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Let Me Do That, Dad



As You Were Saying...

I AM 84, and until recently I drove my own car. This incident occurred a few months before I quit driving.

I was going into town and was just turning onto one of the main streets when my left front tire went flat. I got the wheel off after a struggle and was trying to lift the spare into place when a voice behind me said, "Let me do that, Dad."

There stood a tall young man who had come from across the street. I thanked him and, while I rolled the flat to a nearby service station, he began putting on the spare.

When I returned, the spare was in place and the jack was neatly put away in the trunk. But my benefactor had gone on his way without even giving me his name.—Rev. A. Edrington, Muncie, Ind.

Our Private Password. Before my husband and I were married, the priest who gave us our instructions stressed the importance of sharing, especially the little things. "It's important," he said, "even if one of you just tells the other you saw a dog with a long tail."

Some time after we were settled down my husband came home from work one evening, but I was too busy with dinner to pay him much attention. He slipped his arm around me and whispered in my ear, "I saw a dog with a long tail today."

It brought back everything the priest told us about marriage, and it has become our private little joke ever since, always drawing us closer together.—Mrs. J.W., Grand Rapids, Mich.

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I Was Just Thinking...

... THE KALLIKAKS in my town live a long time. They have herds of children. They're as harmless as the light patter of rain. It's simply that they're a little short of brains.

In the sociology books, the Kallikaks and the Jukes are the John Does of the study of feeble-mindedness reproducing itself. Science shows that the tendency travels on and on from generation to generation and science furrows its brow over the problem.

In our town, we do, too. One of our Kallikaks is 75 and delivers groceries on a bicycle. He looks like a corporation president—snowy white hair and an air of genteel determination. But in

his eyes is the emptiness of the blue beyond.

Another Kallikak, the grocery boy's granddaughter, became a mail-order bride. The last we heard, she'd had five or six or seven children, each innocent of any I.Q.

The Kallikaks have lived in our town for generations. Some of them work and some of them don't. Some live in squalor and some on the icy edge of poverty. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, our good folk take them great baskets of turkey and cranberries and outgrown clothes, neatly washed and mended.

The Kallikaks don't always seem

properly grateful, but we feel better in church on Sunday for having made the effort.

Every town has its Kallikaks. The welfare agencies and the planned-parenthood groups wring their hands over them and some of us poke fun at them and some kind hearts are filled with pity.

We do what we can and then we sit back and wash our hands of them.

What good are they? None at all to society, none at all to history, none at all to progress.

But sometimes they have the curious effect of making the rest of us just a little better than we were before.

Patty Johnson

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