

wont to carry on his person precisely in view of such emergencies as this. The old woman thanked him profusely. "I see," said she, "that you are one of Nature's noblemen! Chivalrous as you are handsome, you should also be fortunate. Take this black stone — for I am a witch! And if ever you should be in despair, dash it upon the ground; then you shall have your heart's desire." Reggie, charmed with her courtesy, was seized with an impulse of mad generosity, added a dollar bill to his already noble largesse, and even promised to stop at the next village, and tell some one of the accident.

The next morning dawned sunny and glorious; all nature seemed to conspire to aid our hero in his suit. After lunch he sought the fair Flossie; together in the exhilarating air they rode for many miles. They stopped on a great height to admire the view. He saw the mood of his beloved melt to romance; he seized the moment. "Will you be mine?" he murmured. "Well," answered Flossie, brightly, "I guess not. You're about twenty years too old."

Words cannot depict the rage and horror of our hero. Like a madman he thrust in the clutch; the auto leapt forward; he never stopped until — the following morning — he found himself held up in 42d Street by the wreck of a Fifth Avenue stage and a lorry. At that moment he realized what despair was. As in a dream, he pulled out the black stone and dashed it on the ground.

When he raised his eyes, wonder of wonders! They fell upon the ideal idol of his dreams. It was another Flossie, but a Flossie raised in every point to the twenty-seventh power. Her name — as the event showed — was Nina Yolande de Montmorency de Carbajal y Calvados. This time there was no hitch. The most rigid investigation proved her as pure as she was fair, as

rich as she was well born; in short, she was IT. Even her modesty could not withstand even for an hour the impetuous advances of our hero; and when he said, only a fortnight after their first meeting, "Let us be married next week in the Cathedral," she replied, blushing divinely and with downcast eyes, "Why not this afternoon, at the City Hall?" No sooner said than done. A sumptuous banquet succeeded the ceremony; intoxicated with champagne and with delight, the happy couple retired to their luxurious suite in the Hotel Evangeline. Reggie Van Rensselaer locked the door.

As it happened, however, the Hotel Evangeline was an unusually family hotel, and on the dressing table was a copy of the Holy Scriptures, placed there by the Gideons, whoever they may be.

Instantly that her eyes fell upon the book, the bride uttered a piercing scream. A moment later, and she had disappeared. In her place, smiling and bowing, stood Mephistopheles himself, complete to a hoof, and not forgetting the sulphur!

"Young man!" he said to the astounded Reggie, "learn that humanity implies imperfection; those who, not content with the ordinary limitations of life, demand perfection, are liable to find the ideal idol an illusion created by the Devil. However, you have willed it; so if you would be so kind as to throw that book out of the window, I will turn back into Nina Yolande (and all the rest of it) and we can get to bed. It has been a tiring day."

Reggie's answer has not been recorded; but six months later we hear of him on his honeymoon. The happy lady was a mulatto widow of forty-eight, with three children, a slight spinal curvature, a cast in her remaining eye, six gold teeth, and the manners of a dock laborer. And a jolly good wife she makes him!

THE CALL OF THE SEA.

By S. J. ALEXANDER.

There's the smart of salt against my eye and spray against my cheek;
 There's the cry of frightened children and a tortured woman's shriek;
 There's the sound of seraphs singing o'er the music of the spheres;
 There's the noise of many waters through the ringing in my ears;
 There's the crash of guns in battle and a jungle wild beast raves,
 For the wind hath lashed the Sea from all her sullen, slimy caves.
 With what agony of loathing, with what ecstasy of love,
 With what torture, hell arisen, with what rapture from above,
 I have heard her call in dreams, wherein I raved with drowning hands
 While I flung despairing arms about the middle of the lands.
 I have thrust the lands between us, I have bid the world divide,
 I have wrapped me in the deserts, and the mountains rose to hide,
 But wherever winds blow waters and wherever winds are blown,

I have known with sure foreknowledge that the Sea would claim
 Her Own.
 I have eaten Fruits of Plenty, but my soul grew starved and thin,
 With the tempest of Her Call without, the still small voice within;
 I have drunken wine of exile, broken bread of banishment,
 Now I yield myself unto her with a God's serene content;
 With foreknowledge of the future, what must be, must ever be,
 And my lives before and after drag me downward to the sea.
 I have flung my all behind me in the futility way I went;
 Let her wreck her will upon me to Divine Accomplishment.
 With her wild, imperious wooing she hath won my soul from me;
 I shall win it back at midnight, in Mine Own Gethsemane.
 I shall play her for my All, where men go down to sea in ships,
 Midst the riving of the body and the soul's apocalypse;
 Standing face to face with Terror, I must grapple with Despair,
 When the grip of icy fingers stirs the creeping of the hair;
 I must dree my wierd at midnight, when the wild beast, Terror,
 strips
 Man to bare and primal nakedness in caves of soul eclipse.