

Easter Eggs

By...
Kate M. Cleary

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AND you're sure that you won't forget, Rody?"
 "I'm sure that I will!" retorted Roderick Ferrol, his admirable patience worn to a frazzle by the repeated injunctions of his sister. "If you tell me once again that the basket with the bit of blue yarn tied to the handle is to be left at the doctor's on my way to the depot and the basket with the pink yarn on the handle is to be taken to the city and given to Cousin Susanna, I'll leave both of 'em at home!"
 "That might be better than gettin' 'em mixed up!" commented Mrs. Spicer dryly. "I've had hard-billed and colored eggs every Easter for Dr. Dobbs' babies ever since he had any babies to color 'em for, and I'm sure I don't know what Susanna would say if you was to go visitin' her to the city and never take her a fresh egg for her breakfast!"
 "There's the team now," announced Ferrol, glancing out of the window. He picked up a basket in each hand. His sister regarded him with frank admiration. "No one will ever take you for a farmer!" she declared. "When you get store clothes on and a white shirt and collar!"
 "Aw, quit foolin'!" advised the great, brawny individual whose height dwarfed her little kitchen. "It takes more than clothes to make a country chap look like a city man, and I don't know that I want to look like one either!" he supplemented stanchly.
 "Rody," said Mrs. Spicer rather wistfully, "I wish you'd bring back a wife."
 "Me!" His laugh was short—and bitter. "There ain't any city girl that's going to marry me! Though," he added, and his honest face darkened, "it's no trick at all for a city man to marry most any country girl he wants to."
 "You ain't got over that affair of Rose Curtis yet, then?" she asked gently.
 "No," he replied, "and I'm not likely to."
 Then he said goodby, gripped his baskets tighter and was striding down the path from the farmhouse to where his hired man held the team at the gate. The latter drove in order to bring back the horses from the depot. His master ordered him to draw up as they reached a gabled frame house on the edge of town.
 "I've got to leave these colored eggs for the Dobbs children," he explained. "Let's see! The basket with the pink yarn on the handle is the one that's got the hard 'tied in, Joan said. I told her I'd remember."
 The doctor's wife opened the door for



HE LEANED FORWARD AND KISSED HER.

him.
 "Oh!" she exclaimed. "How good of dear Mrs. Spicer to remember the children. I'll set these by for them till Easter morning."
 Mrs. Spicer might not have maintained an unshaken conviction of her brother's metropolitan appearance if she could but have known how many seem- edly eager to take him to see the ruins of the big fire. But Roderick, if a countryman, was not gullible, and he kept straight on to the street cars. He found the place he sought, a tiny little frame house away out on Park avenue. And his Cousin Susanna, who resembled nothing so much as an overblown peony, gave him a bolsterous welcome. He must stay with Tom and herself while in the city. And how were all the folks? And did Joan Spicer really send her some fresh eggs? Well, they would be a treat, sure enough, for 'twas only the millionaires who could be eating eggs the months past. The very sight of a fresh egg would be a cure for sore eyes, and she was going to boil one that very minute, and he might tell Joan she did that same.
 She unfasted the cord around the basket and took out the hay that filled the top. Then she flung up her fat hands and fell backward a step. The next instant she was rocking in a paroxysm of laughter.
 "Since when," she panted—"since when did Joan Spicer's hens begin to lay eggs the like of them?"
 "Well, I'll be hanged!" ejaculated Ferrol. He was looking at the contents of the basket. There were eggs, to be sure, but eggs that were green, pink, carmine, yellow and a combination of all these colors. "Joan told me wrong, I bet! The basket with the pink yarn on the handle was to be left at the doctor's. The time she took coloring 'em too!"
 "Tell you what," advised Susanna,

suddenly struck with an inspiration. "You take 'em over to Rosie Ward. She don't live but four blocks from here. It's like as not it's all her children 'll get for Easter. The bit of sewing she can get to do don't more'n keep the life in 'em. You remember, she ran away from our town with that city chap."
 "I remember," returned Roderick grimly. "Why, doesn't he support her?"
 "Land, he's dead! 'Twas in the papers. He'd left her anyhow. He got killed holding a man up. She's supposed to be a widow, I tell you!"
 Ferrol replaced the hay. "Tell me just how to find the place," he said.
 Was that the plump, rosy, pretty girl he had loved—this worn, pale woman who opened the door of her two rooms to him? His heart went out to her in a great wave of pity, of tenderness. He set the basket on the table.
 "Rose!" he said. "My poor girl!"
 He took the heavy child gently from her trembling arms. She flushed scarlet as he leaned forward and kissed her on the forehead. The little girl clinging to her skirts looked up at him timidly.
 "Roderick!" Rose said and broke down, sobbing. "That you should see us—like this!"
 He sat down, set the baby on his knee and drew the little girl to his side. "Rose," he vowed huskily, "it's God's own mercy that lets me! I made a mistake about them eggs, and Cousin Susanna thought your children could play with 'em. She ain't got but Tom, you know." He looked around the wretched place. "Rose, this ain't a patch on the farm for comfort. Joan, she's crazy to go off and live with her daughter. I'll be in the city till Thursday. Can't you and the children be ready by then to go back with me?"
 "Roderick," she faltered, "I'm not the girl you—used to love!"
 "You're the only one I ever did love!" he declared stoutly, "or that I ever will!"
 Her eyes shone. "Oh," she sighed softly, "it will be like—like heaven!"

LEGENDS OF THE LILY.

A Saint Among Flowers, an Angel in Every Bud.
 World-wide sentiment has decreed the lily to be a saint among flowers, and the reason lies are so appropriately and extensively used in the decoration of churches is not only because of their symbolical meaning, but because they are the most perfect of floral types, especially the candidum and harristal and the so-called calla lily, which, by the way, is not a lily at all, but, as all agree that a rose by any other name is just as sweet, so the calla is the acknowledged type of absolute stateness of form and purity of color, and the beauty of these white flowers betrays solemn and lofty surroundings.
 Legends in plenty cluster about the lily. One legend of very ancient date gives the supposed origin of "the lily, of all children of the spring the palest, fairest, too, where fair ones are." Long centuries ago angels coming as

celestial visitants to earth found in bare and gloomy in comparison with the eternal blooms of their home in paradise. They entered rocky tombs and took the shining mantles off the blessed dead and changed them to flowers. From this comes the beautiful and poetic superstition that on Easter morning in every lily bud is hidden an angel.
 A beautiful ancient tradition, which is inserted in the Proto gospel of St. James and mentioned by St. Jerome, relates that the candidates for the Virgin Mary's hand after having invoked the Lord's blessing left each his own rod or staff in the temple in the evening and that next morning the dry rod of Joseph was found green and blossomed with lily flowers.
 Another pretty legend is that Mary on her way to the temple plucked a lily, and upon pressing it to her breast it became white. "Lily of the Virgin," "Madonna flower" and several other mystical names were given to the lily, having reference to this legend. The flower has been for centuries regarded as an emblem of purity and innocence. As Percival says:
 "Roderick!" Rose said and broke down, sobbing. "That you should see us—like this!"
 —Designer.

THE EASTER RABBIT.

Why Mr. Long Ears is a Symbol of the Festival.
 For more seasons than one cares to count the Easter egg has been the familiar symbol of the great spring festival, but of late years another emblem has begun to dispute its supremacy in the confectioners' shops, and for some time the hares at Easter have been almost as numerous as the eggs. The hares are quite as often rabbits, delicate distinctions to sociology not being the province of confectioners, but in this case they cannot go far out of the way in confounding the two, because in symbolism the animals are identical, and, moreover, to the American eye the rabbit is the more familiar form.
 But why either?
 What has the innocent rodent, as George Elliot would say, "with its small nibbling pleasures," to do with the great festival of the resurrection?
 Easter, though apparently a solar festival in its connection with the equinox, in reality, and even as ordered by the Christian church belongs by rights to the moon, and the hare, we find, was in ancient and especially oriental symbology identical with the moon, across whose disk endless numbers of Hindu and Japanese artists have painted him, while their Chinese brethren represent the moon as a rabbit pounding rice in a mortar.
 The Hindus had two different stories explaining the hare's presence in the moon.
 One was that Buddha once took the shape of a hare, that he might feed a hungry fellow creature, and was translated in that form to the moon, where he forevermore abides.
 The second myth, as told by Dr. Guernbert in his "Zoological Mythology," seems more likely to be the genuine. This legend says that when Indra, disguised as a famishing pilgrim, was dying for food the hare, having nothing to give him, threw himself into the fire that he might be roasted for his benefit, and the grateful Indra translated the animal to the moon.
 There are several other reasons why the hare was chosen to symbolize the moon. One was that it is a nocturnal animal and comes out at night to feed; another that the female carries her young for a month, thus representing the lunar cycle; another that the hare was thought by the ancients to be able to change its sex like the moon, which as it waxed or waned was regarded as masculine or feminine.
 Sir Thomas Brown says that this was affirmed by Archelaus, Pitararch and many others. Pliny, who is not mentioned by Sir Thomas, gives it the weight of his authority in his "Natural History." The historian of "Vulgar Errors" devotes a chapter to the subject, but is extremely cautious in his dealings with it, considering it quite possible that such a change might take place, but in exceptional instances only and certainly not annually, as the ancients asserted.



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one most sensational features of greenhouse floriculture in America during the last quarter of a century. Our florists raise about 5,000,000 Easter lilies a year. Assuming that only half of these plants are sold, that each bears only two flowers (a good plant should have six to eight) and that the public pays 50 cents a bud, it would seem that the American people spend at least \$2,500,000 for Easter lilies every year.—Country Life In America.
 How woefully pride kin pass away.
 'T's takin' 'fob my tax.
 What is a Christmas tree one day
 Is stickin' wood de nox."

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