

The Contented Windmill

By Anna Crawford

The tourist autos come and go.
In still, green waters far below
The slow canal-boats to and fro
Are passing under me.
I wave my painted arms on high,
To scare the great storks, flapping by,
To greet my neighbors standing nigh,
Waving huge arms to me—
A little windmill, working hard,
Beside the Zuyder Zee.

The little boats are bright and clean,
The autos smell of gasoline,
The stork is but a moment seen,
But always you see me.
The little fishing-boats come home
With sunset sails across the foam,
The bonny bird-boats love to roam—
But I should rather be
A little windmill working hard,
Beside the Zuyder Zee.

The little maids wear wooden shoes;
The cattle wander as they choose;
The long-haired artists sit and muse—
They all look up at me.
Our gentle queen passed by to-day.
The people cheered, the band was gay.
"God keep our queen!" I heard them say.
And, oh, she looked at me,
The humblest friend who serves her well,
Beside the Zuyder Zee.

How Crocodiles are Captured in Florida

The crocodile differs from his cousin, the alligator, in that the lower maxillary, or jaw bone, moves in the "gator," whereas it is the crocodile's upper jaw that is movable. The crocodile, moreover, has two sharp teeth that protrude from the lower jaw through the upper and movable one; his nose is sharper, his teeth are longer, his scales softer and not so thick, and his body is slender and active. His eyesight and hearing are both good, and he can scent an enemy if the wind favors for at least a half mile. He can dive and swim like a fish, and on land he can run at a good pace. He is cruel and cunning, and it is not easy to capture him. But the cunning of man has found a way to catch him alive; it is the method used in Florida, and contrived, it is said, by Warren Frazee, locally called "Alligator Joe."

The crocodile lives in a den or cave close by a lake or pond; close by the den he builds a mound of grass and mud, and inside the mound the female deposits about sixty eggs, which she carefully covers and leaves for the sun to incubate, although she mounts guard to keep away such enemies as raccoons, opossums, and snakes. When the eggs have hatched, the young take to the water at once. During the first six weeks they are carefully guarded by the mother, and during that period she is a dangerous creature to deal with.

"Alligator Joe's" crocodile-catching outfit consists of some boards eight feet long and a foot wide, three or four two-by-four scantlings, a spade, a crowbar, and a block and tackle.

Having selected a den that the sign shows to be inhabited, he drives a number of boards into the mud so as to stop up the entrance and prevent the occupants from escaping. He then takes his crowbar and prods the ground—the dens are all built near the surface, and at times extend back for 150 feet,—finds the nearest approach of the den to some convenient tree, attaches his block and tackle to the tree, and then digs a hole—just large enough to pull his prize through. Next, he drops a slip noose of the rope from his tackle and arranges it so that when the crocodile runs along the den he will run his head into the noose.

Next, Joe takes his crowbar and jabs it down along the course of the den until he stirs up the crocodile, and a moment later the creature has his head hung in the noose, and is struggling frantically to escape. Joe pulls cautiously on his ropes until all is tight and secure, when he very carefully reaches down with a strong cord and ties the crocodile's jaws together. Then he slowly pulls on his block and tackle, and as he draws the fighting crocodile from below, puts one of the two-by-four scantlings alongside of him, and wraps a strong rope round and round him all the way to the end of his tail. With his legs bound close to his body and the scantling holding him stiff and rigid, the crocodile is dragged down to Joe's flat-boat, and shipped to some circus or museum.

Larry's Diploma

Supper was over in the Sullivan household, but Larry, the father, remained at the table, while his wife and Katie, the oldest girl, washed the dishes at the kitchen sink. It would soon be time to go to his work, for he was a night watchman in a downtown building; but meanwhile he sat drumming absently on the table.

"And how do you fare at the grammar school these days, Katie?" he asked, at length.

Katie, bright-eyed and rosy-cheeked, like her father, returned his smile as she polished off a plate with a dexterous flit of her towel.

"Better, father dear," she replied. "It has been weary work chasing along behind; but I'm gaining, and I'll sure graduate this year. It shall never be said of me that I left school without a diploma."

"They might say that same of me," said her father. "I'm wondering," he continued thoughtfully, "if it is too late to get one now. I've half a mind to try."

"What nonsense are you talking, Larry?" said Mrs. Sullivan. "Would you be going back to the grammar school?"

"I might take private lessons," said Larry.

"And who would be your teacher?" "Who else but Miss Katie Sullivan? Isn't she smart enough to get a diploma for both of us?"

"It's only his joke, Katie; don't mind him," said the mother, as she packed her husband's midnight luncheon.

But the joke did not stop there. Two months afterward it was the topic of Mrs. Sullivan's talk with her neighbor, as they hung out their respective washings in adjoining yards.

"You'll laugh, Mrs. Malone, when I tell you that my man is studying for a grammar-school diploma. He's got our Katie to teach him, and it's her that's putting him through his paces. He has spare time at night when he isn't making his rounds, and it's then he studies the books she brings home. Then every morning, before he goes to bed, she puts out his spelling lesson, and marks his sums, and hears him recite, and explains, and scolds him for all the world like a real teacher. She does be saying that he picks up the learning fast."

"But how can Larry get a diploma? You may well ask that, Mrs. Malone. It's my belief he can't, though he does say if he goes to the committee and tells them boldly that he's ready to take the final examination that he missed when a boy, how can they have the face to refuse him? But it's fine practice for Katie. She was behind at school from being out so much, by reason of my children always taking any disease that comes near. But now she's near the head of her class, and barring ill luck, she'll easy win her diploma at the end of the year."

But with the goal almost in sight, fate again laid a detaining hand on Katie. There still remained one of childhood's diseases for the young Sullivans to take, and when the quarantine was once more lifted June was at hand.

"It run light with all but Katie," Mrs. Sullivan told her neighbor. "It has left the poor girl's eyes in that state that she can use them for scarce anything, except to cry with from disappointment. It has cheated her out of her diploma entirely. Did you ever hear of the like bad luck? To-day we are packing her off to my brother's farm in the country, and I hope the change will do her good."

No traveller returning from foreign parts ever received a warmer welcome than did Katie in that humble home.

"Your father can't be disturbed yet," said Mrs. Sullivan, "but I can tell you a bit of news. They have considered your case, and decided that you've earned your diploma; so you are to graduate with the rest. Here is the letter, and isn't the sight of it good for your weak eyes? But Larry will be telling you he's beaten you, for he's got his diploma already."

Katie's joy over her own good fortune was almost lost in her surprise at her father's success; but to all her inquiries her mother would only answer, "You must wait a bit. He'll be wanting to tell you the story himself."

Then Katie had her own long story of her visit to tell, but after a time she stole outdoors to look about her. She was back from broad fields, gay with buttercups and daisies, to a narrow, dusty street, and a bare little yard where flowers could never

be made to grow; but this was home and her heart was glad. An ice cart went lumbering by, and she waved her hand at the driver, who lived a few doors below. From down the street the letter carrier was approaching. Glancing in another direction, she caught sight of Policeman Burke just turning the corner. Very imposing he looked; no wonder Mary Burke was proud of him. "But my father is a far finer figure of a man," said Katie to herself, "and wouldn't I like to see him in a uniform once!"

Then she heard a quick step on the walk, and she turned to find her wish gratified. "I've a letter for one Katie Sullivan at this number," said a well-known voice. "Are you the party, miss?" "Why, father!" cried Katie in amazement, as she threw her arms round his neck. "However did you get to be a letter carrier?"

"It was by means of my diploma," replied Larry with a grin. "That's the name I give to the paper that came from Washington, showing that I had passed

my civil-service examination. It is that I was working for all the while, Katie dear, and never would I have got it without your help. I'm a sub now, and only on this route while Mr. Towle has his vacation; but I'll be on regular soon."

"But why did you keep us so in the dark?" asked Katie reproachfully.

"For the reason that I wouldn't have you sorrowing if I failed. But now you must leave me go. It is strictly against orders to loiter, or needlessly converse with patrons on the route."

"And what is your letter?" asked Mrs. Sullivan, with a smile, as Katie, quite breathless with excitement, entered the house.

"Oh, I never thought to look!" said the girl, as she tore open the envelope. "Why, it's the dearest hair ribbon, and a card! And listen, now, to what it says: 'For Miss Katie Sullivan, from her grateful friend, Mr. Lawrence Sullivan. Hoping she will wear it at her graduation, and remember the giver when she receives her diploma.'"

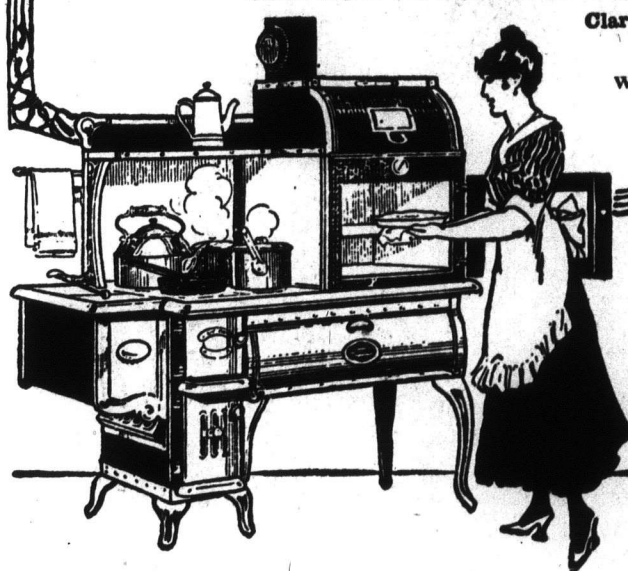
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