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The Friend Of The Devil

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Once upon a time there was a handsome Flemish youth who came to the island of Fayal. His name was Fernão de Hutra. He fell in love with a beautiful nun in the convent of the Gloria in the city of Horta.

One day the Devil appeared to him.

"Since you fell in love with this fair nun, I see you are a friend of mine," said the Devil.

The young man had not known this, but he replied: "Say rather that I will be your friend if you help me get possession of this nun I love."

"Very well," said the Devil, "but you will have to make a bargain with me."

"What is it?" asked Fernão, rather anxiously.

"Grant me your solemn pledge that you'll give me all your children," responded the Devil.

"Agreed," said Fernão.

After that he saw much of the Devil. The nun, however, was as devout as she was beautiful. She refused to break the vows she had made and flee with the Flemish youth. She firmly resisted both him and the Devil.

"You are not a true friend to me after all," said Fernão to the Devil sadly.

"But you are my friend," said the Devil in reply.

Soon after, Fernão de Hutra left the city of Horta and the island of Fayal and went to join his kinsmen who had settled in Angra in the island of Terceira. Here his handsome face won many friends for him among the youth of the city. To some of these he confided the story of his relations with the Devil.

Now it happened that in the year 1666 the first bull fight was held in Angra. To this very day the island of Terceira is the only one in the Azores which has bull fights.

Fernão had taken part in this. He was one of the chief organizers of the bull fight held on St. John's Day of the following year. That day all the men and women and children of the city of Angra assembled in the public square before the fort.

The bullfighters, richly clad, rode forth upon prancing steeds decked in costly velvets with streamers and ribbons of gold and silver which sparkled in the bright sunlight. The youths were resplendent in their garments of crimson or purple or blue velvet, richly embroidered. Fernão de Hutra was radiant in his jacket of blue decked with pearls, with a plumed hat upon his handsome head. He carried a yellow banner embroidered with the arms of his family.

Gay music sounded. The bulls were brought into the ring. The bullfighters saluted and the fight began.

In the windows of the castle the daughters of the chief magistrate of the city of Angra were seated among their friends. The eldest daughter, Sophia, was the most beautiful maid of the whole city. The magistrate watched her anxiously as her fair cheek alternately paled and flushed as the struggle went on. There could be no doubt about the fact that there was love in her eyes as they rested upon the handsome young Flemish cavalier, Fernão de Hutra. She was wearing his colors and in her hand she carefully held his bouquet of flowers. The ribbon which tied them secured also a piece of paper upon which were written these words:

"Oh, beautiful maid of my heart's desire,
For your dear sake I'd go through fire."

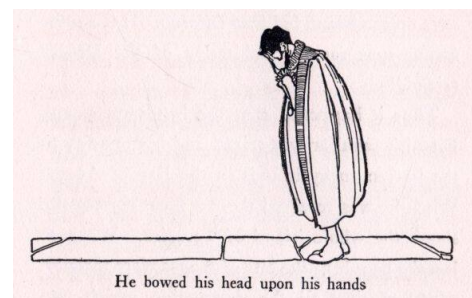
The magistrate withdrew from the gay scene into the silence of the great hall of the castle. He bowed his head upon his hands.

"This youth is the friend of the Devil," he groaned. "I cannot consent to my daughter's marriage to him. He has promised to give all his children to the Devil, they say. I cannot allow my own grandchildren to be given to the Devil."

That very day he began to plot how to get rid of the handsome young Fernão.

Now in the bay before the city of Angra there are two rocky islands called to-day just as they were then, the Ilheos de Cabras, the islands of goats. The brother-in-law of the magistrate was the owner of these barren islands. There were a few goats there, a few mulberry bushes, and a tiny spring of fresh water. The magistrate called his brother-in-law to him as soon as the bull fight was over. He told him all his fears and asked if he might use the islands as a place of banishment for the young Flemish cavalier who was the friend of the Devil.

"You are quite welcome to use these islands for so worthy a purpose," replied his brother-in-law. "Indeed, I have often thought that the deep cave on the island led



into Inferno. It is a most fitting spot for the habitation of the Devil's friend."

Thus it happened that the handsome young Flemish cavalier was seized and borne away to the barren rocky islands in the Bay of Angra. When he was received there a great earthquake shook the whole island of Terceira. When at last the people of the city of Angra were through contemplating all the destruction which had been wrought, some one looked in the direction of the island of goats. They saw that a great piece had been broken away from one of the islands.

Thus it was that the Devil received his friend.

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