

must learn to behave with grace and dignity. You must go the same way you have been going, but show by your manner when you meet this gentleman that you can't stop to talk with him.

"That," said the little boy, "will be as hard as making my violin speak pleasantly." "Is he an old gentleman, Pierre?" Betty asked.

The child regarded her thoughtfully. "I don't know, grandmamma." "Is his hair white, dear?"

Peter nodded. "Yes, his hair is white, but the mustache, that is black." "Where does he live, did you say?"

"Around the corner only." Mrs. Van Zandt shook her head. "I don't know any of my neighbors, dear, not even their names. Grandmamma would rather you did not talk with any stranger."

There was a long silence between them, while Stradivarius, Ole Bull and Paganini purred on the hearth. Finally the child asked, in a curious, defiant way, "Grandmamma, why?"

Betty was startled. She had wandered far away from her surroundings and into the territory of the unknown.

"You and I and the pussy cats, we will make it glad." and was for the moment puzzled for an adequate reply, therefore she said:

"Dear, grandmamma can't always explain to her little boy." There was another pause. Then little Peter said, "It is true that Christmas is coming soon, is it not, grandmamma?"

"Yes, indeed," Betty sighed. "I remember last Christmas," the boy exclaimed.

"Yes, of course you do." "And the large storm and the beggar man at the window of the salon, his feet in the snow without even sabots."

"Yes, dear," Mrs. Van Zandt was well pleased at the child's remembering.

"We took him in by the stove, and Marie and Ursule brought soup and bread, and socks and a coat, and I gave all my 2 francs and 20 centimes, and you too."

"To be sure, we did gladly, dear." The lad fixed his eyes upon Betty's face as he whispered gently, "He was a stranger."

"She turned her head away. She rose and went to the window. Peter Van Zandt saw her shadow as he passed, saw her hand go up to her eyes."

"You said I must always entertain the strangers. They were sometimes angels, and even if they were not still I must entertain them," little Peter went on.

Betty came back to her grandson. Kneeling down on the rug near him and the cats. "Yes, dear, I know."

"Grandmamma, I could make you cry with much pleasure if you say to me one thing last Christmas, another thing this Christmas time, about the strangers, I could." His dark eyes flashed just as Betty had seen Peter Van Zandt's eyes flash long ago, and his hand's voice was tense, fierce.

She took his little rebellious hands in hers. "Dear, by and by you will comprehend, there are wicked men who do harm to little children. They are strangers sometimes. One has to be on their guard."

"He who calls me 'monsieur' is not wicked, grandmamma, I am sure. Ah—his small arms went around her neck caressingly, his face hot, against her—'please, grandmamma, do not forbid that I speak with this stranger this year, please! He is noble like well-like you!'"

"Very well, then, you may, but promise me, dear, on the word of a gentleman, you will not go anywhere with him, eh?"

The boy raised his right hand: "Foi de la Quereau, grandmamma, never." Betty kissed him and drew him closer. Presently he asked: "Shall we have a Christmas tree, grandmamma? Do they have one here?"

gled with herself. Had she not fallen upon her knees? Had she not humbled her soul? Was she not living in Peter's house?

Did not the little boy bear Peter's unlikable name? Had she not nailed her antipathies to the cross of remorse? Were not her nerves racked each day by the tortures of the violin she had elected that Peter's namesake should learn to play upon? Had she not named the very cats in remembrance of the fiddle masters of the world? Then Betty, laughing Betty, smiled as she heard the child's feet scampering in their play over head.

She was the same Betty that she had been years and years ago, full of little whimsical conceits, child and woman both in one. By and by the pattering footsteps died away and the log burned down on her hearth and the snow blew and flew and beat at her panes. The early twilight crept on, and Betty alone there heard nothing but the ticking of the tall clock over on the landing.

Would Peter ever knock at the door of her side of the old house? As she knelt that was the cry of her bitterness. She felt the Christmaside coming, people were counting on the days that it already, the little lad was wistful over it. Ah, would the blessed day of all birthdays fetch to her the gift she craved?

While Betty knelt alone there, above little Peter was having a very fine time, indeed, inducing the cats to the most lively games of hide and seek, over and under and in and out, of all the odd dark corners a garret alone can afford.

Ole Bull had separated himself from his friends; he had discovered a bit of string hanging from some keys on a wooden peg, just enough in reach of his claws to set the keys jingling and the string flying, whetting his joy more and more.

Little Peter, attracted, of course, came over to look at the keys. He had looked at so many things already, and he had put on a pair of Hessian boots and spurs, in which his small legs were swimming, and a soldier cap of Peter Van Zandt's which covered his ears like a basket, and he was brandishing a rusty gun over Paganini and Stradivarius, when Supple, it being Thursday and her day for what she called "redding up the garret," beheld him as she mounted the steep stairs, her head popping through the well hole just as the little boy was carefully attempting to fit one of the keys to the door of the pantry under the eaves.

Miss Bridget Supple's eyes danced. She paused, leaning on her broom handle, and actually seemed to feast upon the grotesque little figure in the army boots and cap, its busy fingers at the key and lock.

"That don't fit in there, Master Peter," said the serving woman. "No? But where, then, Brigitte, eh?" "Nobody knows but me, sir."

"But you will tell, yes?" "Maybe so," Miss Supple sat upon the top step while the three pussy cats collected around her, purring and arching their backs; they knew who fed them very well indeed. "Will you promise not to tell any livin' soul, sir, if I tell you?"

"Grandmamma!" little Peter said tentatively and in mild reproach. She paused, leaning on her broom handle, and actually seemed to feast upon the grotesque little figure in the army boots and cap, its busy fingers at the key and lock.

"Not madame, my grandmamma?" Supple still shook her head. "Not yet, Master Peter, by and by."

"Oh, very well. Now tell me." "Sure, sir; why do you want to know that?" Miss Supple was adjusting sundry matters in her mind and was taking time.

"Because," the little boy said, choosing words as he had to do, since he had been brought up in a foreign country, "because, Brigitte, I am like a king of France; that one who was also the locksmith, you know."

Miss Supple nodded. She didn't know, but what did that matter. "The king loved to fit the keys. So I—much better than the violin. Now, where shall I go to fit the big one?"

"Miss Supple rose. While the boy had been speaking she had communed with her saints, and to her simple soul they had seemed to speak. Bridget said, "Come on, sir," and together the middle-aged woman in her turkey red corset, the little boy in his Hessian boots and army cap, followed by the three pussy cats, descended the garret stairs, then the lower flight, cautiously, tip-toe. Supple with her finger on her lips, as they passed the mistress' door. Down to the wide hall and across to the big archway. Supple drew aside the heavy curtains and disclosed the large mahogany door. She pointed to the keyhole and the bow on the turkey red wagged expressively.

"It's there that one fits, Master Peter," Bridget whispered.

"Shall I, then, fit it and turn it?" the little boy whispered back, the army cap of Peter Van Zandt dropping into his eyes and over his round, red cheeks.

Paganini at this juncture mewed. Miss Supple exclaimed, still under her breath: "Whist! No, sir; not now, not now." "But when?" "The child looked earnestly at her, waiting, the big key in his hand, ready."

"But when?" Yes, that was the question Supple could not answer, and the sparkling, expectant, excited child's eyes waited on her reply.

"Well, Master Peter, it's your own Bridget has led you here to the sill of it, but it's your own self, sir, must say when you'll fit the key to that lock."

The child, confronted with his first draft of real responsibility, drew back, then in manly fashion started forward to fit the key then and there.

Bridget held his arm. "Not now, Master Peter, not now." Supple was terrified at her own audacity.

Little Peter thus withheld, said, "But, Brigitte, what is on the other side of this door?"

Bridget Supple, brought face to face with a concrete problem, clapped a hand to the turkey red for assistance. To be sure, Supple had an excellent intelligence stowed away back of the turkey red somewhere.

After a slight pause. "Sure, Master Peter, I don't exactly know, but I'm thinkin' it's happiness, sir, that's lyin' on the other side of that door."

"Do you?" cried the child excitedly. "Happiness for grandmamma also?" "Sure I do."

"Brigitte—the little boy drew near to her, holding the key tight—'do you fancy I should unlock that door and find happiness for Mme. Grandmamma before Christmas, eh?'"

"I do, sir; that same, before Christmas, some evenin', Master Peter, when madam is readin' or writin' above or when she's gone up to Bloomin'dale to visit Miss De Peyster."

"Brigitte, I will! You will see! I will, foi de la Quereau, unlock and find the happiness for grandmamma." He put the key in his jacket pocket, and Bridget went into the pantry to confer a bit with Shaddie.

"CHAPTER XI. What Peter Van Zandt Saw in the Parade Ground."

NOT very many days after the little boy had found the key, to happiness hanging on the wooden peg in the garret he was playing snowballs in the park, while his grandmother sat on one of the benches and watched him. It was not too cold for this; one of the crisp, mellow days, with sunshine through a yellow veil of mist from the two rivers and not a breeze to stir the leaves beneath one's tread. Betty was facing the north side. Looking up, she could see the house she was born in, with its brick and marble front, and its small square panes, pink with the curious color touch of time. Little Peter came bounding up to her.

"Grandmamma, your letter! We have not posted it, and Ursule and Marie will be thinking you forget them if it doesn't get to Limoges, by Christmas. Shall I take it to the box, yes?"

"To be sure! I did forget it! And, Pierre, you had better take it over to the Broadway box, dear, you know—the one on the corner by Grace church. It will go more quickly, perhaps, from there."

"I will, I will run all the way for Ursule and Marie to have their Christmas letter."

"No, don't run. I will wait, or if I don't, I will go straight home. If you want to play here awhile longer you may."

"Yes, yes!" The child ran off and posted the letter. As he turned from the box he paused a moment and stared at the church, took a few steps toward the iron railing and peered through. The path looked pleasant to Peter De la Quereau. It was possibly because it was in a sense forbidden.

His hand was on the gate latch, and he was bound in when some one said, "Good morning, sir!"

The little boy turned to see his new friend waiting for the stage sleigh to come along and take him downtown.

"Good morning, monsieur. I was just going into this church, but I will not."

"Do you want to go in?" asked the man in some astonishment, for the desire was clearly in the child's renunciation. Little Peter inclined his head.

"Why, may I ask?" "Because grandmamma will not. We go always to St. Clement's, in Amity street, you know. This is a large, splendid church. I wish to see it. It is like France."

"Go in, by all means, then," Mr. Van Zandt opened the gate himself.

"I am not sure," the little boy hesitated. "Grandmamma says my grand-

papa, one of them, goes there, and he would not wish to see us there?"

Van Zandt stood still a second. Then for even this little child there was already the strife, the unhappiness of some family discord.

"No?" "No?" "Then go in and see it and go home and tell your grandmother, eh? How will that do?" He smiled down into the troubled face.

Pierre put out a small, mottened hand to his friend and said, "With you I go in."

But Mr. Van Zandt, imperceptibly perhaps, started back; then, looking into the upturned face so full of trust he relaxed and answered, "You see sir, I have not been inside of a church in over twenty-six years."

The little boy stared and ejaculated, "But, come, monsieur, yes?"

The man was still reluctant, although they were together going up the path. A moment more and they were ascending the steps, little Peter tugging with all his might at the door, looked over his small shoulder and said, "Please help me, monsieur."

And "monsieur" helped him. They went in, and hand in hand they walked upon the aisle that Peter had walked down with his bride on his arm so long, so long ago.

"It should be to kneel down, monsieur, yes?"

Peter Van Zandt knelt down beside the little boy. Presently they rose and came out together.

"You see, your grandpa was not there, eh, M. le Marquis?" Van Zandt laughed.

"No, monsieur. Look, look! Already the Christmas trees are for sale!" The child ran down and through the gate to the street. At the corner a vendor was hawking a wagonful of evergreen and fir. Little Peter clapped his hands for joy. He had now forgotten his grandfather and the church, immersed in the first signs he had seen in this new country of the customs and mirth of the one where he was born.

"You are to have a Christmas tree, I suppose?" "But, no, monsieur, not this year. Grandmamma thinks Christmas is very sad." He glanced up into the strong and tender face of the man beside him. "Do you think that way, too, monsieur?"

"Yes, sir; I'm afraid I do." His lips were set.

Little Peter stared up wonderingly. "That is strange, you and grandmamma both." Then the little boy suddenly remembered the key to happiness and also recalled that he must hurry away.

"Goodby, monsieur. I must go back to the parade ground. Grandmamma waits for me."

"I'll go with you." In some vague fashion Peter clung to the skirts of this little boy. They walked briskly back to the parade ground. Little Peter surveyed the scene.

"Grandmamma is not here; she did not wait. I have been too long. Goodby, monsieur, I must hurry. I ask your pardon, I promised."

The child ran away, catching a slide as he went on a frozen pool, his curls flying, and, to be sure, that key to happiness jingling in his pocket, with his top and knife and pennies.

Peter Van Zandt watched him quite out of sight. Had he wished, indeed, to meet the grandmother of his little new friend? Had that been why he had come back with this boy? No, no. It was charming to encounter this charming and original child, but his grandmother! The old lady in the stiff brocade with the reticule full of spectacles and knitting needles and lozenges; no.

Then, as he decided to cross the park quite to the west side and take a car down as far as Vesey street, Peter Van Zandt, as he went, saw a figure in brown sitting on a bench near the wooden paling at the north end. A lady in a russet gown and boots, a large milk cape with cuffs and small muff to match; on her brown hair a cap of the same fur, brown gloves too. She rose, he saw that her figure was slim and graceful; she turned her face his way, although she could not see him for the tree that had prevented little Peter from seeing her.

It was his wife, Betty Van Zandt, Betty as of old, resplendent in the rich bursting bloom of her cheeks and lips, the softness and dazzle of her blue eyes, the curve of her chin, the slope of her shoulders, the long supple line of her, from throat to heel. Peter stood perfectly still for a second, then started toward her, then shrunk away. Betty had left him. Could he intrude or force himself upon her? Take advantage of the open freedom of the streets to address or approach her?

By no means. He stood afar watching her as she apparently watched or waited for some one else. For whom? Suddenly with startling accuracy Van Zandt recalled Ashleigh. Pshaw! Ashleigh was safely married. Some one else, then, for whom Betty watched, with whom she was going to walk and talk. The keen steel of jealousy struck to his heart. She was, though, after all of it, his wife. And his eyes flashed as the little boy had flashed when his grandmother had cautioned him as to strangers.

Betty was beautiful, more radiant, vibrant with life and vividness than ever. The lines, if there were any in her face, were the little lines of laughter, and her glorious eyes looked forth into the world with all the glad expectancy of youth. Could a man expect a woman like that not to be loved, not to love? Absurd! She was made for love. He turned on his heel and left the park. A hand organ was droning out "When This Cruel War Is Over" at the corner, and all the buttons stuck between the palms, dented in the breeze. He paused there and looked at them vacantly. "Annie Laurie," "Ben Bolt" and the rest. Then he glanced back to his own house. He saw smoke coming from the chimneys. He saw the pigeons

wheeling above the stable in the rear of the garden. The stable? To be sure, the stalls were empty. Poppet and Peacock, the roans that had fetched Betty and him back from Grace church to St. Nicholas on their wedding day, had years since been sent to a farm on Long Island.

Peter Van Zandt, keeping himself well in hand, keeping his face averted from her, made another turn, went back to Broadway and walked all the way down to Tattersall's.

A few days after that the little boy came rushing, tumbling in from the garden up to Betty's room.

"Grandmamma, grandmamma! There are horses in the stable—two speckled, and a coachman, and they are in the stalls and their names are Poppet and Peacock, just as the names of the old horses you have told me about!"

Betty looked up from her crochet work. "Pierre!" she exclaimed. "You must be mistaken."

"But, no, grandmamma, I am not. And they are your horses. The groom told me so, and it is the surprise you make for me, is it?"

"No, no, no!" Betty cried out impetuously. "No, dear, it is only that the owner of the stable has probably rented it to some one to whom these new horses belong."

"Grandmamma—the little boy spoke with some impatience—"I tell you the groom says they are your new horses. And, there! I hear prancing on the snow before the house!" He darted to the window. "See!" Rushing back to drag his grandmother with him. "Look! There they are! Look, look!"

"I see." She saw the coupe put into thorough order, its white linings renewed and a pair of straw-roans clumping their bits and gayly dancing in the snow before the door.

"Magnificent!" cried the child. "Yours, grandmamma! Perhaps Santa Claus sends them early because he will be so busy with so many chimneys?"

Betty shook her head and drew away. "Is that what we will go out in now?" The child pressed her eagerly. "I am sure the coachman expects it, for he put the warm soapstones in for your feet, yes?"

"No, dear. It is a mistake." She went back to her chair and her woolwork.

Yes, that was it—a mistake. Did Peter Van Zandt think that she was craving his horses and his carriage? Did he think that she would accept gifts now? It was true that she had come back to his house. That was because of the little lad, of course—the little lad whom she could not find in her soul as yet to reveal to him.

Solely the little lad? Then Betty's crochet needle dropped and something briny, bitter, fell upon the afghan she was making for little Peter's bed.

If Peter Van Zandt could not, did not want to knock at the door of her half of the old house, she could not ride in Peter Van Zandt's coupe.

"Then it is not for us to get in and promenade to Central Park or Fifth avenue, eh, grandmamma?" The child spoke with resignation.

"No, dear; no, no. It is a mistake. Grandmamma knows, you will enjoy riding on your hobbyhorse up in the garret, I am sure, just as much as in the coupe."

Little Peter shook his head. "But you, grandmamma, you have no hobbyhorse. What will you do?"

"Just as before."

"When you go 'way up to Bloomingdale to Miss Ann's," he sighed over the lost joys of real horses as to be preferred to wooden ones.

Betty laughed. "I will ride in the horse car to Thirty-second street, and there the stage waits to take me to Bloomingdale, you remember?"

Peter the little nodded. "Yes, Mme. Grandmamma, a very pale, miserable stage, with the horses thin and smoking in the sunshine, without blankets—I remember." Pierre de la Quereau had gone back to the window by this time and his brilliant little face was pressed against the pane.

"Grandmamma, what is a mistake?" he at last cried out pertinently, even angrily, his small fist clenched ready to fight mistakes, whatever they might be.

"Something wrong that some one has done—that is always a mistake, dear one."

"Who, then, did something wrong?" he asked interestingly, coming to her side.

"I did."

"You, Mme. Grandmère!" His large, incredulous eyes were fixed upon Betty's face. Then he saw the shine of tears, and his little arms went about her in coaxing fondness. He forgot the strawberry roans and the coupe. Presently, too, he felt the key of happiness jingling in his pocket, and he said:

"Never mind, grandmamma; I know something," with importance—"something excellent and very extensive as well."

She smiled. "And what is that, dear?" "By and by you shall know. Not yet. It will come, I know."

"I will wait."

"It is not comfortable to wait," remarked the little boy, balancing it in his mind whether to tell his grandmother or not about the key to happiness.

Then he recollected quickly that his promise had been given to Miss Supple not to tell, and he moved uneasily on his ottoman until Betty answered, "After one has waited twenty-six years it is not so hard, dear."

"Oh!" Little Peter rolled this over and over in his thoughts until finally he concluded that he would not wait any longer to fit the key. Christmas must be near by. It was to be before Christmas was Christmas?

"Grandmamma, when will be the Christmas?"

"In three days, dear."

And he had agreed with Supple that it was to be fitted when Mme. Grandmamma should be very busy with her books and pens or else when she had gone to Bloomingdale.

"Grandmamma, when will you go to Bloomingdale?"

"I'm going up there on Christmas eve, dear, just for a little while, to have dinner with Miss Amy and Mr. Davies, and afterward to St. Michael's church."

The little boy's face fell.

Betty saw it and undivined the cause. "Grandmamma is not going to take you up there with her because there are no little boys and girls to play with. On that night you are to go to the Ogdens' for a very merry time."

Little Peter now forgot the key to happiness completely. "Will Miss Polly Maniere be there, grandmamma?"

"I expect so. She is going to marry Mr. Lawrence Ogdens, you know."

"Then I will not go!" The little boy stamped his copper toed shoe vehemently.

"But, Pierre, why not?" "Because, grandmamma, if—if I were Cain and Mr. Lawrence Ogdens Abel, I would kill him."

"Peter Van Zandt de la Quereau, I am ashamed of you!"

"Yes, Mme. Grandmère, I would." "You must not say or think such things. Why do you?"

"Because—the child almost suffocated with his emotion—"Miss Polly is which I love and have promised to marry me, and it is wicked for Mr. Lawrence to steal her from me!" As usual, when deeply moved, the child's use of his second language was perturbed.

"But, Pierre, dear child, Miss Polly was only in fun. Don't you know you are a little boy and not to marry any one for years and years?"

did, and told him what lay on the other side, dared no more. In fact, as she considered if the little boy ever recollects about the key at all, wondered if today he would strive to emulate that king of whom he had spoken, she trembled in her felt slippers and was more than usually morose with her butler.

Shaddie, for his part, sat in his pantry, cleaning the silver which served for both sides of the house; Bridget was helping him; neither one spoke, polishing away at trays, spoons, ladles, knives, teaspoons, cream jars and the like. But before long both heard footsteps coming down the stairs; heard the soft patter of the cats' tread on the marble hall; heard the little boy's ad-munition.

"Now, Messieurs Ole Bull, Paganini, Stradivarius, it is for you to be quiet. No, no, playing with the strings of my boots; it is that we go to unlock happiness and let him out. Hush-h-h!"

The little boy crossed the wide hall; Bridget put the pantry door ajar just wide enough to let one of her eyes peer out; she beheld him peep aside the heavy curtain, holding it with his feet; beheld him put the key in the keyhole and try to turn it.

The key was rusty; the lock was stiff with age and dinner; the little boy tugged and wrenched and pulled to no purpose. He had on the army boots, and the army cap was falling about his ears. Finally he took the key out and turned away with it to the dining room; he poured some oil from the cist to a saucer and dipped his key in it; and then, the cats following his every motion as cats will, for they are an animal possessed of intense curiosity, Pierre de la Quereau returned to the mahogany door and the curtain slipped back into its place behind him.

Bridget Supple could no longer see him, but she heard the lock give, the key grind in the hole, the mahogany door creak as the little boy doubtless pushed it open with all his strength. Stradivarius, Ole Bull and Paganini purred and sidled about him as he sojourned at least the unmaking of the door to happiness.

"The Lord love us, Shad!" exclaimed Miss Supple as she fell away from her reign of vantage, "but the little matter has unlocked the door between!"

He had. His love as to that of France who loved to sit back had stood him in good stead. Pierre had recollected that his majesty had dealt with just such a refractory boy at Amiens with a whiff off from his royal breakfast table.

The mahogany door opened toward the little boy's side of the house. Once opened there confronted him a shower of dust and impalpable dirtiness, and the heavy curtains, of course, on Van Zandt's side. He extended his hands; there was no discouragement or fear in his mind. He had yet to learn that any one deceived or told lies. It was but to go on and discover what he was looking for. Little Peter, then, with the direct, unflinching hand of childhood, pushed against the barrier and found that it yielded. It was also a curtain of cloth. He beat it back, his energies concentrated on the moment which he believed had arrived, when he would find "happiness."

(To Be Continued.)

Announces Postoffice Choice. From Wednesday's Daily.

According to dispatches from Washington, the president, among some 270 names of post-masters sent to the senate, included that of E. C. Morgan of this city for the position of post-master here. The senate will probably take up the matter and confirm the nomination today.

For Sale. One section, 610 acres wheat land, in Franklin county, Washington. Land rolling, but not rough. All plowed spring of 1912; no waste land. First crop wheat 25 bushels per acre raised in 1907. Located 2 miles north of Kahlstons; 2 railroads. All fenced. Price, \$22.50 per acre, on easy terms. Good opportunity for farmer with boys who want large farm. Owner an invalid. Must sell. For particulars write owner, W. C. Sampson, P. O. Box 325, Platts-mouth, Neb. 12-11-1913-w



Peter Van Zandt Kneel Down Beside the Little Boy.

Advertisement for W. W. Harp's Whiskey. Includes text: 'Yas Suh, Boss. It's the same old whiskey, suh. Time don't never seem to change dat. OLD W. W. HARP'S WHISKEY' and an illustration of a bottle.