

Started With a Smile



A New Year's Promise

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NORMAN HARDY was born on New Year's day, and deemed the fact a decided misfortune. There was one feature in which his father specialized—system—and this involved discipline. "A strict disciplinarian," he would boast to his neighbors. "That's me," and he looked it and acted it out until Norman fancied he had been placed in the world simply to become the butt and victim of rigid rules.

When Norman's tenth birthday was only eight hours distant, his father gave the order, sternly spoken: "You will be in the house for the night at seven o'clock," and Norman moped in a martyrlike way, envying his boy friends who had mapped out a joyous New Year's eve program of skating, hill sliding, and like boyish pranks. He wondered what was coming, but his father simply viewed him speculatively and sent him to bed at the usual time. He was awakened to find his father roughly pulling at his arm.

"Get up, Norman, and come down to the kitchen," said Joel Hardy; "you needn't dress."

Norman arose, rubbed his eyes, and followed his father downstairs. There was a light on the table and beside it the house clock. Norman noticed that it told the time as ten minutes to twelve. All was still and solemn except his monotonous tick, and outside an occasional echo of shouting, announcing impatient celebrants already prepared to herald in the new year.

"My boy," spoke his father after a moment of ominous deliberation, "when I was a lad of ten, my father taught me a lesson that has left its impress on my whole life in a salutary way. Upon the tick of midnight just preceding my birthday he always called me down to the kitchen and gave me a good squand strapping. It hurt him more than it did me, he used to say, but the reminder would be ever present with me. Until I was twenty-one, regularly, upon each birthday the strap played its part and I think it did a good deal towards teaching me that I had a master and in making me a better man. I have concluded to adopt that feature with my system. You're a pretty good boy, but for fear you might kick over the traces I'm going to bulk the system until you are of age. Now, then, take your punishment like a man."

Joel Hardy produced a short, thick piece of tanned cowhide and Norman winced, but did not cry out during the unique castigation. It was five years later, and with the usual routine late in the afternoon Joel Hardy reminded Norman of the pending midnight event. "His eyes bulged and his face betrayed overwhelming amazement as Norman stood up before him, a tall, well-knit stripling, almost menacing in his bearing as he said:

"Father, there will be no strapping

The New Year

WITH the whirling and drifting of snows comes a breathless the wild New Year; While bitter north wind blows, O'er the fields that lie stark and drear.

Yet hope is alight in her eyes As she looks from the heart of the storm, "Earth sleeps in her shroud," she cries, "But the life in her heart is warm."

"Death is but a dream of the night And the hymn of joy is begun, For slowly seeking the light The great globe turns to the sun."

"Behold, I will bring delight In place of darkness and cold; Safe under the meadows so white Is hiding the buttercup gold."

"And summer's splendor shall reign In place of the winter's dearth, Her color and music again Shall gladden the patient earth."

Hark to the New Year's Voice Through the murk of winter drear! Oh, children of men, rejoice! At the tidings of hope and cheer.

—Celia Thaxter.

this time. I'm through with it. Half the town has heard of it, and the boys taunt me and the girls twit me. Not that I care for any of them except Milly Daniels, and she's true blue and stands by me, and I won't have her humbled and shamed. I'm going to spend this New Year's eve with the crowd, and I'll be home to breakfast."

"If you don't report here by ten o'clock I'll send the town marshal after you," pronounced his father, with fire in his eye.

Norman marched out of the house, hung around downtown until eight o'clock, and then repaired to the agreed-on rendezvous of the crowd, an old buggy shed attached to a great barn owned by Farmer Logan. He felt uneasy, stubborn and nettled. Recently he had been dared by his companions to smoke a cigarette. He had met the dare and now, with two of them in his pocket, he lit one, and in sheer rebellion against his father's system, was about to puff out his resentment when the signal cry of his comrades echoed forth. Carelessly throwing the lighted cigarette into a corner of the shed, he bounded out and for over an hour forgot all save the excitement of the moment. The unruly coterie rolled a giant snowball and let it slide down the hill leading to the town common; they got up into the town hall tower and rang its bell. In the midst of setting loose a drove of cattle from a live stock enclosure they were attracted by the dash and rush of the village fire cart, making for a vivid, spreading glare.

"Why, it's Farmer Logan's place!" shouted a chorus of excited voices, and Norman Hardy's heart stood still. He recalled the cigarette and the littered woodshed. He stood dumb and scared. The flames completely engulfed the great frame barn. Norman slunk off alone by himself, oppressed with an appalling sense of guilt. His emotions were doubly intensified when he heard some one say:

"Logan thinks it was set ablaze. Arson. I pity the firebug if he's caught. It's straight 14 years in the penitentiary."

"It will ruin Logan, they say," spoke

another. "The barn was stored with grain and machinery and the insurance ran out last week."

Norman was crushed with a sense of his culpability. He felt like flying from home, town and all the people he had ever known. He skulked behind a hedge as a group of girls came along. They were discussing the fire so excitedly that they paid no attention to a lone member of their group trailing on behind them. Norman noticed her, however. She was Milly Daniels. He started her by stepping directly in her path.

"Just linger for a moment, will you, Milly?" he spoke under high agitation, "or I'll walk with you a bit. I'm in terrible trouble, and I'm going to leave town for good," and Norman recited the entire story of the evening.

"There's only one way out, don't you see it, Milly?" he said. "I don't dare to face Farmer Logan; I'm going away to make something of myself, and the day I have got the money to make it square with Mr. Logan I'm coming back. And Milly, dear, you have been my truest friend and have always stood by me. Will you try to think of me while I'm gone, will you—will you wait for me? For I shall never love anybody but you."

Five years went by. Not a word had been heard from the truant son. Joel Hardy had forbidden even the mention of his name in the home. Mrs. Hardy, half heartbroken, repined in silence. Milly Daniels became an orphan, and when Mrs. Hardy needed a nurse and then a companion, it came about that she found a permanent home with the mother of the man she loved. She and Mrs. Hardy, with the tyrant father, all unaware of it, cherished a mutual memory of the absent youth and took comfort in watching and hoping for his return.

It was a few minutes after midnight, five years to a day since Norman Hardy had gone forth into the world to seek his fortune. Milly had pleaded to sit up and watch the old year out and the new year in. All three of the family, though in different ways, were thinking of the boy who had run away from home. The bells had just finished a resonant chime when the knob of the outside door turned. There stepped into the room a bronzed, stalwart young man, at a sight of whom Joel Hardy gasped incredulously, his wife uttered a joyous scream, and Milly stood breathless and fluttering.

"I waited till I was sure the final hour of discipline and the strap was past and gone," spoke Norman Hardy. "Mother, a warm embrace. 'Father,' and a sturdy hand reached out. 'Milly,' and the young girl awayed to and fro and would have fallen had not Norman caught her.

"I said I wouldn't come back till I could pay for the damage I did to good old Farmer Logan," continued Norman. "I've kept my word. I hear you are struggling with a two-thousand-dollar mortgage, father; I can pay it off and loan you as much more if you need it. Milly, dear, am I welcome? I have come to keep my promise true."

Joel Hardy left the room. He returned with the strap that had been so familiar to his son. Taking out his pocketknife, the old man proceeded to cut the strap to pieces and flung them into the blazing grate.

"You've cheated me out of several years, my son," he observed, "but I forgive you. It's enough to know that you are back home safe and sound this blessed New Year's day!"

New Year's Lore

NEW YEAR'S night quiet and clear indicates a prosperous year.

On New Year's eve while the clock is striking 12 repeat three times: "Good St. Anne, good St. Anne, send me a man as fast as you can," and you will be engaged within the year.

Spend on New Year, spend all the year. The Chinese say that if a man sits up for ten years in succession and sees the new year come in he will have a long life.

It is unlucky to refuse a beggar anything on New Year's day, or to refuse a request of any kind.

It is lucky to rise early on New Year's morning.

If the first carol singer who comes to the door on New Year's morning is brought in at the front door, taken all through the house, and let out at the back door, it will bring luck to the house for a year.

When the wind blows on New Year's night, it is a sign of pestilence.

If your first caller on New Year's day is a male, you will have good luck and many friends; if a female, bad luck and few friends.

The Chinese think New Year's day is the luckiest of the year.

If you wash clothes on New Year's day, you'll be sure to wash a friend away.

Turn your pillow at midnight of the 31st of December and you will dream of the one you are to marry.

It brings good luck to place a piece of money on the window on New Year's eve.

If the first man you speak to on New Year's morning has his hands in his pockets, you will have a hard time getting what money you want during the year.

It is an old Dutch superstition that if you want to marry the girl you love, your voice must be the first one she hears and your face the first she sees on New Year's morning.

Superstitious folk consider it important to notice whom you meet the first thing on New Year's day. If it is a man, you will have good luck, if a woman, bad luck; if a priest, you will die within a year; if a policeman, you will have litigation.

The first person of the opposite sex you meet on New Year's day will bear the Christian name of your future partner.

If ice melts on January 1 it will freeze on April 1.

Feed the birds well on New Year's morning by placing a sheaf of wheat or barley or some bread outside your house, then good luck will attend you, and good crops and prosperity come to you during the whole year.

On New Year's eve take your hymn-book to your bedroom, blow out the lamp, open your book, and mark a hymn (in the dark), put it under your pillow, and sleep on it. Next morning read the hymn, and it will indicate the events of the year.

It is unlucky to have clothes hanging on the line when the New Year is born.

Cook cabbage on New Year's day and you will have good luck all the year.

Decorated apples stuck on three skewers are exchanged for luck on New Year's day in Great Britain.

Burn all the visiting cards that have been received throughout the year on January 1. If you keep them from year to year you will have bad luck.

If you have not provided yourself with a calendar before the New Year comes in you will be behind hand in all your undertakings during the year.

In Japan oranges are hung up on New Year's day as a charm to insure the long life of the family.

The Chinese believe it bad luck to pay all of outstanding accounts on the last of the year and begin fresh and straight on New Year's day.

Just before midnight on New Year's eve the Chinese put on new or clean garments, so as to enter the new year purely, and thus gain good fortune to themselves.

On New Year's night it was an old Welsh custom with the wise and courageous old men of the parish to sit up all night in the church porch. On that night, it was said, a voice, emanating from beneath the altar table, pronounced the names of those who should die within the coming year.

Your conduct on New Year's day is a forerunner of your conduct all the year.



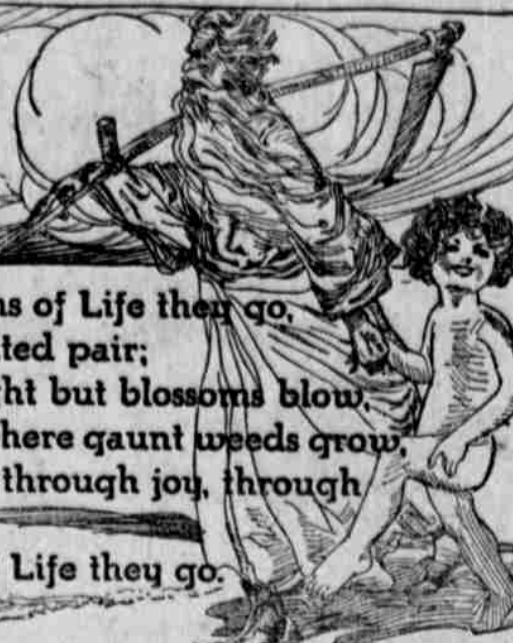
NOT STINGY.

"No, Genevieve, I ain't got stingy, but I made a resolution that all me pennies goes to the heathens this year!"

Peanut Butter Taffy.

2 cupfuls molasses, 1 cupful peanut butter. Boil the molasses and peanut butter to the crack stage, and then pour into pans. When partly cool pull like any taffy. Cut off into two-inch pieces with sharp scissors.

LOVE and TIME



ACROSS the gardens of Life they go, A strange, ill-mated pair; By paths where naught but blossoms blow, By paths neglected where gaunt weeds grow. But hand in hand, through joy, through care,

Across the gardens of Life they go.

The one is old, and grim, and gray, His eyes stare off, like one in dreams; Across his breast his white locks stray; The sands in his glass fall day by day; Over his shoulder his scythe-blade gleams, And he is old, and grim, and gray.

And one is young, and bright, and fair; The golden curls about his head Shine as a halo; his red lips dare The birds in song; he knows no care. Joy in his heart is never dead,— He lives to love and he is fair.

Hoar-headed Time was never young, And Love on earth can not grow old; And yet, since first to that hand he clung— Since first his tender song he sung, Since first his love-tale he had told, And to a dart his bow had strung—

Together, through ways of joy, of woe, Though one is old and one is fair, By paths where naught but blossoms blow, By paths neglected where gaunt weeds grow. Together, a strange, ill-mated pair, Across the gardens of Life they go.

—Rebecca Demarest Lloyd in Indianapolis News.

New Year's Ghost Party

THERE is a pleasant old superstition that jollity in a house during the first week of the New Year brings pleasure and happiness to that household during the entire year. There are many interesting ways of entertaining a New Year's party, but the favorite of all is the masked dance or party, and the most interesting way of having this sort of entertainment is to give a ghost party. The invitations read in this manner:

Our good old Father Time Has promised to convene The shades of many notables To meet you New Year's even. We'll look for you, you know, To help to make things go, And incidentally to meet Some ghosts you're sure to know.

There should be 20 or more guests, and after the invitations have gone out, the hostess has a little private chat with her guests over the telephone. She requests them to come dressed to represent some famous person now dead, pantomime, words, gestures and costume being used to carry out the impersonation.

Dressed in a misty black robe covered with stars cut from gold paper, the hostess will receive her guests in a room draped all in white. Sheets or cheesecloth can be used for this. No word is spoken until a little red lamp distributes cards and pencils to the assembled guests. Then each in turn speaks some word or does some stunt to suit his or her character. The person guessing the greatest number correctly receives a pretty copy of the book, "Ghosts I Have Met."

Games, contests and dancing will follow, and the supper or refreshment table will be filled with things tempting enough to attract even the most ghostly appetite. The table decorations should correspond with the festivities of the season. A New Year's pie made of crepe paper over a deep pan is filled with dainty little favors for the guests or cards upon which some funny rhyme is written for each individual guest. Part of the entertainment for the evening may be the telling of fortunes, informing each guest of their fate for the coming year.

Whatever you do, don't let anyone shatter your faith in New Year's resolutions. They are the best things ever if you know how to handle them, and the most discouraging things if you don't.

Resolutions



Let's us girls form little clubs and boycott th' mop top hair cut.



Let's break up th' practice o' wearin' cloth top shoes with broken arches.



Let's all resolve t' spend our money at home.



Mothers, keep a closer surveillance on your daughters in 1922.—Abe Martin.

Iodine Stains.

Iodine stains will disappear overnight if left in water to which has been added common dry mustard.