

The Dream Child

By A. H. Gunter

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There was a streak of paint on Alice's nose, which made her feel strangely cross-eyed, her hair had fallen about her shoulders, and her back was aching. David's letter lay unopened in her lap, and that was queer, for David was ill at an out-of-town sanitarium, and a girl is supposed to take some interest in her fiancé's health. But Alice believed in art for art's sake, and David could wait. Tomorrow the entries would begin for the Worton art exhibit and she must put the finishing touches to her picture.

The room was bare and ugly, since art for art's sake is not always profitable, but now that the huge canvas was there, to enter was like coming from the filth and din of the streets into still midsummer woods, into haunted forest. Beneath a moss-hung oak, knee-deep in a tangle of bracken and fern, stood a little girl, with wide eyes and expectant face. She was looking for the fairies, that child, and she would surely find them, for she knew that fairies really lived. You felt that they would peep out at her the moment your back was turned.

Henry Blaine, the portrait painter, tried to catch them at it by turning away ever so carelessly and then whirling suddenly back. They were not to be tricked by a grown-up like that; they whisked out of sight in a second, but Blaine declared that he could see the grasses quiver. He shook his finger at the little dream child. "I caught them, didn't I?" he asked, but she would not tell on the fairies, not she.

Every student in the building praised it, and they were frank and unsparing critics. Even Billy Goldsby held his glib tongue for fully five minutes when he saw the picture. Billy had been raised on the streets of New York, and he had never had a childhood, nor wanted one, but for five minutes he felt with vague resentment, that, as he himself put it, he had been "done out of something."

Goldsby represented a large advertising firm, and he was always hanging around the studios in search of novelties. Being entirely commonplace himself, he had a wonderful faculty for choosing pictures that would appeal to the average person, and though he could not have explained that in this painting Alice had ensnared the universal heart of childhood, he did know that the Dream Child would attract attention anywhere.

"Say, Miss Wade," he announced, approvingly, "the kid's a regular hold-up. The blind man couldn't pass her without looking back. I'll give you \$300 down for the picture."

Alice continued to slap on the paint with loving strokes. "Sell the Dream Child?" she repeated in horror. "Why, I wouldn't sell her for anything in the world. She's my life, my heart, my soul."

When he was gone she climbed down and surveyed her picture contentedly. It was good work, and she knew it, and hoped that it would take the Daneleigh medal. That high goal of artistic ambitions was awarded every five years, and Alice had set her heart on winning it. She had been savagely selfish for her art, she knew, had sacrificed everything to it and at last it seemed about to reward her.

David Arden was one of the things that she had sacrificed, and now she opened his letter absently. It was cheerful throughout, for sickness could not cloud David's brave spirit, but toward the end there was a paragraph that startled her: "I am getting well rapidly here," he wrote, "but don't know whether I can stay. This place eats up money like a taxicab. But don't worry, little girl, for I'll soon be on my feet."

Alice read that paragraph over and over again, with growing anxiety. David had been a successful illustrator, and it had not occurred to her that he could be in want, yet the long illness must have cost him a great deal of money. If he was improving, of course David must stay where he was, but when she tried to think where the money was to come from, Alice grew panicky. Her own resources had dwindled most painfully, while she was working on the Dream Child. She looked about her room for something to pawn or sell, but it was practically bare. There was nothing of any value in it, except the picture of the little girl—the Dream Child. Goldsby had said that he would give her \$300 for the Dream Child.

Alice covered her face with her hands and tried to fight off that horrible thought. She could not, would not sell the Dream Child. It would be more than the ruin of her ambitions. It would be like selling part of her own soul. She had planned the picture in her early girlhood; it was woven of the long, long thoughts of youth, embodied the sweetest memories of her childhood. And all the time she realized with sickening clearness that there was no other way to get the money.

Very slowly and miserably she put

on her coat. If she delayed, Goldsby might change his mind. With face averted, for she could not meet the innocent eyes of the Dream Child, she walked over to the canvas, and took it from the easel. Soberly, as if it were a sacrament, she laid one kiss on the little girl's soft hair, then hurried over to Goldsby's office. A few minutes later she stumbled out, with tear-blinded eyes, and \$300 in her pocket.

David would not take the money from her, she knew, but he had a queer old cousin, Baxter Arden, who worked for a meager pittance in a downtown office. Alice had always liked this shy, crumpled little man, and she was sure that she could persuade him to send the money to David in his name. She would tell him it was a loan, which David would not let her repay.

At Baxter's lodgings, however, she was disappointed. Mr. Arden was out of town and the landlady did not know when he would return. There was nothing to do but wait, so Alice spent three miserable days with Goldsby's check burning in her purse like blood money. She could not bear the emptiness of her room; she wandered in the parks all day, and at night kept up her courage by writing love letters to David.

David was not allowed to write often, but the third day she received an answer from him, a letter full of frank adoration. He had been receiving five or six love letters a day from a sweetheart who was usually rather neglectful, and he was fairly maudlin with joy. For pages he raved, but at the very end of the letter he gave important news. Old Baxter Arden was there on a visit. "And he's pathetically proud of my work," wrote David. "cuts out all my illustrations and saves them. You ought to hear him speak of my cousin, the famous illustrator. And here's the wonderful thing, Alice, the old man has saved up quite a small fortune by the simple method of never spending anything, and he offers to lend me all I need. I'm to stay on here, and the doctors tell me I'll be well before many weeks. So get your wedding dress made, for when I do get up you can't put me off again."

Then David did not need the money! Alice saw that at a glance. She sprang up and ran dizzily, wildly, for her hat. It was not too late to compete for the Daneleigh medal, she would give Goldsby back his check, she would snatch her little dream girl from the polluting gaze of the vulgar herd that filled his office and carry her to the lofty atmosphere of the Worton galleries.

She hurried through the streets, so intoxicated with her new happiness that she was quite unconscious of the attention her breathless haste attracted. Near Goldsby's office she was forced to stop. A sign paster was putting up a poster and a crowd had gathered before it. They were shabby, ordinary people, but they stared at the picture in dumb admiration. Even the policeman on the beat was stealing a peep at it. With a sudden catch at her heart, Alice made her way toward the billboard. It was a very simple picture, yet it seemed as if one turned from the din and filth of the street into the haunted forest. There beneath a moss-hung oak, knee-deep in bracken and fern, stood a little girl with wide eyes and expectant face.

But she would never see the fairies, that child, though she knew that fairies really lived, for all day and all night the street before her was filled with the roar of traffic, and the pavement echoed with the footsteps of the worldly wise, the weary, the sinful. So poignant was the appeal of the upturned face that you would not notice that she held a small object tightly clasped in one hand, would not notice it until the sign paster, with a last sweep of his brush, stuck a lurid card beneath the picture. "Have you used Lavina? The purest soap on earth."

For a long time Alice gazed in silence, then she smiled, though there were tears in her eyes. "You'll never see the fairies," she whispered to the child, "but you'll see a great deal of life, my little dream girl, and real people are better than make-believes. As for me, I'll use the money for a trousseau. Anybody can try to be an artist, but only one woman in the world can be David Arden's wife."

At The Phone.
"For me, life has been so satisfying that my curiosity lies pretty near dormant," an old man said; "but even now I am capable of wondering over persons who blush at the telephone. People do blush then very often. A pretty girl whom I watched the other day turned the color of a pink rose at something told her over the wire. I wish I could have heard. It must have been something nice, for only a pleasing message could make a girl look so happy and foolish as she looked then."

"The man who used that same telephone an hour later also got pretty red in the face, but it wasn't a compliment that made him color up, I'll swear. He looked mad enough to eat somebody, and if he could have laid hands on the fellow who had made him blush I suspect there would have been some lively doings in that neighborhood."

Cemetery for Pets.
The picturesque village of Molesworth, Huntingdon, England, possesses an unusual cemetery. It has been established about seven years, and up to date there have been interred about 200 pets, mostly dogs, although there are a few birds, about fifty cats, a marmot, and four monkeys. The place is beautifully kept, the graves being planted with flowers, while the stones and curbs are principally of white marble with suitable inscriptions.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By E. O. SELLERS, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

LESSON FOR JUNE 23

THE PENITENT WOMAN.

LESSON TEXT—Luke 7:36-50.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. 1:15.

Jesus had accepted an invitation to visit the home of the aristocrat Simon, but instead of being treated with courtesy he is humiliated by studied neglect and insult. There was one, however, who fully appreciated his real worth, a woman of the street who had doubtless seen him enter or else observed him at meat through the open doorway. Knowing him is one thing, but to love him is quite another. Do not confound this woman with Mary Magdalene, there is no connection at all. Jesus always drew to himself the sinful ones; it was for that purpose he came into the world, to bear our sins (Matt. 1:21; Isa. 53:6). This woman was, however, a sinner who no longer ran after her sin, but one who was repentant. This is shown by (1) her sorrow (weeping); (2) her humble service (wiping his feet), and (3) her gift of love (the alabaster box), this latter having undoubtedly been an accessory of her life of sin, but now devoted to a more noble use. As the odor filled the house the self-satisfied Pharisee spoke "within himself," but he who discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart knew not only how great a sinner she had been, but knew also the cloak of self-righteousness worn by Simon. Her purity and holiness had been shattered like the alabaster box and Jesus proceeds to shatter Simon's shell of self complacency by putting forth one of his matchless parables.

Jesus Speaks to Simon.
A certain creditor, undoubtedly meaning himself, had two debtors, by inference this woman and this Pharisee. Both alike were bankrupt, one owed about \$8.50 and the other ten times as much, about \$85. Both alike, however, received forgiveness. "Tell me," says the Master, "which debtor will love most?" The Pharisee's reply was the logical one; they both depend upon the mercy of the creditor, hence the gratitude will be in ratio to the amount forgiven. Much had been required, hence much forgiven. Jesus immediately turns the Pharisee's answer to a practical application. Taking the words out of Simon's mouth he makes one of the most complete and practical applications of applied Christianity in the gospel record. To paraphrase Jesus says: "Simon, I came into your house and the most common courtesy of washing a guest's feet you neglected, yet this woman has washed my feet with her tears, an evidence of her repentance, while you sit there with dry-eyed cynicism. She has wiped my feet with the hairs of her head, her glory and crown has been laid at my feet while you have not so much as offered me a towel to wipe the dust off my feet as I left my sandals at your door. Simon you gave me no kiss, that common mark of a courteous welcome, yet this woman has not ceased to kiss my feet since the time I came into your house. The anointing oil, common olive oil, you neglected to use, yet the precious oil of her treasure she has thankfully poured upon my feet. Simon, your life is a life of works so are these acts of this woman, but your life is one of seal while her acts have been prompted by love."

In another place Jesus tells us that if we love him we will do the things he commands us and that he and the Father will come and abide with us. Hers was the heroic love of one who having lost her shame dared to thrust herself into an unbidden house of refreshment and perform those neglected mental duties, the result of which was that reward for her faith that meant forgiveness of her sins. By her attention to these duties she was unconsciously rebuking the vanity of Simon's self merit while at the same time she was showing to the world a fine example of the gratitude of a saved one. Paul later expressed it most forcefully in the fourth chapter of his letter to the Romans.

The Great Creditor.
This woman knew she had no merit of her own and hence she thrust herself at the feet of Jesus, claimed his righteousness and compassion and at the same time by her acts she showed the attitude of her heart and of course she had the desire of her heart. It has always been so for has not the Master said, "Happy are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be fed?" After this "practical sermon of applied Christianity" to Simon, Jesus turns to the woman, nameless so far as the Scripture record is concerned, and with infinite and a heavenly thrill in his voice he said: "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." "Who is the creator," they asked.

Jesus teaches us that though there be degrees of guilt, all alike must come to God for forgiveness. Also that he, the Great Creator, is the one to whom we owe our debt of sins and who alone can without merit discharge that debt and send us forth in peace.

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"We consulted two doctors at Chicago, where we resided at that time. After trying all the medicine of the two doctors without any result, we read of the Cuticura Remedies, and at once bought Cuticura Soap and Ointment. Following the directions carefully and promptly we saw the result, and after four weeks, the dear child's face was as fine and clean as any little baby's face. Every one who saw Gilbert after using the Cuticura Remedies was surprised. He has a head of hair which is a pride for any boy of his age, three years. We can only recommend the Cuticura Remedies to everybody." (Signed) Mrs. H. Albrecht, Box 883, West Point, Neb., Oct. 26, 1910. Although Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold by druggists and dealers everywhere, a sample of each, with 32-page book, will be mailed free on application to "Cuticura," Dept. L, Boston.

Zeke Knew Rufe.
Rufe was telling Zeke about a terrible escapade he had had the night before after he had crossed the dam at the river and was making for his cabin about a half mile through the dark woods.
"And just as I stepped inter de brush I hears a funny noise like a shoot anortin'. I looks up an' a blue light jumps out er de groun' and shapes itself into a ghost about six foot tall. Red fire was a-flickerin' out er its nose. It stood still kinder, then lifted a long, bony finger an' says: 'I want you, Rufe Jackson.'
"I walks up to it and shakes my own finger right in its face. 'You mind yore business and I'll mind mine,' I says, and turns on my heel and goes right on.
"Now, what'd you er done, Zeke, in a case like dat?"
"I'd er done jest what you done, you durned lying nigger."

A Gentle Result.
She—I thought prize fights were very exciting.
He—They usually are.
She—Well, this one I am reading about could not have been very lively, for it seems from this account the fight ended because one of them went to sleep.

Nature Faker.
"Tommy," queried the teacher of a small boy in the juvenile class, "what is a swan?"
"A swan," replied the youthful observer, "is an animal with a turkey's body and a giraffe's neck and a goose's head."

Her Foresight.
"It is really by little things that one can tell a man's character."
"Yes; I think that was the reason Julia broke her engagement. Henry used to bring her such cheap chocolates."
The young man who tells a girl she is a dream is likely to bump up against a rude awakening shortly after marriage.

The Chief Requisite.
David Belasco, in an interview in New York, condemned a certain ultra-modest type of society woman.
"This type, which luckily isn't numerous," he said, "lives on notoriety. To a woman of this type a lawyer said one day:
"Yes, madam, I can get you the divorce you desire. For \$500 I can get you a divorce—and get it without publicity, too."
"She wrinkled her smooth, white, well-powdered forehead in a frown; she bit her rouged and over-red lips in annoyance.
"But what would it cost," she asked, "with publicity?"

Warm Compliment.
A fancy-dress ball was held in a certain garrison town recently, at which many military officers and men attended. A soldier attired as a lady was spoken to by the regimental chaplain.
"Well, young man," said the parson, "you are very well got up. Did you win a prize?"
"Yes, chum; I got second prize. Did you get a prize?"
"Me? Oh, no; I—"
"Well, now, that's rotten bad luck, I call it," said the Tommy, warmly, "for you are about the best get-up of a parson I've seen lately."—London Tit-Bits.

Just to Accommodate.
Hungry Girl (one of a party of tourists who have arrived late at a country inn)—No fresh eggs? But you've got hens, haven't you?
Inkeeper's Wife—Yes, but they're all asleep.
Hungry Girl—Well, but can't you wake them?—Fliegende Blaetter.

The Last Word in Defense.
The angry mother returns home from a shopping tour down town to find that Tommy has broken into the jam closet, teased his little sister till she cried, smashed a window pane with his top, tied a tin can on the tail of the dog next door, and then wound up further depredations by tracking the parlor carpet with his muddy boots. "You young villain, I'm going to whip you till you can't sit down." (Grabs hold of him.) "Now what have you got to say for yourself?"
Tommy—Aw, say, ma, this looks like a frame-up.

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