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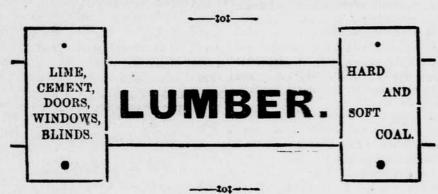
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and in the suggestions of her own imagination. Her powers were natural, those arts which from time to time are seen in men and women, which are alternately scoffed at as impostures, or accepted as facts, but which are never understood either by the possessor or by those who witness the results. She had from childhood the power to charm with the eye and hand all living things, the fascination which takes hold of the consciousness through sight and touch and word, and lulls it to sleep. It was witchery and she was called a witch. She had been taught how to use what she possessed according to the shadowy beliefs and dim traditions of the half forgotten magic in a distant and. Her heart had been filled with longings, and she had grown up to believe that once only would love come, and that the supreme danger of her life would be that she should not know it when it was at hand.

And now she knew that she loved, for the place of her fondness for the one man had been taken by her passion for the other, and she felt without reasoning, where before she had tried to reason herself into feeling. The moment had come. She had seen the man to whom her happiness was to be, the time was short, the danger great if she should not grasp what her destiny would offer her but once. Had the Wanderer been by her side, she would have needed to ask no question, she would have known and been satisfied. But hours must pass before she could see him again, and every one minute spent without him grew more full of anxiety and disturbing passion than the last.

She placed a sincere faith in the old man's answers to her questions, regardless of the matter inquired into. She believed that in the mysterious condition between sleep and waking which she could command, the knowledge of things to be was with him as certainly as the memory of what was even now passing in the outer world. To her, the one direction of the faculty seemed no less possible than the others, though she had not yet attained alone to the vision of the future. Hitherto the old man's utterances had been fulfilled to the letter. More than once, as Keyork Arabian had hinted, she had consulted his second sight in preference to his own, and she had not been deceived. She looked upon him as the Pythoness Delphi ration.

Unorna bent over the sleeper, looking earnestly into his face, and she laid one hand upon his brow.

"You hear me?" she said, slowly and distinctly. "You are conscious of thought, and you see into the fut-

The massive head stirred, the long limbs moved uneasily under the white robe, the enormous bony hands contracted, and in the cavernous eyes the great lids were slowly lifted. A dull stare met her look. "Is it he?" she asked, speaking

more quickly in spite of herself. "Is it he at last?"

There was no answer. "You must answer my que stion.

command you to answer me. Is it

"You must tell me before I can an-

The words came in a feeble, piping

voice, strangely out of keeping with the colossal frame and imposing feat-Unorna's face was clouded, and the

eyes as it ever did at the smallest opposition to her will. "Can you not see him?" she asked

ready gleam of anger flashed in her

impatiently. "I cannot see him unless you lead

me to him and tell me where he is."

"Where are you?"

"In your mind."

"And what are you?" "I am the image in your eyes."

"There is another man in my mind," said Unorna. "I command you to see him.' "I see him. He is tall, pale, noble

suffering. You love him. "Is it he who shall be my life and

my death? Is it he who shall love me as other women are not loved?" The weak voice was still for a moment, and the face seemed covered

with a veil of perplexity.
"I see with your eyes," said the old

man at last. "And I command you to see into the future with your own!" cried Unorna, concentrating her terrible

will as she grew more impatient. There was an evident struggle in the giant's mind, an effort to obey which failed to break down an obstatle. She bent over him eagerly, and her whole consciousness was centered

·I see. He will love you." said

the tremulous tones. "Then it is he."

"With a suppressed cry of triumph Unorna lifted her head and stood up-

grew very pale.



spoiled everything," said a rich bass voice at her elbow—the very sub-bass

of all possible voices. Keyork Arabian was beside her. In her intense excitement she had not heard him enter the room and he had surprised her at once in the breaking of their joint convention and in the revelation of her secret. If Unorna could be said to know the meaning of the word fear in any degree whatsoever, it was in relation to Keyork Arabian, the man who, during the last few years had been her helper and associate in the great experiment. Of all men she had known in her life, he was the only one whom she felt to be beyond the influence of her powers, the only one whom she felt that she could not charm by word, or touch, or look.

"The best thing you can do is to put him to sleep at once," said the little man. "You can be angry afterward. and, I thank heaven, so can Iand shall.'

"Forget," said Unorna, once more laying her hand upon the waxen brow. "Let it be as though I had not spoken with you. Drink in your sleep of the fountain of life; take new strength into your body and new blood into your heart. Live, and when I next wake you be younger by as many months as there shall pass hours till then. Sleep."

A low sigh trembled in the hoary beard, and all was still, save for the soft and regular breathing.

"The united patience of the seven arch-angels, coupled with that of Job ing. And now, as the conjurer says your acquaintance for a day, observed Keyork Arabian.

asked, turning to him and pointing to the sleeper.

She was quite ready to face her companion after the first shock of his unexpected appearance. His small blue eyes sparkled angrily.

"I am not versed in the law conswered. 'You may have property in than an old and ugly man declaring a couple of hundred-weight, more or his unrequited passion for a woman less, of old bones rather than the worse for the wear and tear of a century, but I certainly have some ownership in the life. Without me you would have been the possessor of a and of nothing more.

and I will neither submit to your re- make together one short day?" proaches nor listen to your upbraidings. Is that enough?"

"Of its kind, quite. I will build an altar to Ingratitude, we will bury soft music. our friend beneath the shrine, and imposing proportions you would know nothing? Look at me. I am an old do you understand? Do you know comprehend that word—you girl, you child, you thing of five and twenty summers. You moth, you butterfly, you thread of floating gossamer! How can you understand the incalculable value of Self-of that which is all to me and nothing to you, or which, being yours, is everything to you and to me nothing? You are so young, you still believe in things, and good and evil, and love and hate. What were you doing here when I found you playing with life and death, perhaps with my life, for a gip's trick, in the crazy delusion that this old parcel of humanity can see the shadows of things that are not yet? Why did he hesitate and suffer? Because you asked that to which he knew there was no answer. And you tortured him with your will until his individuality fell into yours and spoke your

Unorma's head sunk a little and she covered her eyes. The truth of what he said flashed upon her suddenly and unexpectedly, bringing with it the doubt which had left her at the moment when the sleeper had spoken. She could not hide her discomfiture, and Keyork Arabian saw his advantage

"And for what?" he asked, beginning to pace the broad room. "To know whether a man will love you or not! Have you found a second Keyork Arabian, over whom your eyes have no power-neither the one nor the

He bughed rather brutally at the thought of her greatest physical pein the words she desired him to caliarity, but then suddenly stopped

"They are certainly very remarkable eyes," he said, mo e calmly, and heart with my hands to feed the very with a certain uneasiness which dog that fawns upon you-and who is Un rea did not notice. "I wonder more to you than I, because he is lar, you in the lace without losing and worship, and adore! right. Then she started violently and hims H. 1 su pose it can hardly be my fa cinating elf whom you wish to that you love me?" she cried in her "You have probably killed him and .nth at." he added, conscious, after a wonder,

moment's trial, that he was proof against her influence.

'Hardly.'' answered Unorna, with bitter laugh.

not need that means of bringing me and the years with to your feet. It is a pity that you do fills the world with you only; makes not want me. We should make a very happy couple. But there is much is but the air that is made bright with against me. I am an old man, Unorna, and yet I was young once, and eloquent. I could make love then-I beieve that I could still if it would amuse you.'

most people, could not long be angry you will not even remember that I with the gnome-like little sage.



her, straightening his diminutive figure in a comical

soldier on parade. "In the first place," he said, "in order to appreciate my skill, you should realize the immense disadvantages under which I labor. I am a dwarf, my dear Unorna. In the presence of that kingly wreck of a Homeric man" - he pointed to the sleeper beside them - "I am a Thersites, if not a pigmy. To have much chance of success, I should ask you to close your eyes, and imagine that my statire matches my voice. That gift at least I flatter myself, would have been appreciated on the plains of Troy. But in other respects I resemble neither the long-haired Greeks nor the trousered Trojans. I am old and hideous, and in outward appearance I am as like Socrates as in inward disposition I am totally different

man of your acquaintance. "It is not to be denied," said

from him. Admit, since I admit it,

Unorna," with a smile. "The admission will make the performance so much the more interestwhen he begins, observe that there is no deception. That is the figure of "Is he mine or yours?" Unorna to be nothing but deception from beginspeech called lying, because there is ning to end. Did you ever consider the nature of a lie, Unorna? It is a

very interesting subject.' "I thought you were going to make

love to me." "True; how easily one forgets cerning real estate in humankind in the kingdom of Bohemia," he anble was a support in the ble, more utterly or hopelessly absurd ble, more utterly or hopelessly absurd these little things! Can there be any-

who might be his granddaughter?"
"Very like," said Unorna with a

"And yet-my evening star-dear remarkably fine skeleton by this time den Unorna—shall I be cut off from star of my fast sinking evening-gol-"He is mine, Keyork Arabian, alive rather, shall I not love you the more, love because my years are many? Or or dead! If the experiment fails, and because the years that are left are he dies, the loss is mine, not yours. few and scantily blessed? May not your dawn blend with my sunset and

> "That is very pretty," said Unorna, thoughtfully. He had the power of making his speech sound like a deep,

"For what is love?" he asked. "Is you shall serve in the temple. You it a garment, a jewel, a fanciful ornacould deify all the cardinal sins if you ment which only boys and girls may would only give your attention to the wear upon a summer's holiday? Is subject, merely by the monstrously love beauty? Is love youth? Is love how to give them. You dare to tell rose upon the lip or the peach blosyellow hair, or black? Is love the me that if he dies you are the only som in the cheek that only the young loser. Do 50 years of study count for may call it theirs? If that is love, if man, and unless I find the secret of vision of your dreams, the familiar that is the idol of your shrine, the life here, in this very room, before genius of your earthly paradise, why many years are over, I must die—die, then, indeed, he who worships by what it means to die? How can you habitation of your happiness, must wear Absalom's anointed curls and walk with Agag's delicate step. What matter if he be foolish, faithless, forgetful, inconstant, changeable as the

tide of the sea? He is young.' "Good," she said. "You tell me what love is not, but you do not tell me what it is."

"Love is the immortal essence of mortal passion; together they are as soul and body, one being; separate them, and the body without the soul is a monster; the soul without the body is no longer human, nor earthly, nor real to us at all, though still divine. Love stands at the gateway of each human soul, holding in his hands a rose and a drawn sword-the sword is for the many, the rose is for the one." "Have you ever loved that you should talk like that?" she asked.

He turned upon her almost fiercely. "Loved? Yes, as you can never love; as you, in your woman's heart, can never dream of loving-with every thought, with every fibre, with every pulse, with every breath: with a love that is burning the old oak through and through, root and branch, core and knot, to feathery ashes that you may scatter with a sigh-the only sigh you will ever breathe for me. Unorna Have I loved? Can I love? Do I love to-day as I loved yesterday and shall love tomorrow? Ah, child! That you should ask that, with your angel's face, when I am in hell for you! When I would darkness for a touch of your hand, for as much kindness and gentleness in a

word from your dear lips as you give the beggars in the street! When I would tear out my

whom you have found who is able to yours, and all that is yours I love,

else for me, in anything, in any one but you, Unorna. The service of my love "If I were the happy man you would fills the days and the nights heaven to be on earth, since heaven your breath, as the temple of all temples is but the spot whereon your dear feet stand. When I am gonewith the love of you in my heart. Unorna-when they have buried the "Try it," said Unorna, who, like ugly old body and out of your sight. was once your companion, still less that I knelt before you; that I kissed the ground on which you stood; that I COULD make loved you as men loved whose hearts love-yes, and are breaking; that I touched the hem since you tell of your garment and was for one mome to try, I ment young-that I besought you to press my hand but once, with one He came and thought of kindness, with one last stood before and only word of human pity-He broke off suddenly and there

"Possible? True? There is nei-

ther truth nor possibility in anything

was a tremor in his voice which lent intense expression to the words. He was kneeling upon one knee beside fashion as though he were imitating Unorna but between her and the light. so that she saw his face indistinctly. She could not but pity him. She took his outstretched hand in hers.

"You are the greatest of great acors, Keyork Arabian. There is something diabolical about you. I sometimes almost think that you are the devil himself."

"Perhaps I am," suggested the little man, cheerfully. "Do you know that there is a horror about all this?" Unorna rose to

her feet. Her smile had vanished, and she seemed to feel cold. As though nothing had happened. Kevork began to make his daily examination of his sleeping patient. He noted some of the results of his observations in a pocketbook. Unorna

stood still and watched him. "There is little room for love in your system," remarked Unorna. "for such love, for instance, as you described

that I am the ugliest and smallest to me a few minutes ago. "There is too much room for it in yours," retorted Keyork. "Your system is constantly traversed in all directions by bodies, sometimes nebulous. and sometimes fiery, which move in unknown orbits at enormous rates of speed. In astronomy they call them comets, and astronomers would be much happier without them."

'I am not an astronomer.' "Fortunately for the peace of the solar system. You have been sending your comets dangerously near our sick planet," he added, pointing to the sleeper. "If you do it again he will break up into asteroids. To use that particularly disagreeable and suggestive word invented by men, he will

die.' "I am sorry," she said in a low

"Sorry! No doubt you are. It remains to be seen whether your sorrow can be utilized as a simple, or macerated in tears to make a tonic, or sublimated to produce a corrosive which will destroy the canker, death. But be sorry by all means. It occupies your mind without disturbing me or injuring the patient. Be sure that if I can find an active application for your sentiment I will give you the rare

satisfaction of being useful. "Nothing that you could say or do

would surprise me.'

"Indeed? We shall see." "I will leave you to your studies, then. I have been here too long as

"Unorna," he said, suddenly, in an altered voice. See stopped and looked

"Do not be angry, Unorna. Do not go away like this.

Unorna turned, almost fiercely, and came back a step. "Keyork Arabian, do you think you can play upon me as on an instrument? Do you suppose that I will

come and go at your word like a child -or like a dog? Do you think you can taunt me at one moment, flatter me the next, and find my humor always at your command?" The gnome-like little man looked

down, made a sort of inclination of his short body, and laid his hand upon his heart. "I was never so presumptive, my

dear lady. I never had the least inention of taunting you, as you express it, and as for your humor-can you suppose that I could expect to command where it is only mine to

"Your repentance is too sudden, it savors of the deathbed.' "Small wonder, when my life is in

the balance." "Your life?" She uttered the question incredulously, but not without curiosity.

"My life-and for your word." he answered, earnestly.

"We must understand each othertoday or never," she said. Either we must part and abandon the great experiment-for. if we part, it must be abandoned-

"We cannot part. Unorna." "Then, if we are to be associates and companions-

"Friends," said Keyork in a low

"Friends? Have you laid the foundation for a friendship between us? You say that your life is in the balance. That is a figure of speech. I suppose. give my body to death and my soul to Or has your comedy another act? I can believe well enough that your greatest interest in life lies there upon that couch, asleep. I know that you can do nothing without me, as you know it yourself. But in your friend-

ship I can never trust-never! "My accursed folly," he exclaimed, as though speaking to himself. "My damnable ingenuity in being odious. It is not to be believed, that a man "Keyork Arabian, is it possible of my age should think of one thing and say another-like a tetchy girl or a snoiled child. The stupidity of the

[Continued on page 5.]



