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The
DEVIL'S
MOTOR

A FANTASY

by
MARIE CORELLI
ILLUSTRATED BY
ARTHUR SEVERN

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BRITISH MUSEUM
LONDON
DEC 11 1910

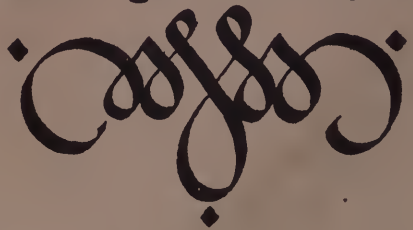
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A Fantasy by
MARIE CORELLI
Illustrated
by
ARTHUR SEVERN,
R.I.

Hodder & Stoughton



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The DEVIL'S MOTOR

A FANTASY

In the dead midnight, at that supreme moment when the Hours that are past slip away from the grasp of the Hours yet to be, there came rushing between Earth and Heaven the sound of giant wheels, — the glare of great lights, — the stench and the muffled roar of a huge Car, tearing at full speed along the pale line dividing the Darkness from the Dawn.

And he who stood with-
in the Car, steering it
straight onward, was
clothed in black and
crowned with fire; large bat-
like wings flared out on either
side of him in woven webs of
smoke and flame, and his
face was white as bleached
bone. Like glowing embers
his eyes burned in their cav-
ernous sockets, shedding ter-
rific glances through the star-
strewn space, — and on his
thin lips there was a frozen
shadow of a smile more cruel
than hate, — more deadly than
despair.



THE forests dropped like broken reeds, - the mountains crumbled into pits and quarries, the seas and rivers, the lakes and waterfalls dried up into black and muddy waters, and all the land was bereft of beauty. In the place of wholesome green fields and leafy woods, there rose up gigantic cities, built in on every side, and bristling with thousands upon thousands of chimneys belching forth sickening smoke into the overhanging gloom which hid the skies; and the cities were full of a deafening noise and crashing

confusion as of ten million
hammers beating incessantly-
beating away all peace, all
solitude, all health, all rest.

On!" he cried—"Still
on! On with an end-
less rush and roar!
Over the plains of the
world that is gone,—over the
heights of the world to come—
on, still on! Without pause, with-
out pity, without love, without
regret! Follow me, all ye forces
which are destined to work
the ruin of Mankind,—follow!
On, on, over all beauty, all ten-
derness, all truth I ride,—I,
the Avenger, the Destroyer, the
Torturer of Souls, the Arch-
enemy of God! The Kingdom
of Hell grows wide and deep,
—praise be to Man who
makes it! I count up my grow-

-ing possessions in the ever-
breeding spawn of human lust and
avarice, - I breathe and live and
rejoice in the poison-vapours of
human Selfishness! The men of
these latter days are my food
and sustenance; the women my
choice morsels, my dainty deli-
cates! Brute beasts and blind,
they snatch at every lie I offer
them; - rejecting Eternal Life,
they choose Eternal Death, - ver-
ily they shall have their reward!
Like a blight my Spirit shall en-
compass them! - and whosoever
would scour the air and scorch the
earth must run on the straight
road of his desire with Me!"

A huge Car, tearing
at full speed along
the pale line dividing
the Darkness from
the Dawn.....

On, - on, and into these
countless prisons of
stone and mortar the
Demon of the Car swept
vast and ever-hurrying crowds
of human beings, with the fu-
rious force of a mighty whirl-
wind sweeping dead leaves
into the sea.

“No room to breathe - no time
to think - no good to serve!” he
cried - “Now shall you forget
that God exists! Now shall
you all have your own wild
way, for Your way is My way!
Now shall you resolve yourselves
back to an embryo of worms
and apes, and none shall rescue



you, no, not one! For the
Seven Angels of the Judgment
Day are sounding their trum-
pets of terror, and who shall
silence their Voices, or stay the
thunderings and lightnings, or
the great earthquake?

Hail and fire! — and
the trees, and the
green grass burnt up
and destroyed! — the
sun and the moon, the day and
the night smitten into one black-
ness! We will have no more
virtues! — no more hopes of Hea-
ven! Honour shall be as a rag
on a fool's back, and Gold shall
be the pulse of Life! Gold, gold,
gold! Fight for it, steal it! — pile
it up, hoard it, count it, hug it,
eat it, sleep with it, die with it!
Lo, I give it to you in millions,
packed down and pressed to-
gether in full & overflowing
measure — I scatter it among
you even as a destroying rain!

Build with it, buy with
it, gamble with it,
sell your souls and
bodies for it, - there
are devils enough in Hell to
drive all your bargains! Sneer
at truth, defeat justice, snatch
virtue's mask to cover vice, drug
conscience, feed and fatten your-
selves with the lusts of ani-
malism till the cancer of sin
makes of you a putrefaction
and an open sore in the sight
of the sun! Come, learn from
me such wisdom as shall com-
pass your own destruction!
Unto you shall be unlocked
the under-mysteries of Nature,

and the secrets of the upper
air, — you shall bend the light-
ning to your service, and the
lightning shall slay! — you
shall hollow out the ground
and delve a swift road through
it for yourselves in fancied
proud security, and the earth
shall crumble in upon you as
a grave, and the cities you
have built shall crush you
in their falling! — you shall
seek to bind the winds, and
scail the skies, and Death shall
wait for you in the clouds,
and exult in your downfall!
Come, tie your pigmy chari-
ots to the sun, and so be

drawn into its flaming vortex of perdition! All Creation shall rejoice to be cleansed from the pollution of your presence, for God hath sworn to give unto Me all who reject Him, and the Hour of the Gift has come!"

Still faster flew the
Car, — red meteors
flashed in its course
— and the Phantom
shapes which followed its
flight crowded together in an
ever-thickening, ever-darken-
ing multitude, while bright
stars were shaken down from
heaven like snowflakes whirl-
ing in a winter blast. And,
mingling with the grinding
roar of its wheels came other
sounds, — sounds of fierce
laughter and loud cursing, —
yells and shrieks and groans
of torture, — the screams of
the suffering, the sobs of the

dying, — and as the Fiend
drove on with swiftly quicken-
ing fury, men and women and
little children were trampled
down one upon another and
killed in their thousands, and
the Car was splashed thick with
human blood. And He who
was clothed in black and
crowned with fire, shouted ex-
ultingly as He dashed along
over massacred heaps of dead
nations and the broken rem-
nants of thrones.

Progress and speed!" he
cried — "Rush on,
world, with me! — rush
on! There is but one
End — hasten we to reach it!
No halt by the way to gather
the flowers of thought, — the
fruits of feeling — no pause
for a lifting of the eyes to the
wide firmament, where mil-
lions of spheres, more beauti-
ful than this which men make
wretched, sail on their cours-
es like fair ships bound for
God's golden harbours! No
time to listen to the singing of
the birds of hope, the ripple
of the sweet waters of re-

freshment, the murmur of
cool grasses waving in the
fields of peace; — no time, no
stop, — no lull for quiet breath-
ing, — on! — for ever on!”



The ripple of the sweet
waters of refreshment,
the murmur of cool
grasses waving in
the fields of peace.



Up and ride with me
all ye who would reach
the goal! Come, ye fools
of avarice! Come, ye
blown and bursting windbags
of world's conceit and vain pre-
tension! Come, ye greedy maaws
of gluttony - ye human pottles
of drink, - ye wolves of vice!
Come, ye shameless women of
lusts and lies and vanities!
Come, false hearts and treach-
erous tongues and painted fa-
ces! - come, dear demons all,
and ride with me! Come, ye pre-
tenders to holiness - ye thieves
of virtue, who give 'charity' to
the poor with the right hand,

and cheat your neighbour with
the left! Come, ye gamblers
with a Nation's honour,
stake your last throw! Come,
all ye morphia-fed vampires
and slaves to poison! - grasp
at my wheels and cling!
On - on - over the fragments
of mighty Empires, - over the
hearts of kings and queens, -
over the lives of the brave, the
good and the wise! - trample
them all down and crush them
into dust and ashes! What
shall we do with wisdom, we
who have done with God?
What with purity? - what
with courage? Naught are

these but reproach and bitterness - mere obstacles in the road way which leadeth to destruction; - ride them down! On-on! to the destined end! - on with rush and hurry and panting eagerness to reach the only goal - the last of winning-posts - the close of Certain-ties, - the GRAVE!"

Like a flashing blur
of fiery wheels the
Car now spun along
in the blackness of
the night, and the drifting
Phantoms round about it were
as great grey sails swelling
with the angry blast, and
sweeping it onward through
the dark.

“**P**ray no more—hope no more—love no more!” cried the Fiend. “Be as the shifting sands, or as the trembling quicksilver— inconstant, capricious, — ever in motion, never at rest! Change—change and revolt! All ye who weary of old things, behold I give you new! Bodies shall be pampered and souls killed for your pleasure;—foulest vices shall be called merely “sensations,” — each to be tried, excused and condemned in turn, — and virtues shall have no more place at all in the scale

of feeling! The music of life shall clash into wild discord—the love of home shall be a lost glory,—tenderness for the young, and reverence for the old, shall be the faded sentiments of the past, only fit for a mummer's jest! Change—change and sensation! Roll out your columns of vaporous notoriety, ye printing-presses of the world!—spread wide the fame of the Anarchist and the Courtesan,—mock and revile the spirits of the wise and true,—noise abroad the name of the Murderer, and treat the Poet with derision—give flat-

tery to the rich and scorn to the
humble, - teach nothing but
the art of lying, - add venom
to the tongue of scandal, - dig
up the graves of the great, and
kill the reputations of the brave
and pure! ”

Help nothing on that
is noble—nothing that
is honest,— nothing
that is of God, or for
God,—print every lie, grudge
every truth, and let your trum-
pet-note be that of blatant
Atheism and Devilry to the
end! Set trade against trade,
—community against commu-
nity,—nation against nation,—
until with your windy bombast
and senseless twaddle you fill
your witches' cauldron of mis-
chief and contention to the
full! Up and ride with me, ye
Plotters against Peace!—ye
whose hands are against every

man! — there is no time to be
lost — up and away with a rush
and a roar! — for the Great Star
has fallen from Heaven to
Earth, and to Him is given the
key of the bottomless pit! The
pit is open — the gate stands
wide — up, and speed on with
Me! ”

By this light was seen
a monstrous ridge
of dense blackness
jutting sharply over
some vast incalcu-
lable depth of horror.



Like lightning now the great Car tore through space — its flaring lamps flashing, its wheels grinding with the sullen noise of a bursting volcano, — and amidst cries and shrieks indescribable, it leaped, as it were, from peak to peak of toppling clouds that towered above and around it like mighty mountains. And presently it seemed as if a thin, pale line of purple fire glimmered afar off, and by this light was seen a monstrous ridge of dense blackness jutting sharply over some vast

incalculable depth of horror.
On—still on—the Car rushed;
and He of the sable robes
and flaming crown urged a-
pace its reckless speed with
wild shouts of wilder laughter.

“**A**ll the world in such haste to die!” he cried. “All the world gone mad with the craze of movement! Up in the air, down on the earth — all turned to whirling, flying, tossing atoms of dust in a storm, and lo, the End! Be patient now, for ye shall never wander again! — be silent now, for prayer and cursing, laughter and tears are done! — let the hoarded gold drop from your grasp — it can purchase nothing yonder! Was it worth while think you, — this rush headlong, to be cast into silence?”

Rejoice. O trees, that
the axe of the de-
stroyer shall no
more cast ye
down!"

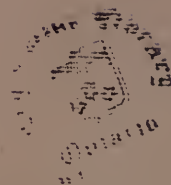


“**W**as it worth while to
leave the sunshine for
this dark?—beauty for
this decay?—sweet
sounds of love and tenderness
for this still glow of the eternal
flame which is not quenched
—this gnawing of the eternal
worm whose appetite is never
satisfied? Lo, ye have burnt
up a world to light Hell with
its flame!—but the world shall
blossom again like a flower
springing from the dust and ye
whose soulless lives have been
a curse and an outrage on its
fairness, shall pace its pleasant
paths no more!

Like a vast
Shadow be-
tween Earth
and Heaven
the Demon
stood



On—on,—along the black
ridge jutting darkly
over silent Immensi-
ty, with a whirl of
fire and roar of thunder the
Car flew,—and then—as if for
one brief breathing part of a
second it paused!



Like a vast Shadow between Earth and Heaven the Demon stood — his bony hand on the steering-wheel — and every point in his flaming crown scintillating with the sparkle of a million stars. Round about him soared and stooped countless terrific Phantom-shapes — some like wrecked ships — some like torn flags of honour — some like mounted warriors — some like throned kings — some like fair women veiled in a mist of tears, — and beneath his bat-like pinions, outstretched to north and south,

there glimmered a pale crowd of white faces, upturned wild eyes and imploring hands— all crushed together in a writhing mass of agony! But no sound came from those dumb mouths agape with terror,— all were silent as Death itself, and only the thunderous roar of the Car echoed through space, as after that infinitely brief pause, it dashed furiously onward and down!—down,— down sheer over the edge of that mystic precipice into the fathomless abyss of the Unseen and Unknown!

A scarlet sun rose
slowly, fixing the
red seal of God
on the closed
history of a
world.

