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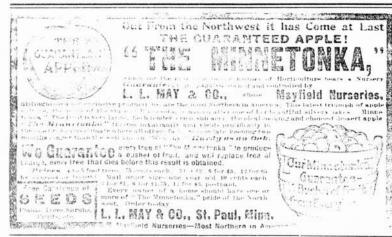
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Antoine's Marie

By Virginia Leila Wentz

Copyright, 1905, by K. M. Whitehead One August morning, with his high

leather leggings, his easy costume, his fishing basket and tackle, Paul Blake strode along through the dew wet Caradian grass. He knew of a certain deep hollow in the brook which on such a gray moist day as this would be the haunt of juicy trout, and for the sheer joy of expectation he whistled. For equal to Blake's love for the art of painting was his love for the sport of fishing. He was not only enjoying his summer gathering French Canadian landscapes; he was reveling in his favorite sport as well.

After an hour of successful fishing in the quiet spot which he had selected he spied a splendid trout tucked cozily under a stone. But it was written in the book of fate that this fish and the frying pan should not lightly be brought together. Fly after fly was thrown in vain. Down through the crystal clear water he could see the sleek sides and the round, unspeculative eve of his intended victim, and he resolved to try the method of tickling.

So he undid his sleeve links, bared his arm and knelt upon the lichens, clinging with one hand to an overhanging birch. He was dipping cautiously toward the water when there in the pool before him, close to the reflection of his own, flashed another face.

It was a girl's face, and in its unusual loveliness it lay for a second like some magic picture. The next second Blake observed with a thrill that the vision was being changed by the current and that his own blond curls were made to trespass gently over the girl's dark ones. Then while he gazed at the reflection with Narcissus-like intentness the other face vanished as suddenly as it had come.

Springing to his feet, Blake perceived the bent trunk of an alder which projected across the stream from the top of the bank above, and he knew that the girl must have been leaning over the trunk from that higher bank, unconscious of his presence, until, like a startled deer, she fled.

"She was like one of Murillo's gypsy eyed Madonnas!" he exclaimed. And. though he went on for awhile longer with his trout fishing, the sport seemed to have lost a bit of flavor.

The next day Paul Blake drew up his horse before the kitchen door of a whitewashed farmhouse, and Antoine Martin rose to greet him.

"Bienvenue, m'sieu," said he, with old French hospitality. "And will m'sieu dismount?"

Blake did dismount, and as he stood in the wide doorway he tried to account for his presence. He was a painter, forsooth, and doing this section of Canada. He had already collected a good many views, but among them all there was not one more wonderful than that which could be obtained from the level plateau on which Antoine's farm stood. It was as if the hills had here withdrawn to leave an arena for some great spectacle, some ancient savage pageant. Might he, therefore, be permitted to fetch his easel and palette and to put upon canvas the harmony and beauty of it all?

Blake saw the lithe figure of a girl Murillo eyes framed in both hands, her scarlet lips parted in breathless listenwas with him, to be sure. If he had lost the trout vesterday he had found the girl today.

"Come here, cherie," said old Antoine to the girl, and to the stranger, "My niece. Marie." * *

"But, you little water sprite, you little Undine, however did you get your face so mixed up with mine that day as Marie stood watching him at work on his canvas.

"Eh, bien, m'sieu, I had gone out for a pique-nique on the barrens, and-ramasse les granages-what you call pick berries," she answered in her quaint English speech, eked out with bits of patois here and there. Then she explained how she'd leaned over the trunk of the tree from the bank above to wash her stained fingers; how, just as she was in the act of dipping down. she had seen his reflection in the water and was startled.

Between the strokes of his brush Blake took surreptitious glances at the willowy figure, half holding back the apple boughs as she talked, half swinging on them. Rebel locks had broken out of confinement and were curling damply about her warm, white neck and that crumpled rose leaf of an ear. Ah, she was exquisitely delightful! That same day he said to Antoine:

"If you would permit Mile, Marie to sit to me, and if Mlle. Marie will consent"-he questioned the Murillo eyes, which silently gave him his answer then fell beneath his own-"I could do

a painting that was worth while." So the August days passed till the brief Canadian summer was over. Already they had started to burn the wood that Antoine had cut for winter

While the piled up logs sent red lights flickering about the plastered walls and shining floor, they would often show that Blake had joined the Martin home group and was reading to old Antoine, who listened soberly between long whiffs at his pipe. Marie would sit on the high backed bench near the clock, knitting, stealing a Spree.

glance now and then at the volume which lay open on the table.

Antoine, good, sturdy old Antoine, had just been offered the position of foreman of a gang in the pineries at the headwaters of the Lievres. He had worked in the lumber camps for years, but never as foreman, forsooth. Nevertheless he hesitated about accepting it. There was poor little Marie, he pointed out to Blake. What would become of her?

"Poor little Marie!" For the next few days Blake did a good deal of thinking. Marie had never read Henry James or Meredith, it was true; she had never seen a poster lady, never heard "Camille," and yet in her setting she was perfect. Moreover, she was the sort to adapt herself readily to new environments. "And why not?" he argued finally to himself. "She is pure, beautiful and capable of the deepest, tenderest feelings. What she has not is the superficial gloss of society. That I do not want."

One evening, pushing his book aside. Blake glanced across at Marie, whose eyes, as usual, were bent on her knitting. She was humming softly to herself an old Canadian boat song:

"Descendez a l'ombre,

Blake had often heard it above the blow of the oars in the rowlocks, but never had the words seemed so fitting as tonight. He rose suddenly and laid a hand on Antoine's shoulder.

"Let me take Mamselle Marie for a little stroll in the starlight," he said pleadingly. "It's warm in here. I will take good care of her."

"Eh, m'sieu!" The old man dropped his pipe and gauged him silently for a second with those black beaded eyes of his. What he read in the younger man's face must have satisfied him, for he said finally, with a little move-ment of his hand: "It must not be far. See you, m'sieu? And it cannot be for long."

Outside through the dusk there was a silvery glimmer. The woodland stir seemed like a sigh. Blake looked down closely into the little face beside him. In the mind of the girl something indefinable had arisen, something which had stolen away all her gay caprices and set her trembling.
"Ma petite blonde!" Blake used the

soft provincial word for sweetheart that Marie had used in her song. His tone was one of gentle entreaty; his attitude was that of reverence.

"Ma petite blonde," he repeated, taking her hand and lifting it softly to his lips, "I want you for my little wife. Will you let me take care of you al-

She looked at him with wide, sur prised eyes and slightly parted lips. "You, m'sieu?" she said breathlessly

"You to take care of me?" It seemed incredible. For answer he drew her to him as

a knight of old would have drawn a lady and looked into her lovely face. His blue eyes and her Murillo eyes met and pledged each other in deep drafts of gazing; then with a superb motion of surrender Marie reached up and put her arms about his head.

Thus in reality did his blond curls trespass gently over the girl's dark ones, even as once they had seemed to do in that reflection in the pool. And thus was brought about the winning of Antoine's Marie.

Probably the most complete incognito on record was that adopted by King Charles of Roumania on his way to take possession of the Wallachian throne

At the time the relations between aged them and led him to the big sitting opposite to him, her arms upon Austria and Prussia were exceedingly chair in the dining room, where he the table, her dimpled face with the strained-it was just before the out-sank back, still suffering considerable break of war between these two nations—and the Vienna government was known to be strongly opposed to a prince of the house of Hohenzollern ascending the throne of Roumania.

It was feared, therefore, that obstacles might be placed to the passage over Austrian territory of the newly elected sovereign of the Wallachs. Accordingly King Charles traveled down the Danube on board the Austrian steamboats disguised as a servant and in the second or third class cabin.

The two or three members of his suit, who of course were in the first class cabin, affected to treat him with the utmost severity and contempt and assailed him with loud reproaches for alleged negligence in his menial duties.

It was only on setting foot on Roumanian territory that the roles were reversed and that those who had remained on board the steamer were able to witness the ceremonious welcome accorded by the Wallachian authorities to the erstwhile valet and footman.

River Funerals In Germany.

The river Spree, which runs through Berlin, has a habit of almost continuously overflowing its banks. As a result the lowlands beyond the city. called Spreewald, are almost always under water in summer and covered with ice in winter. Much of the summer traffic is done on skates and with sledges. The postman delivers his mail either in a boat or on skates, the chil dren skate to school, and the ladies go to market on the water wagon or on the ice.

Even the dead are carried along the river to their last resting place in a coffin resting on a bier in a boat covered with flowers. The hearse is paddled by two of the undertaker's assistants. In the first boat following are the clergymen and the family, and the usual long line of coaches is supplanted by a long line of boats. These are paddled sometimes by men, sometimes by women, but always by some of the friends of the deceased. These water funerals are very picturesque as they wend their way through the temporary channels caused by the overflowing

Black = Belle

By CLEF LOVELL

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"Oh, it's you, you wretched little thing! No; go away, Black-Belle! I won't have anything to do with you. It was all your doing. You know it was." And the pretty brown head was again buried deeply in the cushions, and the hammock shook with the girl's convul-

The little black calf eyed her mistress in wide eyed wonder, then nosed the hammock gently. Whatever had been the matter these last three days? She could not imagine.

The girl suddenly sat up and tossed her hair from her tear reddened eves.

"Yes, you wretched little creature, it was all your doing right through! Your frightening Dick's horses and our quarreling over it and going on and on; then my saying I'd just go and marry Sam West; his asking father, and fa ther saying yes, and then saying I'd have to, when I wanted to back out unless Sam agreed, but he wouldn't. Oh,

it's just horrible! And I hate him!
"'Uncle Sammy!" Why, folks would



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get you cornered on 16 to 1, you sniff I get you agin the fence on reciprocity, you snort; I down you on trusts, you

grunt. Bah!"

suppose I'll have to cheer up and smile His caller sniffed again. and be bright, and everything, or he'll The sheriff turned from him in supreme disgust. There was a low cough and the chair beside the door moved There was something wrong. On his

"Oh, yes; come in and have a seat." exclaimed the sheriff apologetically.

The chair moved again. "Oh, there's something on it, is there? You see, I can't see. I got my eyes full of dust today."

Raising his voice, he called, "Milly, come and give Mr. West a chair."

The kitchen door opened. There was an exclamation, a momentary silence, then a wild scream of girlish laughter. Simultaneously there was a clatter and clawing at the door, a frightened bawl, and, tearing the bandage from his eyes. the sheriff saw the flourishing heels of the disappearing calf.

Milly laughed until she dropped weakly into a chair, while her father, from sheer inadequacy of anger equal to the occasion, sank limply back and smiled foolishly.

But he vowed he would be revenged on the meddlesome animal. When Milly left the room he secured a small stick of wood from the wood box, and, having practiced swinging the missile back toward the doorway until he felt sure of being able to strike the calf without turning about the chair and before she would have time to withdraw, he settled back and waited.

A few minutes later, with a glow of satisfaction, he heard her again clicking up the walk. With a grim smile he took one more look toward the door, measured the distance with his eye. again gauged the movement of his arm and leaned back in his former position.

The animal reached the door, halted a moment and, as before, placed her feet over the threshold. Quietly the sheriff leaned forward, drew the stick up across his breast and suddenly, leaning sideways, with all his strength threw it back toward the door.

"Take that, you fool! I'll show"-"S-Sam! Sam West!"

Straightening himself with an effort and with one hand still gripped tightly across his stomach, the outraged man sprang forward and shook his

fist in the sheriff's face. "You-you"- he exclaimed inarticulately, and before the sheriff could recover power of speech he spun about and ran from the room, only pausing on the doorstep to shout back: "I came up and heard what you said a minute ago when you thought it was I! I thought I must 'a' made a mistake and came back! And this ends it! I'll never marry your girl as long as I

And Sam kept his word. He will probably continue to keep it, for within three months Milly and Dick were married.

And thus Black-Belle repaired her wrongdoing.



if mother were only living!

something wrong with him!"

pain and much out of tempe

be angry.

"But there's father at the gate.

"Why, what's the matter? There"

way from town a sudden and unex-

pected gust of wind had enveloped

Sheriff Bark in dust, filling his eyes. and he was scarcely able to see, and

for half an hour Milly forgot her own

misery in attending her father. When

she had done all she could to ease his

inflamed and smarting eyes, she band-

Meantime Black-Belle had tired of

searching the long grass of the orchard

to ponder enviously on the freedom of

the dusty road beyond. Suddenly, as

acting on a thought, she turned and

trotted briskly back about the house

Indignantly Black-Belle butted hard

against it, shoved sideways against it,

backed against It, but all to no pur-

pose. Thrusting her head between the

bars, she sought to raise it, after the

manner of Samson, but fruitlessly. She

spied the big iron latch. Poking her

nose beneath it, she lifted it. It fell

back in its place. With a toss of re-

sentment she raised it again. Then

disappointed and cross, she turned

about and strolled toward the house.

She must be satisfied with other

see Sam West coming up the road?"

"Milly," called the sheriff, "do you

"No, dad," replied Milly from the

"Keep a lookout for him. John said

he'd get him talked over to local option

all right today and send him over to

"Ah, this is him," he added ungram-

matically a moment later, catching the

click of the gate latch and footfalls on

the path. The footsteps paused before

The answer was a sharp sniff.

'Good evening, Sam," said the sheriff

The sheriff's prospective son-in-law

was an exceedingly eccentric man,

with a hundred odd tricks of speech

and manner, even of silence, which

were of peculiar significance to those

who knew him, and in that contemptu-

ous snort Sheriff Bark read an unlook-

ed for but certain opposition to a cause

he lfad ardently taken to heart. His

already ruffled temper gave way, and,

throwing himself back in the chair, he

exclaimed warmly and bitterly: "You

needn't say another word-not another

word! I know all you mean-every

"But," again turning his blinded eyes

toward the door, "can't you never talk

like an ordinary mortal, Sam West?

That's just the way you talk politics. I

stupid, pigheaded word of it!

amusement.

sign the petition.

the open door.

affably.

kitchen.

and down the lane toward the road.

The lane gate was closed!

for windfalls and had sought the fence