The Devil's Own

A Romance of the Black Hawk War

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"YES, I AM RENE BEAUCAIRE."

Synopsis.—In 1832 Lieutenant Knox of the regular army is on duty at Fort Armstrong, Rock Island, Ill., in territory threatened by disaffected Indians. The commandant sends him with dispatches to St. Louis. He takes passage on the steamer Warrior and makes the acquaintance of Judge Beaucaire, rich planter, and of Joe Kirby (the Devil's Own), notorious gambler. Knox learns Judge Beaucaire has a daughter, Eloise, and a granddaughter, Rene, offspring of a son whom the judge has disowned. Rene's mother is a negress, and she and her daughter, never having been freed, are slaves under the law, although the girls have been brought up as sisters. Kirby induces the judge to stake his plantation and negro servants on a poker hand unfairly dealt by Joe Carver, Kirby's partner. The two hands contain five aces, and Kirby accuses the judge of cheating. Beaucaire, infuriated, arises to attack Kirby, and drops dead. In the confusion Kirby and Carver are enabled to steal away. Knox tries to induce Kirby to give up his stolen winnings. Kirby refuses and after a hot argument he and Carver throw Knox overboard. The lieutenant swims ashore and reaches a hut. Knox lies unconscious for ten days. Recovering, he finds he is in a cabin owned by Pete, a "free nigger," who had shot him, mistaking him for an enemy. His dispatches have been forwarded. Recovering from his wound, Knox sends Pete to bring Haynes, Beaucaire's lawyer, and they arrange, with Pete's help, to get the women to the cabin of an abolitionist, Amos Shrunk, before Kirby comes. Knox and Pete start out for Beaucaire.

CHAPTER VI.

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The Home of Judge Beaucaire.

The road we followed appeared to be endless, and so rough that I soon climbed down from my seat, an unplaned board, uncomfortable enough under any conditions, in the swaying, bumping cart, and stumbled blindly along behind, tripping over stumps in the darkness, and wrenching my ankles painfully in deep ruts.

It was considerably after ten o'clock when we emerged upon an open plateau, and a glimmer of stars overhead revealed to me afar off the silver thread of the great river. Pete stopped the straining mule, a feat not at all difficult of accomplishment, the animal's sides rising and falling as he wheezed for breath, and came back to where I stood, staring about at the dimly perceived objects in the foreground.

"Out dar am de Beaucaire place," he announced, as soon as he could distinguish my presence, waving his arm to indicate the direction. "An' I reckon we bettah not ride no further, fer if Alick shud smell corn, he'd natt'larly raise dis whol' neighborhood—he's got a powerful voice, sah."

"Equal to his appetite, no doubt."

"Yas, sah; that's mostly whut Alick am."

"How far away is the house?"

"Likely 'bout a hundred yards Yer see dat light out yonder; well dat's it, an' I reckon de ladies mus' be up yet, keepin' de lamp burnin'. Here's de slave cabins 'long de edge ob de woods, but dey's all dark. What's yer a goin' fer ter do now, Massa Knox?"

I was conscious that my heart was beating rapidly, and that my mind was anything but clear. The problem fronting me did not appear so easily solved, now that I was fairly up against it, and yet there seemed only one natural method of procedure. I must go at my unpleasant task boldly, and in this case only the truth would serve. I was an officer in the United States army, and had in my pocket papers to prove my identity. These would vouch for me as a gentleman, and yield me a measure of authority. And this fact, once established, ought to give me sufficient standing in the eyes of those girls to compel from them a respectful hearing. I would tell the story exactly as I knew it, concealing nothing, and adding no unnecessary word, outline my plan of action, and then leave them to decide what they thought best to do. Strange, unbelievable as the situation was, proof was not lacking. Delia could be compelled to acknowledge that Rene was her child—she would scarcely dare deny this truth in face of my positive knowledge—and she, at least, must know that Judge Beaucaire had never during his lifetime given her her freedom. This fact could be established beyond question, and then they must surely all comprehend the necessity of immediate flight—that there remained no other possible means of escape from hopeless slavery. Desperate as the chance appeared, it was the only one.

It dawned upon me now with more intense force than ever before, the position in which I stood, and I shrank from the ordeal. A perfect stranger, not even a chance acquaintance of those directly involved in this tragedy, I would have to drag out from the closet, where it had been hidden away for years, this old Beaucaire skeleton, and rattle the dried bones of dishonor before the horrified understanding of these two innocent, unsuspecting girls. The conviction came to me that I had best do this alone; that the presence of the negro would hinder, rather than help the solution of the problem.

"Pete," I said, measuring my words, my plan of action shaping itself even as I spoke. "What lies in there between us and the house?"

"A truck patch mostly, wid a fence 'round it. Den thar comes som' flower beds."

"No path?"

"Well, I done reckon as how thar might be a sorter path, sah, but you'd hardly find it in de dark. De bes' way'd be ter sorter feel 'long de fence, 'til yer git sight o' de front porch."

"All right, then. I am going to leave you here while I scout around. Keep your eyes open, and have the mule ready to leave at any minute."

"'Bout how lon' yer be gone, sah?"

"I cannot tell you that. As short a time as possible. It may require considerable explanation and urging to get those three women to trust me. However, all you have to do is wait, and be sure that no one sees you. If you should be needed for anything at the house, I'll get word to you some way; and if I should send Delia and Rene out here alone, without being able to come with them myself, load them into the cart at once, and drive to the boat. I'll manage to join you somewhere, and the important thing is to get them safely away. You understand all this?"

"Yas, sah; leastways I reckon I does. I'se ter take keer ob dem all, an' let yer take keer o' yerself."

"Exactly, because, you see, I haven't the slightest idea what I am going to run up against. There may be others in the house, and I might not dare to leave Miss Eloise behind alone without some protection. I shall endeavor to induce her to go to Haines at once."

Following some impulse I shook hands with him, and then plunged into the darkness, my only guidance at first that single ray of light streaming through the unshaded window. As I advanced cautiously along the fence, a low structure built of rough rails, and thus approached more closely to the front of the main building, other lights began to reveal themselves, enabling me to perceive that the inner hallway was likewise illuminated, although not brilliantly. All about me was silence, not even the sound of a voice or the flap of a wing breaking the intense stillness of the night. I came below the veranda, still in the deep shadow, utterly unconscious of any other presence, when suddenly, from just above me, and certainly not six feet distant, a man spoke gruffly, the unexpected sound of his strange voice interrupted by the sharp grate of a chair's leg on the porch floor, and a half-smothered yawn.

"Say, sheriff, how long are we all goin' ter set yere, do yer know? This don't look much like Saint Louee afore daylight ter me."

I stopped still, crouching low, my heart leaping into my throat, and every nerve tingling.

"No, it sure don't, Tim," replied another, and the fellow apparently got down from off his perch on the porch rail. "Yer see Kirby is bound he'll get hold o' them two missin' females furst, afore he'll let me round up the niggers. The papers is all straight 'nough, but they've got ter be served afore we kin lay hands on a durned thing. The jedge tol' me fer ter do everything just as Kirby sed, an' I aim ter do it, but just the same I got ter keep inside the law. I dunno as it makes much difference when we strike the ol' town."

"'Tain't so much that, sheriff. I kin stan' it fer ter be up all night, but Bill wus tellin' me we might hav' som' trouble down ter the Landin' unless we finished up our job yere afore mornin'."

"Oh, I reckon not; whut was it Bill said?"

"Quite a rigmarole frum furst ter last. Giv' me a light fer the pipe, will yer?"

There was a flare above me, and then darkness once more, and then the slow drawl of the man's voice as he resumed. "Some feller by the name ov McAdoo, down ter Saint Louee, who's just com' down from the lead mines, tol' him thet Joe Kirby got all this yere property in a game o' kyards on the boat, an' thet it wan't no square game either. I didn't git it all straight, I reckon, but accordin' ter the deal handed me thar wus two dead men mixed up in the affair—Beaucaire, an' a young army officer. Seems ter me his name was Knox."

"I didn't hear that."

"Well, enyhow, that's the way Bill told it. Beaucaire he naturally fell dead—heart, er somethin'—an' the other feller, this yere army man, he went out on deck fer ter see Kirby, an'



I Stopped Still, Crouching Low, My Heart Leaping Into My Throat and Every Nerve Tingling.

he never cum' back. McAdoo sorter reckoned as how likely he was slugged, an' throwed overboard. An' then, on top' all that, we're sent up yere in the night like a passel o' thieves ter take these niggers down ter Saint Louee. What do yer make ov it, Jake?"

"Wal," said the other slowly, his mouth evidently loaded with tobacco. "I ain't never asked no questions since I wus made sheriff. I'm doin' whut the court says. Kirby's got the law on his side—no doubt 'bout that—but I reckon as how he knows it wus a durn mean trick, and so he's sorter skeered as ter how them fellers livin' down ter the Landin' might act. Thet's why we tied up ter the shore below town, in the mouth o' thet crick, an' then hed ter hoof it up yere in the dark. Of course we got the law with us, but we wanter pull this job off an' not stir up no fight—see?"

"Sure," disgustedly. "I reckon I know all that; I heerd the jedge tell yer how we must do the job. But why's Kirby in such a sweat ter git all these niggers down ter Saint Louee?"

"Ter sell 'em, an' git the cash. Onct they're outer the way there won't be no row. He'll let the land yere lie idle fer a year or two, an' by that time nobody'll care a whoop how he got it. But he's got ter git rid o' them niggers right away."

"Well, who the h—s goin' ter prevent? They're his'n, ain't they? Thar ain't no Black Abolitionists 'round yere, I reckon."

"Seems sorter queer ter me," admitted the sheriff, "but I did get a little outer that feller Carver comin' up. Carver is som' sorter partner with Kirby—a capper, I reckon. 'Tain't the niggers thet are makin' the trouble—leastways not the black 'uns. Nobody's likely ter row over them. It seems that Beaucaire kept a quadroon housekeeper, a slave, o' course, an' a while back she giv' birth ter a child, the father o' the infant bein' Judge Beaucaire's son. Then the son skipped out, an' ain't never bin heard frum since—dead most likely, fer all this wus twenty years ago. 'Course the child, which wus a girl, is as white as I am—maybe more so. I ain't never set eyes on her, but Carver he says she's good lookin'. Enyhow, the jedge he brought her up like his own daughter, sent her ter school in Saint Louee, an' nobody 'round yere even suspected she wus a nigger. I reckon she didn't know it herself."

"Yer mean the girl's a slave?"

"Yer bet! That's the law, ain't it?"

"And Kirby knew about this?"

"I reckon he did. I sorter judge, Tim, frum whut Carver sed, that he wus more anxious fer ter git thet girl than all the rest o' the stuff; an' it's her he wants ter git away frum yere on the dead quiet, afore Haines er any o' them others down at the Landin' kin catch on."

"They couldn't do nuthin'; if thar ain't no papers, then she's his, accordin' ter law. I've seen that tried afore now."

"Of course; but what's the use o' runnin' eny risk? A smart lawyer like Haines could make a devil ov a lot o' trouble just the same, if he took a notion. That's Kirby's idee—ter cum' up yere in a boat, unbeknownst to enybody, tie up down thar at Saunders', an' run the whole bunch o' niggers off in the night. Then it's done an' over with afore the Landin' even wakes up. I reckon the jedge told him that wus the best way."

There was a moment of silence, the first man evidently turning the situation over in his mind. The sheriff bent across the rail, and spat into the darkness below.

"The joke of it all is," he continued with a short laugh, as he straightened up, "this didn't exactly work out 'cordin' ter schedule. When we dropped in yere we rounded up the niggers all right, an' we got the girl whar there's no chance fer her ter git away—"

"Is that the one back in the house?"

"I reckon so; leastways she tol' Kirky her name was Rene Beaucaire, an' that's how it reads in the papers. But thar ain't no trace ov her mother, ner ov the jedge's daughter. They ain't in the house, ner the nigger cabins. Leaves me in a deuce ov a fix, fer I can't serve no papers less we find the daughter. Her name's Eloise; she's the heir et law, an' I ain't got no legal right fer ter take them niggers away till I do. Looks ter me like they'd skipped out. Thar's Kirby an' Carver, a comin' now, an' they're alone; ain't got no trace ov the girl or her mother, I reckon."

Where I crouched in the shadows I could gain no glimpse of the approaching figures, but I heard the crunch of their boots on the gravel of the driveway, and a moment later the sound of their feet as they mounted the wooden steps. Kirby must have perceived the forms of the other men as soon as he attained the porch level, and his naturally disagreeable voice had a snarly ring.

"That you, Donaldson? Have either of those women come back?"

"No," and I thought the sheriff's answer was barely cordial. "We ain't seen nobody. What did you learn down at the Landin'?"

"Nothing," savagely. "Haven't found a d—— trace except that Haines hasn't been home since before dark; some nigger came for him then. Is that girl safe inside?"

"Sure; just as you left her, but she won't talk. Tim tried her again, but it's no use; she wudn't even answer him."

"Well, by Heaven! I'll find a way to make her open her mouth. She knows where those two are hiding. They haven't had no time to get far away, and I'll bring her to her senses before I am through. Come on, Carver; I'll show the wench who's master here, if I have to lick her like a common nigger."

The front door opened, and closed, leaving the two without standing in silence, the stillness between them finally broken by a muttered curse.

I drew back hastily, but in silence, eager to get away before the sheriff and his deputy should return to their seats by the porch rail. My original plan of warning the women of the house of their peril was blocked, completely overturned by the presence of these men. Beyond all question those I had hoped to serve were already aware of their position—someone had reached them before me—and two at least were already in hiding. Why the third, the one most deeply involved, had failed to accompany the others, could not be comprehended. The mystery only made my present task more difficult. Why should Delia, the slave, disappear in company with Eloise, the free, and leave her own daughter Rene behind to face a situation more terrible than death? I could not answer these questions; but whatever the cause the result had been the complete overthrow of the gambler's carefully prepared plans. Not that I believed he would hesitate for long, law or no law; but Donaldson, the sheriff, refused to be a party to any openly illegal act, and this would for the present tie the fellow's hands. Not until Miss Eloise was found and duly served with the eviction papers would Donaldson consent to take possession of a single slave. This might still give me time for action.

I slipped along in the shadow of the house, without definite plan of action but with a firm purpose to act. The side door I knew to be securely locked, yet first of all it was essential that I attain to the interior. But one means to this end occurred to me—the unshaded window through which the glow of light continued to stream. I found I could reach the edge of the balcony with extended fingers, and drew myself slowly up until I clung to the railing, with feet finding precarious support on the outer rim. This was accomplished noiselessly and from the vantage point thus obtained I was enabled to survey a large portion of the room.



Carver Thrust Her Forward, but Remained Himself Blocking the Doorway.

I clambered over the rail, assured by the first glance that the room was empty, and succeeded in lifting the heavy sash a few inches without any disturbing noise. Then it stuck, and even as I ventured to exert my strength to greater extent to force it upward, the single door directly opposite, evidently leading into the hall, was flung violently open and I sank back out of view, yet instantly aware that the first party to enter was Joe Kirby. He strode forward to the table, striking the wooden top angrily with his fist and knocking something crashing to the floor.

"You know where she is, don't you?" he asked, in the same threatening tone he had used without.

"Of course I do; didn't I help put her there?" It was Carver who replied, standing in the open doorway.

"Then bring the hussy in here. I will make the wench talk if I have to choke it out of her; she'll learn what it means to be a nigger."

I had but a moment in which to observe the man, for almost immediately Carver flung the door of the room open and Kirby swung impatiently about to face the entrance. Except for a possibility of thus attracting the attention of the newcomer I was in no special danger of being detected by those within. Carver thrust her forward but remained himself blocking the doorway. I use the word thrust, for I noted the grip of his hand on her arm, yet in truth she instantly stepped forward herself, her bearing in no way devoid of pride and dignity, her head held erect, her eyes fearlessly seeking the face of Kirby. Their glances met, and she advanced to the table, the light of the swinging lamp full upon her. The impression she made is with me yet. Hers was a refined, patrician face, crowned by a wealth of dark hair. Indignant eyes of hazel brown, shadowed by long lashes, brightened a face whitened by intense emotion, and brought into agreeable contrast flushed cheeks and red, scornful lips. A dimpled chin, a round, full throat, and the figure of young womanhood, slender and yet softly curved, altogether formed a picture so entrancing as to never again desert my imagination. With one bound my heart went out to her in sympathy, in admiration, in full and complete surrender. Before I could change posture, almost before I could draw fresh breath, her voice, trembling slightly with an emotion she was unable wholly to suppress, yet sounding clear as a bell, addressed the man confronting her.

"May I ask, sir, what this outrage means? I presume you are responsible for the insolence of this fellow who brought me here?"

Kirby laughed but not altogether at ease.

"Well, not altogether," he answered, "as his methods are entirely his own. I merely told him to go after you."

"For what purpose?"

"So pretty a girl should not ask that, Carver, close the door and wait outside."

I could mark the quick rise and fall of her bosom and the look of fear she was unable to disguise. Yet not a limb moved as the door closed, nor did the glance of those brown eyes waver.

"You are not the same man I met before," she began doubtingly. "He said he was connected with the sheriff's office. Who are you?"

"My name is Kirby; the sheriff is here under my orders."

"Kirby!—the—the gambler?"

"Well, I play cards occasionally, and you have probably heard of me before. Even if you never had until tonight it is pretty safe to bet that you do now."

"I know," she admitted, "that you won this property at cards and have now come to take possession. Is that what you mean?"

"That, at least, is part of it," and he took a step toward her, his thin lips twisted into a smile. "But not all. Perhaps Donaldson failed to tell you the rest, and left me to break the news. Well, it won't hurt me any. Not only this plantation is mine, but every nigger on it as well. You are Rene Beaucaire?"

"Yes," she replied, slowly, almost under her breath, and hesitating ever so slightly, "I am Rene Beaucaire."

"And you don't know what that means, I suppose?" he insisted savagely, angered by her coolness. "Perhaps the sheriff did not explain this. Do you know who and what you are?"

She rested one hand on the table in support, and I could note the nervous trembling of the fingers, yet her low voice remained strangely firm.

Knox acts after the fashion of a man in love.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

DIES IF AFFECTION WANES

Pet Wife of Congo Chief Put to Death When Fickle Lord Tires of Her Charms.

An African chief may possess 1,000 wives, but the chief who has two pet wives at the same time or keeps any two wives in the same house is yet to be found.

To be the pet wife of the chief, to know that one is pointed out by the entire village as a beauty and the honored one, sounds rather alluring, but to know that one may lose one's head when a more attractive successor appears is sufficient cause for hesitation on the part of the bride when the chief comes a-wooing.

Jewelry that is worn by the pet of a Congo chief is interesting. A neckpiece of beaten and carved brass, perhaps two and one-half inches thick, eight inches in diameter and weighing 28 pounds, is shaped like the letter C. After this ornament is placed about the neck of the chief's pet she lies down with her head on a rock and the ends are closed with heavy hammers. Heavy anklets and bracelets accompany the neckpiece, so that she daily carries about with her from 36 to 50 pounds of jewelry.

As she walks about the village she is the center of attraction. She may hold this enviable position for five or six years, or at least until the chief may choose another beauty. Whenever this occurs her doom is sealed. Off comes her head for the purpose of removing the neckpiece, and next the arms and legs that the bracelets and anklets may grace the fair successor.

Dancing in Haiti.

Dancing to the music of a drum, saxophone and flute is the chief source of amusement for Haitians in their little villages on Saturday night, according to an article by William Almon Wolff in Collier's. Beginning at sundown every Saturday night, he writes, one will come to a wine shop, if one follows the sound of the drum. The drummer sits outside. His unceasing drumming marks the rhythm of the music; what melody there is, is borne by a flute, and almost always there is a saxophone. The music is the same at every dance. It is in common tone; a single cadence is repeated, over and over again.

Dancing in Haiti resembles the saturnalia among the Australian aborigines, Mr. Wolff writes. The dancers are frank and unashamed and one gets little or no feeling of a personal note between the two one sees dancing; rather they are staging a spectacle.

Origin of Drinking Pledges.

Pledging each other in wine was in reality nothing more than the survival of the once universal custom of parties drinking together in ratification of a bargain. It is in this sense that some Jewish and Russian couples drink wine at their betrothal ceremonies. The Hebrew, after drinking, dashes the vessel to the ground, in memory of the destruction of the Temple; whereas the Russian tramples the glass beneath his feet, with the pious wish: "May they thus fall under foot and be trodden to pieces who shall endeavor to sow dissension and discord between us."

Good Taste.

Good taste is the conscience of the mind. Lowell's definition is compact of thought and is worth dwelling upon. Good taste is a trait we all agree in valuing, though its meaning as a rule is rather vaguely felt; we urge its cultivation and admire its exercise but the quality itself is generally less analyzed than desired.—Hartley Alexander.

Some Vienna theaters do without ushers by mounting electric lights in such positions that they illuminate the numbers on seats as long as the latter are unoccupied.

Wraps Distinguished by Elegance



Whether as the result of more general prosperity or the better education in styles of the buying public, coats and other outer garments for the coming fall and winter are distinguished by unusual elegance. That is, the fabrics used for them are appropriate and beautiful, the lines on which they are cut are graceful and dignified, and they are not overtrimmed or freakish in any particular.

There are several new cloths, including many pile fabrics, used by the manufacturers of wraps. Each has its own name and it would be burdensome to undertake to memorize them all. But they are soft, with velvet or suede finish, resembling duvetyn and Bolivia cloth which have made themselves familiar. Besides these there are the wool-furs and fur fabrics that have become important among materials for wraps. All of them are soft and rich looking and of a texture that accommodates itself to the swinging lines of the present styles in wraps.

The short jacket which has the effect of a cape, shown in the picture, is made of a taupe colored fur-fabric that resembles moleskin and is quite as warm and rich looking. The jacket sets closely to the figure and is belted in with a belt of the material that slips through slides at each side of the back and front. It fastens at the front, holding the garment snugly to place. To accomplish a graceful wrap the designer has set in shaped pieces instead of sleeves to give the cape-like effect and used a shawl collar, widened at the back to further his aims. He has turned out a charming and cozy wrap that is warm and durable, which can be bought at a price that is within reason for the woman of average means.

Contributors to Success in Dress



Some clever and charming women, experienced globe trotters among them, insist that no one needs more than two suits, a good-looking frock or two, a separate skirt and a small collection of blouses to dress well enough for almost any occasion. They confide that successful dressing, with a meager outfit, depends upon choosing clothes very carefully to start with and on the possession of smart accessories of dress, more than anything else. A plain, beautifully fitted and faultlessly tailored street suit may be inconspicuous, but it becomes a background for small and exquisite accessories that lift the costume up to the plane of distinction. Odd vests, collars and cuffs of lace, chic shoes and bags, just the right collar or fur neck piece and, most important of all, a hat that has the cachet of unusual style, lend a new air to what might be commonplace without them.

In the accompanying picture a collar and vest combination, with a shopping bag of ribbon and a hat to match the bag, challenge any suit to remain unnoticed in their company. The collar and vest are made of embroidered net in a lace edging, bordered with narrow, fine Val lace. Plain net is used as a foundation for this piece. Accessories of this kind make gifts that are sure of enthusiastic appreciation from one's friends. These, and collar and cuff sets, made of durable laces, like cluny, Irish crochet and filet, are not to be omitted when one is reckoning with a satisfactory outfit in mind.

The pretty shopping bag is one of those which entice us to linger at the ribbon counter. It is made of narrow, heavy satin ribbon in two shades sewed together in strips that alternate the colors. It is lined with plain satin and sewed to a metal mounting with handles made of the ribbon. The rows of ribbon are stitched together with corded edges overlapping, and the bag is bound with the darker shade. In the drama of rich autumnal colors there are deep purplish reds and glowing nasturtium shades that will make wonderful bags of this kind. The hat to match has a brim and top crown of georgette crepe and the side crown banded by two collars made of satin ribbon like that in the bag.

Julia Bottomley

The Between-Seasons Frock.

It is not at all a safe plan to go into the matter of the fall wardrobe too early, leaving only the tag ends of the summer wardrobe for the few warm weeks. The material that answers best for the between-seasons frock, whether that period is the brief one existing between spring and real summer or summer and real fall, is taffeta, and as a matter of fact a taffeta dress made up now may be worn as an indoor frock all winter with perfect taste and comfort.

That Touch of Color.

As a note of color for hat or girdle a cluster of nasturtiums in rust red or flaming orange is the choice of the Parisienne. This simple garden flower, perfectly imitated, is the chosen companion for simple linen or voile frocks. With white muslin dresses the correct thing is a little bunch of deep orange nasturtiums tucked away in the folds of a black velvet ribbon waist belt, a further bunch of the same flowers appearing on the brim of the shady hat.

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