

The moist coolness of the forest night touched his aching head tenderly, as with a quiet hand, and gratefully he inhaled the tranquil perfumes of the spruce woods and healing smells are these.

The great northern moon flooded down a perfect freshet of light and Keenan thought as he gazed through the doorway that the moon made the world look very old, even as the sun-light made it look young.

Only a quarter of an hour had elapsed since the fight had ended, but in that short time the cache-keeper had been, in a way, born again. The fight had made him think. It had uncovered a pay-streak of manliness in his unreflective pagan soul. A great light had burst suddenly upon him.

Heretofore for him the world had moved only in monotonies; his very strength had narrowed his horizon of life as a thick turbulence of rain narrows the summer landscape. But now he saw a clear perspective stretching away before him. It seemed as if the fight had broken something in his brain, and let in a kindly light which showed him his duty

to himself. Something like conscience or a human sense of right and wrong had sprung to life in him. It had wiped away the brand of the dog and tamed his iconoclastic spirit and placed a bit in his mouth.

He would marry little Franchette. She was a good girl, kindly and tender as any man could want, healthy and intelligent and fitting into the environment that he loved. His mind shaped a picture of the wild, perfect thing, and he heard her soft laughter, a sound as light and sweet as the small silver noise of a tree-shadowed stream. He would marry her and settle in the North.

The building of the Transcontinental would make the northern wilderness an empire of magnificent possibilities. The old spirit of the pioneers stirred in him. Just north of Rabiskaw Lake lay a great belt of good clay land, through which the railway would pass. He knew a place where a town would be made, at a divisional point on the railway. He thrilled with a sense of the hugeness of the enterprise. He was one of the men of whom the future will have songs to sing and tales to tell.

Suddenly Black Joe, a wild and bloody figure, unkempt, ragged, the blood blackening on his battered face, shambled through the doorway, and with a great rough oath called upon the cache-keeper to come out and renew the fight. The trader's muscles were stiff and numbed with pain, his swollen eyelids were shut to slits and he saw things only as blurred shadows, but his thick jaw was set hard and his fighting blood was still astir.

Keenan set the basin down from his knees and got up from the bench.

"You're a good man, Joe," he said, "but we two fight no more. It isn't that I'm afraid. You know that. I never learned the lesson of fear yet, though I think it would do me good if I could. It would be as hard a lesson for me to learn as it would be for you."

"Wash your face and have a drink; there's whiskey in that bottle on the table. Then we'll go to the post. I've changed my mind, Joe. I'm going to marry your daughter."

# Concerning Elizabeth and Dan

Just a Little Tale of Every-day Life

By AMY E. CAMPBELL

IT was a well-known fact for miles around that Dan MacDonald loved Elizabeth Harding. Ever since school-days, when Dan had proudly carried her books and lunch basket, she had reigned supreme in his affections, and Elizabeth—well, she didn't think she would quite recognise herself as anyone but Dan's sweetheart, for he had told her about it so often there was really no mistaking the fact and if it grieved Dan that she took their relationship so calmly and with so little apparent interest, he bravely concealed his disappointment and told himself that it was Elizabeth's nature to be undemonstrative. But Dan was mistaken.

Of late Elizabeth had grown restless and exacting. Her soul craved—she hardly knew what, and the busy life on the farm grew monotonous beyond her patient endurance, so though she welcomed Dan's visits and drives, she inwardly hated herself for having promised to be his wife. What a prospect! Living on a farm all one's days, for she realised that Dan would never be a success in any other calling, he loved his chosen life so well.

As they drove rapidly along the smooth white road one evening, filling their lungs with pure, sweet country air, which never failed to thrill Dan with the joy of living, Elizabeth's pent-up feelings gave way:—

"Dan, I'm going to the city. I simply can't endure this 'merely existing' any longer. Mother and father have consented and I am going next week."

"So soon, Elizabeth, and you never even hinted it to me!"

"Well, I'm telling you now, am I not?" she asked crossly. "And I think, Dan, considering I find farm life so irksome, we may as well break our engagement."

"Oh, Betty, no!" he pleaded, his face white and old in the moonlight. "Anything but that, dear—I can't give you up."

"But Dan—"

"Dearie girl, I've loved you all my life and I know no other life apart from you. Think, sweetheart, is our promise nothing to you?"

"Of course, I expected a scene, Dan, but I think you are selfish to want to keep me against my wishes."

"Against your wishes, Betty! Did you mean that?" and he held her hands and looked into her eyes.

"Yes," she said defiantly, in a low tone, "I meant it."

"Then there is nothing more to say," he said slowly.

He drove her home in silence and when they parted Elizabeth said:

"Don't bother coming again, this will be goodbye."

"As you wish, Betty."

"And I'll think of you often, Danny boy, you've been so good," she said ever so softly, with a trace of regret in her voice.

"Betty, if ever you want me, ever so little, if ever you need your old Dan, in any way, one word will bring me and—until I hold you again in my

arms there will be no other, sweetheart!" and he drove away in the silent night.

Elizabeth was charmed with the gay life in the city. She boarded in her uncle's home and worked in a store uptown for a very small sum, but she was rapturously happy. This was what she had longed for all her life. How vague and far away were those old days on the farm, and Dan—why, she never took time to think of Dan. How she could ever have thought of marrying him she could not possibly understand, especially after meeting such splendid young men at her uncle's. So Elizabeth soon found herself with a new lover and her cup of happiness overflowed.

She sought her cousin's room one night after a theatre party and the two girls sat chatting until far into the night.

"Why do the men leave between the acts?" asked Elizabeth curiously.

"Why, you precious goose! Didn't you notice the perfume of their breaths upon their return?" said her cousin with a laugh.

Elizabeth's eyes were wide with horror.

"Is that—why?" she said.

"Yes, my sweet country maid, that's why! But don't lose any sleep over it. You'll get hardened in time."

"Does—does Harold go on that account, too?" asked Elizabeth, a great fear in her eyes.

"Of course, Betty. Do you think because he is in love with you he is going to ride the water cart?" replied the city maid flippantly.

But Elizabeth thought long and sorrowfully that night before sleep came to her. Always, since she was a little girl, she had abhorred liquor. Her father had shielded her from any touch of it in her life, telling her nothing could be worse misery than being a drunkard's wife. Somehow she felt a curious loneliness for the dear old home—and—Dan, for she remembered proudly that Dan was at least free from this horrible habit.

As time went on her cousin grew white and ill and doctors recommended country air, so she was sent to Elizabeth's home for a couple of months. Elizabeth missed her sadly, although they had very little in common.

Harold Heighton haunted Elizabeth and with reluctance on Elizabeth's part they became engaged. Harold promised to even give up the social glass for her sake. But Elizabeth was not happy, she could not rid herself of a silent fear that some day Harold would cease to care enough for her to do as she wished.

The months of her cousin's visit to her old home passed quickly and she came back radiant with health and praise of life in the country.

"So much fun every evening, Betty dear, and loads of beaux. Guess who I liked the best? Dan MacDonald! Isn't he perfectly grand, Coz? He took me out so much and I fell quite in love with him—I told him so, Betty, just for fun."

"What did he say?" asked Elizabeth, in a cold, curious tone.

"Oh, something about me being foolish to think of such a thing, as I would soon forget him in the city, and do you know, he looked so dear and sad, I just up and told him I would never forget him—but of course, I shall. How's everybody—and Harold, your best beloved?"

"Did he—ask anything—about me?" said Elizabeth, trying to speak naturally.

"Who? Oh, Dan? No, he didn't, but there—I almost forgot—he sent a little packet for you; it's in my suit case. I'll get it for you later on."

"Now, please," said Elizabeth with a smile.

"Oh, very well, I'll unpack at once and then it will be off my mind."

Elizabeth escaped with her precious little package and locked the door of her room; with eager, trembling fingers she opened it and there, sweet and fragrant, breathing of the dear old woods at home, was a tiny bunch of violets. She searched hungrily for a note, but none was there. She had bade him be silent and he had not disobeyed her wish.

The sweetness of his great love that had sheltered her whole life swept over her and her heart went out to him, seeking for its own. It had never been so in the old days. Her present engagement meant nothing beside this tumult of undiscovered love awakened in her being.

The maid rapped at her door, and Elizabeth opened it. She was carrying a huge box of violets from Harold.

"Please take them away, Rosa," she said impatiently, "and do as you wish with them."

Dan sitting alone in the twilight saw the village messenger coming up the lane carrying a yellow envelope. He trembled with fear. Could anything be wrong with Elizabeth?

He tore it open and read until the words made a never-ceasing song in his heart: "Danny, boy, come to me, I want you. Betty."

## Another Curious Wager

SINGULAR letter this carried by a man from Montreal: "To Members of the R. N. W. M. Police: The bearer of this, Mr. Chas. King, is walking from Montreal to Vancouver along the C. P. R. track. He is not to be molested, as he has authority to do so. J. N. HEFFERMAN, Inspector Com. Regina District." Mr. King has undertaken under a wager of a thousand dollars to do this long walk in one hundred and fifty days, under forfeiture of two hundred dollars if he leaves right-of-way of the C. P. R. He is to arrive in Vancouver with \$150 earned on the route. In one hundred and nine days he had got to Calgary, averaging thirty-four miles a day. He is now climbing the mountains. If he succeeds in his wager Mr. King expects to deal a body blow to the physical culture vegetarian fads of Bernard McFadden, for he is a believer in meat.