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soul's yearning to her. We were very happy. For years we were constantly together, and never was wife so appreciated. Then a great fear began to grip my heart. I remember it came suddenly, in the very midst of the little feast we were having to celebrate the first year of our wedded life—our 'first anniversary.' I realized that soon, in the very joy of our honeymoon I must anticipate our separation—the wedding would take place, next we would be engaged, then mere acquaintances, and after that—oh, desolation—it would be before I met her, and I should never see her again.

"I lived that year, our second honeymoon, and the last of our life together, torn between the joy of my returned happiness and the terrible knowledge of my coming loss. The wedding day came and I could have cried out in my agony but I could give my pain no voice. I had no tears, only smiles and laughter that must be gone through with, though my heart was breaking. Imagine it if you can, sirs. Was ever a man so tried? Then came the period of our engagement, when I knew we were drifting slowly and surely apart—and the happiness and misery of that time was, perhaps, the hardest of all to bear, even worse than the actual slow separation, though after my declaration, when our relations were formal and distant, it broke my heart to see her, whom I had loved so long, treat me as a mere acquaintance; and with it was the awful knowledge that there was no future hope, no possibility of our meeting, on this earth at least. The poignant day of my first meeting with her arrived at last. I saw her, as I had seen her then, so many years before, lighting that conventional ball-room with her presence, a radiant vision, all gold and rose, her tall graceful figure gowned in soft, filmy drapery. I saw her with all my heart and soul, with all the pent-up memories of my twice lived life, for I remembered it was the first, and knew it was the last time I should see her. She vanished and I was left alone. For some time afterward, although I was living over my happy-go-lucky bachelor days, I was internally of a suicidal turn of mind, even on my return journeys in the East.

I could not resign myself to losing this girl that, according to reversed time, I had never met. But youth is gay, and its recuperative powers strong, and I am growing steadily younger, you see. Then, too, other loves came and went, or rather went and came, and in spite of myself I am able to contemplate my double past with the buoyancy of my second youth. Yet it is all very strange, and recently unaccountable intervals have intruded into my life, such as this evening, for instance. You, gentlemen, are not a part of my boyish past, and yet you seem to be interpolated into my otherwise coherently backward existence. This has been happening for some time, and grows more marked. You may be dreams of my old life that I had forgotten, but I am at a loss to account for it fully. For instance—how could I have foretold then what the future had in store? and yet in one sense that is what I am doing now in telling you my experience. You must admit that it is confusing."

Gage's story had fairly made me dizzy. I admitted that it was confusing. I hardly knew what to think. I even turned an anxious eye on the clock over the fireplace to assure myself that its hands still moved from left to right. As I faced it, Lamison regarded me with his amused but sympathetic eye.

"I hope to interpolate myself a great deal into your world, Gage," he said. "It's time you stopped in your mad career of growing younger. I don't want you on my hands when you become a troublesome stripling, or even when you have to unlearn your college education."

Gage laughed. "It will be rather hard, but I did enjoy my Harvard days, before I had that row with the family. Whew! How the old man did blow me up! And when I think I have

to hear that all over again, it makes me sick." He paused again, and assisted his courage from the cheering pitcher. "Another thing that worries me," he went on, "is this: Have you noticed that, although all the happenings of my life seem to follow in well ordered reversed sequence, what I say does not? For instance, by all rights I should repeat my sentences verbatim backward. 'I am glad to see you,' in reversed language would be, 'You see to glad am I.' Now, in all my years of reversed experiences, although the order of conversation progresses backward, the sentences themselves make perfect forward sense. This drives me to distraction."

The whole impossible proposition danced before me, but Lamison was evidently delighted.

"Good. Gage, splendid! You are making progress—your logic is returning. I am unspeakably glad."

Gage looked at him wonderingly. "Why should you? It is only more confusing. Ah, well, I should not be unhappy if it were not for the awful prospect of being a baby again. That revolts me, like becoming senile. It is such a horrible thing to become a squirming, senseless infant—it makes me shiver, it keeps me from sleeping, it is a menace too ugly and loathsome to be endured. Fancy it, gentlemen, the ignominy of it—the hideous helplessness."

"We'll find a way to prevent that," Lamison said soothingly. "You are better already. It won't be long before we set it all straight. Come, come, be a man"—for Gage suddenly flung himself on the table, his face buried in his hands, moaning slowly:

"I don't want to be a baby—I don't want to be a baby."

This exhibition was so pitiful that I turned to Lamison, almost with tears in my eyes. "Is there any hope for him?" I asked.

Lamison nodded. "Yes," he'll pull through. A condition brought on by overwork and the sudden death of his wife, of whom he was devotedly fond. You see how he is beginning to realize the discrepancies in his imaginary life. He will come out all right—in time."

Gage now had himself under control and sat up shamefacedly.

"Don't mind me, Mr. Robertson," he said. "I don't often break down this way, and I wouldn't have you imagine for one instant that I regret my life. I could not have asked a greater boon of Fate than those happy days restored to me, when time had turned."

He rose gravely, excused himself and left us, and we sat silent and deeply thoughtful, staring into the red embers of the fire.

The days are passing, oh, so swiftly. None of us mean to entirely miss the best things of life, but procrastination is more than the "thief of time." He robs us of so many happy experiences that might be ours if with open eyes, loving hearts and willing hands we'd grasp the present situation with firm hands and be to-day what we mean to be sometime, do to-day what it has always been out intention to accomplish sometime and enjoy to-day's pleasures that are ours for the taking. Ralph Waldo Trine tells us to "find your Centre, then live in it. Surrender it to no person, to no thing." It is a great thing to find one's "centre," for is it not the key to the solution of every individual life problem? Instead of being biased by other people's opinions, suppose that for to-day we enter into our own closet, shut the door and in the privacy of personal heart communings decide to follow our own intuitions of what is right. If we have never done this we need to be "born again." There is a world of happy satisfaction in store for those who learn to respect their God-given conceptions of truth, which makes "free" every time. We do not need to leave our morning work to "enter into our closet"—simply keep still enough within to use our own judgment concerning all matters with which we have to do. We cannot use it unless we find out what it is, and that when learned is really our "centre."