

Bovril
helps you to
"turn the corner"

The Purple Lady

BY GEORGIA WOOD PANGBORN

PART I.

It was a rainy afternoon, so Joe and Althea were in the attic, cutting fashion ladies out of an old Godey's Lady's Book. That is, Althea cut out the ladies. Joe designed animals on yellow wrapping paper. These, he said, would cut the ladies up. But when the back of Althea's wrist went to her mouth and her eyes fixed mournfully on him filled and filled, he said hastily that it was only a few of the animals who were like that. The rest were good and would protect the ladies. Just let him have his turn at the scissors and she would see. And so, indeed, it proved, for the beads fought so terribly among themselves that in a short time good as dead alike were nothing but a heap of torn scraps, while the ladies, quite unscathed, still stood along the floor crack. Then Joe said he smelted the cookies being taken out of the oven and went down to see.

Althea was hungry. People at home were sick. People at home, though this she did not know, were nearly at their wits' end. So the kitchen at home was at sixes and sevens, and the little cooking done there was almost inedible in result. Mrs. Mack knew all about it and was terribly sorry, and helped by having Althea over at her house so much that she began to feel as if she had a little daughter of her own as well as that square, blundering, noisy little son. And as she watched the two together, how splendidly they got on, her dreams would sweep foolishly forward to a time when Joe should no longer be so square and blundering. Althea so tiny and frail. What a pair they would make if they carried out the fine promise of their babyhood!

The far corners of the attic were a little dimmer than she liked; in particular, the corner where the model of the machine stood, all legs and elbows and long fingers. It had been there ever since she made the acquaintance of Joe's attic (which was the same as always), and though Joe had explained all about it—how it wouldn't go and couldn't hurt anybody—she had never quite liked it. It stood in front of a little black trunk which she eyed longingly through the machine's sprawling levers. But Joe said the trunk things weren't old-fashioned things you could dress up in, but the machine's things, drawings and models. He had seen them once, and some day, when he was a man, he was to have them and the machine and see if he could find out what it needed to make it go. It was something about printing; he knew that much, and he told Althea what printing was.

But, of course, now that things turned to dreams, the machine was as unsubstantial as the rest, so as she looked at it through half-closed eyes Althea was not surprised that it should thin, dissolve, become invisible. Oh, how lovely! She had done it! She had dreamed the lady real!

Yes, there she was, a real dream lady, lady size, too, not just a doll, and she wore a great braid of yellow hair

in this was more than in other wars the enemy has had power to reach a man's soul. I may be mistaken; yet, if it is so, such a wound must heal. I do not believe any such wound, even of the soul, can touch the real centre. "So you have the little things all airing? How sweet and confident they look with the little sleeves spread out! Wait till the arms get in them and begin to flap and wave! Joe wore out everything! I never saw such a baby. He scribbled through his long dresses just as he did later through his knickerbockers. It's a shame that he didn't leave anything of his wardrobe for his own baby—but they never think of that!"

"I do wish," said Althea, "I could have embroidered some slips. Of course, the woeen things are most important this weather, but I wanted a frilly cap, too. Poor baby! He won't be going out much in this weather, but I'd like to see him in one. There's nothing quite like a baby's face with a frill around it and a bow under the chin."

"Well," said Mrs. Mack doubtfully, "it's terrible the way they get ribbon ends in their mouths. Bad for them and hard on ribbons. You tie them under one ear, not under the chin. But even so, they always get them and chew them."

"By the by—," said Althea suddenly, then stopped with shy, sidelong look.

"Yes, my dear?"

"I wish—that little trunk in the attic, the one behind your father's model. Are you sure there's nothing in it but drawing and things like that?"

"You are thinking of your old attic chest? O, my dear, don't get that notion that it was anything more than a phantom of your poor little hungry tum. The first thing the fakes and those people do when they want to see to get into that trunk, of course, is Children always want to get into shut things, and you certainly had been fasting."

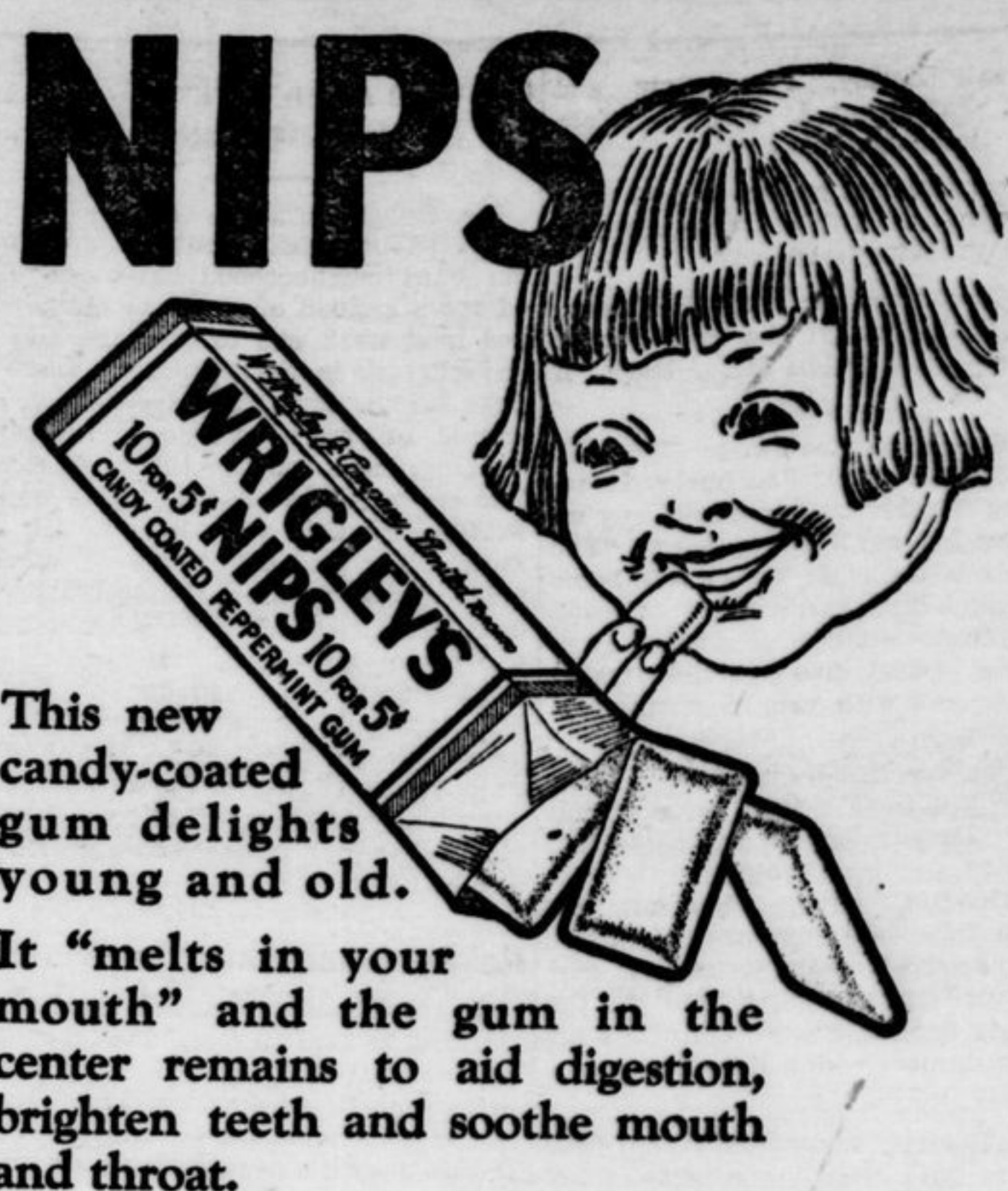
"And yet," persisted Althea, "did you ever look into it—clear down to the bottom?"

"Why, no; not to the bottom, but enough so that I could see. It's only drawings. After my mother's death my father just put everything away, stuffed his drawers into the trunk, and he forgot it, as well as he could. He had had great hopes of it, but it would have taken money to finish it, and when she went and kept her position at the Tracy lumber yard and finished out his days there."

"I thought then," said Althea, "it was old doll things she was looking over. But now—I know, and she pointed at her own collection, and wasn't doll things. If I could," she said, "I mean, if it were I—I suppose it wouldn't be—I'd ask you to let me go up and look."

"Why, my dear, persistent little Fattimal! I'll look; of course I will, though I'm afraid you'll be disappointed. It wouldn't do for you to go up those stairs and pull heavy attic things around, of course. How funny it would be if there should be anything under the poor old drawings. There's just one thing that makes me

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THE HOTEL MOUSE

By G. Bruno-Ruby
Translated by William L. McPherson

A mouse—the word always evokes the image of a lively little creature, sprightly and also young. And, after all, why should a mouse always seem young?

The one of which I speak was not young. She was a big mouse, a mouse who nibbled at other things than crusts of bread.

This mouse was named Lea Verne, and she made her way at night into hotel rooms to rob travelers. She was forty years old—an age which ought to be that of wisdom, but she had always been idle, and, as every one knows, idleness is the mother of all the vices.

That evening she had arrived at the Terminus Hotel in the city of X—. She had taken the only vacant room, a room on the sixth floor (a floor occupied by less prosperous people, which was hardly a good thing for her business), and she was reading with bursts of laughter a letter which she had just received.

This letter was from her brother, a brave and generous-minded man. He was the only one of the family who had not called her to account, who did not wish to guess what she was doing, who struggled to believe her honest. He told her that he had been appointed chief of a department in the establishment in which he had been working for the last fifteen years, and that he had an excellent situation for her.

An excellent situation. She laughed again, shrugged her shoulders, took her bunch of keys and left her lamp and consulted her watch. One o'clock struck in a neighboring bellery. Putting on a protective over-garment of gray linen—a hotel mouse in heart and soul—she left the room. She was going to lay her hands in a few minutes on as much money as she would probably have to work a year for with her honorable brother.

A hotel door is generally not difficult to open. This one made hardly any resistance. Slipping through the opening Lea listened intently. She could hear a man breathing with regularity. She closed the door and cut the electric wiring. The room was exactly like her own. She walked straight to the mantel-piece, where men prefer to leave their pocketbooks and their jewelry. But the mantel-piece was bare.

Lea began to be annoyed. The breathing continued, tranquil and regular. The sleeper surely must have an easy conscience. She resumed her search, examining the baggage rack. A bag was there—a simple bag. Nearby some clothes were carefully laid over a chair—a uniform and modest linen.

"An officer," Lea said to herself. "Not much to hope for."

She approached the bed (the moment to administer the chloroform had come) and leaned over the sleeper. The officer had blond hair, a boyish face, shaved like an Eton scholar's, and, in his sleep, all the charming abandon of adolescence. Lea drew back a trifle, the chloroform still in her hand.

"A little sub-lieutenant," she murmured.

Then she noticed, on a small table by the bed 600 francs in bank notes, a watch and a time-table.

"He arrived here," she thought; "he came to the first hotel, near the station, and here is his pay."

She bent down again over the sleeper. What confidence, what hardness, in that clear countenance, and what beautiful honesty, also! She, Lea, with her forty years, could have had, if she had not gone wrong, a son of that age, a handsome and charming boy like this one!

She recoiled again.

This young man evidently was not rich. She was going to rob him in cold blood, deliver him over, on his arrival at his garrison, to difficulties, to humiliations, perhaps to despair! She looked again at the bare room, the simple wardrobe, the worn traveling-bag.

"If I had some money with me," she sighed, "I would double his pay myself."

But she had no money with her and she simply left the room, her head buzzing and her heart heavier than a hotel mouse's ought to be. She went back to her own chamber, without the courage to continue her evil work.

She slowly took off her gray over-garment. Then, seating herself at her table, she re-read her brother's letter. She had laughed at it a few minutes before. But now—now, as if some mysterious hand guided her, she took up a pen and answered:

"You are very good. I agree to work with you. I shall come."

She signed her name. On the other side of the wall she could hear the regular breathing of the little sub-lieutenant. How happy she was that she still had his 600 francs!

So the die was cast. She was going to become honest again and it was the mere sight of a young and pure face which had accomplished that miracle. Honest! She took it herself in the mirror. It seemed to her that she already had a different look—that she was a different woman. She went to bed, full of a light-heartedness which she had never felt before, and for the first time, tranquil and without booty, the hotel mouse slept the sleep of the just.

Elephants continue growing for forty years.

Woman's Sphere

The Dangerous Year of Married Life. The Swedish journal "Charm" publishes an article on "The Dangerous Year of Married Life" which criticizes, after long study, has decided in the third. They arrived at this through study of the divorce statistics, which disclosed that a third, or at least a fourth, of all divorces occur in the third year of marriage. After passing the third year there is every prospect that the couple will live happily ever after.

But why is the third year the most dangerous? The expert answer that two years of romantic life as a rule enough. The hope that the romance may be continued during the following years is erroneous, unless husband and wife are able to talk themselves into an endless romance. And to this are added practical considerations. Thus, for instance, pecuniary worries may easily become the causes of divorce, for it makes, of course, a difference whether one or two persons shall be supported.

The first child, too, often makes a difference. The child, which really should bind husband and wife to each other, often separates them. And a husband who does not possess sufficient income cannot always content himself with the wife's great interest in the child, for he realizes that he no longer means everything to his wife.

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