

EASTER LILIES

By LUCILE WINGATE

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"I 'low nothin' can't hurt Tobia no more! Cold ways an' looks can't hurt poor Tobia no more! It's jest two years to-day sence he died; but I ha'n't forgot of others es ought'er remember hev."

"Wantin' to trim up the meetin'-house! Fur my part, I think it'd look more like grievein' an' rememberin' to lay them air lilies as a offerin' o' love on Tobia's grave than to hev 'em a noddin' an' aswayin' afore the minister, distractin' his mind on Easter."

"But I promised them in the winter," began the other woman, a despairing look coming into her eyes. "I won't stay, mother, I'll jest take 'em over to the meetin'-house an' give 'em to Mrs. Lackey, and then I'll come right back."

Mrs. Toon rested her head against the hard brown back of the old rocker and closed her eyes as if the sight of the woman before her was more than she could endure.

Her face was as homely and brown as the old rocker itself. Hard, unyielding lines had formed a network around the mouth and between the cold, pale eyes that had never looked with anything but suspicion and severity upon her daughter-in-law, who had married her stupid son Tobia out of gratitude for the home he had given her. Her son, Tobia, was the only creature the hard old woman had ever loved and whose grave lay covered with a winding sheet of snow this Easter-tide.

The younger woman stood silently before this august presence, nervously clasping and unclasping her thin white hands, from which she had removed her wedding ring a few hours previously. She felt as she stood there that she would gladly lay down her life if she might stay just five minutes in the little church that lay like a black patch in a silver flood far down the road.

She must see—her heart beat so loud she was afraid the statue in the motionless chair would hear it. She took several steps toward the door. Mrs. Toon suddenly opened her eyes and sat bolt upright.

"So you air goin', Sarepty?" she said, raising her hard old voice till it cracked in her throat and brought on a coughing fit. Sarepty suddenly knelt by her side and took the hard old hands caressingly between her own.

"Oh, mother!" she said, "don't you think I'd better go? I promised, an' I'd like to keep my word; an' then Mrs. Lackey's countin' on 'em so."

"I ha'n't got nothin' to say—I'm like dear Tobia thataway," whimpered the old woman. "I reckon you'd best keep your word, though," she continued, "but hurry along, fur the sun will soon be down, an' don't stay an' mingle in the frolickin'. I never did b'lieve in frolickin' myself, an' then there's poor, dear Tobia—"

But Sarepty did not hear; she was



Placed a Lily on the Snow-Covered Grave.

fast speeding down the road, wafted along by the wind like a thistle, she was so slight a thing.

She seemed in her somber dress like a wraith as she sped along the deserted road that lay like a silver ribbon in the gathering gloom. When she had gone about a quarter of a mile, she put her hand into her bosom and drew out a bit of looking-glass wrapped in a piece of paper. She let her shawl slip from her head onto her shoulders and, turning her face toward the setting sun, held up the glass.

The wind caught her rich brown hair that seemed too heavy for her small head and blew it into little ringlets around her pale face. Her wide, brown eyes had a hungry, frightened look and seemed full of unshed tears. She gazed into the glass for several minutes with a questioning, imploring look, then with a sudden, desperate movement, she flung it far from her and sped along.

The unclosed windows of the church, sending rich, warm radiance out into the gloom, seemed to Sarepty like the gateway of heaven. Some of the beams fell on the graves that clustered around the old church, and flooded with gold one far removed from all the rest.

Sarepty opened the gate and almost flew toward that golden grave. She

fell on her knees in the snow and placed a lily on the snow-covered grave of the sleeper. A moment later she had entered the church.

"Here's Sarepty with the lilies," exclaimed Mrs. Lackey, as Sarepty gilded in and stood tremblingly by the old sheetiron stove. The lights blazed her at first, then with returning vision two figures alone became visible to her. A man was standing on a step-ladder looking down into the eyes of a beautiful girl who was reaching a trailing vine toward him.

The man, attracted by Sarepty's burning gaze, turned suddenly and saw a slight, dark-robed figure holding a bunch of lilies to her breast.

Sarepty's heart gave a hot leap along her breast and then stood still. It seemed to her that it would never move again. She felt only a great calmness after the burning fever of the past few days.

"They're just lovely," commented Mrs. Lackey, taking the lilies from Sarepty's trembling hands. "Prudence and Mr. Dean air a-goin' to arrange them. Did you know John Dean 'ud come home fer good an' all? You used to be lovers like, didn't you, afore you took up with Tobia Toon? But surely you're not goin' now, Sarepty?" she exclaimed, as Sarepty, without replying, gathered her shawl closely around her and turned toward the door.

"Yes—mother's alone, an' I guess I'd better go," she softly replied, wondering the while how it was possible to talk with that awful weight on her breast. It seemed as though Tobia had laid his cold dead hand on her heart.

"I wish you'd jist dust them books an' pile 'em up in the corner," Mrs. Lackey continued. "The young folks air a-goin' to arrange the flowers, an' the dustin' an' sich like falls to us as air married an' settled down."

Sarepty took up the old dust brush and commenced to dust and arrange the books. Prudence Lackey's laughing tones and the questioning ones of the man on the ladder fell on her ear as her trembling hands busied themselves among the books. When the last one had been carefully gone over, she lay the brush on a chair and quietly stole out.

It was quite dark when she passed out into the cool air, and she shivered as she reached the churchyard, unconsciously quickening her steps.

She walked quickly along, saying to herself over and over again that she was glad he was happy; it was but natural that he had forgotten her; she hadn't expected him to remember, it all happened so long ago. She had never realized before how beautiful Prudence Lackey was, nor how pale and faded she must seem in comparison.

An overmastering quietude took possession of her; with such oppression it was impossible to think clearly. She was only conscious of a dazed feeling and a desire to be alone.

She had gone about a quarter of a mile when the sound of some one running smote on her ear. She grew afraid, terrified at she knew not what. Perhaps it was Tobia come to upbraid her!

The wind caught her shawl and bore it away; she turned to pursue it, when the figure of a man running at full speed became visible. He was holding in his hand some white thing that waved and fluttered in the wind.

She felt her strength going and the solitary lamp in her mother-in-law's window seemed so far away. She managed to reach a big thorn tree growing by the roadside and sank down, unable to move or speak.

A faint moon had risen and Sarepty could see the man but a few yards away. It was Tobia with the lily she had laid on his breast! The next minute she had fainted.

When she came to she was lying on some one's breast wrapped in a man's soft overcoat, and a voice that sent the blood leaping through her veins was murmuring:

"Retta, darling, Retta! why did you run away from me? When I tacked that vine I went to find you and you had gone." He held a bunch of lilies before her happy eyes, exclaiming: "See, here are your lilies. I stole them because they were yours."

There was a wedding on Easter and the bride wore a bunch of warm, fragrant lilies on her breast that her husband had stolen from the meeting house, while the solitary lily on Tobia Toon's grave was as cold as the heart that lay beneath.

PAID FOR HIS FAULT.

Little Girl's Idea of the Punishment Visited on Adam.

In the latest number of "Heimgarten," which has just been published at Graz, Pastor Rosegger tells this story: "I visited a school one day where Bible instruction was a part of the daily course, and in order to test the children's knowledge asked some questions. One class of little girls looked particularly bright, and I asked the tallest one: 'What sin did Adam commit?'"

"He ate forbidden fruit."
"Right. Who tempted Adam?"
"Eve."
"Not really Eve, but the serpent. And how was Adam punished?"

"The girl hesitated and looked confused. Behind her sat a little eight-year-old, who raised her hand and said: 'Please pastor, I know.'
"Well, tell us; how was Adam punished?"
"He had to marry Eve."—Exchange.

Pensions for French Actors.

The French Comedie Francaise is the only theater which pensions its actors and actresses. After 20 years' service they are entitled to \$1,000 a year.

VARIED USES OF THE ONION.

Homely and Strong Smelling Vegetable Not Without Virtue.

The ancients frowned on the onion as a food and classed it with garlic and leeks, as of an acrid nature, of unwholesome juices. "When twice boiled they give little nourishment, but when unboiled they do not nourish at all," says Paulus Aegineta, and Burton, advising as to the diet of the melancholy, dismisses the onion as troublesome to the head. The people at large pay no heed to these sayings. To the man who smiles at the conflicting opinion of dietists, the onion is beautiful, when plainly boiled. As a child he was taught that it was good for a cold. These same ancients thought highly of it as a medicine. It occasions a rapid growth of hair, it breaks hard tumors; chewed, it is beneficial in paralysis of the tongue; it is eminently rubefacient; its juice is useful in suffusion and dimness of vision from thick humors. Discordias recommends it as a cataplasm with salt, rue and honey for the bite of a mad dog. There are many to-day who believe that onion juice is of assistance in deafness. Italians in the north end eat the insides of little onions and stuff them in aching ears of their children. They leave them there for weeks. An onion put under the pillow will bring dreams of the loved one. The thickness of the skin determines the mildness or severity of the coming winter. But to dream of onions is a bad sign. In some countries it presages sickness.

MR. BOGGS KNEW THE AMOUNT.

Possibly He Had Often Computed the Water He Carried.

It was by no means a holiday task for Amos Boggs to carry pail after pail of water from the old well through the orchard and across the henyard to the kitchen, where Mrs. Boggs washed for the family and a dozen or so of customers. Therefore he was in no mood to enjoy questions.

"How many years have you been at this sort of things?" asked the elderly person of wealth, on whose white skirts Mrs. Boggs was then expending her energy and the heat of a heavy iron.

"Ten years," responded Mr. Boggs, striding on with his pails.

"Dear, dear!" said the woman, in a commiserating tone. "Why, how much water do you suppose you've carried in that time?"

"I've carried all that's been in the well during that time, and isn't there now, ma'am," and Mr. Boggs entered the kitchen and set the pails down with as near a thump as the nature of their contents would permit.—Youth's Companion.

Only Mortal, After All.

"When I went to church last Sunday," said a young woman visiting in Washington, "I sat directly behind a high executive officer whom I have regarded as almost more than mortal. I tried not to be rude and stare at him too much, but I could not help my eyes wandering toward him occasionally. I glanced at him just once, near the end of the sermon, and what do you think he was doing? He was yawning, and he yawned a large and vigorous yawn, which came on him so suddenly that he did not have time to hide it behind his hand. I must confess that I was delighted. My veneration for the executive officer is just as great as it ever was, but I am glad I found out with my own eyes that he is subject to ordinary human weaknesses and cannot help yawning during a sermon."

German Shipping Trade.

The activity of the German shipping trade is demonstrated by the fact that the number of vessels built in the empire in 1906 was 760, of 398,151 registered tons, against 646 of 310,771 registered tons in 1905, and 535 of 267,891 registered tons in 1904. Among the vessels built in 1906 were 11 men-of-war of 30,831 registered tons. In addition to the foregoing, there were built in foreign countries, on orders for German firms, 119 vessels of 122,845 registered tons.

Children's Favorite Toys.

A hundred and thirty-two school-boys of Paris and 72 girls were invited to describe their preferences in the way of toys. Among the former 31 voted for a railway train, 23 for tin soldiers, ten for steam engines, nine for building bricks and eight each for toy typewriters and mechanical horses. Forty girls—a solid majority—declared without hesitation that a doll was superior to any other implement of recreation. The super-child seems, happily, a long way off.

Historical Fragment.

P. T. Barnum had just added the woolly horse to his wonderful collection of curiosities.

"That's an entirely new kink in horses," he said.

Regretting that the animal's wool was not finer, so it could show fur, and thus be to some extent a forerunner of the automobile, he instructed his press agent to send the news of his find to his friend, the editor of the New York Herald.

When the Band Played "Dixie."

Judge Sam White of Baker City, the Tom Taggart of Oregon Democracy, a few years ago threw a five-dollar hat through a skylight 75 feet from the ground in Baker City when the band started up the tune of "Dixie."—Pendleton East Oregonian.

Miss Margaret's Wedding Dress

By INA BREVOORT ROBERTS

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Except for the twittering of the birds the little country churchyard was very still as Miss Margaret laid the wreath she had brought upon her lover's grave.

Twenty-five years had gone by since John Grant had closed his eyes in her arms, and in that time his sweetheart had allowed no anniversary of his death to pass without placing flowers on the grass mound that marked the spot which held all that was earthly of the man she loved.

"Miss Margaret is faithful," said the older people in the village, who remembered her as a gentle, lovely girl with the light of a happy love in her blue eyes, and after the loss that ended her pretty romance, as a still, sad-faced woman.

Only two days in the year did she consecrate to her sorrow—the anniversary of John's death and, following it, the day that was to have seen her married.

On the former she placed flowers on her lover's grave; on the latter Miss Margaret took from their tissue wrappings the wedding gown of sheeny satin, the filmy veil, the snowy gloves and slippers she had never worn.

If the day were fine she hung the dress before an open window to let the spring breeze smooth out any wrinkles. Then, lovingly and carefully, she wrapped the things again, in fresh paper, with a bit of wax in each package to keep its contents white.

It was of the morrow's labor of love that Miss Margaret was thinking as she paused in the quiet churchyard, where the setting sun shone with serene splendor and a faint breeze swayed the grass that between the graves was blue with periwinkle, and here and there a late violet.

"It's hard to have to be married in muslin, and not fine muslin at that," the voice said. "I don't often mind being poor; even at graduation I didn't complain at being the worst dressed person in the class, but it does seem as if when a girl is married she ought to have pretty clothes for once in her life."

"Yes, it does," replied another voice, like the first one, and yet different; Miss Margaret guessed that the speaker were sisters. "If the crops hadn't turned out so badly last fall you might have a silk dress. Why don't you wait another year? We mightn't be so poor then?"

"I—we—he doesn't want to wait," said the first speaker. "Besides, you



"Why Don't You Pray for What You Want?"

know I would not buy a lot of things I could never wear afterward even if I had the money in my hand. Do you think I could be extravagant with father and mother's hard-earned dollars? No, indeed. But if I could only have a white satin dress and a veil, and white gloves and slippers." The words were followed by a sigh.

Miss Margaret leaned forward a little and, peering between the trees, managed without being seen by them, to get a glimpse of the two girls. She recognized them as Farmer Edgcomb's daughters, and remembered having heard that Margaret, the younger, was shortly to be married.

"Why don't you pray for what you want?" the older sister said at this moment. "That's what mother says to do, and that's if it's best for us, our desires are always granted."

"Oh, I know," returned the other somewhat impatiently. "But I'd be just as likely to get it as the things I want. Nothing short of a miracle could get me that dress and veil and those gloves and slippers. And the day of miracles is over."

"I'd pray just the same if I were you," maintained the older sister stoutly. "I always do, and I've had the things that seemed just as unattainable come to me in the most unexpected way."

"Well, I won't," declared the bride-elect. "I can't help wanting those things, but I can help praying for what I know I ought not to have. Come, we must go. I'm glad we live near the cemetery, aren't you? It's such a nice place to come to think things over. Or to talk them over," the speaker concluded as she tucked

her arm in her sister's and the two moved away.

Miss Margaret responded somewhat absently to the salutations of the people she passed as she drove home. She was pondering the mysterious ways of the Providence which had given dainty wedding finery to her who was never to wear it, and had denied it to the other Margaret.

"She is the one who should have had those things," Miss Margaret thought, "and yet," she asked herself, "what would I have done without them, how borne the long, lonely years?"

Her wedding gown had seemed in some indefinable way to keep in mind the thought that she and John were to meet again. She had left instructions that she was to be dressed in it for her burial.

As she touched its shining folds next day Miss Margaret's thoughts kept recurring to the conversation she had overheard in the churchyard. It fretted her to think that the other Margaret must do without the things she longed for. A bride ought to have her every wish gratified, should be made the happiest of God's creatures.

An hour later Miss Margaret dressed for the street. Her mind during this interval had been the scene of a quiet, bitter combat, a struggle between her unselfish desire to do a beautiful act and a feeling that she could not bear to have other hands touch the treasures she had kept so long. The parting with her wedding clothes was a tragedy in the lonely woman's life.

Pleased with the invitation to spend a day in the "great house," although a little surprised at it, Margaret Edgcomb chatted gayly as she drove by Miss Margaret's side along the country roads and through the village.

Ever afterward that visit seemed like a dream to the girl. The dim twilight of the stately rooms, the quaint silver and china, the highbred charm of her hostess, all contributed to an atmosphere she felt, but could not have described.

When, after luncheon was over, Miss Margaret took her guest into her own room, it seemed to the young girl that she was entering a sanctuary, and that it was another person than herself who watched her hostess unlock a cedar chest that stood against the wall and from many layers of white paper take out a long tulle veil, white gloves and slippers and a dress of satin, to which age had given the tint of ivory.

Dazed and bewildered, the one Margaret listened while the other Margaret told the story of the twilight hour in the churchyard, and afterwards in a maze of wonder tried to realize that the things were to be hers if they would fit. Both pairs of hands trembled as the old maid helped the young one to don the bridal array.

Strange enough, the things fitted. And yet, not strange either; what miracle was ever incomplete?

The robing finished, the girl stood, shy and blushing before the pier mirror, scarcely daring to lift her eyes to the vision in the glass.

"You look very lovely, and I am glad you are to have these things," Miss Margaret said softly.

The girl did not speak, and a terrible fear seized Miss Margaret's heart. Were her bitter struggle and cheerful sacrifice to go for naught? "Perhaps after all you may not care to have them," she said gently. "It may be that to you they seem ill-omened."

The bride-elect forgot her shyness, and moving forward, took the older woman's hands in hers. "Ill-omened!" she exclaimed. "Consecrated, rather. The wearing of them will seem a blessing on my marriage."

A deep peace fell upon Miss Margaret's spirit as she returned the pressure of the youthful fingers.

"Of course the dress is old style," she remarked tremulously, "but the pattern is large, so alterations can easily be made, and with new bows on the slippers—"

The other Margaret looked at her with something that was almost anger in her eyes.

"Alterations!" she exclaimed. "Do you think I would have a thing changed, a ribbon altered? Why, it would seem like profaning something sacred."

As she helped the girl take off the finery and the two packed it to be sent to the home of its new owner, Miss Margaret's heart was full of gratitude and tenderness toward the woman who had accepted her gift as gracefully and graciously as she had proffered it.

As she said good-bye to the young Margaret kissed the older one. "It all seems too good to be true," she murmured. "And to think I said the day of miracles was over."

Snubbed Completely.

Among the guests at a wedding breakfast in the country was one whose continued rudeness made him extremely objectionable to the rest of the company.

His conduct, though high unbearable, was put up with for some time, until he held up on his fork a piece of meat which had been served to him, and remarked in a voice of intended humor:

"Is this pig?" This immediately drew forth the query from a quiet-looking individual sitting at the other end of the table: "Which end of the fork do you refer to?"

Deaf and Dumb Bible Class.

Probably the most curious Bible class in the west of England is that of deaf-mutes which meets near Chalford, Gloucestershire. All the members are deprived of their senses of hearing and speech, and have to communicate and "talk" to each other by means of the deaf-mute alphabet.

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