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TWO STORIES IN ONE, AND BOTH TRUE.

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The children were teasing, as usual, for a story.

"O dear!" said Uncle Walter; "I've told you everything I could remember or make up. I can't think of another story for six nights, at least. You must give me time for a new crop to grow."

This was what he always said. But always, somehow, a story was forthcoming before the children went to bed; so they were not much discouraged. Indeed, Uncle Walter exclaimed almost immediately,—

"I've thought of something,—two stories! I'll tell you two stories in one; and they are both true."

This was luck! Not a story to be told in six nights,—and here, in about six seconds, were two stories promised, and both true. The children liked true stories, as, indeed, who does not? That story is worth very little which is not true, at least to the human heart and life; but Uncle Walter's was to be more than that,—they were to be true even to facts.

"I was reminded of one," said he, "by reading the other to-day in a book. Both happened in the same year—eighteen hundred and twenty-nine. One took place in the imperial palace of St. Petersburg, the other in a settlement in the backwoods of Western New York. They are both so much alike, and yet so very different, that they ought to be told together."

"I'll begin with the far-off one, which I read to-day in the book."

The great Emperor, Nicholas of Russia, was lying sick in his palace. Now men, when they are sick, are very much alike, whether rich or poor, kings or common folks. The pains of fever, headache, rheumatism, are about the same to all, I suppose. The Autocrat of all the Russias had taken cold, and his physicians had given him a sweat. The fact that he was the most powerful monarch of Europe, that his word was law to millions of people, didn't help his cold at all, or console him much, lying there, sweating off his aches and pains.

But something did console him—that something which makes the poor man rich, if he possesses it, and which the greatest princes are poor enough without,—the presence and affection of his family.

"Though a tyrant to his subjects,—cold, stern, unrelenting,—Nicholas was a kind husband and father. He forgot his cruelty and ambition, when with his wife and children.

"And now when he lay sick, it was the greatest delight to have the Empress sit by his side and read to him; or to listen to the merry voices of the princes and princesses at play in the next room.

"There was Alexander, eleven years old,—who was afterwards to become Emperor on the death of his father, in eighteen hundred and fifty-five. A noble boy then, to whom his father was giving the most thorough education an

Emperor's son could have,—for education, you see, is as needful to the rich and great as it is to you.

Young Alexander had as hard lessons to learn as any you complain of, and shed many a tear over them. I've no doubt, prince and heir to the throne as he was. But he was a good boy, and he profited by the instruction he received from the best teachers, so that he became afterwards quite as great a man as his father, and a much better ruler,—the most humane and liberal ruler, in fact, that Russia has ever had.

"But you must remember that he was only a child of eleven then; that it was the children's play hour, and that he was having a good time, like any other boy out of school, with his sisters Maria and Olga, aged ten and seven, and his little brother Constantine, only two years old.

Suddenly the Emperor heard a terrible crash in the children's room. There was a sudden silence of the merry voices,—then screams of terror—then the frightened tones of a governess, who rushed into the Emperor's apartment, exclaiming,—

"Constantine is killed!"

The Emperor, sick as he was, leaped out of bed in his night-clothes, and ran with the Empress—a very nervous, excitable woman—into the next room, where it was found that a huge porphyry vase, which had been accidentally toppled from its pedestal by the children in their play, had fallen upon the baby Constantine, who was completely hidden from sight by the massy stone.

The alarm and excitement were intense. Governesses and nurses shrieked, and ran hither and thither, calling for help. The Empress went into hysterics. The Emperor laid hold of the overturned vase, and with his own hands tried to remove it; but, though physically a large and powerful man, he found it too heavy for him.

Help came soon, however; and the vase being lifted, little Constantine was found unhurt, the great rim having fallen exactly over him, and shut him in the opening.

The anxious father gathered him up; and we may well believe that the mighty Czar of Russia forgot his dignity, and shed very human tears of joy when his darling child looked up and laughed.

The excitement, and the exposure to the cold in his night-clothes during his sweat, nearly cost the Emperor his life. He got well, though, after a while; and the children grew up to be men and women,—Alexander to be Emperor, as I have said, and his sisters to marry princes, and little Constantine, who came so near being crushed by the vase, to be high admiral to the Russian navy.

"And now for the twin story of this," Uncle Walter went on, after answering all the questions the children had to ask about the Russian princes. "It happened, as I have said, in the same year—and I don't know but on the same day—in the backwoods of Western New York.

"There a young married couple, whom we will call Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, had settled a few years before on what was then an immense forest, on the shores of Lake Ontario. They made a clearing, which they converted into a little farm, and built a hut, which in a few years gave place to a more substantial log-house; and there they lived, with still a few bears and wild-cats for neighbors, while other neighbors, more to their liking, were slowly increasing in number around them, when this thing happened.

Curiously enough, they, too, at that time had four children, and the name of the eldest was Maria. She was aged twelve. The other three were boys,—Edward, nine; George, six; and the baby, not quite old enough to walk.

One afternoon the children were at play, when Mr. Edwards was chopping in the borders of the woods, a few rods from the house.

The wind had blown over a large elm tree, tearing it up by the roots, which had lifted a great mass of earth with them, and left a hole in the ground, six or eight feet across and one or two feet deep.

Over the north side of this hole the mass of roots and earth rose like the mud-plastered end of a log hut, and afforded the children a pleasant shelter from the wind that autumn day, as they played horse in the warm sun, calling the hollow behind the roots their stable.

Mr. Edwards was chopping another prostrate trunk near where it joined the roots, and the children were having a merry time just on the other side of that shaggy wall, when suddenly he left his axe sticking in the log, and cried out,—

"Boys, it won't be safe for you to play there any longer!"

"Why not?" said Edward, who—like some other children I have heard of—always wanted to know why he couldn't do this thing or that, and often didn't believe much in the *why*, after he had learned it. "I wish you'd let us; it's real nice here."

"But this log is almost off. It will drop in a few minutes, and then the stump may fall back in the hole where you are, by its own weight. I've known roots to do such a thing. So away with you, and take the baby, if Maria hasn't taken him already."

"Maria has gone to the house and left us to take care of the baby," said Edward.

"Well, take care of him, then, and yourselves, too!"

"So the boys took the baby up out of the hole, Edward giving him a ride on his back, while George drove, and went to play in the woods, a little farther off.

Mr. Edwards continued chopping, and the boys soon became so much interested in some new game that they forgot all about the baby; while he, left to take care of himself, and thinking, no doubt, the hole behind the up-turned elmroots a very comfortable place, crawled away once more in search of it.

Suddenly the trunk Mr. Edwards was cutting parted from the

stump; and the root, as he had more than half expected, flew back in its place with a dull, heavy thud.

"There, boys," he cried, triumphantly, "you see now *why* I didn't want you playing in there!"

The boys hastened to the spot to see what had occurred; but the father noticed that Edward, as he ran, looked about him, alarmed and confused.

"What are you looking for, Edward?" his father asked. "Where's the baby?"

"He was out there, just a little while ago. I—I don't know where he is!" Edward stammered, and began to cry with terror.

He remembered that it had been all he and George could do to keep the baby out of the hole any time that afternoon, and that he had last seen him creeping away in that direction. He was naturally a good boy, and very fond of his little brother; and the thought of what had now happened through his negligence, filled him with the wildest fear and grief.

"O he is killed! baby is killed, I know!" he shrieked, running frantically around the stump, and seeing how closely the tremendous mass had crushed down again into the hollow.

Maria, hearing the alarm, came running from the house, followed quickly by her mother. A terrible scene ensued. The mother and children were beside themselves with fright and terror. And no wonder! Think of it,—that dear little baby crushed under the stump, which a hundred men could not move!

Mr. Edwards alone kept his head clear.

"Look in the woods!" he said to his wife; "all about! He may be behind some log. Edward! Maria! run to the neighbors! Tell them to bring their oxen and log-chains! quick as you can go! George, help your mother search!"

As for himself, he ran for a spade, and began throwing out the earth under the side of the stump where he thought the child most likely to be; working as he never worked before or after in all his life.

George and his mother searched the woods in vain, while the father dug as fruitlessly. Meanwhile, Edward and Maria ran to the nearest neighbors, told them the strange, horrible story; and Mr. Elder, Mr. Egglestone, Mr. Worth, and their boys and men, left everything to go with their yoke of oxen, horses and chains, to help pull the stump over—if, indeed, it could be pulled over at all.

"But before they reached the spot, while the mother was wildly searching, and the father as wildly working, George cried out, 'O, mamma, I hear baby somewhere!'"

Mamma listened. Papa listened. A faint cry came from the direction of the house. Mrs. Edwards flew into that direction, followed by her husband and George. Louder and louder grew the cry as they went nearer and nearer; and thereafter all, was the baby in the house which he had crept into; some roundabout course having missed the hollow by

the stump, and, finding the kitchen deserted, had finally set up his little howl of loneliness and alarm.

"Do you think the Emperor and Empress themselves could have been any more overjoyed when they found little Constantine unhurt beneath the prophery vase, that this father and mother were in the American backwoods when they found their own little baby safe? Human life, you see, is very much the same, whether men rule empires or chop wood, live in palaces or log huts.

"When the neighbors came, they, of course, had a good laugh over the affair; and if any one laughed, and had right to laugh, it was Edward who had been so lately in a fury of fear and self-reproach, thinking it was his own wicked carelessness that had caused his baby brother's death."

"And what ever became of that baby?" the children wished to know.

Uncle Walter laughed. "O, well, that Mr. and Mrs. Edwards were your own grandfather and grandmother, Edward and Sarah Preston. The Maria of my story is your own mother. And as for the baby,—why, I was that baby myself?"

Chasing Deer with a Steamboat.

The poor English deer have suffered for centuries, hunted by "hawk and hound." It was reserved for men of the Western World to run down the frightened quarry *by water*, and paddle wheels.

On the 4th of July, says the *Portland Oregonian*, as the steamer *Maria Wilkins* was on her way from Freeport to Kalama, she sighted a deer in the river, about a mile below the latter place. When first seen, he was about one-third of the way across, and striking out boldly for the Oregon shore. The steamer was headed off for him with all haste, and there being no fire-arms on board except a small pocket pistol, it was decided to try and capture him alive. A noose was made in a rope, and thrown as the boat approached, but missed the game. The deer turned and made for the Washington Territory side, which was the nearest, but Capt. Huntington turned the little steamer in fire style, and headed him off. The chase now became exciting. A second time the ropes were thrown unsuccessfully, and the deer, though making prodigious efforts to reach the shore, was a third time overhauled. This time both ropes caught on his horns, and after a desperate struggle, he was hauled on board and securely fastened, but one horn was broken off in the struggle. He proved to be a four-year-old buck, and in fine condition.

A breeder of poultry writes: "Every spring I procure a quantity of cedar boughs, and scatter them plentifully in and around the hen house. This is all that is necessary, as the odor of the cedar keeps away lice. This remedy is cheap, simple, and effective, and is well worth trying by all who have hens to care for."