

An Incident Of Heredity

By DWIGHT NORWOOD

"Doctor," said Norman Goodfellow to Dr. Theodore Colt, "I am thinking of proposing marriage to a lady in whose family there are traces of insanity. Do you consider me justified in marrying her under the circumstances?"

"Not if the insanity is hereditary. There is a great difference between insanity from a temporary cause and from an organic trouble that may be transmitted from parent to child. I do not consider that any one suffering from an ailment which is hereditary has a right to marry. Your question suggests a story involving a case which came within my professional experience."

"One day a young man named Severance came to consult me as to a case similar to yours. He had recently been married and all had gone happily till one day on returning to his home from business he found his wife lying on the bed indisposed."

"Presently he heard her tossing about on the bed and looking at her from his paper, saw that, though asleep or at least dozing, there was an undulatory motion about her that suggested the movement of a snake. He had awakened her and asked her if she had not been dreaming, but she said she had not been conscious during her nap and felt much better for it."

"Nevertheless the young husband seemed to me to have been much shocked at what he had seen. Were it not for this I would have concluded that what he had seen was the work of his wife's nerves uncontrolled during slumber. I gave him this case in order to reassure him, but it did not. However, since I could give him no other comfort, he left me, much dejected."

"Not long after his visit, taking up a newspaper, I saw a notice that he had left his house a few days before and had not been heard from since. The police had been notified, and an alarm had been sent out. Fears were entertained that he had met with foul play, since the day before his disappearance he had drawn a large sum of money from his bank."

"His visit to me, the story he told and his depression led me to suspect that he was suffering from some nervous or mental trouble, and I inclined to the belief that what he had told me about his wife was a creation of a diseased brain. I did not see how I would be justified in making known my suspicions without mentioning the cause, and that I did not care to do."

"Severance never turned up, and no probable cause was ever given for his disappearance. When several years had passed his wife gave him up for dead, believing that he had been murdered for the money he had with him. Four years after his disappearance she married again, and as fate would have it her second husband was a patient of mine. I did not know that he was to marry Mrs. Severance, and I was satisfied that I had not known it, because I should have been troubled as to what I should do in the matter, for I was undecided what to attribute her first husband's disappearance to."

"Within a few months after my patient's marriage he came into my office one day with a wild look in his eyes and told me a story similar to the one Severance had told me. He had had a disagreement with his wife, during which she had become very much excited. During the vituperations she had hurled at him her eyes had glittered like those of an angry serpent. Her appearance during the trouble had made such a horrible impression upon him that he was afraid he would lose his mind. He asked me to give him a sedative to help him to sleep."

"Here was a worse complication for me than Severance had brought me, for I was not sure whether Severance's experience had been an hallucination occasioned by a disordered brain or had been caused by some peculiar condition in his life. But I dared not tell Hammond this, for it would be sure to make a wreck of him. I had no recourse but to say to him that he must have been suffering from some nervous weakness. Instead of giving him a drug I advised him to go on a trip, but on no account to take his wife with him."

"He took my advice as to the trip, but never returned from it. News of his having fallen over a precipice in Switzerland was sent to her over the ocean, but I have always suspected that he arranged for its transmission himself. One thing confirmed this suspicion; his body was never found."

"Two years after having become a hypothetical double widow the lady in this case died. I confess I was relieved. There was now no further chance of any more of my clients marrying her. Soon after her death I made some investigation as to her case through the physician who attended her. I called on him and gave him the experience of her two husbands as given to me. He accepted a theory I gave him and promised if possible to learn facts that would confirm it."

"He found an aunt of the subject of my story who told him that her sister soon after her marriage had been frightened by a serpent. Six months after this episode the child, who became Mrs. Severance-Hammond, was born. My theory was that the mother's fright at this critical period affected the nature of the child."

Inconsiderate.

"She—I think Mrs. Elkins is one of the most tactless and objectionable women I ever met. He—Why do you say that? She—Why, at the club this afternoon I had just started to tell one of the smart things our Willie had said, when she told the same story and ascribed it to her horrid little Johnny—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

TOWER OF BABEL.

Its Remnants Are Believed to Stand Near Babylon's Ruins.

It is doubtful if there is any place in the world so rich in ancient remains as the valley of the Euphrates, in Mesopotamia. The result is that to the archaeologist and scholar the place is a veritable "Tom Thudler's ground," and new "finds" are constantly being reported.

When it is remembered that tradition places the site of the Garden of Eden here, while among its many ruins are those of ancient Babylon, the promising nature of the valley to the scientific excavator becomes apparent.

It is near the ruins of Babylon that we find what many scholars believe to be the remains of the tower of Babel—an immense cube of brickwork, called by the natives Birs Nimrod.

Recent exhaustive examination of the strange pile and its site has revealed the fact that the tower that once stood here consisted of seven stages of brickwork on a earthen platform, each being of a different color.

The tower boasted of a base measurement of nearly 600 square feet and rose to an unknown height. Even to-day the ruins rise some 100 feet above the level of the surrounding plain.—Wide World Magazine.

WHEN YOUTH DIES.

Shock of the First Realization That One Is Getting Old.

The moment when one first feels acutely that he is no longer young is bound to make one pause in something akin to consternation. For vividness it is like a flash of lightning across a black sky. Life no longer is all before one; even, more dreadful thought, it may be mostly behind.

After the first realization there follows a bewildered state of mind due to unwillingness—yes, to an actual puzzled inability to accept the truth. With all the agony of the startled child of a child at night the heart cries out, "It cannot be! It is not so."

Youth dies hard and fights and struggles in its dying like an imprisoned bird. Others, even those near and dear, are older, are even old; we can see that. But how can the stubborn facts be true as to ourselves? Very gradually, little by little, fighting its way inch by inch, the truth prevails and gnaws at the heart—until time nubs this emotion as it does every other one.—Robert L. Raymond in Atlantic Monthly.

Poetry and Noses.

I have read that no poem was ever written to a nose. Can you, or offend, recall a single rapturous or even admiring description of one? I search my memory in vain, but produce instead one instance that has always interested me by neglect. You recall that little poem of Browning's, "A Face," the brief and charming description of a girl's profile against a background of gold. The "matchless mold" of softly parted lips, the neck "three fingers perfect chin" all receive their due of praise; the nose, a seeming necessity in any profile, is not even mentioned.

It may be as well; each reader supplies in the lovely face the line that suits him best. The poet may have feared that by its mere mention he would reduce the effect too often given by the nose in real life—a heaviness that mars an otherwise charming face.—Atlantic.

Decomposing Water.

Water is decomposed or separated into its constituent gases by passing a continuous current of electricity through it. An ordinary zinc and copper voltaic battery gives sufficient amperage and also voltage to separate the oxygen and hydrogen. Oxygen goes to the pole connected with the copper plate and hydrogen to the zinc pole or plate. The volume of hydrogen is double that of the oxygen, and both are chemically pure. Steam, if passed over red hot iron, surrenders its oxygen to the atoms of the metal, while hydrogen is given off pure and free.—New York American.

Bad Memory.

Flatbush—You've got a piece of thread about your thumb. Bensonhurst—Yes, wife put it there to remind me to mail her letter. "Did you mail it?" "Sure thing." "Why don't you remove the thread then?" "Oh, I'm keeping that on to remind me to tell her that I forgot to put a stamp on it"—Yonkers Statesman.

A Hasty Make-up.

An actor once was cast as a brigand in "Ingram," and the director told him to get a rug, throw it about his shoulders and sit by a camp fire. He did so, his face being toward the audience. In a tense situation he stood up, turned around and almost broke up the show. Worked in the rug was one word, "Welcome"—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Guessed It.

Inspector, examining a class in grammar, wrote a sentence on the blackboard and asked if any one noticed anything peculiar in it. After a short silence a small boy exclaimed: "Yes, sir, the bad writing"—Fix change.

Overcoming Difficulties.

I find nothing so singular in life as this, that everything opposing appears to lose its substance the moment one actually grapples with it.—Hawthorne.

None but the ill bred ridicule the peculiarities of others.

The Witch's Trick.

At Peel, in the Isle of Man, it is related that a witch said once the herding feet would not return. Every ship was lost, and she was rolled down the hill in a barrel set with spikes. The gram has never grown since in the barrel's track.

A Bad Old Dream.

"Oh, Algernon, I dreamed last night that we were parted forever." "My darling! Did it frighten you?" "Yes, yes! It seemed that I didn't get any—any alimony or insurance either."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Her Leap Year Privilege

How a Fortune
Was Lost.

By CLARISSA MACKIE

"Tum-tum, tum-tum-tum"

Angela Winton watched the little fingers wander uncertainly up and down the piano keys.

When the pupil had gone Angela closed the piano with a sigh of relief. Twenty years of teaching music had worn her nerves to a fine edge.

"I wonder if it will always be the same," she thought as she went to open her letter box. There was a letter.

A little card flashed into her pale cheeks as she read the name in one corner of the business envelope:

JOHN T. CATEBY

Attorney and Counselor at Law
John Cateby was an old friend of Angela's, and she tore open the letter with a feeling of impatience at her swift conclusion that John's unexpected letter was in direct response to her query of the moment before. Very likely it had to do with the bridge club to which they both belonged. The letter read:

Dear Miss Winton—Please call at my office immediately, as I wish to consult with you concerning an important matter of business. Faithfully yours,

JOHN T. CATEBY

"Dear me! I wonder what he wants to see me about? I may as well dress and go downtown now," she thought as she folded the letter.

An hour later Angela presented herself at Cateby's office. She was a small, timid looking woman with soft brown eyes and a wealth of gleaming brown hair. Twenty years of battling with the world had made Angela bold of heart and unafraid, but the appealing look remained in her eyes.

An office boy took her into John Cateby's private office, and Cateby grasped her little gloved fingers in his large hand and forgot to release them for a moment.

"You wished to see me?" asked Angela, and thus reminded, he drew forward a chair beside his own.

"Listen to this," he said in an odd tone, picking up an open letter:

Sydney, Australia, Jan. 13, 1918.

Dear Sir—Kindly inform my niece and only relative, Miss Angela Winton, that I am now in the possession of an entire fortune of \$1,000,000. She is married at the time of my death. She is the only child of the late John Cateby, and she is still unmarried when the announcement of my death is made she will receive a small annuity, while the remainder of my estate goes to charity. As I am suffering from an incurable disease it behooves my niece to hasten to the altar.

JOSEPH HENRY WINTON.

"How utterly absurd!" cried Angela as rosy blushes invaded her smooth cheeks. "The very idea! He might as well cut me off with an annuity and be done with it!"

Another letter had been received by Cateby on the same subject. The lawyer had been a protégé of Winton, who had sent him to school, to college and as stated in his letter, Angela was his only relative. He was very fond of her and had noticed what Angela had not even suspected—that his protégé loved his niece. He was in hopes that the two would make a match. In this event they would inherit his fortune together, and John would make a capital manager of the estate.

Finding that death was not far distant, he had written the two letters, the one intending to influence his niece, the other to advise Cateby of his desire to leave them his property jointly. In the one for John's private reading he had told him that it was his intention to place his niece in a position which would place Cateby in a position to marry her.

"Excuse me just a moment," said Cateby, rising. "I am called away on a matter of business." He went into the outside office, where a client was waiting for a few words of advice, and Angela was left alone with her startled thoughts.

How glorious it was to be the owner of a great fortune! What bliss to travel, to have beautiful clothes, to help the needy!

How sordid it was to consider that she must marry and lose her freedom, but who on earth would marry her? Common sense told her that many unscrupulous men would embrace the opportunity to become the husband of an heiress.

From an adjoining office came the lowered voices of two stenographers. "I saw the letter," insisted one impatiently. "It said she must marry before he died or she would lose the money! The idea!"

"As if such an old maid could find a husband quick as a wink!" giggled the other. "Did you ever see such a little brown mouse of a woman?"

"I wonder if she knows it's leap year and she has the privilege of asking some man to marry her? It's her only chance to get the million, believe me!"

When Cateby returned to his desk he found Angela drawing down her veil. Through the filmy meshes her cheeks were pink and her eyes flashed dangerously. All Angela's fighting instincts were aroused. She must have that million at the price of her pride, at any cost.

For the time avarice possessed her soul.

"And now, Miss Winton," smiled Cateby suavely, "let us plan how we can agree to your uncle's eccentric proposition. Of course you do not want to lose a fortune."

"Of course not," said Angela crisply. "I shall not lose it, Mr. Cateby."

"He stated at her."

"You mean that you are going to be married?" he asked.

Angela nodded.

"Then the matter is simplified," he said brusquely. "Perhaps you can arrange to be married immediately so as

to keep the fortune for any as well as for me."

"Yes," said Angela mechanically. He opened the door for her.

"You will let me know at once?" he asked in such an altered tone that Angela flashed a glance at him. His face was pale and stern, and the friendly look was gone from his dark blue eyes.

It was almost as if he had guessed Angela's bold intention.

"I've got to—I've got to look out for the future," thought Angela all the way home.

That evening Angela sat and thought and thought of all the men she knew who were eligible. When she had weighed and sifted them and discarded the impossible and the undesirable there remained but two—Roger Frame and Dr. Deering.

Roger Frame was a civil engineer, or, rather, an unenvied one—brusque and bad-mannered, but withal a fine, strong character and a good friend.

"And," debated Angela, "it must be desirable to have one's husband a good friend as well."

Dr. Deering was her minister, the middle-aged rector of her church. "I will explain to them," thought Angela with not much gusto. "They will understand, and as that office girl said, it is leap year, I am only taking advantage of my privilege."

The next morning Angela arrayed herself in her best frock, happily a new one of soft gray with a hat to match. The hat was trimmed with violets, and at her breast she pinned a bunch of the same sweet purple blossoms.

Who could guess the panic in Angela's heart when she stood before Roger Frame's office door? All her principles were in revolt, in arms, against the fear that she would lose Uncle Joseph's money.

Facing Roger Frame in his private office, Angela found refuge in hasty speech. Her words tumbled desperately from her lips.

Roger Frame's rugged face was gravely tender as he took her hands in his.

"You have done me such a great honor, Miss Winton," he said gently, "that I am proud of your confidence in me. But you see, I've complicated matters by engaging myself to Mrs. Wood, but sit down and let us talk it over."

Angela smiled bravely and shook her head. "I've another name on my list," she said lightly. "The rector."

"Dear lady," said Frame earnestly, "I wish you much joy and success in your quest. Dr. Deering is a good fellow, but I'd like to bring your uncle's neck for placing you in such a position."

Angela's lip quivered. "If Mr. Cateby had only thought of some other way out of it," she said pitiously.

"Cateby? He's the lawyer in the case?" asked Frame quickly.

She nodded. "You see, I must do something, Mr. Frame, and with one shamed look over her shoulder, she slipped out and closed the door upon a very angry man."

Roger Frame jerked the telephone receiver from his hook and called John Cateby's number.

Dr. Deering's reception room was bathed in mellow sunshine when a trim maid ushered an agitated Angela into the room.

"Dr. Deering is engaged at present," said the servant. "He will be at liberty in a little while."

Left alone, Angela could hear the frightened thumping of her heart.

There was the purr of a motorcar outside and the sound was instantly stilled. The rector had another visitor. Angela's courage waned rapidly. She had arisen in a panic when the servant ushered a man into the room with the same explanatory formula.

The man was John T. Cateby.

"Ah!" he cried quickly. "Have you seen him? Am I in time?"

"I haven't seen him yet," admitted Angela faintly.

"Then—then," he stammered excitedly. "My—my—marry me, Angela? I love you. I want you for my wife."

He held out his hands. Angela placed her trembling hands in his. "If I have to marry any one," she faltered, "I'm so glad it's you!"

He drew her closer.

"Suppose your uncle had never written you? Suppose there had been no fortune involved?" he whispered.

"Your love would have been richer enough," said Angela, her face against his and her pretty hat all crooked.

He smiled contentedly.

"Then you may read this," he said drawing a card from his pocket. "It came half an hour ago."

It was from Sydney, Australia, and dated the day before. It announced the death of Joseph Henry Winton.

Angela would have drawn away from his arm, but he held her closely.

"And you come to me after that?" he asked.

"Didn't I say I loved you?" he retorted gruffly. "I've been screwing up my courage to tell you. Your becoming an heiress was a dash of cold water."

"But what shall we say to Dr. Deering?" questioned Angela.

"Why, we'll ask him to officiate at our wedding next week," was Cateby's brilliant suggestion.

Russia's Merchant Flag.

The Russian merchant flag is a horizontal tricolor of white, blue and red. Originally it was the Dutch flag, and its appearance so pleased Peter the Great that he took it with him from Amsterdam and hoisted it upside down.

His plan to distinguish it from the Dutch banner met with such criticism, however, as the flag in an inverted position denoted a flag of distress, and eventually the stripes had to be rearranged before Russia adopted it as a national emblem.

He Stood.

It happened in a crowded Market street car one evening recently. A brilliant passenger shifted his bundles, arose, proceeded to take off his hat and said to an equally fit not more hardened female staidie, "Won't you take my seat, madam?"

My Fairy Godmother

She Gave Me Three
Riddles.

By E. A. MITCHEL

Having tried various ways of spending the month I put aside each year for an outing, and tired of them all, I was casting about for some new method when I saw an advertisement of a cabin situated on an island on the coast of Maine. The price was so reasonable that it attracted my attention. I entered into correspondence with the owner and engaged it.

My reason for doing so was that I met so many people at home that I desired to go where I would see no one. All day long I was haunted by persons eager to get a word with me to sell me something, and in the evening I was engaged in various social matters. A cabin hidden in a wood with a view of the ocean appealed to me. To lie at night listening to the breakers on the beach was a pleasing fancy.

I found the location what I had dreamed of. The cabin was well enough, but the furnishings were execrable. A cheap bedstead, a rickety bureau, a table on which to eat, a cook stove and a lot of cheap dishes completed the furnishings. There was no other abode near me, but scattered about were summer cottages, some of which were fairly pretentious. I saw no reason why I should be troubled by the inmates of any of them so long as I let them alone, which I proposed to do.

I had spent a week with only myself for company when one day, after a long tramp, on returning to my cabin I stood on the threshold astonished at a transformation of the interior. Disorder had been accumulating ever since my arrival; the bed had never been made; the dishes had not been washed. There were enough of the latter to last one person a week without being used more than once, and I had about finished the lot. I found on my return the bed made, the dishes washed, the cooking utensils scoured and hanging spick and span on the shelves.

I felt myself to be the hero of a fairy story and almost expected to see a little old woman drop down the chimney and stand upon the hearth.

Several days passed, during which disorder was again looming up about me, when, after an absence, I returned to find all set to rights, as before. Still not finding any clerk, I wrote on a piece of cardboard a message and pinned it up against the wall for my next absence.

Fairy Godmother—Thank you very much for your attention. I need only one thing. Will you give it to me? If so, leave word when next you come and I will make it known.

I went away again very soon, and when I returned beneath what I had written were penciled in letters apparently in the hand of an old person the following:

Your single wish is granted; name it. Before going away again I wrote: Some one to love me.

The answer to this was: Love is not singular; it is plural.

I found on the rude mantel of my cabin a skein of fine thread, tangled, and pinned to it the words:

Unravel this and you shall have your wish.

This fairy business was not gratifying my curiosity. I spent no time trying to unravel the thread, but spent considerable thought in laying a plan to find out who was my fairy godmother. I did not doubt that it was some girl from one of the cottages—possibly several girls who were deriving a lot of amusement in playing fairy. The only plan I could think of was to go away early in the day and hide near by. This I did. There was a dense thicket a short distance from my cabin, and one morning, having breakfasted at 5 o'clock, taking a book, pipe and tobacco and a lunch, I went into the thicket prepared to wait and watch.

About 11 o'clock in the morning I heard a child's voice calling, "He's gone!" I peeped through an opening and saw a girl about ten years old near the cabin beckoning to some one I could not see. Presently I saw a girl of perhaps twenty concealed from the hut by a tree, but visible to me, evidently fearful of advancing. But the child ran into the cabin and out again, beckoned eagerly, and the young woman (thickly veiled) hid behind a bush and went into the cabin.

Now I did not propose to give away the advantage I held by cornering my fairy godmother. I waited till she had left the cabin, then stole cautiously after her, my object being to locate her home. I followed her and her companion for two miles and saw her go into a cottage situated on a bluff overlooking the ocean. Thence I returned to my habitation to see what was her last message.

I had left the tangled skein on the table and near it a sheet of writing paper on which I had sprinkled drops of water and written "Tears" and below:

Fairy Godmother—I am wearing myself out trying to unravel the skein. Give me something easier.

A reply to this had been written on the "Tears" bespattered paper:

My dear, square the circle and you shall have your wish.

It was evident that the young lady had no intention of giving me a sweet heart. Anyway I knew enough not to tinkle an insoluble problem. I chuckled for I had her secret and she did not have mine. Lighting a pipe in order to sharpen my inventive faculties, I set to work to think out my next move. I did not spend much time on deciding upon one.

The next evening just before dark I was passing the cottage where dwelt my fairy godmother. The little girl who had aided her in her visits to my cabin was playing in the yard. Seeing myself by the gate, I called to the

child. She came, and I asked her if she could get me some arbutus. She ran to the house and returned with an elderly lady, who asked if I had been injured.

"Only a sprained ankle from slipping off a smooth stone," I said. "A little arbutus will fix it. Indeed, I don't know that anything is needed." I arose, with pretended difficulty, took one step and sank down again.

"I will call help," said the lady. "You must be carried to the house."

"No, no," I protested. "I'm sure I can walk that far if you will kindly allow me to put a hand on your arm."

The lady consented. With her assistance I got to the house and was placed in an easy chair on the porch. The fairy godmother came out, but I pretended not to notice her. She started on seeing me, and I saw color come and go in her face. I made a grimace in pretense of suffering, and her expression of uneasiness at my presence gave way to one of sympathy. I carefully concealed my recognition of her, and she was soon ministering to me with the others.

"I fear," I said, "that if you have a vehicle on the premises I shall have to ask some one to drive me to my cabin. It is a couple of miles from here on the eastern end of the island."

Now, I was quite sure there was no vehicle on the premises, for there was neither barn nor garage. The elderly lady informed me that there was no means of conveyance at hand, and since it was growing dark, I would be welcome to remain till she could be found. I pretended to demur to this, but was overruled. My "sprained" ankle was propped up on a foot rest with pillows. I remembered to wrince occasionally, fearful that my benefactors might suspect the part I was playing.

Soon after I had got settled my fairy godmother brought me out a dainty supper which she placed on a stand beside me. I felt quite confident that she knew me for the person whose cabin she had visited in my absence, but I was equally sure that she believed me to be ignorant that she was the person she had favored. In order to convince her of this I told her about my cabin and how I was spending an outing there alone. She made no comment, seemingly preferring to chat on other subjects.

I spent a pleasant evening, not mentioning that I had received kindness from an unknown person. Nor did my fairy godmother give any hint that she had even ever seen or heard of me before. No conveyance was forthcoming, and I was urged to abandon any idea of going to my cabin till morning, when it was suggested I might ride over with a farmer who supplied the family with milk each morning. After trying to step with the injured ankle and demonstrating that I could not possibly use it without great agony, I yielded to persuasion and consented to remain the night.

By this time a stout case had been provided for me, and I insisted on hobbling to my room without other assistance. In the morning I came downstairs, still keeping up the hobbling, and about 10 o'clock the farmer came with the milk. I expressed my heartfelt thanks to my benefactors and bade him to drive me to my cabin. My fairy godmother was solicitous lest I would need attention and be without it, living alone as I did, but I assured her that I would be back soon to thank her and the others again for the kindness that had been bestowed upon me. Then the farmer lifted me into his wagon and I was driven away, followed by smiling goodbyes from all the family.

The next day, since I did not expect another visit from my fairy godmother and not wishing to spend the day lounging about my cabin, I went out for some deep sea fishing. As usual I left everything in disorder. On my return shortly before dark I met with a surprise. My household had been put to rights and the paper on which I corresponded with my fairy godmother bore a message:

Since you have done neither of the tasks given you by your fairy godmother you cannot have any one to love you. You shall have one more opportunity. Tell how a sprained ankle can be made well within twelve hours.

I was dumfounded. Never had I so prided myself on playing a part as palming myself off as a sufferer. Talk about men being deceivers of women! I doubt if any man ever did any such thing. The girl had seen through my ruse and had played me a far better game than I had played her, or, rather, I had tried to play her.

Well, the fairy godmother business was ended. There was nothing for me to do but go to her abode and confess myself beaten. This I did the next morning. I longed for an offering to take with me, but in that wilderness no such thing was to be had. I was received with a look of amusement mingled with triumph. My first words were, "How did you discover my game?" The reply