



WHEN SHE WAS NEAR.

My mother's heart was honey,
Her kiss was sweetest balm,
And though the world was full of storm
Her lap was full of calm.
Her arms and breast were filled with rest,
Her smile was full of joy,
And life was dear when she was near
And I a little boy.

The world is full of golden gifts,
And yet my spirit sighs
Between the gracious long-ages
And happy by-and-byes.
I am a-weary of the cares
That fill the lives of men;
I would I were a little child
Within those arms again.

For my mother's heart was honey,
And her kiss was sweetest balm,
And though the world was full of storm
Her lap was full of calm.
Her arms and breast were filled with rest,
Her smile was full of joy,
And life was dear when she was near,
And I a little boy.

—Nixon Waterman.

"Is Life Worth Living?"



ORMAN BROKAW stood at his study window, looking out at the dying day. The western sky was all aglow with a warlike crimson, that, away above his head, softened into a rosy pink. But the Professor was not thinking of the sunset. His finely moulded features wore an expression of weariness and his intellectual blue eyes looked out from under his luxuriant brown curls with a settled melancholy.

He was young—in fact, just twenty-six—but his dress gave him the look of a much older man. His coat did not fit him and his whole attire was careless and old-fashioned.

Behind him stood his desk, from which he had just risen, covered with papers, pencils and ponderous volumes in many languages. In his hand he still held the last sheets of a thesis he had been writing when the sunlight had deserted him. It was entitled, "Is Life Worth Living?" and was designed for a popular magazine that had requested something from his pen. In it he had proved conclusively, quoting freely from classic and German authors, that this life of ours, taken all in all, is decidedly not worth the living.

He felt quite satisfied with his effort. His arguments seemed to him soundly drawn and unanswerable. He read the last sentence over twice with evident approval: "And love, the fairest bubble mortals chase, the soonest bursts and turns to nothing but a vain deceit."

He flattered himself that that was rather well put, and he jotted down some ideas in continuance of the thought, which he would elaborate that evening. That he hastily donned his overcoat, and, as it looked like rain, grasped an umbrella unfashionably large and went out to his dinner, which he took at a cafe near.

He ate his dinner in solitary silence, unheeding the laughter and jests of irrepressible students at tables all about him. They observed him with a respectful stare, for they knew that this young Professor was already famous in the intellectual world and they felt a personal pride in the honorary degrees that other people wrote after his name, although he never did.

They knew that his pamphlet on "Phenomenality of Spirit" had been translated into fourteen different languages and had revolutionized modern thought on that subject.

The Professor sat idly drumming with his fingers on the table, waiting for his dessert. He felt a half pity, half contempt, for people who could laugh foolishly in such an empty world. Strange sentiment for a young man! But Norman Brokaw's life had been a strange one. Early deprived of father and mother, he had been brought up by an uncle, a man divorced from his wife.

Proud of Norman's bright intellect his uncle had lavished money on his education, but the love and cherishing that are the inherent rights of childhood the boy had never known. After graduating and taking a master's degree at Harvard he had gone abroad and spent two years at a German university. His life had been destitute of

social pleasures. He had scarcely known a woman, save the old house-keeper.

His uncle, embittered by his own sad experience, had warned him against the whole sex as foes to man's happiness.

On his return to America he had been tendered a professorship in the large university where he now was. His uncle's death while he was abroad had left him an independent fortune, and now, at twenty-six, rich, famous and in perfect health, he found life only an immense and unnecessary affliction.

He finished his dinner and strode out again into the chill November night, his fine figure and firm tread followed with admiring eyes by would-be aspirants for college athletic honors. His abused muscles pleaded for exercise to-night, and he struck out into a brisk walk down one of the quiet streets. Clouds had been gathering while he was at dinner, and soon big rain drops began to fall. He hurriedly opened his wide spreading umbrella. Just then an exclamation of dismay fell on his ears.

He turned and saw, crossing the street in the full glare of the electric light, a young lady in the prettiest of fall costumes. She had no umbrella and the rain was beating ruthlessly down on her large velvet hat with its mass of waving plumes. As she caught sight of the Professor her face brightened, and with an impulsive bound she stood beside him under the umbrella.

She raised appealingly a face so captivating in its girlish freshness that even the Professor's grave features, shadied by the umbrella, softened into a smile. Long lashes veiled a pair of the loveliest hazel eyes that ever lighted up a veritable rosebud face. Perhaps the features were not quite regular—the nose had a little independent style of its own, but the lips were very red, and the little anburn curls just showing under the wide hat brim completed a tout ensemble that was bewitching.

The Professor suddenly recollected himself and stammered: "Certainly—of course—I shall be very glad."

"Thanks awfully; you're so kind," returned the young lady, walking along beside him. "I did hate to ruin my new dress and hat. I just got them from home yesterday. I'm a university student," she explained, "but I live in New York. I suppose anybody else would have got completely drenched before they'd have asked to share your umbrella without being introduced, but I thought you wouldn't mind. You're sure you don't?"

"Quite sure," said the Professor, laughing. This was rather amusing. Lifting the umbrella a little more over her, he asked, with fatherly patronage: "May I ask what work you are pursuing at the university?"

"I? Oh, I pursue Greek and English and history and French, etc. I'm going to take philosophy next term."

"Under whom?" queried the Professor, with interest.

"Under Professor Brokaw. He's awfully clever, but they say he's just as cranky as he can be."

"Indeed!" was all the astounded Professor could ejaculate.

"Yes; gets himself up like a scarecrow. It's a pity, too, for he'd be real handsome if he only knew it. I watched him in chapel yesterday. He has beautiful eyes, so large and dreamy, and the loveliest hair! But he always looks as if he'd lost his last friend. Perhaps you know him?"

"Slightly," replied the Professor, for the first time in his honorable career stooping to dissimulation.

"They say he hates women," she continued. "He's never had any in his classes, but some of us are going to beard the lion next term. Well, here we are at my house. I'm so much obliged to you. Good night."

And before the Professor could regain his senses she had slipped from under the umbrella and was gone.

Divided between indignation and amusement, the young professor strode home. So that was what people said of him—he was a crank and he hated women. It was a new experience having such things said to him, and he didn't like it. But "his eyes were lovely," were they? He had actually

blushed in the darkness when she said that, and he found it soothing now to his wounded vanity.

Would it be believed that the first thing the learned professor did on reaching his rooms was to walk straight to the mirror over the grate and study himself with all the interest of a freshman? For the first time he noted that his coat was shabby, and a firm resolve shone in his eyes. His hair wasn't bad, perhaps, and his eyes—again the swift color came into his face and with a boyish laugh he turned away from the mirror.

His thesis still lay on his desk.

"I don't feel like that any more to-night," he said, and he thrust it into a small drawer and threw himself into an easy chair to read.

Professor Brokaw had just begun his lecture on the first day of the next term when the door opened and in walked six very demure young ladies, headed by his acquaintance of the rain storm. They seated themselves sedately near the door, unheeding the chairs placed at their disposal by as many gallant young men. Forewarned is forearmed. The Professor merely included them in a general bow of recognition and proceeded with his discourse.

At the close of the hour the students came forward for enrollment. As the Professor took the card from the fair sharer of his umbrella he looked her bravely in the face, wondering if she would recognize him, but she only blushed slightly and dropped her eyes.

"Grace—what is the last name?" he asked, scrawling her name in his book.

"Hamilton," she said, and he thought that a pretty name for such a cruel young woman.

The Professor had apprehended dire and dreadful things from that class in philosophy, but he was, happily, not doomed to experience them. He was a gentleman and he treated the young ladies courteously. That being all they wanted, they smiled on him amiably in return and said he was "quite nice."

There were, nevertheless, not wanting revelations for him. He at first charitably refrained from "quizzing" the young ladies, under the impression that their minds were unadapted to grapple with the abstractions of philosophy. What was his amazement to discover on the first examination, that one of the two candidates for highest marks was a young woman, and that one Grace Hamilton.

He was none the less gratified and the next time he met her he stopped and told her how pleased he was with her work. And he was glad that he had done so when he saw the pretty flush of pleasure it brought to her face.

So interested did the Professor become in this bright pupil of his that he would frequently bring her books from his private library to shed light on dark problems, and he was surprised to find how quickly an hour or two would slip away while he was explaining things to her.

During those winter months the young Professor was passing through some strange phases of life. He was beginning to discover that with all his knowledge some things he had yet to learn.

Not Kant nor Schopenhauer had ever told him what a charming thing a sweet young woman can be, nor had all his mathematics taught him to estimate the face value of a smile. He seemed to be entering into a new world in these latter days. He wondered that he had never noticed before how bright the sun shone and how blue the sky was.

With all this revolution taking place under the Professor's brown curls there had come about a complete metamorphosis in his external appearance. He no longer wore shabby clothes, but walked the streets in the most stylish suits that a city tailor could devise.

He had never, with all his erudition, taken a course in the science of love, and it was long before he could interpret to himself these new sensations of his. When at length it dawned upon him that he was actually in love with Grace Hamilton he was appalled at his audacity.

All this time the weeks were slipping by one by one and at last there

came a bright day in June when the Professor realized that commencement was only two days away. He wandered about aimlessly all day trying to face the misery of not seeing Grace Hamilton all summer. By evening he could endure it no longer. He yielded to the promptings of his heart and turned into the street that led to her house.

He found her alone on the vine-covered side veranda, looking like a picture in a dainty white dress, with a blue fringed scarf thrown over her shoulders.

"I know I am selfish to take up your time in these last days, Miss Hamilton," began the Professor apologetically, "You have so many other friends who have a better claim on you."

"Oh, no, indeed," declared the young lady. "I think dragging me safely through the profundities of philosophy all winter ought to constitute a claim if anything could. We girls were saying to-day we thought you'd been wonderfully good to us."

"You didn't find me as bad as you expected, did you?" said the Professor, smiling.

"Why, we didn't expect—" she began, and then stopped in confusion.

"Oh, yes, pardon me, but you did expect to encounter something terrible when you ventured into Professor Brokaw's class. I had it from your own lips."

"From mine!"

"Yes. Let me tell you something. Do you remember being caught in a rainstorm one night last fall and walking home under a stranger's umbrella? You will recall that you said some very plain and uncomfortable things about Professor Brokaw. Well, do you know who that stranger was?"

Grace Hamilton's face had grown scarlet while he was speaking.

"Oh, Professor Brokaw!" she stammered, penitently. "I was in hopes you'd never know! I knew you when I heard you speak in class, but I thought you didn't know me. It was so dark that night. I've always felt so sorry about it."

"You said I was cranky and that I hated women," he continued, teasingly.

"Please don't!" she begged. "I didn't know you, or I couldn't have said such things. I take them all back."

"But you said I had beautiful eyes. Do you take that back, too?"

She looked up and met something in the beautiful eyes that made her drop her own and blush. The Professor blushed a little, too. Then they both laughed.

"No, I won't take that back," she said audaciously. "They are beautiful."

Something in the downcast, blushing face inspired the Professor with a sudden boldness.

"Grace," he said, impulsively, "I know it's a great deal to ask you, but do you think you could ever come to care enough for your stupid Professor to make his whole life glad for him? Could you ever think of being my wife, Grace?"

The long lashes quivered as they drooped over the hazel eyes, and the little fluttering leaves of the woodbine and the trumpet-creeper near stood still, waiting, with the Professor's heart, for the answer, that came in a low, tremulous voice:

"I might if—you asked me."

Two hours later Professor Brokaw came dashing up the stairs to his rooms, two steps at a time, humming a lively tune. He turned up the gas and began hastily to finish packing the contents of his desk, for he was to leave day after to-morrow. The grate was already filled high with waste papers, to which he added others, and touched a match to them.

Opening one drawer he came across a partly finished manuscript. Looking at the first page he saw that it was that old thesis he had once written on "Is Life Worth Living?" and he sat down on the table and read it through.

He finished and sat looking out into the moonlight for a moment, with a dreamy look in his eyes.

"What a fool I was!" he said, at last, with a happy laugh, and he tossed the thesis into the grate.—Chicago News.

A blanket mortgage furnishes but a poor house-warming.—Puck.

A FROG STICKER.

THE AGILE BATRACHIANS ARE DIFFICULT TO CATCH.

A Talk With One Who Makes a Business of Supplying Brokers and Bankers With Their Favorite Tid-Bit—A Frog's Paradise.

FROG culture in Philadelphia centres in the Neck, that region so fertile in truck farms and piggeries. The low, marshy ground and the shallow ditches which drain the surplus water into the two rivers make it a veritable frog's paradise. These meadows, most of them the property of the Girard and other large estates, are open to any one who may desire to hunt or fish on them. Professional frog-catchers, therefore, ply their trade without fear of molestation.

These men make a regular business of catching frogs. Many of them have made as careful a study of it as a carpenter or other mechanic would of his trade.

The local leader of this queer industry is one George W. White. He has been catching frogs for twenty-nine years. During that time, Sundays excepted, he has not missed a day from his work. Every morning, summer and winter, rain or shine, he may be seen tramping over the meadows with his bag slung across his shoulder and his frog-catching outfit in his hand. He has no other business. That is his trade. He supplies one of the leading game dealers in the city with frogs.

"Do I know anything about frogs?" said White the other day.

"Well, I ought to. I've been catching them long enough. Yes, there are lots of them hereabouts. They are to be found in the 'Neck' principally. I work along the river from Girard Point to Broad street. Frogs are thicker there than anywhere else. I find more in the ditches and marshes bordering the river than on the banks of the river proper. They are not hard to discover in warm weather, but in the winter time they bury themselves between the mud and trash in the bottom of the ponds and ditches and I have to rake around until I strike them.

"There are four varieties of frogs in the country about Philadelphia; the bull-frog, which is the largest, measuring full-grown, eight or ten inches in length; the grass-frog, which is not quite so large; the yellow-throater and the yellow-legger. The bull-frog and yellow-throater are found all the year round, but the grass-frog is caught only in the spring, and the yellow-legger principally in the fall of the year. The medium-sized frogs are the best for eating. The old fellows are not so tender and sweet as the younger ones.

"Some frogs live to be ten or twelve years old. I have caught bull-frogs which I judged to be at least ten years old. They were big ones, too. A frog four or five years of age makes the best eating. Under that they are most too small. Few people know that a frog is a year and a half a tadpole before his tail drops off, and he gets in its stead a set of legs which enable him to jump about on land as well as swim in the water.

There is a general idea that frogs are not clean. That is not so. They live on bugs and insects which they catch in the water, and do not touch filth of any sort. Sometimes they catch a bird in the marshes and make short work of it.

"I have seen a big bull-frog get away with a young duck. He swallowed it feathers, legs and all. Frogs are very strong for their size and have powerful jaws with sharp teeth. Some of the larger ones live on crawfish. During the winter they do not eat, lying in a torpid state. One crawfish will last a frog all winter. Many of them have already eaten a good, hearty meal and gone to the bottom for their winter's sleep. They will lie there until May. The first thunderstorm in May always brings them up again, good and hungry, ready to eat the first bug or insect they get their blinking eye upon.

"Although the frogs are out of sight in winter, I do not stop my work. Early in October I go all over the ground and make note of where they are settling. Then I have comparatively little trouble in getting

them. I use a 'herdy-gerdy,' or combination rake and net on the end of a long pole. The rake is to clear away the rubbish in the bottom of the ditch and at the same sweep the net picks up the frogs, if there are any there. I get more in the winter time than I do in warm weather, because they are in a torpid state and can't get away so fast.

"The catch varies. Some days I get five dozen, others fifteen dozen. I guess I catch on an average ten dozen a day. It is no trouble to sell them. One game dealer takes nearly all I catch. I sell a good many live frogs to students for experimental purposes. I also supply several private families.

"After my morning's catch I sit down in the meadows and clean my frogs. The only implement I use is a pair of big shears. I cut the frog down his breast-bone, beginning at the mouth, and peel his skin off back toward his head. It comes off easily in one piece. Then I string them up in dozens and take them to my customers."

The number of frogs consumed in Philadelphia is enormous. One game dealer alone sells on an average 10,000 dozen a year. His trade is among the hotels, restaurants and many private families.—Philadelphia Times.

not grow very high makes up in length, attaining, according to Rumphius, in some instances a length of 1200 feet. The ordinary cane of commerce attains a length of 500 feet. The bamboo must have been the bean stalk of legend, as it has been known to grow one foot in twenty-four hours in a Glasgow hothouse, and in Chinese jungles it often grows from two to two and a half feet in this time, the greatest increase being observed in the night.

Some of the palms are giants, even their leaves being enormous. A leaf of the Raphia, a Brazilian palm, is seventy feet long and forty in diameter. Another genus, Maximiliana regia, has leaves fifty feet long, while a single leaf of the Talipot palm of Ceylon is used as a tent, sometimes covering fifteen people.

But of all the leaves that strike us as being remarkable, that of the Victoria regia is the most phenomenal. On New Year, 1837, Sir Robert Schomburgk was sailing up the Berbiore River when he discovered the famous lily, with leaves six and a half feet across, with a rim five inches high, bright green above and crimson beneath. Large birds are often seen standing upon them, and one grown in a hothouse served as a raft for a little child.—New Orleans Picayune.

Quaint Welsh Names.

The Welsh have many peculiar names in their nomenclature, or possibly a peculiar way of using names, as in the case of a Welsh storekeeper, who had on his sign the names John Mary Williams. This is a relic of the old custom, when Maria was a name shared by both sexes, as Jean Marie Farina. It appears that a Mr. Williams, a man of position, had in his household a woman servant named Mary, who was known by her master's family name. When the woman married she kept the names by which she was best known, and added to them her husband's Christian name, a bit of diplomacy in the way of trade. Her husband was always alluded to as John Mary Williams. In ancient times the Welsh were known by personal peculiarities, as the American Indians are at the present time. Hook Nose, Black Beard, Crooked Tooth, and Fast Foot being the only cognomens bestowed on them. There is a quaint story told by Barrie of a child named Davy, who makes a brief appearance in one of his novels, and takes much of the interest of the story with her when she goes. For Davy is a girl. And this odd name was an accident at the christening. The minister looked sternly at the father and said: "The child's a boy is it not?" He had already been given a paper with the name written upon it, but when the confused father answered "yes" to the query as to sex, the dominie responded: "Then I cannot christen him Margaret so I will call him David." The mother felt very badly, but she only excuse her husband gave was that he dare not contradict the minister.—Scottish American.

Worms never frequent the succatypus tree, nor the earth to which its roots reach.