

HOME.

By GERTRUDE ROCKWELL.

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Susan Kent was cutting her flowers. The big lilac bush by the front door hung low with its load of purple clusters. Mrs. Kent's scissors snipped lavishly, and occasionally she held a spray against her white cheeks. Her cheeks and her hair had whitened rapidly since that day nearly a year ago when Derry had come home. She tried to keep her thoughts from going back to that homecoming, so different from her plans. She tried to thank God that Derry had come home, even though in some strange way he had left the living, thinking part of him in France.

She looked tenderly over to where Derry sat on the door step, playing with a spray of lilac.

Down the street came a swift pattering of feet, and a little girl stopped at the gate. She was dressed in white, with a red, white and blue cap.

"Flowers ready, Mrs. Kent?" she inquired, smoothing down her starched skirts.

"All ready, Gladys, and about all you can carry, my dear." She came over and placed the big bouquet in the child's arms. Derry was looking at the red, white and blue cap. He shook his head slowly, and brushed his hand over his eyes.

"You aren't going to the parade?" asked Gladys, as she started off.

"No dear; I don't think Derry wants to go today," Mrs. Kent replied, steadily.

Derry went over and lay down in the hammock. Mrs. Kent paused on the steps to see him settled.

"While you have a little nap, I'll get the work done, dear," she said, as she went in the house.

Presently down town the band began to play. As the faint sounds and the rumble of the drums came up the street, the boy in the hammock sat up. Again the slight frown wrinkled his forehead, and he brushed his eyes with his hand.

The boom of the drum drew nearer. Derry stood up. He went down the gravel walk, and opening the gate, stepped out. He paused. The splendid strains of the national anthem came to his ears.

Derry looked puzzled and walked toward the sound.

Mrs. Kent worked quietly about the house for some time. Derry usually slept most of the forenoon. She tried to shut her ears to the music, and the knowledge that out there, khaki-clad lads, strong, intelligent, were paying honor to those who slept.

The boom of the saluting guns smote upon her ears. She went to the door and peeped at the hammock. It was empty. In swift alarm she glanced about the yard and saw the open gate. In 10 months Derry had never been out there alone. She ran down the street trying to steady her trembling knees. With sure instinct she made for the cemetery. He had gone to the parade.

She sped on. The procession was winding slowly out, drums muted, music stilled. The sun caught in the folds of the silken flag at the head of the column, and the breeze flung it forth, red as the sacrificial blood of its slain, white as the souls of its heroic womanhood, blue as the heavens that had guarded and moulded it. But she had eyes for none of these. Only dimly did she see the thin line of blue, the white-clad girls, the sturdy marching lines of khaki. On and on they passed, and at last she saw him across the moving pageant. He was standing alone at the edge of the crowd, the dazed wondering frown still on his face.

Forgetting the procession she started across the street. The last of the marchers had passed, and the autos carrying the old veterans were following.

It all happened so quickly. In the very instant that Mrs. Kent started across the street Derry saw her, saw, too, the autos bearing down upon her. Mrs. Kent saw him leap, felt his swift arms about her, and did she hear or did she dream that vibrant voice shouting "Mother?"

Darkness closed about her, a thick, palpating darkness that whirred and sang with strange noises. After a long time it lifted, and she saw the kind old face of Dr. Brown bending over her. She lay on her own bed. Mrs. Kent started up with one cry—"Derry." The doctor put out a detaining hand.

"Just a minute Mrs. Kent. Something remarkable has happened. I hardly know."

"Where is Derry?" demanded the mother.

"Derry is awake and is asking for you."

"Is asking?" Then the vibrant voice was not a dream.

She sped down the stairs and into the living room. He turned from where he was standing at the window

and ran toward her with outstretched arms.

"Mother, I've come home," he told her. The doctor slipped out.

"How I got here I don't know. Last I knew, why, we were going over the top. Mother, speak. Tell me all about it."

Mrs. Kent lifted her head from his shoulder and looked into the clear, radiant eyes.

"Oh, Derry, boy!" she gasped. "Let's sit down here together, and talk, and talk, and talk. And first of all we must thank the dear God that you've come home, Derry, home!"

KNEW WHEN THEY HAD BITE

Traveler Tells of Rats Who Used Their Tails as Fishlines to Catch Crabs.

Captain Monoton in his "Experiences of a New Guinea Resident Magistrate," relates the following incident: "Having landed on an utterly barren island formed of coral rock and destitute of all vegetation, he found it to be the home of an enormous number of rats. There was no trace of other animal life, and it was impossible to imagine how, except by continual preying upon one another, it was possible for these rats to subsist."

"While seated at the water's edge, turning over the problem in his mind, he noticed some of the rats going down to the edge of the reef—lank, hungry-looking creatures they were, with pink, naked tails. He stopped on the point of throwing lumps of coral at them, out of curiosity to see what they meant to do. His curiosity was soon gratified. Rat after rat picked a flattish piece and, squatting on the edge, dangled its tail in the water.

"Presently one rat gave a violent leap of a yard, landing well clear of the water, and with a crab clinging to its tail. Turning around, the rat grabbed the crab and devoured it, and then returned to the stone. Other rats were seen repeating the performance."

Macaulay Silenced Critics.

Macaulay was a victim to the habit of reading in bed. When going the northern circuit as a newly fledged barrister, an old king's counsel staying in the same hotel with him noticed that Macaulay carefully picked out the longest candle as the members of the mess were retiring for the night. "He remonstrated with him," says Sir George Trevelyan, "on the danger of reading in bed, upon which Macaulay replied with immense rapidity of utterance: 'I always read in bed at home; and if I am not afraid of committing paricide and matricide and fratricide, I can hardly be expected to pay any special regard to the lives of the bagmen of Leeds.' And, so saying, he left his hearers staring at one another, and marched off to his room."

Rose Always Loved.

The rose has been a favorite from earliest times. So deep a hold has it on the affections of the people that it is often spoken of as the "queen of flowers." It has figured in the literature of all ages and all nations. People in all stations of life yield homage to its beauty of form and color and to its delicious fragrance. It is loved by poor and rich alike. It is grown in the dooryards of the least pretentious cottages, where often the occupants are stinted in food and raiment, as well as on the grounds of large estates, where abound the choicest things that money can buy. It is also grown in immense quantities under glass and is the most popular winter cut flower for all occasions.

Dinner-Plate Pennies.

Some of the first coins were enormous, the idea apparently being to discourage the greedy from attempting to accumulate and carry around too many of them. There were copper coins as large as dinner plates. This inconvenient style had to give way to the demand for smaller and more convenient forms of currency, and the giant pennies soon dwindled in size to meet the popular demand.

The earliest trace of the use of gold as money is to be found in the pictures of the ancient Egyptians weighing in scales heaps of rings of the precious metals. But there is no actual record that these rings were known as coins with a fixed value.

Humor Superior to Wit.

Wit, bright, rapid and blasting as the lightning, flashes, strikes and vanishes in an instant; humor, warm and all-embracing as the sunshine, bathes its object in a genial and abiding light.—Whipple.

Women Occupied Whole Train.

The first train wholly occupied by women in the history of railroad travel was that chartered by a Massachusetts delegation to attend the women's congress held in Chicago at the time of the World's fair in that city.

SHELburn ITEMS

October 11

Lee George and wife were Lebanon visitors Sunday.

Marion Brown and family have moved to the F. J. Kula ranch.

The farmers are quite busy in this vicinity putting in their fall grain.

J. W. Hiron and wife and Earl Gooch and wife were in Albany last Tuesday. While there they attended the horse show and polo game.

Tally Gibbons, Mr. Ortwein and Harry Ransom are planning a trip to Southern Oregon for a deer hunt.

George French and Miss Sweet, of Dallas, were visiting at the Earl Gooch home over Sunday.

Mr. Peters, of Lyons, was visiting his daughter, Mrs. John Bentz, for a few days.

A. F. Gooch is in Portland on business this week. While there he expects to visit his cousin, who has just arrived from Michigan.

Mr. Bowman has just returned from a few days' visit with his mother in Albany. He also attended the fair while there.

J. W. Hiron, wife and little son, Robin, were Sunday visitors at the Alfred Powell home.

Otto Lyons was a Shelburn visitor Monday morning.

Simple Wireless Messages.

The waves of wireless stations are unceasingly passing through our houses and our bodies and we neither see, hear nor feel them. Yet if there be interposed a few strands of wire, a metal plate and a tiny glowlamp and if these accessories be ranged in order, the wireless messengers will carry the sound of a voice speaking thousands of miles away.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Rope From Milkweed Fiber.

The fiber of some species of milkweed has been raised in making rope. The lint found in the pods, while fine and silky, lacks twist and cannot be used for spinning, but it has been used for stuffing pillows.

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A Frog Concert.

As I sat on the piazza that evening, I noticed first an ominous absence of bird voices, and next the presence of a numerous frog population about the little lake close by. The musical performances of these voluble reptiles began about sunset and increased in volume and power till nothing else could be heard. If all the thrushes in the state had assembled in that spot and sung their loudest, they could not have been heard above the awful volume of frog voices.—Olive Thorne Miller.

Cat Mothers Fox Pups.

An Ontario reader writes that her cat fostered three fox pups since they were two weeks old. The pups were taken from the mother because it was feared they might chill. The cat had five kittens which were disposed of, and the foxes were promptly adopted in their place. The foxes are now over three months old and although larger than their foster mother are still fond of her. They are kept now in a wire pen and kitty is quite content to remain with them all day long, enjoying an occasional frolic.

Insects as Human Food.

Several kinds of insects were eaten by the ancient Hebrews, Greeks and Romans. Fabre, the French entomologist, once tried a dish of cooked cicadas, but found them unpalatable.

Helium Atoms From Radium.

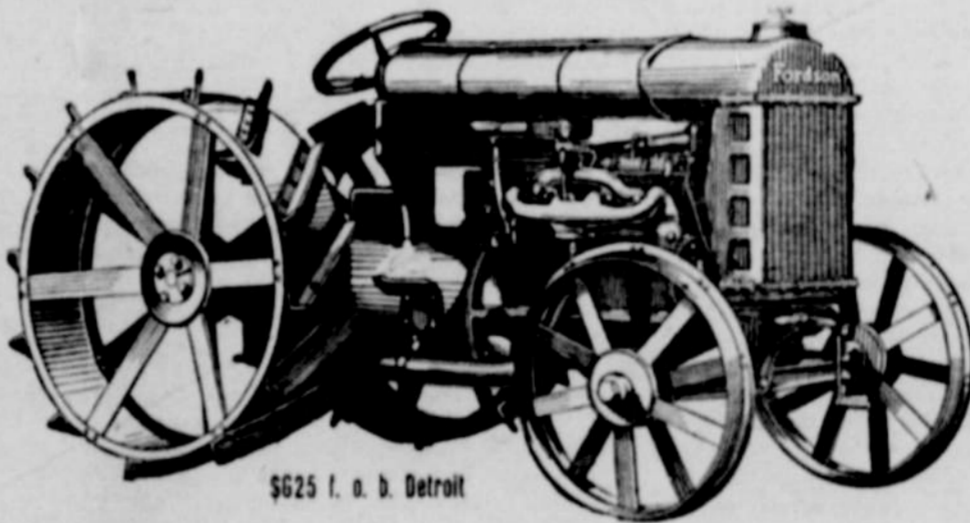
A gram of radium continuously sends off helium atoms, known as "alpha particles," at the rate of 145,000 billion a second, traveling at a speed of 12,000 miles a second.

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