

## WOMAN'S VENGEANCE

Mrs. Prothero sprang back with a cry of horror, an angry red mark staining her pale cheek.

She stood for a moment with head erect and blazing eyes, quivering throughout the length of her slight body with suppressed emotion.

"You struck me," she said at last. "You—you dared to lay hands on me." Her voice was low and tense with passion. She had southern blood pulsing through her veins.

Mr. Prothero lurched unsteadily to the table and poured himself out a liberal brandy and soda. Swaying slightly, he turned and regarded her, an evil leer on his coarse features. Her small, oval face, white save for the spot where the blow had fallen, was thrown defiantly back. The waving masses of luxuriant dark hair glistening in the lamplight formed a vivid contrast to the soft, billowy folds of chiffon and lace of her opera cloak.

"Struck you did I?" said he thickly. "Serve you right—bring you to your senses. Tell you what it is," he added, savagely, "I've had enough of your airs and graces. I'm going to put a stop to them, so understand that."

Without a word she swept past him and left the room, closing the door quietly behind her.

A quarter of an hour later the brougham drove her swiftly away. It was the height of the season, and she was expected at several houses.

Her mind wandered back to the early loveless marriage forced on her in strict accordance with Italian social custom. Her mother had been a Molena.

The intervening years of misery, the man's constant brutality and coarseness, his utter inability to understand her, his callous indifference, and then this last horror of all. Her cheeks flamed again in the darkness as she thought of it, and her hands clenched instantaneously.

When her brougham came to a stop opposite the walled entrance, she paused on her way up the steps and spoke to the foot man. "You can go home, James. I shall not need the carriage again. I shall take a cab if necessary."

The man touched his hat, and she passed into the house.

Up in the gayly lit ballroom many noticed her and admired. Some, a few women especially, envied. Envy her beauty, her grace, her money.

She refused to dance, pleading a headache, but she stayed talking to those who looked around her, though now and again she lifted a slender gloved hand to her face with an unconscious gesture.

When the room was at its fullest, she rose and left.

"Going so early, Mrs. Prothero?" reproached a man.

She turned to him with a ready smile. "It is only a novel," she said. "I am going on elsewhere. We shall meet later at Mallison's."

Her cab drove rapidly to a house near by. There was the usual crowd of people coming in and going out. She descended, paid the man, and dismissed him.

But instead of entering she joined a small knot of people on their way out. No one saw her or noticed her, and, getting into a second cab, she drove away.

At her request the man drove her to the entrance of a quiet street she directed him to and whipped up his horse in hopes of a new fare, without even glancing a second time in her direction.

She hurried down the street, everything was quiet. On one side of her there were houses commonplace enough in appearance; on the other a high, dingy wall, pierced here and there by low doorways.

At the fourth of these she stopped, and, unlocking it, stepped swiftly inside, closing it quickly behind her.

A small garden, such as is common to a certain class of English houses, stretched between her and the large French window of a room in which a light was burning. The window was wide open, for the night had become sultry—there was thunder in the air.

Noiselessly, with quick, stealthy steps she crossed the intervening space, still fingering her check.

A man with flushed face, disheveled dress sprawled, breathing mysteriously, on the sofa, beside him a half empty decanter. She listened intently; not a soul was stirring; the clock on the mantel-piece pointed to close on 1.30.

The household were asleep up above.

She took a slender little dagger from the writing table—a toy of highly burnished steel and jeweled handle, intended for a paper cutter—on the blade was engraved a single word—the Italian for "Remembrance."

She tried the point on her finger, then crossing to the drunken man, she struck sharply twice, and flung it away. A convulsive shudder ran through him; he moaned feebly once, and then lay still, while she stood by and watched with grave eyes.

She glanced at her gloves—they were not soiled. Then moving hurriedly but methodically, she arranged the room—a chair overturned here, a rug kicked up there. With deliberation she took up the massive silver inkstand and hid it on its side, so that a sluggish black stream trickled across the polished satinwood and dripped slowly to the floor. Finally she disturbed a few things on the mantel-piece, and, taking the clock, turned the hands backward till they pointed to 12.45. Then she dropped it heavily on the thick bearskin rug. It made no noise, but the mechanism gave a faint click and stopped. Then she left by the way she had come—the garden gate swinging idly behind her.

After walking a hundred yards or so, she saw a cab and called it. Just as she got in the first heavy drops of the thunder storm fell splashing on the pavement.

She entered Lady Mallison's ballroom, looking radiant and charming, within a few minutes of the half hour.

Her carriage was more erect than ever, her laugh rang more clearly and sweetly, her eyes, unclouded with trouble, dazzled those she danced with.

Some little time afterward the man who had spoken to her earlier in the evening approached. She beckoned to him. "You see," she said, "I was right when I said a revolver. A dance? Yes, you may have the next. My headache has gone. After, you must feed me; I am famished."

She was at supper when a servant in livery dashed up to the Mallisons' furiously driven brougham.

"Mrs. Prothero?" he asked the footman at the door. "I must see her at once, please. Send a message to her. It's of vital importance."

There was a minute's colloquy with the butler, an exclamation of surprise, and a servant who knew her by sight was despatched to find her.

"What is it? What on earth can the man want?" she asked, as the servant, having discovered her, delivered his message incoherently. "I suppose I must go and see what it is myself."

"No, don't do that," said her companion, rising. "Let me speak to the fellow for you. I'll be back in a minute."

He left her, as she nodded with a smile of thanks and lifted her glass to her lips with a steady hand.

In a little while he came hurrying back to her pale and excited, forcing his way toward her through the crowded room.

"Come out, please—come out of here at once!" She trembled slightly, and did as he bade.

"I have news for you, bad news," he said, hoarsely. "There has been an accident, a terrible thing has happened. Your husband—"

"Ah!" It was a faint cry, but she steadied herself at once so that the man marvelled at her control, little guessing the truth.

"If you will let me I will come with you," said he. "I can save you trouble. It will be easier for you."

She assented in silence, and let him lead her to a carriage.

The murder was a seven days' wonder. Openly people sympathized with her. When away from her, they agreed among themselves that it was the luckiest thing that could have happened.

The police tried their utmost, but not a clue of any sort could they obtain. It was generally put forward as a theory that some burglar or tramp had found the garden gate ajar. It was the intermittent hanging of it that had roused one of the men servants from his sleep and so led to the discovery of the crime had slipped in, there had been a struggle, as evidenced by the disturbed state of the room, and that he had snatched up the knife which lay ready to his hand, and struck, got frightened, and hurried away. The hour of the deed was the one definite point in the case; the clock had been overturned in the struggle, and been stopped at 12.45.

It was a strangely dramatic coincidence, as the newspapers pointed out, that the bereaved wife was at that hour unconsciously enjoying herself in a well-known London ballroom.

As soon as possible Mrs. Prothero had quitted London, and journeyed instinctively to the land of sunshine, her native Italy, and there she lived quietly in retirement amid the beautiful scenery. Remorse for her, she never knew. But the hot sun warmed her and blotted out all memories of the past. Six months later a trial was reported in the London dailies. It was headed, "The Murder of Mr. Prothero."

A man had been discovered in possession of certain belongings of the dead man. He was proved to be acquainted with the interior of the house, being, in fact, a discharged servant. His movements had been watched since the crime, circumstantial evidences accumulated against him, and a jury brought him in guilty.

Mrs. Prothero read the news with an athen face. The next day she returned to England.

"The man is innocent," she told the astounded officials and then quietly, without outward sign of emotion, she told her story to the end.

Having finished she was noticed to stagger slightly. She complained of feeling faint, and asked for water. An inspector hastened to give her a glass, but even as she stretched out her hand to take it she stopped with a little gasp, her hand went up to her throat in a convulsive effort, and with a faint cry she fell forward on to the hard stone flooring. She had gone to face a higher tribunal.—Chicago Tribune.

A Wise Judge.

The late Justice Dykman once had before him a respectable-looking man who was charged with the theft of jewelry. The man pleaded guilty, but it was urged that there were extenuating circumstances. The defense introduced a medical expert who swore that the prisoner suffered from kleptomania.

"I know the disease," said his Honor. "I know the disease, and I am here to cure it."

Largest Searchlight.

The largest searchlight in the world was recently finished by an electric plant in Lowell. It weighs nearly four tons, is of 5,250,000 candle power, and projects a beam of light seven feet in diameter.

## SWORDS IN JAPAN.

### Two Swordsmiths Whose Blades Were the Finest Made.

Until the year 1603 there was no law existing in Japan with regard to the wearing of swords. Any one might carry as many as he chose. During the Tokugawa regime, however, a law was promulgated which allowed only the nobles, the fighting men or samurai, the artists or painters and the swordsmiths to carry swords. This law remained in force until 1877, when an edict was issued forbidding any one to wear swords in public. This created discontent among those whose privilege it was to carry them, whereupon the government proclaimed another edict, allowing any one to wear as many swords as he pleased. This removed the cherished distinction attached to the wearer of a sword, and no one cared to do what was permitted to all. Although wearing swords has entirely ceased for twenty years in Japan, the old esteem and reverence for the weapon and its use still exist among the gentlemen of the country, and many of the nobility have at their houses regular establishments where fencing is practiced.

In the past there were certain famous swordmakers in Japan and authentic blades of their workmanship are highly prized. One old-time swordmaker has a singular reputation. This is Muramasa, who was a pupil of the great Masamune, second in fame of all Japanese swordsmiths. He was widely known, and undoubtedly made swords which were excellent weapons, but he was a man of violent temper, and his swords were thought exceedingly dangerous. It was supposed that once withdrawn from the sheath they always shed blood before being returned. They were regarded as being particularly unlucky, so far as the Tokugawa family of Japanese rulers was concerned. The father and grandfather of Ieyasu, the first shogun of the family, were both attacked by men carrying Muramasa swords. Ieyasu therefore issued an edict forbidding any one to carry them. It was in this way that they acquired their bad reputation.

Muramasa once challenged Masamune to a trial of their respective swords. Masamune consented, and the sword blades were placed in a running stream of water with their edges turned against the current. All the leaves, twigs and rubbish which flowed down stream ran into Muramasa's sword and were severed, while they carefully avoided coming into contact with Masamune's blade. "Ah," said Masamune, "that demonstrates very well the difference between our swords, yours is bloodthirsty and cuts everything which comes near it, while mine avoids doing unnecessary damage."

A Drummer's Yarn.

"Funny things happen to a commercial salesman occasionally," said H. W. Hest of Chicago at the Republican House, "and I had an amusing experience this week. The house sent me a line of samples about which I know absolutely nothing. They were something entirely new to me, but I was ordered to push them and started out to do so. Almost the first man I struck was a buyer for a big firm who was new to the business, having been in the position only a short time, and he, too, knew absolutely nothing about the goods I offered him. We staid around for several minutes, confining our conversation to very general terms and fearful every minute of making a breakthrough would make us ridiculous. Then he said he would speak to the foreman of the department to which those goods belonged. I hinted that I would go along with him and did so. The foreman knew all about the goods. There are certain terms and a special phraseology and both the buyer and myself grasped at every word the foreman spoke and then in a nonchalant way used the terms ourselves as if we had known them for years. As soon as the foreman chanced to let out another technical word, we would both jump onto it greedily and bandy it back and forth as familiarly as you please. After an hour of as hard work as I have ever done in my life I succeeded in selling the man a fair-sized order. I don't know yet what I sold him and he doesn't know what he bought, but the foreman said it was all right, and what he said went—that time."—Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin.

The Witch Tree in Nevada.

A very remarkable tree grows in Nevada. It is called by the superstitious Indians the witch tree. It grows to a height of six or seven feet, and its trunk at the base is about three times the size of an ordinary man's wrist. The wood-rim characteristic of the tree is its luminosity, which is so great that on the darkest night it can be seen plainly at least a mile away. A person standing near could read the finest print by its light.

Brief Sketch of Japan.

The total area is 147,655 square miles, excluding Formosa; and the population about 46,000,000 or 300 to the square mile. Eight cities contain 100,000 or more population, and 13 others exceed 50,000 population.

Religious freedom is guaranteed, and there is no state religion or support, but most of the people are of either Shintoists or Buddhists. Elementary education is compulsory and public schools are supported everywhere by a combination of government and local funds. There are two imperial universities.

The total imperial income in 1903 was about 273,000,000 yen (about \$165,000,000), the public debt in 1903 was 508,464,195 yen.

## AN ORIENTAL DOG.

### He Never Barks or Growls and Likes Mice.

Kotobiki comes from northern China and he lives in a big, old fashioned house on Washington Square. He is a thoroughbred Chou dog and is called "Koto" for short, though his whole name means "good luck." He looks a little like a collie and a little like a wolf, and he has some very peculiar habits.

In the first place, he is a thorough Oriental, and he never will fight unless he is forced to defend himself, but then he is a terror. The dogs of the neighborhood at first wondered what odd kind of fellow this stranger was and they started to bully him, but they soon learned to let him alone because his teeth were very sharp, indeed. Next, "Koto" coming from the land of ice and snow, likes cold places, and he always sleeps on the marble stairway leading up from the front hall. Then, again, he always gets up on the highest places he can find, inheriting traits of some of his wolfish ancestors. Whenever he is taken out in the country he immediately runs up on top of the nearest hill, and in the city he never goes downtown—always up.

"Koto" never makes a sound. Not even a growl. As his tongue is perfectly black, perhaps he is afraid to talk, because he might say something very bad. He is more curious than a fox terrier and pokes and noses into everything. His most intimate friend is a little white fluffy toy dog, who wags his tail and wiggles his body until one would really think he was made of jelly. This friend is named after a fierce Borneo head hunter—Tana-Bulam, but he is called "Timmie," and is awfully jealous of Koto and barks and snaps when his big friend is petted.

"Koto" is very proud and will not accept food from any one but his mistress. One time when she went away he nearly starved. He loves to chase cats, and he also loves mice. He will sit waiting at a mouse hole just as a cat might, and one day he was found with a mouse in his mouth with the tail hanging out.

If you want to see "Koto" and his friend "Timmie," go to Washington Square some morning when they are out for their daily airing.—Philadelphia Press.

Submarine First Used by Smuggler.

One of the earliest suggestions of the submarine was that of a British smuggler, Johnson, who converted a boat that was to travel under or above water. With this vessel he proposed to carry Napoleon from St. Helena but the emperor died while the boat was under construction. The admiral of the emperor promised Johnson \$200,000 on the day the boat was ready to start and an immense sum if it proved successful. Some years later Johnson built a boat with which he experimented in the Thames for the British admiralty. In this connection it may be mentioned that one of Napoleon's marshals, Massena, began life as a smuggler on a large scale and Commodore Thuret of the French navy of that time obtained his knowledge of the British coasts in the employ of a smuggler.

Adventure of an Arctic Traveler.

A recent traveler in arctic Siberia, Mr. Vanderlip, a gold hunter, tells the following of his return to civilization: "I found that half a dozen of the officers and men of the steamer which my employers had sent for me had come to hunt me up. The captain dismounted and I tried to address him in Russian, but he said 'You forget that I speak English.' Now it may seem scarcely credible, and yet it is true, that for a few moments I was totally unable to converse with him in my native tongue. I had not used a word of it in conversation for months, and my low physical condition acting on my nerves, confused my mind and I spoke a jumble of English, Russian and Korak. It was a week before I could talk good, straight English again."

Japan and Russia's Naval Origin.

Russia's navy had its origin in the boat which Queen Elizabeth sent to Ivan the Terrible and with which later Peter the Great got the "sea craze." Japan's first European type of ship was built by Adams, an Englishman. Holland and Denmark, however, did most of the training of the officers of Japan's modern fleet. Some of them, as is well known, were trained in the United States.

The Largest Grapevine.

The largest grapevine in the world is growing in the Carpinteria valley, twelve miles east of Santa Barbara, Cal., and is called La Para Grande. It was started from a cutting sixty-one years ago by a Spanish woman Don Ayla. It is eight feet four inches in circumference at its base, and one of the horizontal branches measures more than three feet in circumference. The trellis covers about a third of an acre, and sixty heavy posts support it. The vine produces as many as 5,000 bunches annually, at a conservative estimate, and in good years many clusters measure twelve to fifteen inches in length and weigh six to eight pounds. Its owner estimates that in 1895 the vine yielded ten tons of grapes.—Kansas City Journal.

Meaning of "Retvisan."

The Russian battleship Retvisan, which has figured so prominently in the news from Port Arthur, is called after a Swedish battleship of sixty-four guns which was captured by the Russians at the battle of Viborg in 1790. The word Retvisan means "Justice."

## IS WOMAN ALWAYS BOSS?

### So it Would Seem According to this Man's Experiment.

In Buffalo recently Owen Wister swapped stories with a party of friends till early in the morning. The conversation at last touched upon a woman's influence in domestic circles, and one of the group reminded Mr. Wister of his declaration that the east is the head of the country and the west the heart.

"And in the heart of the country how does woman rank as the head of the house?" asked one. "Does she boss her husband as she does here in the east?"

"Well," drawled Mr. Wister, "I've heard it said that wherever Americans live the woman is the boss of the ranch. As to the west, I'll tell you a little story that may illustrate her status. Up in the Wind river country there lives an old man who is considered well-to-do in worldly goods and has an only son, Hank. Hank wanted to get married, but his father opposed him.

"My boy," said the old man, "all women are natural bosses. If you get hitched you will no longer be free. Your mother has bossed me and your wife will boss you. Keep single and enjoy life."

"But the young man pooch-pooched the idea and said that no woman would ever bespeak him, and that he knew lots of married men who led happy, untrammelled lives."

"Tell you what I'll do," at last said his father. "You take a span of my best horses, hitch them into the buckboard, take a crate of fresh eggs and drive round and see your friends. Whenever you find a woman who runs the ranch give her an egg. If you find a man who is boss give him a hoss and the buckboard and ride the other critter home. If you come back hossback I won't say a word about your getting hitched."

Hank smiled, it seemed so easy. Next morning he got off bright and early and commenced going the rounds.

"Who's boss?" he would ask, as he drove up to each ranch or dug-out.

"I be," the woman would reply.

"At last Hank began to smile and began to get anxious. At first it seemed play to him, but now he realized that he must earn a wife. All day long he canvassed the Wind river country, and at every stop was met with the feminine declaration, 'I be.' Toward nightfall he thought of one place where he couldn't help winning. He had refrained from going there as he thought it was hardly fair to the old man. It was Bill Williams' place, up under the mountains. Bill had a bad name and was said to be hard and overbearing in his own humble home. Other unsavory stories were told about Bill, and it was even hinted that he was a rascal. So Hank felt that his father would have barred the bad man from the contest. But Hank had determined not to ride home in the buck board, and so he turned his horses towards Bill's home.

"He arrived at night fall. 'Hello, Bill,' he cried. 'I want to know who's boss of this ranch?'"

"Blankety-blank blank," cried Bill, coming to the door unkempt and disheveled. "Who in blankety-blank blank do you s'pose is boss? I be, of course."

"Unhitch a horse," said Hank, with a sigh of relief. "Take your pick."

"Bill had unhitched horses in the past with less formal invitations than this, and he at once stepped out to the wagon and said: 'I'll take the off one.'"

"No, ye won't," Bill Williams' cried a shrill voice from the door, and a little thin, faded looking woman came in view. "No, ye won't. Ye'll take the nigh one!"

"I'll take the off one," growled Bill, with an oath.

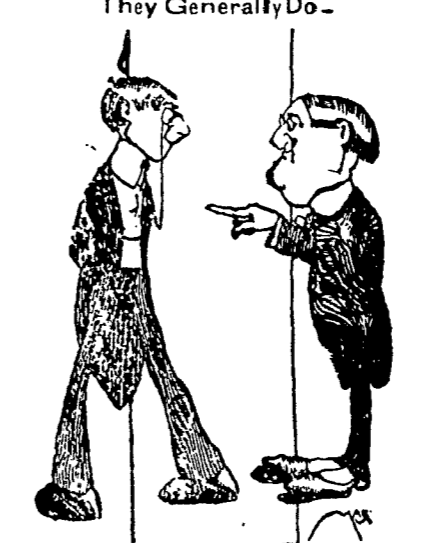
"Do it if ye dare," challenged the woman.

"Bill stood silent for a moment, and then said, 'Wal, blank it all, I'll take the nigh one, then.'"

"Here, give her an egg, and picking up his reins, drove off on the jump, just as Bill procured his rifle and took three shots at him through the dusk.

"Hank is still single."—Philadelphia Press.

They Generally Do—



Yeast—You say that waiter you had at the big dinner the other night held you up?"

Crimsonbeak—Yes, he went home with me.

Undoubtedly.

She—What silly things they do print in the papers sometimes.

He—What's the matter now?

She—Here's an article stating that any woman may be beautiful in her old age if she will only practice armistice. Now, I wonder who could have said a thing as that?

He—Oh, some married man, I suppose.

## THE GROCERYMAN.

### Gets a Gentle Knock at His Rival, the Milkman.

"I don't want to knock anybody," said the groceryman to the pretty cook, "but if I was a girl I'd want to pick out a feller for steady company. It wouldn't be a milkman—particularly a milkman with bandy legs and sandy hair."

"Oh, you think you're smart, don't you?" said the pretty cook.

"I never thought much about it, but come to think of it, I guess I am pretty fussy. I'm dead wise to the milkman, anyway. Do you think his legs is straight? Well, maybe you're right. What can I have the extreme measure of bringin' you this mornin'?"

"I've ever try any of this condensed milk? It beats what these sandy-haired roosters bring around in quart bottles."

"You can keep it," said the pretty cook.

"I knew a girl married a sandy-haired man once, an'—"

"Put down a pound of prunes," said the pretty cook, coldly.

"One extra-fine prunes."

"I didn't say extra-fine."

"All the prunes we've got is extra-fine. This girl was a second cousin of mine. The man wasn't a milkman, though. That's the reason they got on so well together. A milkman wouldn't want to get up in the mornin' an' build fires. His wife 'ud say to him: 'William, it's 8 o'clock an' the house is as cold as a barn an' the children is cryin' for their breakfasts.' I can't help it, he'd say. 'I'm a union man an' the union positively forbids any member in good standin' to get up afore 11. Build the fire yourself, an' while you're about it bring me up some buttered toast an' coffee an' some eggs an' bacon an' I'll eat it abed.' That's what a woman 'ud git for marryin' a milkman."

"She'd get worse for marryin' a groceryman," said the pretty cook, "particularly a groceryman with a snub nose. Have you got any codfish?"

"Not with me," said the groceryman. "I quit carryin' it. I can get you some, though, at the store. Do you want 'em in bulk or on the half-shell? See here, Evalina, you don't want to get mad at me because I joshed you about the milkman. He's all right. I haven't got nuthin' against him except that he's cut me out with the girl at 67. I don't blame him for that, either. If I got a chance to cut a feller out with a good-lookin' girl like that I'd do it, too."

"A pound of codfish, a peck of codfish, apples, five pounds of cutbar sugar and the prunes," said the cook, loftily. "That's all this mornin', an' if you'll get out of this kitchen an' write it down on the porch I'll be obliged."

Agreed With Him.



He—I think I'm a fool!"

She—Well, dear, you told me it was a wife's duty to agree with her husband."

Facing the Future.

"What is the baby's name?" asked the graciously condescending young woman.

"His name is Flynn' Machine Jackson," was the colored mother's reply.

"How did you come to give him such an extraordinary name?"

"Well, you see, dat chile takes after his father, an' I wanted to give him a name dat were gwine to be appropriate. An' every time anybody mentions 'flyin' machine' dey say it's sumpin dat positively refuses to work!"—Washington Star.

Making a Wild Guess.

"On the one hand," said the teacher at the night school, pointing a long finger at the map on the blackboard, "in the present complication is Russia. On the other hand—"

Here he paused and looked sternly at the shock headed boy. "On the other hand—"

"Warts?" hazarded the shock headed boy, helpless with terror.—Chicago Tribune.

Dissembling.

"That man in there is a hypocrite," said Jackson as he left the drug store.

"You mean the druggist?"

"Yes. When I went in I interrupted him in the midst of compounding a prescription; I told him I wanted a two-cent stamp, and he smiled as sweetly as if he was glad to see me."—Philadelphia Press.

What She Did.

"And what did you do when your doctor told you you would have to quit wearing a corset and give up sweets?"

"I sent for another doctor."—Chicago Record-Herald.