

A Supreme Sacrifice

By AMALIES E. COBB

"Dear brother Victor—it's just like him," said Mrs. Eulette as she finished reading a letter that had just arrived. "Is he coming on, mamma?" eagerly questioned her daughter, Victoria. "Oh, how glad I shall be to see him!" There was genuine warmth and sincerity in the fresh young tones. Victoria had never seen the uncle she so cherished, but had always treasured the oft repeated tale of how when she was born the confirmed old bachelor after whom they had named her their first born, had come two thousand miles across the country to view the little mite he was so proud of.

Upon her every birthday, for eighteen years a few days before the natal occasion, there arrived regularly some gift or memento. They kept pace with the maturing years. It was a silver cup, then a child's ring, then a wonderful doll, a tricycle, a talking machine, and so on until this strongly steadfast relative upon her graduation sent Victoria a watch and chain. After that for two years, every week, Victoria wrote a pleasant, loving letter and received in return a crudely fashioned epistle replete with tenderness and love.

She had just written him that she was about to marry Dudley Marsh. The Eulettes were comparatively poor people, and while Uncle Victor had been always profuse in his gifts, Mrs. Eulette had understood that her brother was scarcely even well to do. She was profoundly surprised, therefore, when she read in her brother's letter that he would be on hand by the wedding day and enclosed a draft for two thousand dollars.

"I want every cent of it spent for the wedding and for starting these young people out right in life," the epistle ran. "Dear little mimesake, I feel that I must see her made happy at any cost."

Dudley Marsh demurred when he was made aware of the munificence of the generous Uncle Victor. He and Victoria had mapped out an ideal modest start in life, he said, and besides the dear old man was doing too much for her.

"You will break brother Victor's heart if you say one word to spoil his pleasure in showing his love for Victoria," declared Mrs. Eulette, and so the matter rested and Uncle Victor arrived, rugged, bronzed, suggesting a man who had known little else than hard work.

"You see, Bertha," he observed to his sister, "this is a wonderful event in the life of a man who never had chick nor child, and whose thoughts just revolve round and round the baby grown to a woman that was named after him," and to the last Uncle Victor smiled, chuckled, laughed, played the extravagant spendthrift to perfection, and as he left on the train for home and Victoria threw her arms about his neck and kissed him, the old man whispered rapturously to himself:

"It was worth it!"

Then the smile faded. His brow furrowed thoughtfully and all the long overland journey Uncle Victor sat grave faced and reflective as though turning over and over in his mind some serious problem. For twenty years he had conducted a restaurant in a little mining town. Making the supreme sacrifice of his life, he had followed an impulse he could not control when he learned of the approaching wedding. As a matter of fact he had cut away the only provision for his old age to give to Victoria comfort and happiness. Now, back home again, he found himself without a dollar in the world and started to work in one of the big mines of the district.

He received a few letters from Victoria bubbling over with the joys of a newly made bride, and these he treasured, for she did not write again after a year. Then suddenly he resigned himself to the arduous labor he had undertaken. One day there was a bad accident in this mine. A giant in strength, fearless, self-sacrificing, he fought his way to the surface four times, and each time carrying back to life an overcome miner, the last rescued one being the son of the wealthy owner of the mine.

For a month tenderly cared for at a hospital, a hero to all, the old man fought death and came off the victor, though a cripple for life. It was morning when his full senses had returned for the first time. Peacefully he lay on his cot, gazing out at the green-clad hills in the distance when a fluttering form crossed the room.

"Uncle! dear Uncle Victor!" cried Victoria Marsh, and she was kneeling at his side, her loving arms enclosing him. "Oh, you hero! and oh! you wicked, wicked—to give up all you had for my happiness! But it is all right now, for Dudley has come into a great fortune, and he made me hurry to your side the moment we learned of all that had happened."

"I'm all right," declared Uncle Victor staunchly. "The mining boys have arranged to furnish me crutches and a home."

"Have they?" flared forth Victoria excitedly. "Well, they'll be disappointed! Right straight you are coming East with me, or Dudley will be out here with a posse to kidnap you. And," continued Victoria in a whisper, "there's a little child waiting for you, our first born, and we have named him after you—Victor!"

DUE TO DIGESTIVE TROUBLE

Condition of Narcolepsy Revealed by Victim's Absolutely Irresistible Desire for Sleep.

Even after a meal of moderate size taken by a normal subject there is a slight tendency to drowsiness, which becomes much more pronounced after a heavy meal or in dyspeptics. When sleep under such conditions is irresistible we have narcolepsy. The patient may fall asleep so abruptly that he may endanger himself or others. It is characteristic, however, of narcolepsy of whatever kind that the attack is of brief duration. The victim never collapses, for he always has time to assume a posture suitable for sleep. He may even announce that he must doze for a few minutes, after which he will awake refreshed. He may be kept awake or readily awakened. Hence there should be no likelihood of mistaking narcoleptics for epileptics of any kind. The digestive troubles are of no particular type—cases have been seen of alcoholic gastritis, hyperchlorhydria, atony, etc. In these patients indigestion is only a determining cause, but relief of the stomach mischief seems to lead to complete recovery. Possibly akin to these gastric cases are others in which a subject falls into an imperative sleep after indulgence in alcohol, but who wakes in a few moments completely sober, instead of passing into a stupor.—Rocky Mountain News.

GULL HAD GOOD APPETITE

Veracious Observer Asserts Bird Swallowed Fifteen Smeit Within Space of One Hour.

Sea gulls never visit the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers except when the smelt are running. Local fishermen know when the fish are at hand by seeing the big white birds in the air wheeling and diving and uttering their plaintive cry. They sound like complaining children with rather weak lungs. When the gulls are tired of flying they settle on piles along the shore or on sand banks which they whiten like a fall of snow.

When the sharp eye of a gull sees a smelt he plunges for it, submerges his bill and head, and brings it up squirming. The bird swallows his prey in full flight, seldom or never perching to dispose of it.

A most observant young man relates that a friend of his at Kelso, on the Cowlitz, selected a gull which he could identify and watched it for an hour to count the smelt it caught and swallowed. The number was surprisingly large—fifteen.

Perhaps this gull was more expert or luckier than ordinary. It must have been an exceptional bird in color at least or the Kelso naturalist could not have told it from the rest of the flock. Perhaps it was exceptional in other ways. And perhaps it had a double personality.—Portland (Ore.) Journal.

Obituary of a Jellyfish.

One jellyfish at least became world famous, and when she died, after living for sixty-seven years in the most intellectual society, under the protection of five successive learned gentlemen, she received the honors of an obituary notice in the Scotsman.

"Granny" belonged to the jellyfish family, but was, strictly speaking, a sea anemone whom Sir John Graham Dalyell picked off the rocks and kept in sea water all the years of his life. Sir John fed his protegee regularly with one-half mussel a fortnight, and she bore a large family.

The Scotsman "In Memoriam" notice stated that 600 of Granny's offspring were known. When Sir John died his anemone was passed on to an arctic explorer, and at his death she was bequeathed to another scientific man. Granny thrived and bred little ones; she outlived four protectors, and died finally because of the neglect or ill-treatment of a botanist.

How Much Is Enough to Eat?

Science is speaking up for the 12-year-old who is always hungry. "Age, size and activity," have all to do with the matter. A boy may need more to eat than a girl because he exercises more rather than because he is larger. A small, bookish father tied to a desk may need much less to eat than his romping, growing 12-year-old progeny. It is safe to say that a growing child needs all the bread and butter and milk and fruit that it will eat; when the appetite must be coaxed with sweets it is not to be trusted.

If you have stopped running and growing, don't gauge Bobbie's needs by your relative sizes. Growing is strenuous business. Be sure that the children have both building material for this important occupation and energy fuel for their ceaseless activity. Watching the child's weight will give you a key to the situation.

Center of Sponge Industry.

Nassau, the capital of the Bahama Islands, is a town which seems to exist for the sponge business. Its coral streets all lead to "the sponge market." Carts, slatted on the sides like square bird cages and filled with sponges, are always in progress along Bay street. A fleet of sponge boats is always passing in and out of harbor or riding at anchor head out along the sponge wharf. Men of business hang out their signs as "Sponge Brokers." Entire yards are filled with sponges, and the constant chatter and song of hundreds of negroes at work clipping and pounding, assorting and drying sponges, are among the familiar street sounds.

A Romance In Colors

By VICTOR REDCLIFFE

"Something of a mystery, your new boarder, isn't he?" queried Mrs. Doty of her neighbor at the nearest farm place to her own home.

"Oh, I think not," was the smiling reply of the young matron, Mrs. Ransom, who was the mother of two children whom this new boarder had all but adopted so far as kindness and liberality were concerned. "On the contrary Mr. Wharton is bluff, free and open, and acts like a man glad to get out in the country where he can do just as he pleases. No, indeed, not at all mysterious, but I can say queer."

"In what way, now?" urged Mrs. Doty, who was a confirmed gossip.

"Well, he spends half of his time with the children, romps with them, takes them on long auto rides, buys them all kinds of toys and makes kites for them; in fact he seems extravagantly fond of juvenile company."

"Going to stay long with you?"

"A week or two vacation he told me when he first came," replied Mrs. Ransom. "But it has run into his third week, and he shows no signs of going as yet."

The inquisitive Mrs. Doty having disappointedly exhausted the theme under discussion, chose a new subject challenging her inquisitiveness.

"Who are the folks who have taken the Gale place?" she inquired.

"Now, there may be a mystery," spoke Mrs. Ransom sprightly. "They are new people and keep closely to themselves—a sour-visaged old man, his spinster sister, and they say, a niece. I haven't seen the girl close at hand, for, you know, the Gale place is surrounded by that high-spiked brick wall, but a glimpse now and then from our bay window shows that this niece is graceful, and, I think, pretty. She never leaves the grounds, and one or the other of the man and woman is with her whenever she is in the garden."

Just then there sounded out echoes of joyous, excited shouts and, pointing through the open window space, Mrs. Ransom said: "There is Mr. Wharton now," and the neighbor peered curiously at the new boarder.

Mrs. Ransom had reason to especially notice this fact, for the day previous he had presented one of the children with a large rubber ball tastefully decorated with alternate red and blue stripes. In a game of toss and catch he had sent it spinning over the brick wall of the Gale place, and that was the last seen of it, and he consoled the little lad to whom he had presented it with a promise to place it.

That night at dusk Mr. Wharton had an animated juvenile escort as he sent up the red and blue kite with a red and blue lantern attached to its tail. As he guided it aloft the string broke, and it, too, fell within the extensive grounds of the Gale place.

"And he did it a-purpose," declared little Benny to his mother later on. "I saw him snap the string."

It was two days later that the man who had taken the Gale place came over to the Ransom home and arranged for a regular supply of fresh eggs, butter and milk. Their delivery became the task of little Benny. The second evening of this function he startled his mother and very much interested Mr. Wharton by handing the latter a folded note.

"The pretty girl over there gave me the letter," said Benny, "and half a dollar not to tell anything about it. She said I was to give the letter to the red and blue man and forget all about it."

"That's me, and here's a dollar to help you forget it, Benny," observed Mr. Wharton, and he hastily perused the note and went at once to his room, chuckling riotously.

"Mrs. Doty was right—there is a mystery here!" soliloquized the puzzled Mrs. Ransom.

Mr. Wharton was gone into the village all that evening and Mrs. Ransom went to bed after his return to be awake trying to solve the enigma of his queer actions. She dozed, to be awakened by a soft chugging sound coming apparently from the rear of the house, and hastened to a window that overlooked the back garden.

There stood an automobile, red and blue, and Mr. Wharton was just helping a young lady into it, whom the driver drew into his arms and kissed rapturously. Away went the machine. Mr. Wharton, all smiles, waving his hand after its inmates suggested a fatherly blessing.

Next morning, when Mrs. Ransom came downstairs she found her nonder awaiting her, his suitcase at his side.

"You dear little woman," he said, "I'm leaving a neat little bonus in addition to my board money, as I have got to get back to business."

"And the young lady, sir, and the young man and the automobile?" fluttered Mrs. Ransom.

"Oh! you saw the elopement, eh? Well, my son was the young man, whom I have assisted in getting away with the poor, persecuted victim of relatives interested in her fortune. Man and wife by this time. You see, I had to use Don's favorite college colors, with which Lucia was familiar, to attract her attention and get a note to her. You like a romance, don't you? Well, you have been an indirect agent in making two loving souls happy!"

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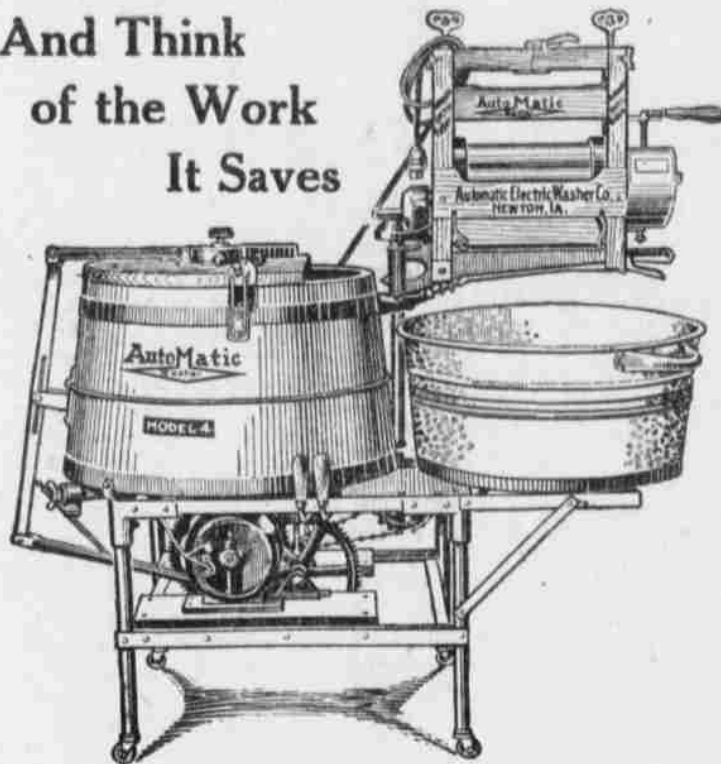
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