

THE BOSS DEVIL OF AMERICA

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The Boss Devil of America by Jean Clarke

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JEAN CLARKE

**THE BOSS DEVIL
OF AMERICA**

THE BOSS
DEVIL OF
AMERICA.

BY

JEAN CLARKE, *author of*

“TRAC’D YOUNG MAN.”

Tuttle, Chicago, Ill.



BOSTON:

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1878.

THE
BOSS DEVIL OF AMERICA.

I. — PRELUDE.

F AIR maid ! whom some call sweet, and sweet
if good ;

With virgin blushes pure and rich and red
And warm ; unpledged love, yet true because
Untried ; unfaded eye, yet bright and soft
And good, its own most certain snare and bait
Of ruin ; smiling face and yearning heart ;
Prospective wife, loved and loving much, —
Fair maid, to thee I speak and write.

Young man ! possessed of strength, with greatest
strength

To fall ; with hopes elated high above

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Intent of good, or virtue of resolve ;
 With signs of greatness, outward many bright,
 But inward few ; with force of mind and soul,
 And build of frame, each great in what each most
 May yet attain ; beset with pleasures good
 And ill, — to thee no less this theme I pen,
 That, by revealing who I am, thyself
 To thee I may present as well, and more,
 That thou mayst know the man whose easy prey,
 At cruel cost, thou art.

But, to be brief, fair maid, young man, or both ;
 The young, the old as well, and all who read
 On trains, in halls, at home, or as a guest ;
 Equal to all, with much to favor all,
 On printed page I come, in measured lines,
 Not welcomed more because in common verse,
 Nor less, but rather more disguised.

Of all the devils seen or hid or felt
 On earth, by men or maids, — their numbers
 great, —
 THE BOSS I am. To my imperious rule
 And sway, to every impulse, word, or wish,
 All legions doomed or dooming by their pow'r,

In ready homage wait on me,
In every act of life's broad stage,
The high and low, the rich and poor, the great,
The small, of every sort, come trooping round
My feet, to crown me Victor, DEVIL BOSS;
Thyself a subject, willing or compelled,
Of my exalted crown. Such is my rank.

My birth I'll speak of later on; my age
As well, or mention not at all, as may
Best suit my wish and plan. My realm,
Already told or hinted quite enough,
Will soon be clear. Thus briefly introduced,
BOSS DEVIL I appear! and, leading on,
Will wind through wooded paths of real fact,
Of virtue shipwrecked, honor lost or won,
Of maiden's hopes deferred and trust deceived,
Of man's high purpose blighted or retrieved,
Of home's cemented circle sundered far,
Or saved.

II. — FAIR ELSA.

No longer girl, yet scarce a maid in years;
In growth of heart, and mind, and form, full ripe
And pure, fair Elsa loved. Her beauty, rare

And rich, invited gaze and lust. Her face
With freshest blush, in tinted hues of pink
And white, was always bright.

Her smiles of love,
In golden sunbeams flowed, in gentle waves
Of inspiration warm. Her auburn hair
Of curls, in silken tresses, hung or lay
In ample luxury.

Her form, not large,
Nor small, but rounded out in perfect shape
And symmetry, excelled perfection's truest moulds
Of fancied thought.

Her voice, in accents sweet,
Broke softest music on the ear and heart,
Enchanting one and charming both. To tell
It all at once, in her combined the whole
Of beauty, youth, and grace.

Her rank of noble birth improved on all
By gilding all with wealth and lineage-fame ;
Her noble gifts of mind, and soul, and grace,
The wisest Giver had bestowed in trust, —

A trust she would have kept, had I not come
To tempt, and steal, and curse, and blight, and
blast,
And waste.

Her easy lot sped on and on,
Each day beholding steps advancing high
In deeds of self-improving culture and
Unselfish love.

Thus born, thus reared, thus blessed,
And thus improved, — an object rare and rich
For angels' praise and devils' bitter hate, —
Fair Elsa lived.

Her ruin fully planned
Was my delight, since she was fairest of
The fair, and purest of the pure; and I
The chief of devils boss, the ardent task
No other hands save mine could execute.

III. — YOUNG ROGER.

Young Roger, bright with college honors, came
From class, in graduation due, to try
With tact and talent, love and wit, life's hard
And surging tide.

From callings great and wise,
 And multiform, he chose his own delight,
 The art of physic, —allopathic school.

Commanding, tall, erect, of noble form
 And noble mien, and mind and soul in all
 Complete, he stood in youth's gateway of life,
 In equipage and armor for the fight
 Complete as well.

With aims above, beyond,
 The common herd, he drew the lines to rule.
 His life by wisdom's plans approved, confirmed.
 The rules he made to be observed, obeyed,
 Were few, but firm and good: The truth to speak,
 To seek the good to do and fellowship,
 To hate the wrong, were fundamental lines
 He would in turn observe.

And why do less?
 Of humble, poor but honest birth, his own
 Unaided way he'd pressed to this fair start.
 With such a life, though short, behind, with such
 A prospect yet untried, but easy to
 Attain, ahead, when all invites that way.