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BOYS and GIRLS

Dear Girls and Boys:

What a long time it is since there was any correspondence in the corner! How are all the nieces and nephews who used to write such nice letters? I want to tell them about a proposition I have had in mind a long while. Christmas is coming, in fact will be here before we realize it, and every one is thinking of the presents they would like to make. Now here is a chance to earn some pocket money by getting us new subscribers. All those who are willing to help and who desire to make this pocket money, just send in your names and addresses and we will mail you blank forms to have filled in. You must all have lots of friends who cannot refuse to go on your list. To those who live outside of Montreal, United States excepted, the price is one dollar per year, United States one dollar and fifty cents. This is how we will treat you: For every new subscriber we will allow you fifty cents, which you will deduct from each dollar you receive, just sending us a P. O. Order for the balance; and as a further encouragement, to the girl or boy sending us in one hundred new subscribers between Nov. 15 and Jan. 1, 1909, we will, besides allowing fifty cents for each new subscriber, present them with a valuable prize.

Now, my dears, what do you think of this. I know you are all able to do good work for me. Write and let me know what you think of this.

Your loving
AUNT BECKY.

TOMMY'S SUSPICIONS.

(Lowell Otis, Reese.)

My daddy says that when he was a boy he never cried. Never ran away from school to go swimming; never tried to eat a lickin'; never failed to do as he was bid. (Well, maybe daddy didn't, then—but gran'ma says he did!)

My daddy brags a lot about the way boys acted when he was a boy. (Gee! but they must 'a been most angels then!) He says he never dared to peep beneath the cake box lid. (Well, maybe not, but anyway, My gran'ma says he did!)

"I never tied a tin can to a dog's tail in my life!" Says daddy. "An' I never carved my initials with a knife in great big glaring capitals on the piano lid." (That's what he told me solemnly—but gran'ma says he did!)

"I never cared for circuses An' brass bands an' such things." (Says, honest! that's just what he said.)

"An' tops an' devil slings, I never waited after school To lick some other kid." (He says he never done those things—but gran'ma says he did!)

Say! but my gran'ma's mighty wise; She knew my daddy when he was a little runt an' says He was a terror then! He says he never cut up none The times he was a kid. (I know I ought to b'lieve him, But gran'ma says he did!)

THE CIGARETTE FIEND.

"You smoke thirty cigarettes a day?"

"Yes, on the average."

"You don't blame them for your run down condition?"

"Not in the least. I blame my hard work."

The physician shook his head. He smiled in a vexed way. Then he took a leech out of a glass jar.

"Let me show you something," he said.

The cigarette fiend stared at the leech, and the other laid the leech on top of his head. The leech fell to work busily. Its body began to swell. Then, all of a sudden, a kind of shudder convulsed it, and it fell to the floor, dead.

"That is what your blood did to the leech," said the physician. He took up the little corpse between his finger and thumb. "Look at it," he said. "Quite dead, you see. You poisoned it."

"I guess it wasn't a healthy leech," said the cigarette smoker, sullenly.

"Wasn't healthy, eh? Well, we'll try again."

And the physician clapped two leeches on the young man's thin arms.

A Little Gray Cat.

The talk had got somehow to witchcraft, werewolves, transmutations of form.

"It's quite true," asserted the girl calmly, "I can do it, my other form is that of a little gray cat."

Her eyes, which were large, rather round and gray, with innumerable yellow spangles, faced Curtis seriously. Her soft gray gown defined her lithe form smoothly and sinuously. She folded her small hands in her lap with silken deliberation. "I don't doubt it," returned Curtis. "But why do you say your other form?"

He was pursuing literature rather strenuously, but that moment gave him a pang of envy for the painter's art. To put in color and form all the quiet, subtle, mysterious, feminine feline charm of her!

"I am serious," she said. "You don't believe me?"

"I could believe easier," admitted Curtis, "with the help of ocular demonstration."

She rose with the poised, independent motion that characterized her.

"Very well. If you see a little gray cat to-morrow, I will be that cat."

"You shall command every luxury," mocked Curtis, "catnip, chicken, cream!"

Her grave, baffling eyes ignored his flippancy. "You are scoffing. You will see a little gray cat to-morrow. I will be that cat."

Curtis and Plymnesser walked home together. Plymnesser had acted as the Westerner's social sponsor before the book had set every one talking.

"Saw you having an absorbing tete-a-tete with Sybil Graydon," observed Plymnesser. "Fine girl, Sybil, and plenty of money, too! Rather too quiet for some people, but a first-rate little person, I say."

"Quite so," returned Curtis dryly. He added more for his own instruction than Plymnesser's. "Miss Graydon, if I were to suggest a fault, knows her own points rather too well, and doesn't hesitate to call attention to them."

"Well, what are girls for!" retorted Plymnesser.

Curtis sat at his desk the next morning wrestling against an obsession in the image of a graceful little woman in gray. He found himself obliged to compromise with the obsession. Thrusting his work aside impatiently, he began on a fresh sheet. This went better. At last he came out of a trance of absorption with a start. Something made him turn abruptly. There in the center of the room demurely regarding him, sat a little gray cat!

Curtis rubbed his eyes; for one instant a shiver struck along his spine, then he threw back his head and laughed uproariously. He remembered the open window and the crowded roofs and chimney-pots outside his sky-parlor. In one sense Curtis lived high. But what a coincidence and what a cat!

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"Kitty!" called Curtis, holding out his hand.

The cat rose but did not approach him. She walked about the room with an air of quiet, impersonal observation. Curtis loved animals. He made prompt overtures of friendship. The cat accepted his petting with staid nonchalance. When he lifted her in his arms she did not resist. He seated himself at his desk again and placed her on his lap. She sat there, dainty, detached, inscrutable. She turned her smooth head, and fixed her eyes, large, round and gray, lit with points of yellow, seriously upon him. If the pupils had been round instead of vertical! As it was, his heart quickened some beats.

"Graydon!" said Curtis aloud, gently stroking her fur. "I think—I think I am in love with you! But it won't do, you know! I've got years of hard work ahead of me. To do nothing of the extreme improbability of my ever getting you to consider it, you're too expensive a luxury for me. That's putting it brutally, but we may as well face the facts. Besides, you're a witch. What do I want of a witch, anyhow? I hope you won't mind being put on a cushion? Right here by the fire? So."

Graydon accepted the cushion courteously. Presently she got up strolled softly-footed about, mounted the window-sill and sprang down upon the confusion of roofs outside.

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LAUGHING WINNIFRED.

"Isn't it too funny!" Winnifred leaned against the wall to have her laugh out. "I can't keep my face straight when she opens her mouth. How in the world does she get her verbs mixed up in that queer way?"

"You know she has been in this country but six months," Pauline suggested gently. "I think she speaks English very well when you take that into account."

"Perhaps she does," Winnifred admitted carelessly. "But anyhow it's fun to hear her. If I were her roommate, I shouldn't do a thing but laugh all day."

"Don't let her know you are laughing at her," warned the more thoughtful Pauline.

"Oh, she won't notice. She's the slow sort that never notices things," Winnifred returned. "And it's my lucky star, otherwise she'd be my mortal enemy." She walked away humming a tune, and it was not until supper that it occurred to her that there might be two sides to the question.

The girls in Miss Graham's school who were studying language did not look forward to their supper with unqualified anticipation. The girls who took German sat at the "German table," and were not supposed to make any remarks during the meal, except in the language. The French table was on the other side of the dining-room and at this time the conversation was all in French. Winnifred sat at the German table, and when she took her seat that night, she found that the flaxen-haired foreigner whose accent had seemed so amusing earlier in the day, was her right-hand neighbor.

Winnifred's German vocabulary was somewhat limited, and it was not till she had done some thinking that she ventured to ask her neighbor, Lena Saeker, how she had enjoyed her first day at the school.

"For a moment Lena stared, as if she had not quite understood. Then suddenly her fair cheeks flushed, and she hastily replied in smoothly-flowing German which fell musically on Winnifred's ear, though she could not understand all the words. The teacher, Miss Roberts, spoke from the end of the table, when Lena had finished.

"We are very fortunate in having Lena with us," she said in German. "Her fine accent will be a great help to us all." And for the rest of the supper hour Lena had so many questions to answer that it was a wonder she found time to eat.

Nor was that all. As Winnifred left the dining-room she heard an animated conversation going on between Miss Roberts, the German teacher, and Miss Wallace, who taught French.

"Can't we make arrangements to divide that remarkable Lena?" Miss Wallace was asking eagerly. "It is not fair that you should have her all the time. You know she has an excellent French accent, and she would be a real inspiration at my table."

Winnifred did not hear Miss Roberts' answer. She was thinking how she had laughed that morning at the peculiarities of Lena's English accent, and the memory made her uncomfortable. She could not help feeling that if Lena had not been too polite, she might have had her share of laughter that day.

The Death of a Blasphemer.

The correspondent of the Croix at Mainz relates the tragical end of a blasphemer. During the preparations for the procession of the Fete Dieu at Sainte James sur Sarthe, a blacksmith named Auguste Railland, fifty-three years of age, mounted one of the tabernacles at a resting place erected opposite a roadside crucifix, and, after indulging in coarse jokes at the procession, shouted to the image of Christ: "If you were not a humbug, you would get off that cross and pull me off your altar!"

Immediately after pronouncing those words the blasphemer fell to the ground from the height of only four yards, injuring himself so seriously that he died three days later. His agony is described as having been most terrible. The emotion this incident caused in all the country around was intense.

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"If examinations were made of every one, people would be surprised at the number of persons walking about suffering from heart disease."

This startling statement was made by a doctor at a recent inquest. "I should not like to say that heart disease is as common as this would imply," said the expert, "but I am sure that the number of persons going about with weak hearts must be very large."

"Hundreds of people go about their daily work on the verge of death, and yet do not know it. It is only when the shock comes that kills them that the unsuspected weakness of the heart is made apparent."

"But undoubtedly heart weakness, not disease, is more prevalent nowadays. I should think that the stress of living, the wear and rush of modern business life, have a lot to do with heart trouble."

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yours."

"The sarcastic girl!" stammered Curtis.

"My best friend," she observed. Then, stirred either to pity or confusion beneath his imploring eyes, "I think I am going home now. If you care to come, too—"

"But I don't understand," said Curtis, very much later, "how you knew about my room."

"Once when I was posing," she murmured, "Sybilla ran away, and I climbed out on the roof to get her. She always made for your window; and I knew you lived there; and people were talking about you so much—I suppose—I must—have—looked!"

"But you couldn't have seen that poem: 'Gods of Egypt.'"

"Ah! That time!" she drew back from him, the pupils of her round eyes widening. "I looked at you, and I wanted to know—and I knew! There is witch blood in me!"

"One thing more," asked Curtis reverently. "How did Graydon—Sybilla, I mean—get away the day I locked her in?"

"Why, Alice fished her out over the transom in a basket with catnip in it. And there are such things as telephones, you know. And now," she mused, plaintively, "I have told you everything and you will not care any more!"

Curtis replied with the most convincing arguments to the contrary which occurred to him, but as these happened not to be verbal, they cannot be herewith reported.

"But," she protested, "my great-great-grandmother was handicapped! Besides, in a way Sybilla is me!"

"Graydon!" cried Curtis rapturously. "Something furry and purry rubbed against his foot."

It was a little gray cat.—Laura L. Hinkley, in The Home Magazine.

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