

SHEEP'S CLOTHING

By **LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE**

AUTHOR OF "THE LONE WOLF," "THE BRASS BOWL," ETC.
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THE CHARMING AND TALKATIVE MRS. BEGGARSTAFF DISCOVERS THAT LUCY CARTERET HAS A WONDERFUL NECKLACE

Just as the giant passenger steamship Alsatia is ready to leave the port of Liverpool for New York, a charming young Englishwoman goes aboard and engages a luxurious stateroom. She is nervous, suspicious and fearful. Presently she learns she is to share the stateroom with Mrs. Amelia Beggarstaff, an amiable chatterbox of fifty years, who lives in New York. Mrs. Beggarstaff learns the girl's name is Lucy Carteret and that she's on her way to America to live. She calmly announces she will act as Lucy's chaperon for the voyage.

CHAPTER I—Continued.

"All my life," the girl admitted, "I was born in London, and when I was very young my parents returned to America, leaving me behind because they expected to be gone only a little time. Then my mother died in New York; and my father went into business there, and thought me better off where I was, in the care of friends, than with him."

"But surely," this in shocked exclamation, "he came back to see you!"
"Oh, indeed he did, often; that is, considering the difficulties, the long voyages, and the fact that he isn't a rich man. But I haven't seen him recently—not in several years."
"And now you're going to join him?"
"Yes," Miss Carteret affirmed in a voice that betrayed more doubt than she suspected.

But before her astute inquisitor could take advantage of the weakness her tone suggested there befell an interruption. It was nothing more extraordinary than a knock on the stateroom door; but it brought Miss Carteret to her feet with a start, again pale and trembling.

"Oh!" she cried in alarm. "Oh, what is that?" Involuntarily she stepped back as if to put as much space as possible between herself and the door. Mrs. Beggarstaff watched her in open wonder.

"It's only the stewardess. I rang for her some time ago."
"Oh, if that's all," Miss Carteret sat down again.

"One moment, stewardess," Mrs. Beggarstaff looked back at the girl. "You don't object to my letting her in?"
"Oh, no, no!" Miss Carteret insisted hastily. "Please don't mind me. I'm very nervous—haven't been—well, I was startled—that is all."

"So I see," said Mrs. Beggarstaff with a quizzical accent. "Come in!"
The door opened, admitting a smiling, apple-cheeked, middle-aged Englishwoman.

"Shut the door—there! So many people running up and down."

But when they were alone again, much to the relief of the girl, Mrs. Beggarstaff failed by any word to refer to her recent betrayal of alarm—something hardly to be explained other than by open confession—which wouldn't in the least suit Miss Carteret's book.

"Now," said the elder woman placidly, folding a veil over a most palpable wig, but still a most becoming one, "now I'll hurry on deck and see about our chairs, and then interview the second steward about seats at table. I know most of these people, stewards and all, and generally manage to get just about what I want," Mrs. Beggarstaff added with grim self-conceit. "I presume you've no objection to sitting beside me? Not that you won't see all you want of me—and more, probably—right here."

"Please," the girl begged, laughing. "I'll be delighted with whatever arrangements you're kind enough to make."

"Very good, then. And for dinner, if you please, put on your prettiest frock. Peter Traff's aboard, and he's a dear—well worth dressing up for."
The bang of the door as Mrs. Beggarstaff went out might have been a signal; immediately the girl became conscious that the ship was in motion—vibrant and sonorous with the drone of its turbines.

The voyage of the Alsatia was begun, and—nothing had happened. She had eluded pursuit, was free!

CHAPTER II.

Dinner ran off uneventfully, if enlivened by the quenchless animation of the Dowager Dragon, but Miss Carteret, manifesting little appetite, sat out the meal with downcast eyes, mute save when courtesy dictated speech. Later she found herself seated by her Dragon's side on the lee of the promenade deck, in darkness save for the beams from lighted ports. For a little the girl relished all this with gladness. But presently her spirits sagged again and she grew drowsy, and lingered from her bed only to please the warm-hearted old woman who had adopted her pro tempore—"on suspicion," as Mrs. Beggarstaff put it, not without a little harmless malice.

Now and again friends paused to pay their addresses to the Dowager Dragon; amiable, light-hearted people, personable and attractive; yet of them all the facile waxen tablets of Miss Carteret's memory retained impressions of but three personalities.

One was the famous Peter Traff, claiming her interest more because of Mrs. Beggarstaff's outspoken delight in him than through any qualities he paraded during the few minutes he spent with the two—a youngish, well-poised body, with a drawl and a sort of lissuolant humor that seemed to afford the Dragon intense diversion. But much of this man's discourse was couched in a modified phase of American slang or else harked back to local American topics; both largely unintelligible to a sense of humor nourished on strictly British slang and localisms.

Then there was a Mrs. Merrilees—according to Mrs. Beggarstaff not a year out of mourning for a worthless husband—an adorably pretty creature, and so bewitchingly gracious that Miss Carteret, at sight, first caught her breath with envy, then fell hopelessly in love with her.

A third she remembered for no reason she could assign. His name was Quoin—a tall, taciturn man with a quiet voice, a semi-ironic attitude toward the Dowager Dragon's gush of spirited inconsequence, and a suggestion of reserve. For some reason she remembered him more definitely even than she remembered Mrs. Merrilees. As for the others, they might as well have been shadows on a cinematograph screen.

By ten o'clock, leaving Mrs. Beggarstaff firmly fixed in the fourth seat at a card table, engrossed by her one confessed infatuation, auction bridge, Miss Carteret was abed and asleep.

A bed of almost sybaritic luxury it seemed, as it rocked her gently to forgetfulness; but a bed of misery when she awoke in the chill of dawn, with the Alsatia, for all her immense bulk, dancing drunkenly to the tune piped by a mad northeaster. And for more than sixty hours she was held the victim of mortal weakness and the elements' immortal rage.

Intervals there were, of course, when her sufferings temporarily abated, she was able to talk a little with one or the other of her would-be comforters—Mrs. Beggarstaff and the stewardess. But on Tuesday a memorable conversation took place, negligible though it seemed at the time.

It was at about six bells in the forenoon watch when the Dowager Dragon came below, ostensibly to find a book, in reality to convey fair tidings.

"You're feeling better," she asserted, after a shrewd look at the girl.

"Propped up in bed, Miss Carteret moved a languidly negative head.

"Don't tell me! I haven't crossed this mill-pond thirty times not to know when a seasick woman's on the mend. Besides, haven't you noticed how much steadier the boat has been this last hour or two?"

"I thought I must be imagining it," the invalid murmured incredulously.

"Nonsense! The barometer's been rising since midnight. The wind shifted at dawn, and now we've a clearing sky and a falling sea. Of course you're feeling better. You'll be on deck before night."

"Oh, please, Mrs. Beggarstaff!"

"Don't worry; I shan't carry you off by force. Bless my inadequate income! What's this?"

The girl turned her head wearily to look.

Mrs. Beggarstaff had been standing beside the chest of drawers, a hand abstractedly toying with her protegee's simple jewelry, and suddenly had singled out a brooch for wondering interest.

This brooch was a very beautiful thing, an exquisite cameo in sardonyx framed in an oval frame of fine diamonds; and Miss Carteret treasured it above all her possessions.

"Where under the sun, child, did you pick this up?"

"It was given me on my fifteenth birthday."

"Five years ago?"

"Just about. Why?"

The Dowager Dragon laughed delightedly. "My roundabout way of asking your age, dear." She turned the brooch over and held it to the

light. "If ever you care to part with it, don't forget my passion for antique jewelry."

"Oh, never—I could never part with it!"

"Forgive me. I forgot it was a present."

"But that isn't all," the girl explained with growing animation. "You see, it was a present from my father, and the cameo—it's a portrait of my father himself!"

"It's what?" Mrs. Beggarstaff exclaimed shrilly. "A portrait of your father! Pooh! Absurd! That thing's a genuine antiquity—two thousand years old if a day!"

"I know. I mean, it looks like him. That's why he gave it to me. He showed it to me once—the last time we were together in London—and I saw the resemblance; so he sent it to me on my next birthday. It really does look wonderfully like him."

"Then, my dear, you ought to pride yourself on having a mighty handsome man for your father!"

"I do," the girl said indistinctly, averting her head and closing her eyes. "And able to make such presents! Why, it must be worth several thousands! An exquisite specimen—perfectly preserved—flawless—ought by rights to be in the Metropolitan museum. I shall envy you it till my dying day!"

Miss Carteret didn't answer.

And presently Mrs. Beggarstaff returned the brooch to the top of the highboy and went her way, one fine, thoughtful wrinkle marring the habitual serenity of her forehead.

The Dowager Dragon's deck chair stood in the shelter of a jog near the entrance to the forward promenade deck companionway—a most advantageous cologn for the sincere student of seafaring humanity. Here, after a hurried dinner, Mrs. Beggarstaff mounted guard in the blue gloaming, narrowly reviewing the postprandial parade with eyes whose brightness was as yet undimmed by age.

At length she sat up with a quick movement and called imperatively, "Quoin!"

A man who, walking alone, had been on the point of passing, jerked a cigarette stub over the rail, and moved to the lady's side.

"Sit down. Three mortal days I've been moping round the saloons with my tongue hanging out, parched for a bit of scandal—and you never came near me!"

"But I hate to disappoint; I'd nothing on tap high enough for your seasoned palate."

"Don't be impudent, Quoin. What are you doing on this boat? If you



"Where Under the Sun, Child, Did You Pick Up This?"

answer, 'Crossing the Atlantic, I'll forget I'm a lady—'

Quoin chuckled. "I'm combining business with pleasure, if you must know. Nothing pleases me more than to be cooped up for a few days with an unsuspecting subject. In such circumstances your humble sleuth learns a lot about human nature."

"Then you're sleuthing! I know it! But on whose trail?"

"Afraid I dassen't tell, Mrs. Beggarstaff."

"What if I know?"

"That wouldn't surprise me; you certainly do contrive to know a surprising number of things that don't concern you."

"I'm not sure whether that's flattery or impertinence."

"The man who could flatter your omniscience, madam, wouldn't hesitate to—ah—tackle the job of teaching a New York head-wearer the gentle art of being insolent."

Mrs. Beggarstaff laughed aloud. "But suppose I do know what game you're stalking and can lend a helping hand?"

"Charmed to humor your whim. Consider me a docile little supposer. And then?"

And right away Mrs. Beggarstaff confesses to Mr. Quoin her suspicions about Lucy Carteret. Don't miss interesting developments given in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Masticate Figs Thoroughly.

The composition of dried figs, dates and raisins is similar. Under normal conditions, and when carefully prepared, all three fruits are excellent food for both children and grown people. The fruit should be thoroughly masticated, however, and for young children, or in any case where the skins may prove indigestible, it is safer to run the fruit through the food chopper before otherwise preparing or serving it.—Woman's Home Companion.

FOR GOOD MOLASSES CANDY

Recipe for Delicacy That Tastes Exceptionally Fine on Evenings When Weather is Cold.

Pour into a kettle that will hold about four times the amount to be used the quantity of molasses of "good quality" that is required for the purpose. Boil over a "slow" fire for about one-half hour. Attend to stirring all of the time while the "kettle is over the fire," and "take the kettle off the fire if there is danger of the contents running over." Watch carefully this process of boiling so as not to allow the molasses to burn. When a little dropped in cold water becomes hard and brittle (make test with spoon by dropping a little into cold water, add a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda (common baking soda), free from lumps, to every two quarts of the boiling molasses. Stir quickly so as to thoroughly mix and then pour on platter or platters that have been well greased beforehand.

When sufficiently cool pull back and forth, the hands being greased by rubbing them with butter usually. Work the candy until it becomes a yellowish brown color. If wished it may be flavored with vanilla or lemon.

I like it best without flavoring other than its own—molasses—and prefer adding a small piece of butter instead of carbonate of soda. Keep the hands well moistened (dip occasionally in a dish of cold water). This makes greasing them unnecessary.

USE FOR OLD TABLECLOTH

May Be Made Over Into Serviceable, Pretty Breakfast and Luncheon Sets, Says Writer.

A tablecloth that has seen its best days may be pressed into further service by making the better part into a breakfast or luncheon set. The number of pieces to be secured depends upon the size and condition of the cloth; mine was a good one to start with. I cut a square 14 by 14 inches for a table center. From the selvage side I cut a piece 39 by 17 for a serving-table slip, fringing three sides; six dollies 11 by 11 inches and six 6 by 6 inches. I got several odd-sized dollies for dishes. I fringed all of these pieces one inch deep. My set has been much admired, and has saved my more expensive sets many trips to the wash tub. It has been in active service a year and with care will last another, and cost me nothing but my time one wet afternoon.—Woman's Home Companion.

Spice Cakes With Chocolate Sauce. For the cakes, cream together two tablespoonfuls of shortening with half a cupful of brown sugar and add half a cupful of dark molasses, one teaspoonful each of ground ginger, cinnamon and grated nutmeg and half a teaspoonful of ground allspice. Mix well; add one teaspoonful of baking soda dissolved in three-quarters of a cupful of thick, soured milk and sufficient sifted flour to form a good cake batter. It should "ribbon" from the spoon. Bake in well-greased cup cake pans in a moderate oven.

Yorkshire Parkin. One pound of medium-cooked oatmeal, three ounces of dripping, molasses, one-half pound of brown sugar, one-half ounce of ground ginger and one-half teaspoonful of salt.

Mix the salt with the oatmeal and rub in the fat. Add the sugar and ground ginger. Mix to a stiff dough with molasses. Roll out half an inch thick, cut into squares and bake on a greased tin for 20 minutes. The oven should be hot.

Parsnip Rolls. Boil two large parsnips until tender and press through a colander, add four cupfuls of hot milk, a teaspoonful of salt, quarter of a cupful of lard, one yeast cake mixed with a quarter of a cupful of sugar and enough flour to make a stiff batter. Raise to twice its original size. Knead. Cut into small strips, roll once, let raise for ten minutes and bake 20 minutes.

Fried Tomatoes. Wash and wipe ripe tomatoes. Cut in three or four slices. Dip into flour, which has been seasoned with salt and pepper. Fry in fat (bacon fat is best) until brown on both sides. Have a little milk heating, and when the tomatoes have been taken out pour into the fat, and when boiling thicken with a little flour mixed in cold water. Pour this gravy over the tomatoes.

French Bean Soup. One pint of white beans, two or three onions sliced, salt, six or eight quarts water. Boil hard so beans will go to pieces; add three or four pounds fore-quarter lamb, cut small and fat removed. In time to cook add one quart potatoes and two carrots cut in dice. Time of cooking whole, about four hours. This is a fine dinner for cold weather.

Health Bread. Pour over one cupful rolled oats three cupfuls boiling water, good one-half cupful molasses, one tablespoonful lard, one dessertspoonful salt. Let cool and add yeast cake dissolved in cold water. Add bread flour until it can be kneaded. Bake one hour and ten minutes.

Silver Custard. Whites of three eggs well beaten, two tablespoonfuls milk, two tablespoonfuls sugar, little salt. Mix well and pour over one pint of hot milk. Bake in a small, deep dish, set in a pan of hot water until firm.

BANQUET FOR HIS 84 WIVES

King of Siam Gave Remarkable Feast, the First and Only One of Its Kind Ever Known.

It was just 20 years ago that his late majesty, Somdet Phra Parmendri Maha Chulalongkorn, gave a dinner—the first and only one of its kind—to a few of his favorite wives, 84 in number.

His majesty's father, King Mongkut, dined every day seated alone and waited upon by 100 kneeling wives. The queen, also kneeling, tasted each dish before presenting it to her lord. King Chulalongkorn, inaugurating a new era, had his wives seated about his royal table as guests and equals. The waiters and busboys were princes of the blood royal.

The service was magnificent—the plates of solid gold were worth a king's ransom. The knives, forks and spoons were fashioned after good old Siamese types of ornamentation found in the ancient capital of Ayuthia. The glass was engraved with his majesty's monogram, inlaid with gold. The menu cards were of the thinnest rice paper with solid gold lettering. On the table stood bouquets six feet in height, made of hothouse flowers, enlarged by hand to unusual size. For example, the roses were gathered, the petals pulled apart and sewn together again with the finest of needles and silk thread.

Of course one of the dishes was birds' nest soup, made of the famous birds' nests from the Malay peninsula. A Siamese curry is always a special delight; this royal curry was a fish to remember. Served from golden "Sombols" dishes were a dozen compliments—in addition to the curry proper—spices from India, grated coconut, copeck (in which hot chili predominated), tamarind paste, mango chutney and, best of all, "Bombay duck," a sun-dried jellyfish.

Siam is noted for the finest of reed-birds, dozens of which were roasted and broiled. Deer for the dinner were shot at Bangplasi, and innumerable varieties of other flesh-meats, as well as of fish, were served, including ducklings and goslings from the royal farm. For fruits there were oranges and bananas—especially ripened—mangoes, mangosteens, pomegranates, custard-apples, guavas, sapadillos and a load of pineapples from Pineapple Island, near Singapore.

His late majesty was a king—every inch of him.—W. J. Palmer, in Commonwealth Idea.

Hit the Mark.

The pretty school teacher had asked her class for the best original definition of "wife," and the boy in the corner promptly responded: "A rib!" She looked at him reproachfully, and nodded to the boy with dreamy eyes, who seemed anxious to say something. "Man's guiding star and guardian angel!" he said, in response to the nod. "A helpmeet!" put in a little flaxen-haired girl. "One who soothes man in adversity," suggested a demure little girl. "And spends his money when he's flush," added the incorrigible boy in the corner. There was a lull, and the pretty, dark-haired girl said, slowly: "A wife is the envy of spinsters." "One who makes a man bustle," was the next suggestion. "And ceeps him from making a fool of himself," put in another girl. "Someone for a man to find fault with when things go wrong," said a sorrowful little maiden. "Stop there," said the pretty school teacher; "that's the best definition."

That Did It.

His aunt was rich and elderly. She had called, unexpectedly, when he was out, and his wife was trying to entertain her by such methods as she thought to be best conducive to their future welfare.

The old lady had recently added a gramophone to her establishment, and when she heard that early that morning her loving nephew had made for her a record of her favorite cornet solo, she was delighted.

"How nice of him!" she said. "Can't hear it?"

"Well," said her niece, "we haven't tried it yet, but still, I'll put it on." It was a pronounced success, and the old lady was charmed.

But her feelings when, after the solo was finished, the instrument brought out with fatal clearness:

"Pshaw! If that's not good for an extra hundred in the old girl's will, I'm a Dutchman!"

When Wild Things Go Mad.

Somehow one never thinks of a wild animal as having rabies, but that they are quite as subject to madness as are their domesticated brethren is evidenced by the outbreak of the disease which swept parts of Oregon, California, Nevada and Idaho last summer.

Madness is particularly prevalent among coyotes, and a heavy loss of live stock is the result. In one case reported, a single rabid coyote caused the loss of 27 steers!

Nor are cattle the sole sufferers. In Nevada alone 60 persons were treated for the disease by state authorities as a result of having been bitten by infected animals, wild and domestic.—Outing.

Room for a Larger Company.

A little girl had been reprimanded by her mother for telling a falsehood. "Where do you think little folks go to hat tell such stories?" asked the mother.

"I don't know," said the little girl, unconcernedly; "the same place big folks go to, I suppose."—The Christian Herald.

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Following Legal Advice.

The farmer walked into the little grocery with a firm step. "I want a tub of butter," he said, "and a lot of sugar, and all that other stuff."

"Good gracious!" said the widow who kept the shop. "Whatever do you want with all them goods?"

"I dunno," said the farmer, scratching his head, "but you see I'm the executor of your husband's will and the lawyer told me I was to carry out the provisions."—Topeka State Journal.

Sure! High Heels Cause Corns But Who Cares Now.

You reckless men and women who are pestered with corns and who have at least once a week invited an awful death from lockjaw or blood poison are now told by a Cincinnati authority to use a drug called freezeone, which the moment a few drops are applied to any corn or callous the soreness is relieved and soon the entire corn or callous, root and all, lifts off with the fingers.

Freezone dries the moment it is applied, and simply shrivels the corn or callous without inflaming or even irritating the surrounding tissue or skin. A small bottle of freezeone will cost very little at any of the drug stores, but will positively rid one's feet of every hard or soft corn or hardened callous. If your druggist hasn't any freezeone he can get it at any wholesale drug house for you.

A Knowing Boy.

"My father and I know everything in the world," said a small boy to his companion.

"All right," said the latter. "Where is Asia?"

It was a stiff question, but the little fellow answered, coolly, "That is one of the things my father knows."—Exchange.

A Misnomer.

"How much money has my husband in this bank?"
"I cannot tell you that, madam."
"The idea! Aren't you the teller?"—Exchange.

To Keep Clean and Healthy Take Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They regulate liver, bowels and stomach.

An Eye to Business.

A party bent on "seeing London" rolled out of Hyde park in a big automobile and listened with undivided interest to the guide's explanation of the various places of interest. Presently they passed an ancient edifice surrounded by a high brick wall. "That is the town house of the Duke of Dea, one of our largest landed proprietors," said the guide.

The eyes of the beautiful young American girl on the rear seat were suddenly illuminated.

"Who landed him?" she cried.—Everybody's.

Also to Be Truthful.

Miss Antique (taking seat politely proffered in crowded car)—Thank you, my little man. You have been taught to be polite, I am glad to see. Did your mother tell you to always give up your seat to ladies?
Polite Boy—No, not all ladies—only old ladies.—Exchange.

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