

Satan's Henchman

By
ART NAYLOR
Well-Known Author

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rushed through his veins. Never had a maiden appeared so ravishingly beautiful to him. She was a vision of loveliness in an imported gown of white chiffon, conspicuous for its lack of frills and furbelows. Rich and magnificent in its simplicity, its soft folds clung to the exquisite lines of her perfect body.

Parted in the middle, her glistening black hair rippled down in perfect waves, and was confined in a massive roll at the back of her shapely head. Her creamy complexion, unmarred by a single blemish, was flushed, and her large midnight eyes were magnetic in their unfathomable depths. Her only adornment was a pair of pearl pendants suspended from her pink earlobes, and a priceless pearl necklace.

When Marcia beheld Theo, a deeper blush dyed her lovely features, and her eyes glowed, but not a word or gesture betrayed her recognition. Only the warm pressure of her small hand reassured Theo of her loyalty, and this assurance, little by little, faded as the evening wore on.

Try as he would, Theo's every attempt to get a few words with Marcia proved unavailing. Her dancing program was quickly filled, and

she politely expressed her regret when he finally urged his way through an admiring crowd of men. Her conduct was baffling, and his heart slowly sank with a lover's jealous pang as he observed the favors she bestowed upon one or two social favorites. He was barely conscious of Clarice's aloofness and Bolton's monopoly of her, and he wondered at the sudden burst of friendship between the two girls.

Theo is Depressed

During a lull in the dancing, Theo, dejected and mystified, stepped out upon a deserted balcony. He dropped onto a settee, lit a cigaret, and quickly became lost in thought. It was a warm spring night and the scent of early flowers seemed to augment the torture which heretofore had always been a stranger to the young cashier's happy temperament.

Suddenly a shadow crept across the threshold and a woman joined Theo in the seclusion of the retreat. He started from his reverie and looked

into the searching eyes of Ethel Oliver.

"Why so dejected and alone, Big Boy?" she asked, laying one of her hands caressingly upon his knee.

"There are moments when one wishes to be alone," Theo quoted, and smiled in an attempt to appear nonchalant.

"Well, your wishes are gratified, now act your part. At least you ought to be quite willing to be—well, may I say, adequately avenged. Just how any real he-man can so docilely submit to such treatment and all disregard for social conventions is more than I can understand. Clarice's treatment of you is disgraceful, and still you refuse to accept the love of a woman who would lay down her life for you. You know I love you, and it's my prophecy that before long you are going to regret it and wish for the opportunity I have offered you. I think you'll need some of the tips I might be able to give you."

For a moment Theo sat and pondered the words his fair companion had uttered. He felt the coils of some

sinister fate creeping about him. He thought of his mother and her dependence upon him, and unconsciously shivered. His silence was misconstrued by the young matron, who slipped her rounded arm about his broad shoulders and attempted to draw him into her longing embrace. Her hot breath fanned his face, and her lips reached up to his.

Theodore Ashton's wandering mind came back to him with a crash. Realizing the full import of the woman's attitude, he quickly disengaged her clinging arms. He was disgusted and would have sorely berated her, but the thought of his own paralyzed affections softened his reprimand.

Circumstantial Evidence

"Mrs. Oliver—I am indeed sorry for your manifestations to me, but surely you realize the utter futility of your misguided passion. I am sorry, indeed, if your protestations are sincere. I have at no time encouraged other than your profound respect and friendship. Even though I admired you fervently, your ties,

your wedded vows, would forever preclude any such association as you have intimated. No matter what I may be, whether he-man or what, I shall never stoop to such license with another man's wife."

"I admit, you have always been a gentleman, and—knowing I could trust you has simply inspired my inspiration. Your reticence, so different from the majority of men, has fired me to this ignoble confession of desire. But you are not angry, Theo, and you'll forgive me, won't you? Some day I'll tell you a secret; then you won't blame me. However, I shall retain my dreams and hopes that you'll change your mind."

"Never!" Theo declared vehemently. And at that instant he looked up into the flashing eyes of his companion's husband, and simultaneously with his appearance another figure, heretofore unnoticed, stepped from a dark recess of the balcony to Theo's side.

(To be continued)

Who Are the Thirteen Most Gifted Negroes in the United States?

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of literary style which place him in a class by himself among the contributors to the present number of the Advocate." Mr. Sweezy adds:

"He is a thoroughgoing, though far from a blind, disciple of Professor Babbitt. He has in fact done more than accept the Humanist creed; he has taken the trouble to find out what the Humanists are talking about—and has equipped himself to speak with them. And, as I have already indicated, his present contribution gains added consideration from the ease and maturity of the style in which it is composed."

But that is not all. One of the high priests of Humanism, Professor Norman Foerster, says in a personal letter to this nondescript-looking little black boy: "Needless to say, I have read your article with interest and approval. . . . The quality of your thought and style makes me curious about your plans. If you are going on into literary or academic work, I hope you will keep me informed of your activities."

Harrison will not have to keep anyone informed of his activities. I will wager anybody that in less than five years William E. Harrison, now one of the most brilliant students that Harvard College has ever had, will be known in American letters by everyone who makes any pretense of being cultured. The only thing that stands in the way of his inclusion among the Most Gifted is his immaturity and (thus far) the narrow scope of his intellectual pursuits.

My list of the Thirteen Most Gifted Negroes in the United States reads as follows: 1. Albon L. Holsey, business organizer; 2. Louis T. Wright, physician and surgeon; 3. Langston Hughes, novelist and poet; 4. Aaron Douglas, painter and illustrator; 5. Roland Hayes, singer; 6. Paul Robeson, singer and actor; 7. George S. Schuyler, novelist; 8. George W. Carver, scientist; 9. Ernest E. Just, bio-chemist; 10. Elmer S. Imes, physicist; 11. Henry A. Hunt, educator; 12. W. E. B. DuBois, editor and sociologist; 13. Carter G. Woodson, historian.

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