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## Story.

### TELL ME!

How to put the question,  
Teach me, humming-bird—  
You who live all sweetest,  
And never say a word!

How shall I come near her?  
Teach me, wind of May—  
You who too with apple blossoms  
Nor brush the down away!

Shall I sing or say it?  
Or do eyes tell best?  
Nay, it is already  
A secret half confessed.

How to win the answer—  
For I am sure she knows—  
Tell me, dew and sunshine,  
How you open a rose!

—CARL SPENCER, in Harper's Magazine.

## Interesting Tale.

### JANET'S NEW YEAR.

Janet Arbutnot put by the little frock she had been striving so hard to finish. It is almost dark, she said, glancing toward the window with a little shuddering sigh. I suppose I shall have to go to bed. I suppose so, dear, replied the invalid, sitting herself to a sitting posture; but they might have spared you to me tonight. Yes, mother; but Mrs. Draper thought they would never get on with the dresses for the tableaux without my help. And my new frock, Janet, piped a curly-headed little thing from the corner, who will finish that?

Never fear, Alice, replied the sister, pleasantly. I shall be at home bright and early to-morrow, and you shall have it in good time. But what's the use, continued the child, impatiently. I might as well have no new frock, I've no place to go to, and we shall have given a doughnut for New Year—shall we, mother?

The mother sighed, and fell back upon her pillow, pressing her thin hands to her face to hide the tears she could not keep back. Janet stood for a moment, with her hand on the door-knob; then she re-crossed the room to her mother's bed.

Don't fret, mother, she said, tenderly, kissing the wan and sunken cheeks. Keep a brave heart, and the sun will shine again some day, despite all this darkness. I think, she added, adjusting her worn shawl, that I'll come home to-night, if it isn't too late, after the party; and I'll ask Mrs. Draper for part of my monthly pay. You shall have a New Year's yet, Alice.

She kissed them both, and left, closing the door softly behind her. But instead of going directly to the street, she went into her bed room. Taking a key from her pocket, she unlocked a small rose-wood case that stood upon the table, and drew forth a tiny, ebony casket. Her hands trembled nervously as she unlocked it, and lifted a string of emeralds it contained. Rare and brilliant gems they were, most daintily set, and looking strangely out of place in that humble, little chamber. Janet held them tenderly, pressing them carefully to her lips, and letting them slip through her fingers like a stream of living light. There was a spray of heliotrope in the bottom of the casket, and its sweet, subtle odor filled the little chamber like the breath of innocence; and with that strange power which alone she possessed, carried the heart of the sad-faced governess back to the dewy dawn of her girlhood.

Only five years ago, and this same Janet had been the daughter of a wealthy and indulgent father, with every comfort and luxury at her command, and crowds of suitors at her feet. But only one of all these had been her true lover, and he was in every respect worthy of her. On the eve of a voyage to Calcutta, he had made his declaration, and been accepted; and the string of emeralds had been his betrothal gift.

For months after his departure, Janet lived in a dream of bliss, and then the great trouble of her life came. Her father, who held a high position in the mercantile world, failed utterly, and finding himself a beggar, died of a broken heart. Then their beautiful dwelling and everything went, and poor Janet sank into despairing helplessness; and there was no one left to breast the bitter storm but pretty little Janet.

Bravely enough she did it, for there was a hero, she removed her slender form and face. She, the daughter of a wealthy and noble family, a city far distant from the scene of their recent troubles, procured humble lodgings, and then cast about for employment. With much difficulty, she obtained a situation as gover-

ness, a position for which her fine education and natural abilities rendered her eminently qualified. This she years ago, Janet hearing nothing from her lover, she was probably dead, she thought; or he might have heard of her father's failure, and resolved to quietly ignore her. She did not know, and she was too proud to inquire.

Now standing there in the gloom with the rush and roar of the great city in her ears, she asked herself, Why not sell the emeralds? They would bring a good price, enough to make her poor mother and little Alice comfortable for many a dreary month. And yet she could hardly bring herself to part from them. They were the one link that bound her to the happy past. The shadows thickened round her, and the dreamy odor of the heliotrope wafted her, like a voice, in memory of the long ago. She could see the green summer garden, hear the plash of the fountain and catch the twitter of the canaries from their gilded cages. His face was bending over her, his kisses burned upon her brow, his very words seemed ringing in her ear again. "A quiet affair of a betrothal gift darling," he said, but they are very precious, and they were my mother's wedding jewels. I hold them dearer than anything else I possess, hence I give them to you.

Could she part from them? Sell them for a few paltry shillings? Her bosom rose and fell with great throbs of agony. She could not! She was willing then into the case again when her mother's hollow cough broke on her ear.

For her sake, she murmured, her face whitening in the gloom. Yes, God help me, for her sake I must.

She closed the casket resolutely, and slipping it in her pocket, hurried out into the darkening streets. Only a block or two from Mrs. Draper's was a fashionable jewelry establishment, every window a blaze of light. With her heart in her mouth Janet entered, and glanced down the long line of gaily dressed customers. It would be an hour at least, she saw, before she could be waited upon, and that would be too late. And after all, perhaps Mrs. Draper might let her have half of her monthly pay, and she would not be forced to sell her emeralds just yet. Glad of any pretext or excuse for keeping her precious gems, she hurried from the shop; but thoughts of her mother and poor disappointed little Alice, brought the blinding tears to her eyes. Life was very desolate. Alas! what would the New Year bring to her? She ran along briskly, with a dreadful aching at her heart, till she reached the stygian residence of her employer.

Oh, Miss Arbutnot! here you are, cried Mrs. Draper, as Janet tapped at the door of the dressing room. Come in, we're in dread full need of help. Agnes is in despair; no one can do her hair to suit her; will you have the goodness to try?

Janet laid aside her wraps, and approaching the superb beauty, who sat in arm chair opposite the mirror, magnificently attired in gold colored silk, began the task of arranging the lustrous raven hair.

And now, asked Janet when her task was done and every braid was perfect, what ornaments shall you wear?

Emeralds, of course. Green and gold are her favorite colours, you know, mother, replied Agnes, smiling and blushing. There is the jewel-case, Miss Arbutnot.

Janet opened it, and clasped the glittering gems on neck and wrists, and hung the gleaming pendants from the beauty's ears. And what for your hair? she asked.

Who knows? replied the beauty, divinely. Flaxen, I suppose. If I only had emeralds to match my necklace. Pshaw! she continued, as Janet held a wreath of red roses against her jetty braids, take them away. They spoil everything. Nothing but emeralds will do.

Won't your pearls answer? suggested her mother.

Pearls mixed with emeralds! You would make a fright of me, mamma. Oh dear! I shall have to take off the dress, and wear something else.

Janet hesitated a moment, and then drew the little casket from her pocket. I beg your pardon, Miss Draper, she said timidly, flushing open the case, but it is the emeralds. I should be so pleased.

Why Janet, cried the heiress, lifting the glittering string from the case, are you another Cinderella? But where, she added in surprise, did you get these costly gems?

They were the gift of a dear friend, replied Janet, quietly. I meant to sell them this evening, but my heart failed me.

Why I'd tell them, if they are for sale, kindly said the heiress. Oh mother, do look here! Was ever anything so magnificent? she cried, excitedly, twining the gorgeous string round her raven braids. May I wear them to-night, Janet?

In welcome, said Janet.

And she swept down to the parlors, the emeralds encircling her brow like an aureole of light. Janet looked after her with an odd sensation of mingled pain and pleasure, and half regretted the impulsive generosity that had prompted her to precious emeralds, even for so short a time.

The tableaux were over, and the waiting had begun. Mr. Willoughby, the lion of the season, who had just come from Calcutta, a millionaire, approached to seek Miss Draper for his first partner.

You have surpassed yourself to-night, Miss Agnes, he said, his eyes full of admiration, as they rested on her queenly face.

Agnes flushed with pleasure. The music struck, and he had turned to lead her off, but suddenly stopped, staring like one petrified.

Great heavens! he exclaimed at last, they are emeralds! Miss Draper, excuse me! But I cannot be mistaken: where did you get those emeralds?

Agnes grew scarlet to her very finger tips, and drew back haughtily.

A strange question, Mr. Willoughby, she said.

I know, Miss Draper, and I beg pardon for my rudeness; but these gems were my gift to the dearest friend I ever had. You can understand my solicitude to know how they came into your possession.

They are not mine, Mr. Willoughby, was the surprised answer; they belong to mamma's governess.

And her name? he said breathlessly.

Janet Arbutnot.

Mr. Willoughby's travel-bronzed face grew absolutely radiant.

One other favor Miss Agnes, he said. Can I see your mother's governess?

For an instant Agnes struggled with wounded vanity and self love, and then said, frankly, her better nature triumphing.

I see Mr. Willoughby, that there is a grand denouement at hand, the finale for our tableaux. Come with me.

He followed her from the parlors, and into a little ante room, where the young governess sat. One glance at the quiet figure in its robe of brown; at the pallid, sorrow worn face; and Eastwicket rushed forward with outstretched arms.

Janet! Janet! he cried, have I found you at last?

Agnes disengaged the emeralds from her hair, and dropping them softly into Janet's lap, left the room blinded by really genuine tears.

It is quite as well as if I had won him myself, she said.

Why did you leave our dear old city? said Eastwicket Willoughby, when he and Janet were alone together. I can understand something of your reasons, of course; you shrink from old associations; but it has led to this apparent desertion of Calcutta, on an important business, and was detained for months. When I returned to America, all traces of you were lost. I have been in search of you for months. But now we will never part again.

So, after all, gladness and rejoicing came to Janet, and to the friends she loved, with the dawning of that happy New Year.

## The Amazon.

Let us, following in brief abstract the account of Mr. Orton, touch upon some prominent characteristics of this great ocean river. It rises in the little Peruvian Lake of Lauricocha, just below the limits of perpetual snow. For 500 miles it flows swiftly through a deep valley. Then, turning sharply eastward, it runs 2500 across the great equatorial plain—a mile and a half, increasing to more than ten miles at the head of the delta, where it divides, and, after running 400 miles, presents a front of 150 miles upon the ocean. For a great distance it is bordered by side-channels or "lagoons," as they are called upon the Mississippi, named by the Indians *igarapés*, or "canoe paths." From Santarem, the principal town above Para, one may paddle a thousand miles parallel to the river without once entering the stream. For twenty-five degrees of latitude every river that flows down the eastern slope of the Andes is an affluent of the Amazon. It is as though all the rivers from Mexico to Oregon united their waters in the Mississippi. A half a score of these tributaries are larger than the Danube excepted—then any European river out of Russia. The volume of water is greater even than the breadth of the river would indicate. At Nauta, 2200 miles from its mouth, the depth is 40 feet, increasing rapidly as it approaches the ocean. The largest ocean steamer could doubtless steam 2000 miles up the Amazon.

The vegetation of the valley is exuberant. There is a bewildering diversity of grand and stately trees, a wild, unbroken forest of vegetable giants, draped and festooned by creeping plants. The moment you land upon the shore you are confronted by a solid wall of vegetation, through which, if you wish to proceed, you must hew your way with an axe or machete. Palms of which thirty varieties are noted, constitute the majority of trees.

Then there are "cows trees," a hundred and fifty feet high, yielding a milk of the consistency of cream, used for tea coffee and confection. The "coucho," or rubber tree, though of a different species from that of the East Indies, produces a gum which constitutes most of the rubber of commerce. Agassiz puts this tree, forty or eighty feet high, in the same class with the "milk-wood" of our American pastures. Of ornamental woods there is no end. Foremost among these is the *Morinda*, or "torrisia-shell wood," the most beautiful in grain and color of any in the world. Enough of this is wasted every year to veneer all the dwellings of the civilized world. For many years to come the exports of the Amazon Valley must be mainly the products of its forest. Yet, strangely enough, there is now one of the chief articles of import at Para. A city of 35,000 inhabitants, lying on the verge of a great forest buys pine boards from far away Maine! This folly will in time come to an end. Contrary to all that we might expect, the Amazon Valley is temperate rather than tropical. It is more equal than any other region of the world. Year in and year out it ranges from 74° to 80°—the fair mean being 80°.—From "The Andes and the Amazon," by A. H. GUERREY, in Harper's Magazine for February.

## Scientific Notes.

NEW ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.—A new artificial light, specially applicable to photography, has been tried, and it is said with much success. It is produced by rendering cylinders, composed of magnesia and tritane acid, incandescent by the oxyhydrogen flame.

NEW CURE FOR DYSPENSIA.—A dyspeptic correspondent of the *Lancet*, records the result of a successful experiment on himself. He had long suffered from the effects of indigestion, which medicines relieved, but failed to cure. The substitution of plain ship-biscuit for soft bread has given rise to great improvement. He thinks that ship-biscuit will be found, dietically speaking, very superior to bread prepared with yeast in cases of weak digestion.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SCARLATINA.—In a paper on this subject, Mr. John Simmons, of the Medical Department of the Privy Council, says: "Chemical disinfectants are of two great classes, and hitherto it is not certain which of the two classes act best. The one class is well represented by chlorine and its compounds; the other is well represented by carbolic acid. Under one system the solution of chloride of lime may be used for minor domestic purposes, and chlorine gas for disinfection of rooms. Under the other system, carbolic acid may be used for minor domestic purposes, and sulphurous acid gas for disinfection of rooms. These systems do not combine well with one another."

ETIMAS AS A MORTUARY.—Sir Frederic Pollock recently communicated to the President of the College of Physicians, London, the result of his experience in using ether. Sir Frederic was remarkable, during the long period in which he discharged the functions of Lord Chief Baron, for his great mental and physical energy. He is now eighty-six years of age, and his eye had not waxed dim, neither his natural force abated. Some years ago old age began to gain on him. He suffered from indelible nervous symptoms, manifesting themselves in painful spasms connected with the digestive organs. In his search for a panacea which should at once be narcotic and stimulant, he hit upon ether, which he inhaled from an ordinary bottle held to one nostril, and one only. Pain and spasms disappeared before a few whiffs, giving place to a general tranquility of the nervous system. He perseveres with his inhalations, sometimes using larger, sometimes smaller quantities, but taking care never to absorb so much of the vapor as to disturb consciousness or cloud the intellect, and he always enjoys magnificent health. He can sleep peacefully for eleven hours out of the twenty-four—not a drug compelled sleep, but a peaceful, refreshing, natural slumber; and generally he is entirely free of all the nervous irritability so prone to trouble those in advanced years.

A SITUATION OVER.—The romance of the runaway drake was quite played out after the people of the North and South had pecked their flits for the final shot. Once in a while, however, there comes a realisation which shows Santa's native humor, and how irresistible was his hankering for the "bon of freedom." Before the war there came into the bar-room of a hotel in Canada, near the frontier, a bright-looking negro, who was thus addressed by one of the eminent persons usually found in such resorts:

"I s'pose you're a runaway slave," said one, looking sharply at the new-comer.

Feeling that he was pretty well away from bondage, the drake responded that he was.

"Ah, indeed; well, we're glad of it; but you don't seem to look very poor—have good clothes down South?"

"Certainly," said the drake, with some pride. "Some clothes as my master."

"But you got many a thrashing, eh?" "Never had a whipping in my life."

"Never thrashed!" said another; "well, but you niggers don't always get enough to eat, do you?"

"Always had enough *gemmen*, never went hungry."

"What?" said the interrogator, "good things, no punishment, plenty to eat. Now," said he, turning to the group, "only think of it!—this fellow has left a position where he enjoys all these privileges for an uncertain 'ty."

"Gemmen," said the drake "all I've got to say respects 'dem privileges is, dat if any wants to avail himself 'em, *de situation am still open*!"—EDITOR'S DRAWER, in Harper's Magazine for February.

SOMETHING LIKE A MOTHER IN LAW.—A German paper gives an account of a strange incident which occurred lately on the occasion of a marriage before the civil authorities in Algeria. The official required the consent of the mother, and asked if she was present. A loud base voice answered, "Yes." The Mayor looked up and saw a tall soldier before him.

That's well, he said; let the mother come here—her consent and signature are necessary. To the astonishment of all present, the soldier approached the Mayor with stern strides, saluted in military fashion, and said:

You ask for the mother of the bride; she stands before you.

Very well, sir, replied the Mayor, then stand back, I can take no proxy; I must see the mother—the mother I tell you!

And I repeat, rejoined the soldier, that she stand before you. My name is Maria L. I have been thirty six years in the service; I have been through several campaigns, and obtained permission to wear uniform, and my nomination as sergeant major.

The Mayor carefully examined the documents and found them perfectly correct, and completed the marriage of the bridal pair, the mother blessing them so fervently with her deep base voice that all present were more startled than touched.

HARPER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE for February has been received. The contents are as follows:—

Frederick the Great.—III. The Marriage of Wilhelm and the Reconciliation.—With Seven Illustrations. Tell Me.—Carl Spencer. Beast, Bird, and Fish.—(Fourth Paper).—Burt G. Wilder.—With Seven Illustrations. The Andes and the Amazon.—A. H. GUERREY.—With Twelve Illustrations. South Coast Samterings in England.—(Isle of Wight, I).—M. D. Conway.—With Seven Illustrations. The Consequences.—Mary P. Wells. Anteros, II.—By the Author of "Guy Livingstone." Flood-Tide.—Charles Landor. Mirabito. A Brave Lady.—By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman."—With Two Illustrations. Mary Russell Mitford.—S. S. Conant. Along the Wires.—Justin McCarthy. Paragony and Her Enemies.—M. T. McMahon. Map of Paraguay. A Promise is a Promise.—Mary N. Prescott. The Game Water-fowl of America.—W. Wadell, Jr. Wadell, or, Every Man has his Price.—Lord Lytton. A Chat on Bulla.—Prof. Schellé De Vere. Editor's Easy Chair. Editor's Literary Record. Editor's Scientific Record. Editor's Historical Record. Editor's Drawer.

MORNING IN WASHINGTON.—In the morning the yells of black vendors of oysters, milk, and vegetables are on the air. Every drake is a humorist in his way, and swings his tail or basket with a devil-may-care gesture, as if he were the slightest consequences to him whether the kitchen maid came out to buy or not.

"Oysters! oysters, heah, I say. Try 'em for yourself, and see how you like 'em! Oysters! Oysters to sell!"

Another shout, at the top of his lungs: "Prawns! prawns!"

"What for you, make all dat noise da? You're enough to make the dumb, remonstrates a cook from the basement window."

"Does I make a noise? Can dey hear me?" "Hush you! dey can't hear you a mile."

"Dat's good, I tell you to be heard. Yah, yah! Tahes! tahes!"

Can any one name an animal of the order "end-nata"—that is, a front toothless animal? A boy whose face beamed with pleasure at the prospect of a good mark, replied: "I can?"

Well, what is the animal? asked the teacher. My grand-mother! replied the boy, with great gloe.

Papa, said a Devonshire boy, what is punctum?

It is the art of putting stops, my child. Then I wish you'd go down into the cellar and punctuate the cider barrel, as the cider is running all over the floor.

Lady (affably): Where in the name of wonder, could I have got such a nose as this? Doctor: Out of the doanster, my man!











