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## A Late Learned Secret

Ell Mulholland, a bachelor of forty, at 10 o'clock at night went up three pairs of stairs, opened the door of his rented room and as he entered heaved a deep sigh. It was heard by Lydia Nutter, the landlady's daughter, aged twenty, who wondered what caused it. Had she, too, been forty instead of twenty, without having followed the course dictated by nature—mating and rearing children—she would have understood that if translated into words the sigh would say: "Oh, this lonely room!"

Ell Mulholland had in his youth chosen athletic sports with which to beguile his leisure hours. He was a man's man rather than a girl's man. He remembered a pair of bright eyes beaming upon him when he had won the champion cup for single sculls. They and the smile that accompanied them were then no more to him than a passing whiff of violets. Now, as he entered his lonely room, he remembered that the girl he had failed to claim was the wife and mother of children, of the man he had beaten in the race. He had won the cup, which he had so dearly prized, leaving for his antagonist the girl whom he had considered merely one of a million. Now the cup was in a vault with other trinkets; the girl was the light of a household.

He remembered another whom he had played with in a double game of tennis, an excitable player, but a soft voiced beauty; how he had saved the game by his skill and activity; how she had received the prize—a silver mounted racket—from his hands, with blushes that told him she would have gladly taken him instead.

These and others with whom he had feared to become entangled contributed their part in that deep drawn sigh, so unintelligible to Lydia Nutter. He was no longer the companion of young people. He had passed the mating period and had not mated.

"What troubled you last night, Mr. Mulholland, as you went into your room?" asked Lydia the next morning as the bachelor went out to get his lonely breakfast.

"I troubled? What do you mean?"

"You drew such a sad sigh."

As Ell looked into her sympathetic eyes something of two decades before came back to him. Was it too late to save what remained of his life from a loneliness intensified with each passing year? As quickly as the thought came it was banished. Had he stood still for twenty years while others had grown old? He turned to pass out without reply. How could he tell this girl, who when he was her age was scarcely born, that he had wasted his opportunities, and, though he had gained the world, it was worthless; that which he had selfishly thought he wished for himself when attained had shriveled in his hands, since he had no wife or children to bestow it upon?

"When you feel that way again, come down and we'll try to comfort you," said Lydia.

There was a wistful look in his eyes as he closed the door.

That night he sat in the reading room of his club pretending to read the newspapers, while he was watching the clock. He wished to go to the house where he roomed, but he would go neither too late nor too early—not after Lydia had gone to bed, not so early that he would seem to have come to be with her, for that was his intention. He chose half past 9 as the hour most likely to conceal it and, after two hours' watching the clock, left the club. Lydia was in the sitting room with her mother, the mother reading, Lydia at some fancy work.

"I'm in rather early tonight," he said to Lydia. "There was nothing doing at the club. I've brought some playing cards. Would you mind a game?"

Again the smile that greeted him reminded him of the face that had beamed upon him when he had been an athletic victor. Then it had been accompanied by the flush of victory, the plaudits of thousands. Now it was bestowed upon a lonely soul hungering for sympathy.

They sat down to a game ostensibly of cards, really to one of love. Lydia had admired the stalwart middle aged man whose hair was beginning to turn, but had not dreamed of being the wife of one she regarded so great. Ell clutched at what he regarded a straw to save him from a desolate old age. Neither believed it possible to win the game, and yet both had already won it. Ell insisted on a stake, sweetmeats, and always contrived to lose. It might all have been arranged at once, but Ell, fearing to spall his game by haste, thinking that great skill at angling was essential, did not dare declare himself till the winter had passed and the time of the singing birds had come. Then when he had spent months setting his trap he sprung it.

Ell Mulholland is now fifty and his wife thirty. He does not brood over the difference in their ages, for, while when they were married she was but half his age, now she is three-fifths of it. Besides, several curly headed urchins are of far more importance to both. Ell, who at twenty coveted wealth to spend upon himself, is now happy that he has a fair share of it to spend upon his wife and children.

If this experience could be imparted to the young, how many more people would pass a contented old age! GERTRUDE GOWAN.

## A Wasp Nurse.

A story of how one wasp cared for another that had been injured is told by a gentleman who, while reading the newspaper, felt bothered by the buzzing of a wasp about his head and knocked it down. It fell through the open window and lay on the sill as if dead.

A few seconds afterward, to his great surprise, a large wasp flew to the window sill and, after buzzing around his wounded brother for a few minutes, began to feel him all over.

The injured wasp seemed to revive under this treatment, and his friend then dragged him gently to the edge, grasped him around the body and flew away with him. It was plain that the stranger, finding a wounded comrade, gave him aid as well as he could and then bore him away home.—London M. A. P.

## Cup Plates.

"These cup plates assure us that this 100-year-old china service is the real thing," said an antiquary. "They stopped making cup plates 100 years ago. Cup plates," he went on, "show how table manners change. Now, do you know what they were for? They were to hold your dripping cup of tea—after you had poured a part of it into the saucer to drink from—so that the cloth should not be stained. Yes, in the past, everybody drank hot tea from the saucer. Kings and queens, emperors and generals, all, with a gurgling sound, tilted the full saucer with careful balance to the lips. The cup, meanwhile, reposed on the cup plate."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

## Awful Blunder.

Newspaper Office Boy—Oh, there's been an awful time up in the editorial room today! Business Manager—Eh? What's the trouble? Office Boy—The hall porter made a mistake and put the "No Admittance" sign at the subscription office and the "Welcome" doormat in front of the editor's room.—London Tit-Bits.

## A Delicate Hint.

Two very cadaverous looking tramps looked in at the window of a railway station where a telegraph operator sat at his key.

"Say, pardner," one of them said in a very husky voice, "report a couple of empties goin' east."—Harper's Weekly.

The surest proof of one's endowment of noble qualities is being free from envy.—La Rochefoucauld.

## The Resourceful Burglar.



Lord and Master (who has been aroused from his slumbers by alarmed spouse)—It's all ri', my dear. It's only Fido. I can feel him licking my hand.—Tattler.

## Very True.

"Here, you," growled the cranky man in the reading room, "you've been snoring horribly!"

"Ugh! Hey?" gurgled the drowsy one.

"If you only kept your mouth shut," went on the cranky one, "you wouldn't make so much noise."

"Neither would you," replied the other.—Catholic Standard and Times.

## His Constant Boast.

"The great trouble with Nuritch is that he's forever making disgusting incendiary speeches."

"Surely he isn't a Socialist?"

"Oh, no! I mean he's forever boasting about having money to burn."—Philadelphia Press.

## Giuseppe to His Dog.

Hi, Carlo, jompa down from dere. You lazy dog! Com', see. Dees jontleman would have dat chair for seat an' talk weesth me.

Hi? Wat! You gona growl an' bite? Aha, I show you dees—Don't go, signore. Wal, alla right; I hope you com' agn.

Hi, Carlo, w'at you theenka dat? You drive da man away. You lazy, ogly lumpa fat.

You good-for-notheeng! Eh? Semeca time w'en I was kind to you. An' peek you from da street.

Dees not wan leetia theeng you do for earn da food you eat. Did you would even chase da rat.

You might be worth to keep, but, no, you are so dumb, so fat. You jus' can eat an' sleep.

How dare you do sooch ogly treesk. An' growl so like dat? Jus' wait ontell I gat my steek—Now, see w'at you weell gat!

Eh? Don't roll your eyes at me. Keep steek your talia too. No leesk my handa! Don't you see?

Dat I am cross weesth you? Ha, stop! You theenk dees mak' me fool. You love me like you should?

Not mooch! Jus' keep dat talia steek. An' I weell beat you good. You theenk because I gat so few da franda dat lova me.

I am afraid for whippin' you? Jus' close your eyes an' see! Aha, so now you run away.

Oh, wal, dees steek weell keep: I gona beat you good som' day—Som' day w'en you are sleep.—C. A. Daly in Catholic Standard and Times.

T. E. Manchester arrived from Portland last night.

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# ATTENTION

A few suggestions as to what to buy for a Xmas present: MANICURE SETS, SMOKING SETS, COMB AND BRUSH SETS, MILITARY BRUSHES, WATERMAN'S FOUNTAIN PEN, BOOKS, GAMES, MUSIC ROLLS.

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# That Xmas Dinner

WILL NOT BE COMPLETE WITHOUT SOME OF OUR SELECT TABLE WINES A PARTIAL LIST TO CHOOSE FROM.

- SWEET WINES**
  - Old Port—Tawny, rich, light and color.
  - Old Sherry—Pale, clean, nutty.
  - Angelic—Soft, agreeable, full.
  - Muscatel—Very fruity, sweet.
- WHITE WINES**
  - Riesling—Medium light table wine.
  - Sauterne—Natural mellow, pronounced flavor.
  - Chateau Yquem—Full bodied Creme of Sauternes.
- Sparkling Sec Dry—Fragrant, effervescent.**
- RED WINES**
  - Zinfandel—Clean, light table wine.
  - Burgundy—Medium bodied, mellow.
  - Sparkling Burgundy—Brilliant, pleasant.
- Grape Juice, Maraschino cherries, fruit and Cognac Brandy, and a full line of Cordials.**

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