

Who is Number One? A Mystery Serial

BY ANNA KATHARINE GREEN.



Almee Pleads Graham Hale's Cause to His Enemies.

In the Chinese Den Almee Has Little Chance to Escape.

EPISODE NO. 12.

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GRAHAM HALE listened with resignation to his son's story of the robbery in the private car, by means of which The Twisted Thread, the organization which, after threatening him for years, had of late been striking open blows at him, had secured certain papers so important that he had taken every possible means to keep them safe.

They came through from the other car, Dad," said Tommy. "Almee and I were sitting there, talking—and then something hit me on the head and I went down and out! That's all I can remember—until I woke up—"

"I was in the road, beside the railway track, and the chap you saw, the one who brought me home, was washing my forehead and trying to straighten me out. I asked him about Almee—she was the first thing that thought about me. And—well, he said she was dead. I don't know if that's true or not. Of course, she's probably all right, if she's with Mr. Carter—"

"For heaven's sake!" cried Tommy. "Almee—she's really got them!"

There was no chance for Almee to resist. She knew better, indeed, than to make such an attempt. She was not badly treated. Though she had been deposed as Number One, she was still the daughter of the supreme leader, and as such entitled to respect.

It was Thornton Rayne, she guessed who had arranged the second theft of the papers she had recovered on the train. His last wish would be to have Almee see them—since they would establish Graham Hale's innocence and his own duplicity, which had lasted so many years.

Soon an amusing thing happened. A drunken man came in. He needed a shirt—he was going to a party, with his wife, he explained. His laundry was ready—but he had no money. He tried to snatch the package, but the Chinaman hurried it back into the room where Almee was, over a partition.

"I never knew why, but her choice fell upon me. Thornton took his defeat hard, but after a little, like a man, he got over it. He told me of my contemplated marriage, threatened to disown me. He had an old-fashioned prejudice against the idea of marriage with an actress—he would not meet Camille, who would have banished it. But I would not give her up.

"I don't understand that," she said. "But, after all, as long as we've got them back, it doesn't matter much, does it?"

"Of course not," said Graham Hale. He was up—his improvement in the last two days had been rapid, although Dr. Connor was still concerned about his condition. Almee, my dear—it was a lucky day for us when you came to live with us! But it was rather hard on you—you've been plunged into the very midst of all our troubles.

"I'm glad to see you," said Almee. She flashed a tender, meaningful look at Tommy, who flushed, delightedly. "When my father died I had no people left—and you took me in and treated me as if I'd always belonged to you! Why shouldn't I share your troubles?"

"I am tired," she confessed. "Tommy—you're sure you feel all right?"

"Yes—I'm perfectly all right!" he replied. "Go and rest."

"Hello—here comes Mr. Rayne," he said to his father. He had gone to the window, and could see his father's old friend approaching. "I'll tell them to send him in."

"I can understand that it was probably Thornton Rayne who deceived you," said Tommy. "He was a false friend then—as he has been ever since. But, are you sure she died in the fire?"

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STORIES FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE

THE QUARRELSOME CHILDREN

DID you ever hear of a sister and brother quarreling with each other so often and so much that they grew to believe they didn't really love one another at all?

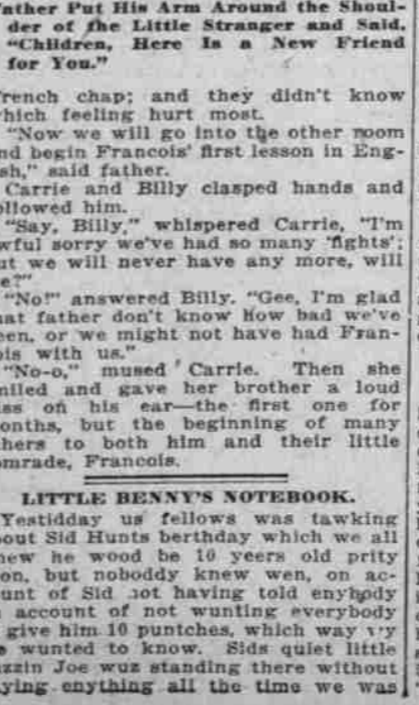
one of their tempers. Certainly something must be done, and done quickly. Grandma sighed as she thought that her well-meant indignance had a bad effect.



Carrie would whimper that Billy "hurt her feelings" and Billy would say that Carrie "picked a fight" with her.

ness might make this little fellow happy once more; so I asked permission to bring him to America with me. I have adopted him now, and hereafter he will be your little brother.

talking, and after a while Puds Simmons, sed. G. Joe, you awt to know weds Sids birthday is, you're his cuzin, aint you?



Governor Ferris, of Michigan, is a strong believer in active play which shall call forth initiative and skill.

Tracing the origin of things is an interesting study. We use words and expressions without having any idea of their first and original meaning.