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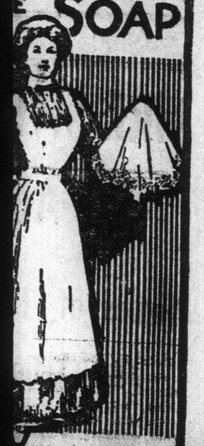
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STORY PAGE.

A TALE OF OLD QUINTE - By T. Muriel Merrill

in The Canadian Magazine.

Quiet by the shores of Quinte lay the Indian village, Jee-yoh-day-hoon-waw-daw-day. The squaws went busily about their work, while the men loiled in the sun, one carved a pipe bowl, another smoking, while still a third told of his prowess in war and in the chase.

It was the time England had made the conquest of Canada. Peace had been restored in the land, but the settlers had not yet commenced their migration to this new country. The Indians still wore at their belts the dried scalp locks of their enemies, and in the village was a slave whom they had captured to the south of the great lake—a white woman with unfamiliar speech.

Now she was toiling back and forth between the village and the shore, carrying armfuls of driftwood for the fires. Once she was ordered on some errand by the shrill voice and graphic gesticulating of a squaw.

Then, when a few spare moments came, she wandered down to the shore. Leaning against a fallen tree she watched the water as it caught the gold rays of the setting sun. The ripples lapped her tired feet, gently caressing them.

Presently a canoe came round the points, propelled by a solitary paddler. As he drew nearer, the girl's heart throbbed, for there was something strangely familiar in his figure and the swing of his paddle.

A hand fell on her shoulder, and as she was roughly hurried away, she heard the word "Yengese"—English—pass from mouth to mouth.

The canoe touched the shore. A man in the garb of a hunter leaped out, drawing it up after him. The Indians saw that it was laden with bundles, and they greeted him with friendly ejaculations.

The hunter answered them in their own tongue, the while glancing anxiously around. They led him up to the village and offered him meat, fish, and a pipe to smoke.

He carried up one of his bundles and threw it down near the greatest of the fires. The Indians, seeing this, brought out from their bark houses many fine furs.

"Where is the white maiden who stood by the shore as I came up the Quinte?" questioned the hunter, the while undoing his bundle.

The Indians bestowed uncomprehending looks upon him. "There is no white squaw here. My brothers eyes have lied to him," said the Chief.

"Mine eyes tell me nothing but the truth," the hunter answered; "they saw a woman here whose skin is more white than mine own."

"This is then perhaps the one whom our brother saw?" They thrust forward a young girl, fairer than the others, but still decidedly Indian.

"No," without hesitation, "this is not the one." The girl withdrew.

The chief glanched at him reproachfully. "Perhaps my brother has some illness?" he asked cencernedly.

The bundle now lay open. In it were bright cloth and strings of beads which glistened in the fire-light. He handed the beads to the Chief as a present.

Then a brave stepped forward, a mink skin in his outstretched hand. But the hunter spurned the fur from him.

"I want not furs," he said. "Look," turning to the Chief, "all this I will give three for the white sqaw who stood by the shore."

The Chief's eyes gleamed avariciously, but he shook his head.

"Nay," said he, "'tis not enough."

The hunter carried another bundle from his canoe. In it were cloth, and sharp knives and hatchets.

"Nay," said the Chief, "it is not enough."

A third bundle was brought forward. More beads, a brass-bright kettle, and gilded ornaments were contained therein.

"Yet not enough," said the Chief.

The fourth bundle was carried up and untied. Twisted, rope-like tobacco, some tools, and a great black bottle came to view.

The chief glanced at him reproach-not do," said he, though he could scarce take his gaze from the bottle.

The hunter strightened himself. "There is no more." His voice came nearto breaking. "There is no more. It is this or nothing."

The Chief leaned forward, his eyes shining greedily. "All this," he said, "and the gun—and the gun. Then is the white squaw yours, but not before."

The hunter handed him his rifle.

"It is well," said the Chief.

"It is good," replied the hunter.

They led the girl out to him.

"Come," said he, as he put his arm gently round her. Then he helped her into the canoe.

He paddled steadily out into the night till thec amp fires dwindled into bright points, with only the new moon hung in the west to light their way.

"Roger," she whsipered, "I knew that you would come."

A FORMAL AFFAIR - By Bayard Veiller in Munsey's Magazine.

"The match is a desirable one in every way," my father said.

The carriage jolted over a stone just then, so I said nothing. This, sometimes, is wise. He went on:

"She is young, very rich, extremely pretty, and her social position is excellent."

"Perhaps," I suggested hopefully, "she has a bad temper."

"On the contrary," said my father, "her disposition is charming."

"Does she wear glasses?" I asked eagerly. I hate near sighted women.

"How absurd you are!" said he. "Certainly not."

I sometimes think my aversion to women who wear glasses is inherited.

"I do hope you are not going to be sentimental and spoil this affair," he went on. "Her father and I have taken the matter greatly to heart. There is much to be said in favor of the match."

"Neith of us has a mother; we should escape the mother in law problem," I said flippantly.

"I do not think marriage is a matter to jest about," my father said stiffly, after a moment of dignified silence.

"Few people find it so," I answered. "Is the young person dark or fair?"

"She is not a 'young person,'" said my father indignantly. "She is a very charming girl. There is no reason why you should not fall in love with her."

"But you said that the match was desirable in every way," I urged. "Has there ever been any talk—any little affair—er—that might——"

"This is her first season," my father interrupted. "She is a young woman of the most perfect manners."

"I wasn't speaking of manners," I explained.

"I don't understand you," replied my father stonily.

Just then the carriage stopped. The house was certainly all that one could expect. Having been abroad so long, I was unacquainted with the new part of the city. This was certainly an attractive neighborhood.

The room into which we were shown was entirely out of the ordinary. In the first plane, it was light. I had grown weary of dimly lighted rooms, with heavy hangings and divans and sofa cushions. There was a refreshing absence of these things.

She came into the room quietly. Her skirts did not rustle. This attracted my attention at once. She walked directly to my father and shook hands with him cordially; then looked at me and laughed a little shyly. I still think she was the prettiest girl I have ever seen.

"I suppose," she said finally, "that we ought to be introduced."

"Please, let's avoid it," I suggested as we shook hands. She gave me a most unexpected smile, but she looked a little puzzled.

"Father," I said finally, "if you went to your club and ordered luncheon, it would save time for me."

"But——" he began.

"I know, said I; "you are very much interested in us; but there are some things which you should not know."

"You won't——" he began anxiously.

"I will behave in the most proper manner," I replied.

"How long will you be?" he asked. I turned to the girl.

"Can you stand me for half an hour?" I asked.

"I'll try," she said; then added with a laugh: "It will be good practice."

When my father had gone, we looked at each other for a moment.

"He's a dear old thing," she said.

"I am said to be like him," I remarked.

"There are many points of difference," she replied.

There was another pause. I could think of nothing particularly brilliant to say. She looked at me. It was a most embarrassing moment. She began at my feet. I had always been under the impression that my feet were of good shape and not too large, but just at that moment they felt a yard long. Finally her eyes rested on mine. It was the first time I had ever felt a young woman really reading my character. She kept her eyes on mine for a full minute, and it seemed to me that she not only discovered everything I had ever done, but that she divined those things that I would some day do. Then I took her hand. I am afraid I held it a little longer than good form prescribes.

"We may as well be perfectly frank with each other," I began. "Our fathers are anxious that you and I marry. We may as well come to an understanding."

"It would be the wisest thing to do," she replied.

"There seems to be no good reason why we shouldn't marry," I said.

"No," she replied disconsolately; "it's manifestly the right thing to do."

"Perhaps," I suggested hopefully, "you have some reason why we shouldn't?"

She shook her head.

"Now that you have seen me——" I went on.

"No," she said hopelessly; "you are extremely handsome."

"I am awfully indolent," I urged.

"I hate men who are always wanting to do things," she said.

"I should smoke about the house continually."

"I love the smell of tobacco."

"I am never content in remain in one place,' I urged. "I like to be here today and there tomorrow."

"Oh, dear!" she sighed, "I'm not in the least domestic, either."

"I read a great deal. You might think me rather unsociable." I was bent on telling her the worst.

"I have written a book myself," she confessed. "I am quite literary."

I must admit I hesitated at this. Finally I went on bravely: "I don't play golf."

"I think it's a silly game," she said.

Again we came to a full stop. I was wishing we had met in some other way, or that there was some reason why we should not marry. I felt that we could be so tremendously happy together. She was really a charming girl.

"There are one or two things I should like to know," she said finally. "You won't think me inquisitive?"

"Certainly not. A pig in a poke has never been considered a wise bargain," I replied.

She flushed uncomfortably.

"There are things I ought to know," she persisted. "I am somewhat interested."

"Of course," I assented; "your interest is quite proper under the circumstances."

"Have you any—er—er——" She flushed hotly. "I mean, are you in love with any woman?"

"I have no entanglements," I replied. I was not sure whether or not I was in love with any woman. "Have you?"

"How dare you?" she cried. "I am not one of those horrid new women."

"How was I to know?" I pleaded.

"I think you are extremely stupid!" she said hotly.

"Our little affair is very formal, isn't it?" I went on pleasantly. "My first name is Archibald. I trust you don't object to it?"

"I suppose I could call you Archie," she suggested, after considering the matter. "How funny it all seems!" she added. "My name is Mary."

"It shall be Molly," I announced.

Again we paused. There seemed to be nothing else to say. Then I suddenly remembered the object of my visit.

"I trust," said I, "that you will do me the great honor to become my wife. I will try to make you happy."

This last was an after thought. I thought—I still think—it was a particularly felicitous thing to say. The girl flushed angrily, and snatched her hand away.

"No!" she cried, rising. "I will not marry you."

"But——" I began.

"Yes, yes,' she cried. "I know all that you would say. But I won't marry you, and that's all there is about it."

Just at that moment I was unfortunate enough to fall in love with her.

"But our fathers——" I urged.

"That for our fathers," she cried, snapping her fingers.

At least, she tried to snap her fingers. She failed ignominously. We both laughed.

"We can at least be friends," I said finally, holding out my hand.

"Yes—friends," she repeated, a little sadly, leaving her hand in mine.

"Now that everything is over between us," I said, "I may as well tell you that you are the most beautiful woman I have ever seen."

I noticed that there had crept into my voice an unusual amount of fervor. I think she noticed it, too. I could not account for it. I think she could. I know she smiled brilliantly, and I think she came a little closer to me.

"Would you mind telling me why you refused me?" I asked, after another pause, which was not at all an uncomfortable one.

"I won't be sold like a lot of stocks, or given away like a pound of tea," she exclaimed.

"If——" I began.

"There's no use urging me," she interrupted. "I won't marry you. Nothing could inducee me to."

"But——" I said. This was not a very strong argument, but at the moment I could thing of nothing better to say.

"Oh, it's all so cut and dried!" she cried. "Your father ties a string to you and brings you here——"

"He does nothing of the sort," I interrupted hotly. "I came entirely of my own accord."

"And I am here to meet you, and they arrange when we are to be married, and we say yes, and they do everything. I won't have it. I don't expect to be married but once, and I have a right to be wooed and won, not—not thrown at a man's head." She ended in a sob.

I lost my head at this, and did something I had no business to do. I seized her in my arms and kissed her on the mouth. She was so astonished that she said nothing at all, so I kissed her again.

"How dare you?" she gasped finally. Somehow she did not seem so angry as she should have been. "Say you are sorry."

"I won't," I replied shamelessly. "I'm glad. I'd do it again if I had the chance. It's nothing to you," I went on bitterly; "but you've made me fall in love with you, and now won't marry me. I love you better than anything else in the world."

"If they hadn't expected so much of us—if it wasn't all cut and dried—" she said. My arm was about her waist, but she did not seem to notice it. "If there was only something unusual about it—"

"Will you run away and marry me now?" I cried.

"Do you mean it?" she asked, coming closer to me.

In reply I kissed her.

"Oh, Archie!" she cried with a little laugh, "wouldn't they be furious?"

"Will you come?" I urged.

"I haven't any clothes," she objected.

"We'll get some in Paris," I explained.

"We really ought not," she began.

"We've got just an hour to get married and catch a steamer," said I, looking at my watch.

"Well, wait till I get my hat," she cried, running out of the room.

—Byard Veiller.

EDEN IN COLD STORAGE - By Marjorie C. H. Jarvis

in The Canadian Magazine.

There was certainly something wrong with Godfrey. I saw that at once; but then a war correspondent has to be quick to notice little things, and it was merely little restless tricks of manner, unusual in so quiet and self-contained a man, that gave me this impression. When I hinted that he didn't seem quite fit, he put me off with some trifling remark, which, however, only strengthened my suspicions. But when I let him see that I was really anxious, he half tentatively, half defiantly, but with magnificent calmness announced, "Well, I've discovered Eden."

"The deuce you have!" I ejaculated. I had not been far out then—the fellow was in love, and a bad attack at that. "Who's the lucky girl?" I continued curiously, for Godfrey was well known for an inveterate woman-hater.

"The lucky girl, as you're kind enough to call her, doesn't exist—I say, Jack, if I tell you this yarn you'll say I'm mad, or lying, or both, but"—rummaging in a large, old-fashioned desk, and producing a sheaf of papyri covered with queer hieroglyphics—"what do you make of that?"

"Nothing," I answered truthfully.

"It's ancient Egyptian"—the study of the dead languages was one of Godfrey's hobbies—"an old legend handed down from the time of the Deluge and written out, as the superscription shows, for Joseph when he was Pharaoh's prime minister, by one of the court scribes. I am tolerably familiar with the Hieratic characters, and managed to puzzle out most of thh old document. It's an account of the Garden of Eden. Man, think of that for a discovery! — Then — you know Penhurst?"

"What, that fool inventor?"

"Perhaps—I thought so once. Anyhow he did invent one thing, and it was an invention, by jove!—an entirely new style of locomotor—one can hardly call it a boat—for Arctic exploration. It is hard to describe; but try to imagine a cigar-shaped shell made to revolve at the rate of a thousand revolutions per minute. Inside, a car is suspended in stable equilibrium, and fitted after the fashion of a submarine. The head of the shell is of nickel steel amalgam, and, for the purpose which will presently appear, it can be kept at a white heat by means of some radio-active 'contraption'—another of Penhurst's inventions, and"—

"But," I interrupted, "what in thunder has all this got to do with the Garden of Edin?"

"Don't be so confoundly impatient, will you, sonny? I made out from this document that the scientists are quite right in their theory, that this old world of ours once upon a time 'took on a bad list to starboard' (as our sailing master describes it); consequently, what were once subtropical regions have changed places with the polar. So the topographers, who try to locate Eden in the vicinity of the modern Tigris and Euphrates, are considerably off their trolly, so to speak. I am not a skeptic, mind you, not even an agnostic, and I do not know enough to set up for a higher critic. I believe the good old Book from cover to cover, but Genesis was not written to teach Geography. Nevertheless, with this old M.S. for a commentary, anyone possessing a smattering of astronomy and equipped with a good compass and a Penhurst locomotor, could make his way to the cradle of our race, as easily as you, dear boy, by virtue of an uncensored cram, can transform two little squads of men potting away at each other from behind distant boulders, into two divisions engaged in 'the greatest battle of the war.'"

I considered a contemptuous sniff a sufficient reply to this sally and maintained a discreet silence.

"Now, look here,"—he'd been at his desk again—"this is Mercator's projection, and there's a chart of the northern heavens. I take a pair of compasses, and turning to the MS., it says—yes here's the place—'Cast, therefore, thine eye upon Pleiades, and then laying a course as it were a cubit on the great chart to the nethermost of Arcturus'"—

"Oh! cut it shore!" I interrupted. "I know as little of astronomy as you do of journalism. Let's go back to our muttons—'Paradise regained,' don't you know."

Godfrey, with a deprecatory look in his dreamy eyes, gathered up the charts and the MSS. with exasperating deliberation, and lighting a fresh cigar, resumed his narrative.

"This boat of Penhurst's was so designed that it could travel equally well on, or under water; and, as the whole enveloping cylinder was groved spirally from stem to stern, it could develop a tremendous amount of speed. But its distinguishing feature (a la Pierpont Morgan, who financed the invention) was its nose. If you have followed my description, you will see that it was meant to travel right through ice as naturally as the 'slithy Toves' are wont to 'gire and gimble in the wabe'—if you remember your 'Jabberwocky.'

"The daily papers made great fun, perhaps you recollect, of 'Penhurst's corkscrew.'" (I took my pipe out of my mouth long enough to explain that I had been a special correspondent in Cuba at the time, and therefore could not be held responsible for any of these lampoons.) "But I had absolute faith in his invention, and he reciprocated by accepting ex animo my reading of the papyrus, so we decided to join forces and, like St. Brandon, 'sail the northern main.'

"The idea got about that we were off on another quixotic hunt for the North Pole, and we rather encouraged the notion. Everyone knows the pole must be up there somewhere, but—the Garden of Eden!—Why, bless me, I wouldn't face the funny men of the papers with such a story for all the wealth of Ormus and of Ind.' Even our unregenerate sailing master did not know the secret of our quest. When interviewed the day before we sailed by a representative of the N. Y. Tribune, he was decidedly non-committal. All that could be got out of him was 'North Pole be jiggered! Stranger, we're jist carcalatin' to git as fur from the latitood, and (incidentally) the climate of Hell as convenient; and that will take us a long way from Noo York harbour, and don't you forget it.'

"'Well, my son,' said the baffled reporter, 'wherever you go in that direction, you won't have to worry about the return trip anyhow. You've paid your fare back in full. We have Hellgate right here, sure, but you are booked a long way t'other side it.'

"There, Jack, I see you're getting impatient again, so I'll skip a whole lot. After a lapse of a few months, as the novelist say, behold us well within the Arctic circle. How far we sailed, I can't tell you. I completely lost track of time and place; we just seemed to go on and on. When there was smooth water we would go on top; when it was rough we'd dive, and when we came to ice we'd corkscrew our way through, after the manner of a N. P. rotary snow plough, only a deal faster. It was wonderful. You'd traverse lake—snow snow everywhere, blue skies, blue water, great white cities, forests, mountains, castles—wherever your fancy cared to see, plied up everlastingly in icy splendour. Then you'd bore through the ice and come to another like scene, exceedingly magnifical. Imagine week after week of that sort of thing, seeing no living creature, hearing no noise but what you made yourself, and the 'siz' of the water as we sped through it—all this till you almost forgot what green fields or (gazing affectionately out of the window) dear old sky-scrapery New York looked like.'

"But at last here came a change, and we got to comparatively open sea. A storm happened along at the same time, and raised Cain. Of course, it couldn't hurt us; we kept under water while it lasted, but it made things decidedly unpleasant. When the storm had gone to seek—let us say—green fields and pastures new—it left us a souvenir behind in the shape of grey lowering skies, and grey restles sea. Even the white caps were a dirty grey; and you may bet your life, we were all in a pretty grey humour withal. I never fought with anyone in my life as much as I did with Penhurst those days; although (reflectively) you and I, old man, can give folks a few pointers on the subject of friendly scraps. The solitariness and sombre grandeur didn't impress us at all, as it should have done. It only put us in confoundedly bad tempers.

"It was rather towards evening, after a particularly grey day, I remember, and Penhurst was wearing at me like a fishwife, when all of a sudden the lookout shouted, 'Land, ho!' We sprang to our feet and hurried to the main conning port. The crew—discipline flung to the winds—rushed from their quarters, fighting for a place at one or other of the little peep holes forward. 'Land!' After all these months of snow and ice, and grey heaving water—no wonder we were all a bit excited, cabin and forecastle alike eager for the first glimpse. 'Land!' And such a land! We had just cut through an iceberg, and were so near, when it was sighted that its full glories burst upon us at once, as when the curtain rises upon a new scene in the theatre.

"I can see it now. Just in front, a few hundred feet of water, grey and gloomy; then a narrow little ledge of snow; then rising straight upward, till it vanished into space, a great wall of ice, the thickness of which we could not guess, but it was transparent as a sheet of the thinnest and purest glass; and beyond it—well it was Eden, there could be no doubt of that.

"Vivid green in the foreground, fading away into blues and greys, all merging into the distant purple of the everlasting hills that stood in majestic outline against the golden sky. And oh, the trees! They faintly resembled some I'd seen in the tropics, or had read about. But everyone was perfect—trees laden at the same time with blossom and fruit, while the ground beneath was a veritable mosaic of grass and flowers stretching as far as eye could see in irridescent undulations. A lake lay in the middle distant, with all the beauty and colour of its banks mirrored in the crystal depths below. It was fed by a great cataract, compared with which Niagara is like the outpourings of a child's mug.

"But the wonder of it all was the absolute stillness everywhere. The diamond-dusted spray of the cataract hung motionless in mid air. There was no commotion in the lake where it seemed to empty, no upheaval where the mighty torrent seemed to fall upon it. The very animals and birds, strange and beautiful in form and plumage (I cannot name them), were as still as if their life had been stopped short in an instant, as if there was a great spell brooding over all, and it looked as if all might have stood thus transfixed for ages." He drew a deep breath.

"I can't describe it," he said, despairingly. "A Milton might attempt to give some faint notion of it. It was unspeakably awful. We couldn't take it in." He picked up a volume of Grey's poems and read:

"Hark how the holy calm that breathes around
Bids every fierce, tumultuous passion cease,
Whisp'ring in still small accents from the ground
A grateful earnest of eternal Peace."

He paused, and neither of us spoke for a minute or two.

"I think I can understand it a little, Godfrey," I said in a subdued voice. "Go on."

"Well you can see, that with such emotions quivering within us, Penhurst and myself wouldn't exactly feel like breaking in upon a scene where angels might well fear to tread. But the crew did not feel that way a little bit. From the sailingmaster down they mutinied to a man. They seemed to have gone absolutely mad. Penhurst and I had not the slightest control over them.

"It was awful to watch their delirious struggles to enter the forbidden garden. They turned on the dynamo and tried to bore their way through that ice wall, as we had been accustomed to negotiate the icebergs. Again and again they dashed at it; each contact sending a sickening shock through the boat. At last, with machinery broken down and hull badly damaged, they were forced to desist, or we should have gone to pieces, I believe, then and there. Then they tried to force a passage with pick and axe. They might as well have tried to make an impression on adamant. They would throw themselves against the walls, and beat them with their fists till they dropped from sheer exhaustion. We lost nearly half the crew, frozen to death, poor devils, before a few of the saner, or less mad spirits decided to cruise along looking for an opening. We found one.

"Jack, if you can picture to yourself a great gateway; sheer glittering pillars of ice towering to heaven on each side, and the centre one mass of flame—clear flame, no smoke, no heat—cold glittering flame (if flame can be cold, certainly it did not melt the icy columns on either side). It was like lightning, only continuous and twenty times brighter and more vivid; never still an instant, darting, and flashing and piercing—God, it was terrible, terrible!

"Jack, I shudder even now to think of all that followed. It is too horrible. The 'flaming sword that turned every way' seemed to possess an awful fascination for those poor crazed creatures. God knows, Penhurst and I did what we could to restrain them and get them away, but they had become utter demoniacs. At last we succeeded in dragging three of them off, utterly cowed, broken wrecks. All the rest perished with the sword. Oh, Jack, that awful gateway!" He was now trembling visibly, and covered his face with his hands as if trying to shut out some over-powering and terrifying sight. He recovered himself in a few moments, and they went on in a quieter voice:

"How we got home, I don't know. My mind seems almost a blank till we were picked up by some whalers in Behing Sea, and none too soon, for our ill-starred craft went to the bottom before it could be secured—Requiescat in pace.

"What become of the men I don't know; they never fully recovered their reason. Poor Penhurst died on the way home. On board they didn't believe our story, and he seemed to feel that worse than anything when he lay dying. The people on the schooner thought us mad, and probably they'd think I'm mad yet, but I am perfectly sane. It really did happen just as I have told you. Jack, you believe me? You don't think me—?" he clutched the arms of his chair and leaned towards me with a pitifully anxious look.

"Of course I believe you, old man," I answered, bent on soothing him; "so would other people, only they're so confoundly prejudiced in favor of the Tigris and Euphrates." I talked on at random for a fem minutes, trying to divert him with clumsy chaff, then picking up my long-since-cold-pipe, I left Godfrey still staring moodily into the fire.