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## The Face In the Sand

BY JOHN J. A'BECKET

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Miss Hartwell strolled along the beach at Atlantic City that early summer morning, drinking in the air and watching the slow, green waves break with the conviction that she was deriving new strength for her settlement work. If only some of those poor east side youngsters could have a little of this sea air too! But they would reap the benefit of all she got, and there was comfort.

At which stage of her reflections she paused to look with smiling curiosity at something in the sand. It was the profile of a young girl fashioned very cleverly out of the damp material. As she continued gazing it grew on her that the features were quite like her own.

It was a mere coincidence, of course. She didn't know anybody in the place, finding all the company she needed in Miss Cunningham. After their breakfast she would get her friend to walk that way and see how the sand image affected her.

The waves of the incoming tide were almost lapping it, but her companion caught sight of the alto rilievo modeled from the unstable material and stopped to look at it more closely.

"Why, Margaret," she exclaimed after a moment, raising her eyes to the other's face, "it looks like you! Turn your head. There! Now take off your hat. Yes! It is a fair likeness of you. Who in the world can have done it?"

"It is enough of a likeness to merit this," returned the other, stamping the delicate profile into oblivion. "It is a piece of impertinence!"

In the sun parlor of the casino that afternoon she noticed a man regarding her. There was a contented, well fed air about him which she did not like, although he was a good looking man in his heavy way. Earnest, practical interest in the thin poor made her a little intolerant of sated idleness. At dinner that evening she caught his eye upon her again as he passed her table. She averted her face. Miss Hartwell was a very pretty girl, but a fastidious one, with no taste for a seaside flirtation.

"That is Burlington, the sculptor," she heard a woman remark to her neighbor.

That face in the sand! Her face! This was the man!

Miss Hartwell got a note from her brother Tom that day saying he could not come before the end of the week. "You girls want a man to fetch and carry for you. You mention half a dozen women you have met and then complain that the place is restful, but a little dull." Here's your chance. I hear that Hammond, a Boston man, classmate of mine at Yale, is at Atlantic City. He is a good fellow—rich, family, brains—but is shy of girls. I shall make him miserable by sending him a note of introduction to you and Miss Cunningham."

A day or two later the young fellow presented the note. He was a charming young man. From an acquaintance he rapidly developed into an acquisition. He was quiet and dignified, not shy. Miss Hartwell got to like him very well. "Tom is a good athlete, but not strong on analysis of character," she laughingly said to Miss Cunningham.

Miss Hartwell had not encountered her face on the sand again and was reaping nothing but health and pleasure from her vacation, especially since young Hammond had become such an interesting part of it. Then one morning she came upon it again. As before, it was early morning. She stamped it out even more emphatically.

Her brother arrived that day, and she immediately confided to him how much annoyance the sculptor was occasioning her. Tom lost no time in getting after the man, who denied all knowledge of the matter.

"I came here for rest and amusement, and the last thing I am likely to do is to make faces in the sand. I work in more durable material."

"But the likeness was unmistakable, and you are the only sculptor here," urged Tom doggedly.

"That may be. I had nothing to do with it. My word should offset a mere suspicion. I do not know your sister, but if she is the young woman I think you can assure her that I will not model her face in the sand," the man concluded serenely.

Miss Hartwell was incredulous when she heard her brother's report. "I don't like the man's face," she said.

"That doesn't prove he did yours in the sand, Maggie," returned her brother reproachfully. "I gather from his remarks that he doesn't like your face."

Miss Hartwell tossed her head. Tom was so easy going. She might catch this man at his work. Then she knew she could count on Tom. She strolled along the board walk, occasionally approaching the rail and looking down on the beach, for the next two or three mornings early. But she saw no one. Perhaps he had been frightened off. If she could only catch him!

The next morning she did. There, crouched down on the sand, working in it, so absorbed that he never glanced around, was a man. He and she were almost the sole persons abroad at that hour.

She recognized the clandestine modeler beyond the shadow of a doubt. But instead of getting her brother and having him fall upon the delinquent red handed she hurried back to the hotel and watched from behind the curtains of her room until she saw the sand artist come up. Then she sallied forth

again, went down to the beach and regarded her features with more interest than ever. He had actually put a sweet smile on the lips! Suddenly she turned and studied the sea. The tide was coming in.

She stood motionless, thinking very hard. Yes! Every time she had seen the face on the sand it had been early morning, when nobody was about and the tide was coming in.

She turned, a smile on her face, regarded the sand image wistfully, then suddenly stooped and stuck a pink carnation from a cluster at her corsage in at the neck of the damp portrait. Next she hastily retreated to the hotel to find her brother and Miss Cunningham well on with their breakfast.

"I declare, Margaret," observed Miss Cunningham as her friend attacked her morning repast with keen enjoyment, "this place is doing you no end of good. Your color is excellent, and your appetite leaves nothing to be desired."

"I hope it leaves a few things that are desired, else you would pay dearly for my improvement, if it could be called that. But this morning walk does improve the appetite," she added innocently.

"If it weren't for that horrid man and his faces in the sand," observed her companion.

"Tom said he denied it in a way that left no room to doubt his innocence. Besides, I have discovered that it was always done early, when no one was about and when the tide was coming in, so that it would be washed out before any one saw it."

"What on earth did he do it for then?" cried Miss Cunningham. "Only a man in love would do such a thing as that!"

"Perhaps as five finger exercises, just to keep his sculptor hand in training," she replied laughingly.

But Miss Cunningham looked so surprised at her mitigated tone and her face felt so red that she escaped to the open air as soon as possible. She had not gone far before she saw Mr. Hammond sitting on a bench, gazing pensively at the sea. His tan shoes were wet and sandy. In his fingers he clasped a pink carnation as if it were a precious relic.

She paused near him. His preoccupation was so great that for a moment he did not perceive her. Then he bounded to his feet, his face discolored the flower for color, and stammered: "Oh, Miss Hartwell! I was thinking of you. I wanted to see you. I hope you are not too angry. You will let me explain."

"It must not happen again, not even when the tide is coming in, and no matter how early," she smiled faintly.

"And I may keep this little flower?" She nodded.

"Will you sit down just for a minute and let me explain?" he asked, his ingenuous eyes fastened on hers imploringly.

She seated herself by his side. Judging from a very pretty wedding in St. George's three months later, Mr. Hammond must have "explained" beautifully.

### The Wise Peasant.

One night as the Peasant was soundly sleeping he was aroused by a knock on the door, and when he asked who called a voice replied:

"O Peasant, I beg the loan of thy lantern for a few minutes."

"Hast lost something in the darkness?" was asked.

"Nay, not that. I am a thief and have come for thy Goat, but I require a lantern to light up the stable."

"You shall have it with cheer, and you may leave it outside the door as you go away."

The Peasant's wife began upbraiding him that he should assist to steal his own property, but he turned to her and commanded:

"Silence, woman! Firstly, I am no match for a thief who has doubtless come armed to attack or defend; secondly, the Ass and the Goat are stabled side by side, and did I not lend my lantern the thief might get the Ass by mistake. I am not the fliest man in the county, but I do know the difference between a three dollar Goat and a thirty dollar Ass!"

Moral.—The man who stops to figure a little generally comes out ahead of the game.

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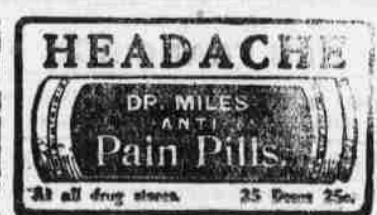
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