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A Liberal Reward By Ethel Barrington Copyright, 1904, by Ethel Barrington

Deep in the heart of each man and woman lies some unfulfilled ambition toward which his efforts tend as a goal. With Myra Darling it was a gold watch. Her days were passed behind a counter where a variety of neckwear was displayed. The remuneration was small and served only to provide her with a "home" and the simplest of gowns. The watch for which her soul hungered might have been the moon or the Roc's egg. But more trying than the privations she endured was the cheapness, the narrowness of her life, so different from the gentle surroundings of her girlhood. It was her birthday, her eighteenth year, and Sunday—a day free from the aisle walker's espionage, a happy combination which Myra enjoyed to the full. A long afternoon in the crisp, cool air of the park was a happy climax. It was turning dusk as she left the park. The city lamps already shone in a long line down the avenue. On the side streets the shadows fell black and ugly, causing a few buildings to stand out in bold relief. Suddenly a flash from a passing automobile struck a small, round object that glittered near the curb. Myra bent over to pick it up. Had some beneficent fairy godmother thrown the gift at her feet? It was a watch, and on her birthday! She seized it rapturously, and looking neither to the right nor left, fled up the steps of her boarding house, never pausing until she stood in the hall room she called her home. She lighted the gas and drew down the shade, then breathlessly examined her new found treasure. The small hunting case was of gold, with no mark to identify it, and set in diamonds. "You little beauty," whispered the girl as she caressed it with her fingers. Then, with woman's curiosity, she tried to open the back. It was difficult, but at last Myra gasped with surprise. The face of a young man, with honest eyes and kindly mouth, looked into her own. "I wonder if he owns the watch?" she thought. "No, it's a woman's trinket. He must have given it to the girl—and if so he"— Myra abruptly closed the case. But she could not shut out the face from her mental vision. She passed her evening rocking slowly in her chair, with a magazine between her fingers, the gentle ticking of the watch counting the passing hours. That night she dreamed not of the watch, but of a life which the watch typified, and through the dream stalked a man whose face was the face in the watch. She awoke a little after 8 to revel in the delight of knowing the exact hour and turning luxuriously over for another fifteen minutes. All day she thought about her wonderful acquisition and smiled happily to herself. The other girls noticed it and twitted her in their good natured, but guarded her secret and hurried home to pass another evening of delightful possession. Three days passed, and, though the watch itself was a never failing source of delight, as the actual realization of her dreams it was the picture that crept into her heart. She told her secrets to those honest eyes and called him "dear friend." He seemed somehow to understand her every whim. "The whole world could trust you, and—I'd trust you absolutely," she told him one night very softly. "The other girl trusts you too? The other girl! How sorry she must be to lose your picture!" Then suddenly, without any warning, Myra awoke to the truth. The watch, the picture, were not hers! She had no right to keep them. She turned to the window and looked drearily out over the roofs of houses. "I never thought of it, not once. They're not mine. They are hers. Hers, and I kept them. It's the same as stealing. I never thought." That noon she spent half an hour

running over newspaper files in the library. She found the description in the "Lost and Found" column and made note of the address with eyes grown misty. She put off the evil day until Sunday and decided to enjoy to the full her last day of the fairy gift which was to vanish so soon. She slipped a narrow black ribbon on the watch and recklessly wore it all day. She did not dare to look at it or exhibit it to the girls, but the knowledge that it was ticking steadily in her belt brought comfort.

"Can I see the lady—the one who lost her watch?" she asked, and she was at once shown into a room with luxurious appointments. There was a log fire in the grate, with comfortable lounging chairs and books in every available space. It carried Myra back to those other days now dim in her memory. "You have found my watch? How glad I am!" The speaker came close to Myra, with outstretched hands and eager smile. She was as beautiful as any of the women whom Myra served during business hours.

The girl laid the watch in the other's hand. Surely with all Miss Shepherd possessed she could have spared this toy, but it was hers, and she must have it. "It was my mother's," said Miss Shepherd softly. "That is why I cannot thank you enough. And you will accept this little acknowledgment?" she said, trying to press a roll of bills into Myra's clenched hand. "No," said Myra. "It's yours. I want nothing."

"But I promised a liberal reward." "And I had it—all the week. The watch was such good company." She did not mention the picture. And to all Miss Shepherd's arguments and entreaties Myra reiterated "No." The picture held her firm. She could not take the money for that. In the end she allowed herself to be persuaded to remain until the rain ceased and to drink a cup of tea. "Here's Tom. You must meet him!" exclaimed her hostess proudly as the door swung open and there entered the original of the photograph. One look from Myra, and then her lashes drooped in embarrassment. The others discussed the watch and its recovery. At first Myra could scarcely follow what they said, but they were so kind, so full of interest about her and her little experiences, that she soon found herself chatting freely and laughing at Tom's funny sayings; still she rose in trepidation to find how late it had become. Tom (she had not discovered his other name) insisted that as his automobile was at the door he would take her home. "Oh, no!" gasped Myra in distress, turning to her hostess. "I'd rather take a car."

"Don't you like motors?" questioned Miss Shepherd kindly. "I've never tried one," admitted Myra. "Then that settles it," exclaimed Tom, and Myra found herself hurried to the door, with Miss Shepherd exacting a promise that she would come again.

"Yes, do!" urged Tom as they went down the steps. "She really means it. Isn't she jolly?" "She's very kind. How happy she must be—so pretty and such a beautiful home, and—and you!" Myra had not meant to say that at all. It just slipped out. "You bet. She's the best sister that ever a fellow had." "Your sister?" stammered Myra, and somehow in her surprise she nearly missed the step of the motor car, but Tom caught her. "Of course. What else did you think?" Myra felt her face flush hotly. She trembled a little, but she did not say just what she thought. In fact, she did not tell him until the following Christmas. Tom had presented Myra with what had once been the desire of her heart, a gold watch. "I can't take anything so handsome," she had said, shaking her head earnestly. Tom only laughed. The case flew back, and there was the one face in all the world for Myra. "Sweetheart, I claim a liberal reward," said Tom. "Please take me too."

Why He Studied Law. "I am going to study law," he announced in decided tones. "And practice it?" "Oh, no." "Then why study it?" "Well, I've always been told that a man never should sign a document that he does not thoroughly understand." "That, I believe, is generally considered to be a sound business principle." "And I'm going to be a thorough going business man or know the reason why?" "Well?" "Well, I've just been looking over the lease of my house, and it occurs to me that if I study hard from now until the lease expires I'll have a glimmering idea what it's all about when I have to sign another. What the agent told me I was signing could have been put in 100 words; what I actually signed amounted to about 2,000 words, badly tangled. I've either got to study law or violate a great business principle."

Wealth's Changes. Willy—There goes that beautiful Mrs. Kofure with her wealth of auburn hair. She wasn't always so rich, was she? Nash—Oh, no! I knew her when she was red headed.—Boston Transcript.

The Doctor Had to Go. A physician in south Baltimore, having decided that a flagpole on his house would add to its good appearance, employed a man to rig the staff to his roof. This man had for his assistant a six foot negro imbued with all the superstitions of his race. The big staff had been hoisted to the roof and was nearly in place when the negro happened to glance down at the crowd that had collected in the street to view the work. The physician, desiring to see how the work of setting up the pole was progressing, had gone to the opposite corner to see the work, when the negro saw him. The crowd saw the darky stop working and say something to his employer. Then the negro left the roof, and the work was postponed. The negro had said: "Look, boss; dere's dat doctor down dere lookin' fo' a job. I knows I's agwine to fall off dis roof, and dat man'll cut me up. 'Deed, I ain't agwine to strike another lick o' work while dat man's down dere."—Baltimore Sun.

How Glass Beads Are Made. A rope walk is connected with the glass factory, a narrow gallery about 150 feet long, so situated that the middle of it is not far from the furnaces. Two workmen seize a huge wedge of molten glass between their blowpipes, and after it has been blown hollow they gradually stretch it out into a long, swinging rope, hollow in the center. When cool, it is skillfully chipped into fragments of uniform size. These fragments are then picked up by boys and stirred in a tub with sand and ashes to fill the holes and prevent the sides flattening when heat is again applied. This final heating is done in a skillet over a hot fire to round the edges and give the beads a globular form. When cool they are placed in sieves, the sand and ashes drop out of the holes, and the beads are ready to be sorted according to size.—London Standard.

The Spirit of the Theater. The glamour of the stage! No one can define it or explain it; no one who has fallen under its spell can resist it. You see it at work in the great artist who, confident of success, already crowned with laurels, comes daily down to rehearsal with the zest and buoyancy of youth. Satiety does not touch him; a blasé actor is an unheard of anomaly. A man may act for twenty, thirty, forty years, and if he is stricken with illness his one lament is that he can act no more.—George Alexander in Pelican.

Those Two Words. "She broke off the engagement yesterday, and now she's sorry for it." "I don't think so. She told me last night that she didn't care." "Yes, but she told me today that she didn't care—very much."—Philadelphia Press.

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