

A Valentine Return

By SADIE OLCOTT

"What's the use of spending money for valentines with an army like this already at hand to cost nothing but a stamp?"

The words were spoken by Jimmy Emerson on the 13th day of February. He had gone to a box in his closet and taken out a bundle of valentines he had received the year before and was trying to remember from whom they had come.

"This one is a daisy. This lay window built out from the main part is a peach. If there's no mark on it I'm going to take the risk of using it."

He examined the valentine with a hand magnifying glass and, not finding any mark on it, laid it aside to send to his best girl. Then he selected another to send to his next best girl and in this way made use of not less than a dozen valentines.

On the valentine he sent to his best girl, Helen Strong, he wrote a couplet indicating that he was pining for an expression of her love, which, if received, he would treasure forever. "Forever" was the last word of the second line and rimed with "sever," the last word of the first line. He didn't disguise his handwriting, for he was proud of his couplet and didn't wish it or the beautiful valentine to go to waste.

Jimmy addressed, stamped and mailed his valentines early in the afternoon of the 13th of February. The next morning the postman brought him a batch of valentines. The first one he opened he recognized as one he had sent out himself the day before. There was an endorsement on it as follows:

My love for you is just as warm as when I sent you this just one year ago.

The blood mounted to Jim's cheek at being detected in using an old valentine.

"Better luck next time," he opened another.

The luck was certainly better, for he had never seen the inclosure before. The third and the fourth were also new to him. On the fifth, which was one he had sent, was an endorsement:

What did you send it back for? I don't want it.

Jim had grown somewhat callous by this time, but the truth is he was looking for his valentine from Helen Strong. Beside her name the rest were of very little importance. However, he opened them all without coming upon one that bore any trace whatever of having been sent by her.

"I'll get it by the next mail," he muttered and tossed them as he received on to a table from which they were destined later on to be broached into a waste paper basket. During the day he hunted about the house, and when he heard the postman's whistle he went to the door himself in eager expectancy of his valentine from Helen. But no valentine came. In the evening he called up on the telephone:

"Is that you, Helen?"

"I'm Jim."

"Got anything on hand this evening?"

"Well, I'll run in for a little while."

"Did you get many valentines today?"

"I sent you one. It was a beauty; cost \$2.50."

"Yes, mine was the one with the couplet."

"I'm glad you liked 'em."

"Yes, I flatter myself that protruding what I call it is very pretty."

"I didn't write anything under the Cupid."

"Can't you tell me what it was on the phone?"

"Well, I'll be over in a few minutes."

When Jimmy arrived he found Helen sitting by a table in her own private parlor with a stack of valentines beside her. Before she would answer any questions she insisted upon showing her love valentines. Jim took no interest in those that had been sent by any one except himself, but Helen forced him to look at every one of them and to take a lot of time in doing so. When the last one had been admired she took up Jim's valentine. She read the couplet over several times and said she hadn't believed that he could "write poetry like that." This made Jim very proud of himself.

"But, Jimmy," she said at last, "aren't you mistaken about the cost of the valentine?"

"Certainly not. It took all my savings."

"I'm sure it didn't cost so much."

"Why are you sure?"

"Because I bought it myself a year ago, and paper wasn't near so high then as it is today."

This was said with a twinkle in her eye.

Jim resolved to make a bluff.

"I've heard before this of girls accusing fellows of sending back their own valentines. You can't come that racket on me."

"What'll you bet?"

"Let what?"

"That I can't prove you sent me back a valentine I sent you."

"Make it a pound of candy against a box of cigars."

"Done."

Inserting the points of a hairpin under the Cupid in the valentine, she exposed the letters H. S.

"That stands for Helen Strong," Jimmy was game.

"Oh, it was easy enough for you to write those letters in there after you received the valentine."

Helen burst out laughing.

The first flank attack.

We have a record in the book of Joshua of "the stratagem whereby Al was taken." This tells us how 5,000 men were set in ambush behind the city, so that when the king of Al and his hosts were drawn forward to the fight a flank attack was made with overwhelming success by the warriors of Israel.

Not less disastrous was the fate of Leonidas and his brave little band of heroes when the Persians at Thermopylae, led by a traitor, took them in the rear, 480 B. C.

It was by a liberally misadvised general by 200 years later that Hannibal dealt one of the heaviest blows against the hosts of Rome. Having concealed his brother Mago, with 2,000 horses and foot soldiers, among the reeds, he enticed the Roman forces across the river Trebia. The legions fought bravely and held their own until Mago, rising from ambush, attacked them in the rear and routed them.

Hope and Faith.

Hope is the boy; a blind, headlong, pleasant fellow good to chase away with salt; Faith is the grave, experienced yet smiling man. Hope lives on ignorance; open-eyed Faith is built upon a knowledge of our life, of the tyranny of circumstance and the fallacy of human resolution. Hope looks for unqualified success, but Faith counts certain failure to be a form of victory. Hope is a kind of pagan, but Faith grew up in Christian days and early learned humility. In the one temper a man is indulgent that he can not spring up in a clasp to heights of elegance and virtue; in the other, out of a sense of his infirmities he is filled with confidence because a year has come and gone and he has still preserved some ray of honor.—Robert Louis Stevenson.

Crest of the Bloody Hand.

The noted English family of the Hottes has for its badge a bloody hand, and this sinister badge commemorates a wager that ended in a crime. Sir Thomas Hottle one day in 1612 was hunting. He invited his comrades home with him to dinner, and as he rode along he made a heavy bet on his cock's punctuality. But the cock failed him for once. When he got home dinner was not ready. The jeers of his companions at this failure, together with his huge loss in the matter of the wager, enraged him so that he ran into the kitchen, seized a cleaver and split the cock's head upon with it. Afterward his family, to keep their crime alive, adopted for its crest the bloody hand of the cock killer.

A Mild Threat.

The following story is told of late Dr. Timothy Dwight. In his early days, when he was a tutor in charge of student discipline at Yale—a sort of precursor, apparently—he was called out of his room by some midnight escapee. He was obliged as a matter of duty to pursue the disturbers, and with long legs he soon found himself gaining rapidly upon them. Thereupon a solemn voice rang out suddenly into the night:

"Gentlemen, if you don't run a little faster I shall be obliged to overtake you."

Hunting a Penny.

More than a year ago the balance in the Bank of England showed the loss of a penny. The working force was told to find it and has been working since without success. Governments are exact in their small financial dealings, and even in this country a post master has received a check for a cent.

Poor Business.

The milliner, as usual, is six weeks behind with his hat.

"Serves you right," growled her husband, the eminent magistrate. "You women will deliberately place a big construction order without a sign of a penny clause."

Very Likely.

"Saturu has eight moons."

"I wonder if moon songs are eight times as numerous with them as with us."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Keeps It There.

He—You're always wanting money.

My hands—in my pocket all the time. She—Yes, and it never comes out.

PRACTICAL HEALTH HINT.

Open the Windows.

Statistics show that the death rate for pneumonia, bronchitis, colds and grip is highest in January, February and March. These are the window shut months. The rate is lowest in July, August and September, when the windows are wide open. The rate rises again in October, November and December, when the windows are closing. It does not drop again until April, May and June, when the windows are again opening. The death rate for the four diseases in winter cannot be reduced to that prevailing in summer, but it can be materially lessened by a more general use of fresh air.

- No air that ever blew out of doors is as dangerous or so poisonous as that inside a bedroom with tightly closed windows.
- Night air is just as pure and wholesome as day air. Pests and rains are only injurious in so far as they frighten you into closing your windows.
- Open the windows and lower the death rate.

ROMANCE AND WAILS

By M. QUAD

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For many years Captain Date was proprietor and captain of the sloop Janet. Then his wife died, leaving a little daughter, Mary, eight years old. Most of the inhabitants of the town of Shore Cove were a bit jealous of the captain, for he generally had luck at fishing or gathering clams and oysters. By the way, the women and girls were also a bit jealous of little Mary. She was a handsome, sparkling child, and when it was known that her father intended sending her away to school to be educated he was called foolish for not keeping her in her station in life.

At eleven years of age Mary was sent to live with an aunt in Connecticut. She remained there six years,

going home for a short stay once a year. At such times she met with no welcome except from her father.

Then came the calamity. Miss Mary was finishing her last term at school when she received news of it. The Janet had been wrecked in a storm and most of her crew drowned. Among those who were beaten on the rocks and cast ashore with a little life left in them was Captain Date. He had many bruises and lacerations and several broken bones, and he had to have his leg amputated and could never hope to be the man he was. When able to get around he had to use a crutch, and the other leg was none too strong to do double duty. He tried to be cheerful through it all, but there were many black hours for him. He had saved a few hundred dollars, but these seemed to go like leaves before an autumn gale. When he said they would soon feel the pangs of poverty it was Mary who put her arms around his neck and said:

"Don't worry, old daddy. Providence has seen you through many troubles and will not desert you now."

There came a day when the captain looked over his bank book and found that only \$10 was left in the locker. He hobbled his way out among the sand dunes and made some remarks on the situation, and he was glad that Mary was not along to hear. He threw himself down on the sand and passed black hours. When he painfully arose at last it was to turn his eyes seaward and gaze with lively interest for a greater part of an hour, and when he entered his cottage it was to say to Mary:

"There are whales about five miles off shore. They are playing and having lots of fun."

It was half an hour later, and there had been silence between the two, when Mary brought her chair over to her father's side and quietly said:

"Daddy, I have kept something from you. A young man up the country wants me to be his wife. I did not dare say yes to him. He did not know that I lived at Shore Cove and that I was only a fisherman's daughter."

"He hasn't written to you since you came home?"

"No. I ran away from him, and he doesn't know where I am, and I don't want to write to him."

"You tell me not to worry, Mary, and that Providence will see to these things. Let me tell you the same."

Mary ran outdoors and down the shore path, and she had hardly reached the beach when she heard a great splashing off shore. It was a moonlight night, and in the wake of the moon she saw a big whale headed straight for the beach.

"Daddy! Daddy!" called Mary as she entered the cottage, with her hair flying and her eyes looking very big. "There's a big whale just run ashore. He is down there now, and he is dead. I guess he was badly injured in a fight at sea."

"Lord alive, girl, there's Providence for you. If it's that big whale I saw this afternoon there's oil enough in him to keep us for a year. Where's my crutch?"

With the help of Mary he got down to the shore and there saw that there was no mistake.

"He is on my land," he said, "and no one can lay claim to him. The tide will lift him up farther on the shore, but I'm going to sit here all the rest of the night and give the Cove fellows no chance to put in a claim."

And he did. Mary brought him down the old folding piece and came down about once an hour to cheer him up. At daylight the people of the Cove saw the whale on the beach, and twenty or thirty made haste to put in a claim. For an hour or more the crowd from the Cove argued and protested and threatened, and Captain Date had to warn them over and over to keep hands off. Then a young man appeared and took the captain's part with such vigor and sarcasm that they gave over. Then Mary came running down and shook hands with the stranger and kissed and sobbed and called him Dick.

"Is this the young man you told me had fallen in love with you?" asked the captain.

And Mary hung her head and could not answer. The young man answered for her, however. He said:

"Mr. Date, I believe I have won the heart and hand of your daughter, and I now ask your consent to our marriage."

"Salt ho, my boy, but you have it twice over," shouted the captain.

There was a marriage six months later, and Captain Date lives with the happy couple and will until he reaches that port where every sailor rests from storms and is at peace.

A Woman's Rights

By ETHEL HOLMES

Miss Elinor Bates was preparing her trousseau for her marriage with Jack Weatherly when she received a note from him calling the affair off. He gave no excuse, but Elinor knew that he had never been known to stick to one girl for any length of time and felt sure that she had been replaced.

Miss Bates was a native of South Carolina, but had spent five or six years in the north, where she had imbibed the ideas of the new woman. Her grandfather had fought a duel, and in her family the code was considered the only way of settling unpleasant affairs. These two conditions, a belief in the right of an injured person to demand satisfaction from the injurer and the elevation of women to the privileges of men, decided her to send a challenge to Mr. Weatherly.

Jack was dressing for dinner when he received Elinor's note, for she had not gone so far as to send a second, and, laying it open on the dresser, read, finishing making a bow of his necktie at the same time. When he had finished both he lighted a cigarette and, throwing himself into an easy chair, gave himself up to thought.

Now, the reason for his breaking with Elinor was that the income to support her was to come from his father, who had agreed to give him \$5,000 a year, and he had at the last moment changed his mind. Jack, thinking that an explanation of this would only serve to irritate Elinor against his father, chose another course.

Jack, who did not consider that truth had any more place in love affairs than in a statement of a woman's age, replied to the challenge by saying that he had promised his mother that he would never fight a duel. On this account he must decline to render Miss Bates what he must confess was her right to demand and to receive.

When Elinor received this letter she saw at once that her effort to punish her recalcitrant lover had failed. Had she been a man she might have published him as a poltroon and a coward with effect, but should she do so as a woman she would only make herself ridiculous. Nobody would blame him for refusing to fight a woman.

Women had horsewhipped men who had flitted them, and it seemed to Elinor that this would be the natural consequence in her case. It would be following in the course of men too. Men who had refused to fight men had been horsewhipped by the challenger. But Elinor hoped by a threat to produce results without taking such drastic measures. She wrote Jack another note stating that she proposed to horsewhip him the next time she met him. This, she thought, would bring him to terms. There could be no greater dread for a man than to stand in the face of a gathering crowd and receive a dressing from a woman. Miss Bates was forced to admit that this was not the same relative position as between two men, for Jack would not be privileged to strike back.

Jack thought over this new phase of the case and made up his mind to make no reply. He dearly loved the girl who was trying to punish him for a crime he had not committed and which pained him as much as it pained her.

Elinor provided herself with a whip. She endeavored to secure the traditional "cowhide" that had been used by her ancestors on those who refused to fight, but she failed to do so. However, she procured a good stout whip and slung it about her waist under her coat. She selected it on account of the color of its handle, which harmonized with that of the costume she intended to wear when she did the whipping.

To be candid, Miss Bates shrank from publicity as much as she presumed her recalcitrant lover would shrink from it. In this she weakened. Instead of waiting till she met him in a crowd she went one morning to the Weatherly residence, which stood back from the street and was partly hidden by shrubbery. Entering the grounds, she concealed herself behind foliage and waited for Jack to appear. Presently he emerged from a side door and was making his way to the garage when Elinor pounced upon him.

Elinor had made a mistake in notifying him of her intention to horsewhip him. It enabled him to prepare himself for the encounter. As soon as she began to rain blows upon him he drew from his pocket a yard of satin ribbon and returned blow for blow with it.

Mr. Weatherly senior was in his accustomed seat in the library reading the morning paper when hearing the sound of Elinor's whip on Jack's coat and trousers, he looked out through the window.

Raising the sash, he watched the fight for a few moments, then cried out to be informed what it meant.

Elinor ceased her blows and said: "Your son has treated me abominably, and I am punishing him as he deserves."

"Jack, you young rascal, what does this mean?"

"It means, father, that I couldn't marry without the income you promised me, and really it was you and not I who is blameable if any one is."

"H'm," said the old man thoughtfully. "How much was I to give you?"

"Five thousand a year."

"Well, sir, do your duty, and I'll do mine."

It was all made up then and there, and the settlement was made five minutes before the wedding.

Incognito and Incognita

By ELINOR MARSH

"Is Miss Watriss at home?" asked a middle-aged man of a maid who answered his call at the front door of a handsome country residence.

"I'll see, sir."

The gentleman dropped a card on the salver the maid held to him, bearing the name of Alonzo Tewkesbury, and she took it upstairs, while the gentleman stepped into a reception room.

Mr. Tewkesbury had complained to his friend Mrs. Sansom that he had neglected to marry during the youthful mating period and had before him the prospect of living all his life without a companion or a home. Mrs. Sansom had replied that she had a woman friend who had a similar prospect before her.

"You are both well off," she said, "in this world's goods and would make a good match."

This led to an arrangement made by Mrs. Sansom, with a view to bringing the parties together, and Mr. Tewkesbury was making his first call on Miss Watriss.

Presently a woman, plainly but neatly dressed, came down with the card to her hand and said:

"Mr. Tewkesbury, I am Miss Watriss' housekeeper. Mrs. Watkins, Miss Watriss has been unavoidably called away. She has commissioned me to say to you that she may return any time during the day and if you will await her coming she will be glad to see you. I am directed to do what I can to enable you to fill in the time. We have a fine library, and I can furnish you with the latest magazines."

"H'm," said Mr. Tewkesbury thoughtfully. "Are you in Miss Watriss' confidence?"

"Somewhat."

"Are you aware of the object of this call?"

"I am."

"Then I know of no better way to

pass the time than for you to tell me something about Miss Watriss."

"Miss Watriss is simply a woman like any other woman. She is neither very good nor very bad. She has a good income, but finds it difficult to live within it."

"Then you think she desires to add to it?"

"Most assuredly. Miss Watriss is practical. She knows that much more can be done with a union of two incomes than with one. The party of the second part would share in this advantage."

"She is right in that. This romance of marrying without giving due consideration to such matters pertains to the young and foolish."

"It is well that you look at it in that light. This proposed marriage is, I take it, on the same order as European marriages where romance is made subservient to common sense."

"That's it. There is too much romance and too little sense in American marriages. Besides, a man of forty and a woman—you say thirty-five—can't go about a courtship as a couple in their teens."

"Are there any other questions you would like to ask?"

"You are very kind to furnish me with this information."

"Not at all. Miss Watriss told me before she left to answer truthfully any questions you might ask and to tell you especially that which she would not like to say herself; that one of the considerations in making the proposed match would be a matter of money. Her income is six thousand a year."

"That will be satisfactory to me. You may say to Miss Watriss for me that my income from my business and other sources varies from five to fifteen thousand, a business income being nearly always uncertain."

"Don't you think that it would be a good idea for you to see Miss Watriss before her knowing that you are Mr. Tewkesbury?"

"A splendid idea! But how could it be accomplished?"

"Men are very stupid about such things. You have only to tell some friend who knows Miss Watriss to introduce you as Mr. Jones."

"Good! Thanks for the suggestion. Perhaps I'd better not wait for Miss Watriss to return. I'll have a look at her, as you suggest. You won't give me away in this matter, will you?"

"Oh, no! I think you are entitled to see the lady you think of proposing to, before proceeding in the matter."

"And Miss Watriss should see me, too, shouldn't she?"

"Oh, Miss Watriss is perfectly able to form and carry out her own plans. I wouldn't think of suggesting anything to her."

"Well, I'll bid you good morning. Much obliged for the idea you have given me."

Mr. Tewkesbury took his leave and straightway went to Mrs. Sansom.

"Do you think you could bring Miss Watriss here to meet me as Mr. Jones without her suspecting that I'm Sam Tewkesbury?"

"Of course I can."

"Then please do so."

A few days later Mr. Tewkesbury received a telephone message from Mrs. Sansom that Miss Watriss was with her and for him to come over. He went and found Miss Watriss' housekeeper.

"Stung," he exclaimed.

"I don't need to see you, Incog," she said, "for I have already seen you."

The match was made.

A STOLEN GEM

By ALAN HINSDALE

When Edward Worthington, millionaire and globe trotter, was in India he bought a large ruby, not knowing its value.

When Worthington reached London he submitted his purchase to a precious stone expert, and the report was surprising. "It is a pigeon blood red ruby almost perfect in color and transparency and worth anywhere from a hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand dollars."

It was evident from this that the ruby had been stolen, and Worthington had been likely to return it to its owner, but, in the first place, he did not know who was the owner, and, in the second, he was obliged to sail without delay for America.

On the steamer coming over he carried his ruby on his person by day, putting it in his inner vest pocket, folding the vest carefully and putting it under his pillow at night. One afternoon, having spent the day on deck, he went to his stateroom, and, having put his key in the lock and taken it out, he noticed a bit of something white on it. Examining it thoroughly, he found the substance to be wax.

Worthington pondered long as to his discovery, for he suspected at once that some one was in possession of the secret of his having the ruby. He had told no one of his purchase, and no one had seen it except the London gem expert. How, then, could any one know that it was in his possession?

He did not care to part with the jewel by having it stolen from him. The price he had paid for it, the fact that he had unwittingly bought a stolen property and that he was desirous of returning it to its owner constrained him to be on his guard with it. It occurred to him to turn it over for safe keeping to the purser of the ship, but that officer would ask him its value, and he did not wish to impart this to any one. Fearing that if he kept it on his person he would be murdered for its possession, he concluded to hide it.

Going to the ship's carpenter, he borrowed a few tools and, returning to his stateroom, took up a board in the floor, placed the ruby, wrapped in cotton, in the cavity and replaced the board. Returning the tools, he borrowed some varnish and revarnished the disturbed place. While doing this work he made sure that no one was in any of the adjoining staterooms.

Having thus put the gem where he was sure it would be safe, he felt

easier, though he was careful not to go to lonely parts of the ship and bar-headed his stateroom door at night, for he thought one who was after the ruby might think it was kept on his person.

At the end of the voyage while the ship was being docked Worthington removed the board under which he had placed his gem and was thunder-struck to see the place empty.

He was more disconcerted at not being able to return it to its owner than at the loss of the price he had paid for it. But what engaged his whole attention was how could the thief have known where he had hidden it.

He thought of calling for a search of all on board, but abandoned the idea as futile. There seemed nothing to do but pocket the loss and think no more about it.

The morning after Worthington's arrival at his home in New York he was told that a visitor wished to see him. The person proved to be of dark color and a cast of features common in India. He was well dressed and appeared to be an upper caste. Advancing to Worthington, he handed him a check for \$10,000.

"Mr. Worthington," he said, "a ruby was recently stolen from the rajah of Rimpure, in India, by one of his servants and sold to you for the amount of this check. The thief was arrested, confessed and told what he had done with the gem, which is one of the rarest in the world. His highness the rajah directed me to follow you and recover the gem. I did as he commanded and have it in my possession."

"But why," asked Worthington, "did you not tell me that the ruby had been stolen and ask me to return it?"

"Firstly, I could only ask you to return it; I could not compel you. Secondly, I did not know whether you would surrender it or what terms you would make."

"But you would have had the law," said Worthington.

"Yes, but you western people have a saying, 'Possession is nine points in the law.' We Indians have something much better than the law. We are adepts in secret methods."

"I shall certainly not dispute that," said Worthington. "Now that the matter is finished I wish you would tell me why you think it necessary to return me the price I paid for the gem."

"His highness has many English and American friends and does not wish to do an injustice."

"Lastly, will you tell me how you recovered the ruby?"

"I came over in the same ship with you. I took an impression with wax of your lock, from which I