

SOMETHING ABOUT CATS
(By "Eagle-Eyes")

The ocelot is pretty,
We hate the stalking lynx;
Mountain cats we can tolerate
The pole-cat badly—?

Bob-cats,—of tails unworthy
Jungle-cats prey on man
House-cats we can tolerate
But cactus-cats we ban.

The cheetah is a leopard
That Hindu hunters tame
It's called the hunting leopard
For coursing sporty game.

The civet cat is spotted
It gives the civet scent
That natives use for perfume
In the Orient.

Mother-cat, our worthy pet
Upon the rodent fares,
Purring sweet contentment while
Our dwelling place she shares.

Tom-cat, poor chap, grows restless
From home he will abscond,
Making himself a nuisance,
Itinerant vagabond.

Manx cats, nice domestic pets
Are born without a tail
While cat-tails on bullrushes
Grow each year without fail.

The cat, some people tell us,
Has got eight lives to spare
Cat o' nine-tails we presume
Has more tails than his share.

Acheshire cat and Alice
Were both in Wonderland.
Why it was always grinning
She couldn't understand.

There are white cats, tiger cats,
Cats with a busy tail,
Maltese cats and yellow cats
Black cats that cross our trail.

Woolly cats and tortoise cats
And cats that love to fight
Prowling, spitting, squalling cats
That keep us up at night.

Kittens are the cutest things
So playful and so pert,
Jumping from the apron strings
And swinging on a skirt.

They go right after knitting
For mischief quite alert
Our sides with laughter splitting
Until they start to hurt.

There is a little pussy
That lives down in our swamp
In Spring she greets the children
Who go down there to romp.

Though loved by all the children
The grown-up and the small
We rob her of some catkins
But never take them all.

This pussy, soft and furry
Would never hurt a rat
She doesn't even worry
About a cosy mat.

She doesn't have to hurry
Her share of milk to lap
Nor does she have to scurry
When some-one gives a slap.

She's not a sneak that wishes
On butter to get fat
She'll not start breaking dishes
When you start shouting SCAT!

She'll not sleep on your pillow
Nor spoil your Sunday hat
Because our Pussy-Willow
Is not a naughty cat.

Love is like a charge account. You
may seem to be getting everything
free; but if you don't pay up, the
account is closed.

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THE LIBERAL SHORT STORY

RENDEZVOUS IN TRENTON

By Roberta Yates

Karen made excuses to herself for this trip to New York as the train sped across the flat plains of New Jersey. She needed to shop; she wanted to see the old crowd again; she was bored with the country. Lies, all of them. Her heart knew the true reason.

She was coming back to New York because of that glimpse yesterday of the man who looked like Rusty Carson. It was only a glimpse. She had been in the car coming out of Trenton and the man walking. The tan overcoat with upturned collar, the arrogant tilt of the head; the long strides were all like Rusty. She had called his name so sharply that the chauffeur glanced back at her. She had strained for a sight of the man's face, but he turned a corner and was lost as the car rolled on. She had settled back, knowing that it could not be Rusty. Absurd to imagine so. He boasted of never leaving Manhattan. He was in the grubby flat that he shared with Jim Pliny, developing photographs that were beautiful, but never sold. He was miles away.

But he was present and vital in Karen's heart, though she had spent a year pretending that she had forgotten him. His red head nodded to her from the limousine window. His crooked grin, like that of the Cheshire cat, mocked her from the trees along the drive.

Oh, Rusty, why couldn't you have been dependable and sensible, instead of bent on a hopeless struggle to be a half-baked artist? Why didn't you appreciate my common sense, when I decided to get myself a respectable job because I was a flop as a writer? Why didn't you beg me to stay and starve with you? I might have been idiot enough to do it.

But Rusty had only laughed. "You're a sensible Dutch girl, Karen Van Nord," he had said. "You were never meant to breathe the murky, uncertain air of art."

He hadn't even asked where her job was. He hadn't cared enough to want to see her again or to write to her. He was striding on through life, regardless of her just as his double had done in Trenton.

Karen went into the big house, carrying the parcels which Mrs. Osmond had sent her to purchase. She had never regretted coming to work as social secretary here. The estate was beautiful; her room a miracle of light and space after the cramped room on Fourth St. She loved the garden and the trees and the far-away gray of the sea. If Rusty would only like such things instead of glamorous New York.

The Osmonds were old and lonely and treated Karen more like a daughter than an employee. When she asked for a day off to go to the city, Mrs. Osmond said:

"Of course, dear. I've marvelled at your being contented to stay here constantly without going in to see your young friends."

She hadn't dared to go. She wanted to forget. And now Rusty's double had made her remember more poignantly than ever.

"I need to shop for spring clothes," Karen said, fibbing to Mrs. Osmond as she was trying to fib to herself.

In New York she even bought a new dress and hat, to justify the fib and she put them on and wore them out, feeling the jaunty self-confidence that new clothes give a girl.

She would drop in casually at Rusty's and say, laughing: "Here's the little Dutch hick back for a visit."

Fifteen minutes by subway, later she stared at the space where Rusty's and Pliny's names had once been printed over a bell. The space was empty. She had an odd, sinking feeling. The jaunty smile froze on her face. They had moved, of course. People move in New York almost every year. But Rusty and Pliny had hung onto the flat for a record time of four years, because it was big and cheap.

She went on aimlessly, along Twelfth Street. Then she thought of Betty and Cal and walked up five flights to their apartment where the river view would be good if it wasn't for the warehouse opposite. They welcomed her with gay effusion though they confessed that they were having one of their "bad times." Cal's last novelette had been turned down. Karen wondered how they stood the constant death struggle between bills and reluctant editors.

She sat on the rickety couch and thought of the many times that Rusty and Betty and Cal and herself had drunk sweet, cheap sherry and talked the night away, about art life and love and world economics—never their own. It was here that she had made her final pronouncement, when she was sick to nausea of fine

phrases and hand to mouth existence.

"I don't know about the rest of you. Maybe you have talent. But I haven't. And I'd rather go to work than starve as a ham writer."

She said now, trying to seem careless: "What's happened to the old crowd?"

They told her about Jake who had gone to Hollywood at a fabulous salary; about Milly who was married and living in White Plains of all places. She asked:

"And Pliny?"

They exchanged glances. Something was wrong about Pliny and they didn't like to say so. Karen didn't care about him anyway. He was just a good natured newspaperman who drank too much, important because he roomed with Rusty.

"And Rusty?" she said at last.

"He's simply dropped off the earth," Betty said. "We haven't seen him for almost a year. He stopped coming around."

"You were the only attraction," Cal said.

Karen flushed. "He concealed it well."

Priscilla might know, she thought. Priscilla had been love with Pliny and had refused to marry him until he went on the wagon. She would have kept in touch with him.

Priscilla had the same studio but prosperity showed in the gay new hangings and furniture. She had sold three covers to "Jester," she said, and others were coming in. She was one of the few who were right in clinging to art. She had talent and she worked hard. For her the lean years would be justified eventually by the fat. Her face went white and strained when Karen mentioned Pliny.

"I don't see him nowadays," she said. "I had to ask him not to come here any more. Oh, Karen, I know I'll get over it. People do. But I hate to see him go to pieces. He's drinking constantly now. He lost his job. I tried to help him, but I can't. Nobody but himself can do that."

Karen said over a sob: "Darling I'm so sorry."

Once they had been a foursome, laughing, talking gay nonsense in this studio. Now Pliny was lost in one way and Rusty in another.

"Rusty and he gave up their place last fall," Priscilla said.

"Where did Rusty move?"

"I don't know. I haven't seen him for ages. Pliny can tell you. You'll find him at Sams Tavern," Priscilla said bitterly. "He's there from four o'clock until closing time."

Pliny released his hold on the bar and almost fell when he saw Karen. He pointed a bony finger at her and roared:

"Jezebel! You ruined my best friend's life."

Karen got him into a booth, away from the stares and snickers of the crowd at the bar.

"Tell me about it," she said. Why am I Jezebel?"

But it was a long time before she got anything out of Pliny. He insisted on talking first about Priscilla. "Just a career woman. Too selfish to endanger her precious work by marrying." Cold hearted it seemed was Priscilla. One who turned on her friends because they took an occasional snifter too much.

Karen, remembering Priscilla's strained face, said: "She loves you Pliny. If you'd only give her a chance."

"Give her a chance I went there night after night and banged on her door and threw rocks at her window and she wouldn't let me in."

No good arguing with him when he was like this.

"Where is Rusty?" Karen said, trying to compel him to answer soberly.

"Rusty's gone to hell," said Pliny. "That's what you did to him. That's where you sent him. Might have been the greatest art photographer in the world and he throws it all over because of a woman."

Karen thought drily: "Rusty had ten years to be a great art photographer. Ten starving years before ever he met me."

But she said nothing. At least Pliny was started on Rusty and Rusty must have cared after all or Pliny wouldn't rage so. It couldn't all be his drunken imagination. He leaned forward confidentially.

"You're a nice girl, Karen, but you have no soul. You're like all domestic women. You want to trap a man."

"Never mind me! Get back to Rusty," Karen begged.

"You trapped Rusty. You got him good. Night after you left town he started raving. 'Pliny,' he said, 'I see myself for what I am. A no good lazy rat. Trying to kid people I'm an artist because I'm too shiftless to work. Pliny, if I had had

a job I could have asked her to stay and marry me. But I had to let her go without a word. Last thing he said to me was he'd find you again some time if it took all his life. Then he went away."

Pliny laid his head on the table and sobbed. Karen shook his shoulder.

"Where did he go?" she demanded.

"I told you. Gone to hell. Gone to New Jersey. Same thing. He even likes it there. Sent me a card gushing about the fresh air and water. He got a job picture scratching for some paper near Trenton. What an end for him!" Pliny mourned.

Karen lingered to be sure of the name of the paper, lingered on a moment longer, because her heart was singing and she wanted to share her happiness with Pliny. She wanted to tell him that Priscilla and he could be happy too. But she saw in his red eyes that there would never be a warm security for Priscilla and him.

On the way to the station and the next train back to Trenton she thought of the many cheap quaint cottages she had seen on drives. She must find one large enough for Rusty to have a dark room to develop pictures. She would economize so that he could buy materials. Oh, he would be a great photographer one day.

Lucky she was to get an express train. There was no time to lose. Rusty and she had wasted months living and working within a few miles of each other. They must make up for that.

Oddments in World News

THE PET BULL SNAKE Belonging to Johnny Kimbrel of Walsenburg, Colorado, was uncomfortable, although it rested in a soft nest in the hen house, which it kept free of rats. Kimbrel detected a bulge in his pet's mid-section, and suspected the snake had turned to stealing eggs. Holding the reptile, head down, Kimbrel worked at the bulging object. Out popped a wooden nest egg.

A PIPE-LINE OF HOLLOWED LOGS, 1,000 feet long, believed to be a part of a plumbing system installed about 100 years ago, has been uncovered by D. O. Root, on a farm near Chardon, Ohio. Holes had been bored through the middle of the logs, and the end of each log was sharpened to join the next. In one of the logs below the spring was a cut-off. A hole had been bored and a plug inserted. When the water was required, the plug was raised. It will still operate.

IT HAS BEEN DISCOVERED BY a French Government Commission that locusts have their breeding grounds. This knowledge, it is believed, will make war on the pest simpler and more effective. This Commission, having visited West Africa, Morocco and Algeria, reported that the gathering ground of the migratory locusts is in Nigeria. Right across the Continent, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the same latitude, English scientists have discovered a similar meeting place for the winged plague.

IN A 44-ACRE FIELD OUTSIDE Laxton, Northamptonshire, in England, thirteen men and women have returned to primitive life in an attempt to found an ideal civilization. Self-supporting and self-contained, they live in discarded army huts, trap rabbits for a living, grow crops and make all their own clothes. Each man has his goat and a bit of land and is independent of the others. One member of the colony, a former society girl, spins yarn and knits her husband's socks at a cost of five cents a pair. Her husband, a former factory worker, is in charge of the colony's training campaign.

ACCIDENTAL DISCOVERY OF the breeding ground and home of a myriad of large vipers, known as "postaks," during road construction in the Herzegovinian mountains (European Balkans) excited immediate fear, but subsequently aroused hope. Blasting operations caused the collapse of a huge fragment, revealing the mouth of an unsuspected cave, from which swarmed hundreds of these snakes. A wholesale invasion of the country-side was threatened, and the panic-stricken workmen fled, all but one, who hurled a stick of dynamite among the advancing reptiles. Over a hundred of them were blown to pieces and the rest retreated into their underground refuge. The cave was promptly walled up and measures taken for their destruction, but the news attracted a rush of peasants to the spot. The bite of these vipers is fatal, and their venom is in demand in laboratories all over Europe for the manufacture of anti-snake serum.

Death in the Afternoon

A momentarily thoughtless motorist, a high-powered car, a playing child, grinding brakes, a crash, a childish scream, a still, twisted little figure, grotesque and terrifying, a life that ended at seven that might have been saved.

These are the elements which enter, too often, into tragedies of the highway; tragedies that might have been prevented. And portraying this drama are grief-stricken, anguished people; parents, brothers and sisters who mourn the loss of a loved one—and, most miserable of all, the hapless motorist whose brain will ever be seared with the torturing knowledge that he has taken a life that might have been saved.

Dramatic, yes, but not exaggerated. True drama revealed by a perusal of accident statistics in any centre of Ontario. The bare figures tell the tale in their own impersonal way, but they do not stress the horror, the needlessness of it all, the grief that must follow as long as life lasts.

It is all the more saddening when we know that most of such accidents can be avoided by care on the part of the pedestrian as well as the motorist.

Children should be taught to be careful in crossing the streets or roads, look well to right and left for approaching cars. Better not to play in the streets at all, but if that cannot be avoided—then play carefully. Remember that death may lurk in the roadway.

Motorists, no matter what the circumstances, should always watch children in the roadway. A little one playing on the boulevard or the sidewalk may run into the road the next second, and flash directly in front of an approaching car. Then it may be too late to avoid a tragedy

that can never be paid for—a life ended at seven that could have been saved.

Take care and caution into your car with you every time you put your hand to your steering wheel. These unseen guests will be the most valuable companions you ever had on any drive, and they won't crowd the car. In fact, you can carry them in your head, but be sure to have them along.

Be always careful. Do your part, whether motorist or pedestrian, adult or child, to lessen the dreadful toll of accidents that snuffs out so many precious lives every year on Ontario's streets and highways. If you are a pedestrian—remember that the motorist has rights, and for your own safety, be watchful of traffic. If you are a motorist—always drive sanely and live to drive longer.

R. H. KANE

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