

The Autobiography of a Cigarette

A History of Travel and Peculiar Experiences. By Grace Corder.

I am called the "Pride of Havana," and though you might not think so, the name really suits me, for I am much superior to most of my relatives in Havana. The name was given to me, with nine of my little brothers, when we were packed in a small box and consigned to the United States shipment.

Not long after this, while I was still young and fresh, we were out on the open sea, bound for New York. Life on shipboard is horrid. It was so dark where we were, and my brothers and I were packed so closely together that we had scarcely enough room to breathe. We could not see anything that was going on, and had to lie still and listen to the water splashing sullenly against the steamer's sides. After a voyage almost endless it seemed to me, we reached New York and were carried to the custom house. After the business here was disposed of we were sold to a merchant and finally exposed in a beautiful glass case in the shop of a dealer. Here we could see everything that was going on about us. It was interesting to watch the different people. Here was a guerrulous old man who would smoke nothing but a Meer-schaum and Arcadia Mixture; a curiosity fiend, who came quite often hunting specimens of old pipes; little boys who bought cigars very shyly and hid them under their jackets. Then there were beautiful ladies who bought all conceivable kinds of pipes for their husbands—birthday or Christmas presents, likely—pipes with long handles and fancy inlaid bowls, of no possible use to husbands, but, as my lady said, "They looked so pretty over the mantel."

We remained here in the pretty shop for a long time, I do not know how long, but until many of the faces had become very familiar to me. One of them I liked particularly well. The owner of this face was Mr. Hurst. He was a large, well-built man, with strong features. Across his forehead was a large scar. Mr. Hurst was a regular customer. He smoked only cigarettes and always bought the Pride of Havana. Perhaps that was why I liked him so well. At any rate, I looked always for his coming. One day he came in as usual, and, throwing a quarter on the counter, said: "A box of Havanas."

The dealer turned to the long rows of shelves back of the show cases and after searching in vain among the different boxes, said:

"I'm sorry, but we seem to be out of them. Here's the Sweet Caporal or Yellow Kids. Won't they do?"

"No," answered Mr. Hurst. "Some way they don't taste like the others."

He turned to go, and his glance rested on us in the show case, and he said, "What's the matter with these? Can't I have them?"

My heart beat violently and I trembled with emotion as the dealer lifted me with my brothers from the case, wrapped us up carefully and placed us in the care of Mr. Hurst.

As soon as we were on the street he drew us from his pocket, took off the wrappings, opened the box and lifted out one of my brothers. Throughout the day they kept leaving me, one by one, until in the evening when Mr. Hurst returned from business I alone was left.

I learned much of Mr. Hurst during this day. He was a lawyer, and besides his regular business he looked after the property interests of several wealthy owners who had retired from the world of business.

In the evening after dinner, Mr. Hurst returned to his down town office, I with him, tucked away in his vest pocket, just below his heart. I lay there quietly, feeling distinctly its regular beat, and wondering idly how long before the spark of my life would go out.

When we reached the office there was a bright fire in the open grate, and Mr. Hurst seated himself in an arm-chair before it. There was no other light but the blaze threw strange shadows everywhere. Mr. Hurst had taken me from his pocket and I lay quietly in his hand gazing about me. This was all so new to me. I looked at the

and it changed in my fancy to the blazing bonfire on the plantation and the changing, darting shadows took on new forms, and again I looked from the fields of tobacco to the fire with the negroes dancing and singing around them.

A movement from my master recalled me from my dreams. He had shifted his position, and now sat, with one hand shading his brow, moodily gazing at the fire.

Finally he muttered, "Ruth, what a pretty name it is. Just suits her. And I, what an idiot I am. Well, I don't care. I'll forget her very existence if I can."

I pricked up my ears at this speech. "So," I thought, "master is in trouble." I turned the matter over in my mind, and returned it, and turned it again, but could think of nothing, until my thoughts were cut short. Master had drawn a match from his pocket and then placed me, glowing with life and solace, to his lips. I had thought my end was near, but in his abstraction master forgot me.

In response to a knock at the door, master called "Come in," without turning his head, but he looked up as the rustle of skirts declared the visitor to be a woman.

"Why, Miss Gibson," master exclaimed, "is it really you?"

"That's all, I guess," she answered, laughing. "I just ran over, Mr. Hurst, to see if papa's reports were made out. He wasn't feeling well, so I came."

"Sit down, Miss Gibson, and I will get them for you," said master, drawing the arm-chair closer to the fire. He had placed me on the hearth when Miss Gibson entered and I lay there until he went into the next room, when Miss Gibson lifted me up and concealed me carefully in the folds of her dress. I lay there thinking as fast as possible. Why should Miss Gibson value such a thing as I, and conceal me so tenderly and be so afraid master would see me? There were plenty more of the Pride of Havana to be found. I tried to think out the puzzle, but I could not understand it.

Miss Gibson stayed a long time talking to master, until, in fact, the clock had struck eleven, and the fire had to be replenished. Master busied himself at the hearth some time, and when he had finished his work at the fire he thought of me. He looked round the hearth, but didn't see me; then he said to Miss Gibson, "Have you seen a cigarette on the hearth? Pardon me, but you know what a confirmed smoker I am, and it was my last one."

"I haven't seen any," she stammered, blushing.

"What a lie," I thought. "Miss Gibson must be a very strange lady to tell a great lie for a cigarette like me. I'll show master that he is deceived in her."

Slowly I rolled out of the folds of Miss Gibson's bodice, and dropped to the floor at master's feet.

"Ruth," he cried, a great light coming into his face.

How very strange it was. He didn't seem to think she had done anything wicked at all, for next moment I could not tell which was master and which which Miss Gibson. But they are one now, so it doesn't matter. And I—well, I am laid carefully away in a little box lined with satin and scented with rose leaves, placed in mistress' bureau drawer.

A FABLE.

Once there was an Aspiring Young Author who wrote a Story. He worked long and diligently at it, and decorated it with a Maximum Consumption and a Subjective Climax. Then one day he unfolded the College Paper, and having found his Story, settled himself in a sequestered nook to read it.

At first things went quite smoothly. There were only six Mis-spelled Words in the first two paragraphs, and the Omission of Commas did not seriously affect the impression which he had originally intended to convey. You see, the Author did not agitate himself unnecessarily over trifles, for this was not the first time he had read a

Dry Oak Chunks

For Stoves.

Gregory, The Coal Man.

Office 1044 O St., Phones, 343-488.

Story After Publication.

The Author continued his reading until he came to a place where the name of his hero was printed with a small letter. "The man was brown," so read the sentence, and the Author began to feel that he had a Personal Grievance. But the Author was a courageous young man, whom nothing could daunt, and he resolved to go on to the end. He encountered many misprints on the way, but he passed them safely, and even retained his composure in the face of a Double Negative.

But as he approached his Beloved Climax, his courage began to fail him. He had a great deal of affection for this Climax, because—because it was so dear to him.

When the Author reached the Climax he saw at a glance that something had happened. His most Touching Sentence was printed upside down, and a portion of the Minor Obstacle had been inserted, thus producing a most incongruous effect. When the Author saw this, his composure gave way, and he expressed himself freely and without reference to Webster.

When he had expressed himself fully and completely, he finally concluded that the inverted sentence was, after all, a Tribute to his Genius, for he reflected that the type-setter had probably been so intensely interested and excited at this juncture that he had been unable to control his fingers.

So the Author, being a courageous young man who nothing could daunt, and withal patient and long-suffering, forgave the type-setter, and continued to write stories ever after.

LETA STETTER.

Sam's Cafe. The only place in the city to get the famous "Little Gem Hot Waffles." Special service for ladies.

The Bully, the student's favorite smoke.

Dr. Jno. J. Davis

Graduate Optician and Refractionist.



Headaches and all Nervous Troubles relieved by correctly fitted Spectacles. Prices Low. Consultation free. Home Office 1238 O St. Phone B 955 LINOLCN

OUR WORK IS WELL KNOWN

We always have and always will appreciate the support of the students—reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

YULE BROTHERS LAUNDRY

Tel. 754. 1514 O Street.

Lincoln Tank Line

Successors to C. H. Man Gasoline, Kerosene, Lubricating Oil 125 No. 12th Street. Telephone 473

COLUMBIA NATIONAL BANK

of Lincoln, Nebraska:

CAPITAL \$100,000.00.

OFFICERS

John B. Wright, Pres. J. H. Wescott, Vice-Pres Joe Samuels 2nd Vice-Pres. P. L. Hall, Cashier W. B. Ryons, Asst. Cash.

The Weber Sutorium

Is the up-to date place where you can get your

Clothing Cleaned and Pressed Phone 700 Northeast Cor. 11th & O Sts.

You are Invited to Visit Our New Store

Corner 11th and O Street.

Entrances 113 and 117 So.

11th, 1033 and 1043 O St.

Nebraskas Largest and

Finest House Furnishing

Store. * * * * *

Rudge & Guenzel Co.

A complete Department of Elastic Book Cases, Card Systems and Deaks.