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THE LESSON OF LIFE

(Continued.)

The winter brought Bat "up to grade" at the public school, but it also made her even thinner than she had been, robbed her of the fine color which had glowed deep in her cheeks, even in the days of drudgery at the boarding-house, and made her dark eyes so big and soft that they were really astonishing.

One night in mid-June, when Perdue called at the flat, he found its occupants in deep discussion of vacation. He was in great spirits, for, during the day, his employers had told him that upon the first of the month he was to draw a higher salary and step into a much more responsible place in the firm's machine.

From time to time he had written to his married sister, who lived with her husband on the old home farm, about Bat, and her replies had not always been enthusiastic. But after the regime at the flat had started, she had seemed to feel that the teachers would be a safeguard against unhappy consequences, and to regard the situation with less dissatisfaction. Indeed, she had written to Miss Gale at length and often, and received comforting replies, but Perdue did not know this.

That night he carried in his pocket a letter from her containing a most remarkable invitation. This informed him that there was room and to spare at the old farmhouse, and asked him to bring all the people of the flat up to it to spend as much of the summer vacation as they could.

He did not realize it—men do not penetrate such subtleties—but his sister's most impelling purpose, when she had written, had been a great desire to have a glimpse of Bat. All he saw was great good-nature and a desire to help. He told his tale exultantly.

For a while the teachers shied at the idea. They pointed out to him that they had no claim on his sister. "Of course," said one of them, "Bat is your ward, and—"

A soft hand closed her mouth, and Bat leaned over her, blushing furiously. Everybody, Bat included, laughed then; but there was serious talk among the teachers after she had gone to bed that night.

However, the invitation was finally accepted, and for two weeks the five—the three schoolma'ams, Bat and Perdue—disported at the farm. At the beginning of these weeks Perdue once or twice suspected that there was cold speculation, as of appraisal, in his sister's manner when she looked at Bat, but he abandoned this idea.

In fact, Bat quickly won his sister's heart. Perdue, even in the first days at the boarding-house, the days of sliding upon trays, had never seen her appear so wholly like a child as she did there in the country. But—

There came the day before he must go back to the city. Bat and the teachers were to remain another week.

"Bat," said he, "come along and

we'll hunt up that threshing-machine I told you of that night I took you to the theatre. Do you recall that first night I took you to the theatre?"

He laughed. "Yes," said Bat, very slowly and not loudly, "I remember it."

"Well," said he, "come on." The threshing season had not yet begun, and the old machine was stored back of the barns in a rickety shed.

"There it is," said Perdue, and began to explain to her just where the stage imitation had failed in realism. The detail with which he remembered the theatrical performance and its accessories were astonishing. He realized this and spoke of it.

"I don't believe that I can remember with such clearness any other play that I ever saw," he said.

"Really?" said Bat dully. "You're not interested!" he reproached her.

Bat stood silent, with her eyes turned to the ground. He was disappointed. He had thought that the association of the thrasher with that first of their excursions would make it deeply interesting to her. Her silence hurt him vaguely.

"When does your train start in the morning?" she inquired at last.

"Oh, before you or any one about the place will have begun to stir," he said. "I must leave at four o'clock."

"I shall be up," she said, still rather flatly.

"Oh, I wouldn't have you get up at that unearthly hour just to see me off," he protested.

To his amazement, she flared at him.

"It won't be just to see you off!" she said. "I'm always up at four!"

"Why, Bat!" he said, derisively. He had memory of that very morning, when she had come late and sleepy to a tardy breakfast-table.

Judge of his astonishment when she thrust her hands up to a flaming ace and fled from him in the growing dusk! He went back to the house slowly, wondering if the abundant exercise she had had there in the country might not have overtired her. But when, at the house, all chorused inquiries for Bat, he could feel the blood surging to his own cheeks as he told them that he did not know just where she was—that she had run away from him, fleeing in the direction of the orchard.

In the morning when, before sunrise, he went out to harness the old mare to take him to the station—he was to tie her there and she was to be brought home behind another wagon later in the day, as he had absolutely refused to sanction anyone in rising to go with him—Bat appeared, and he was wondrous glad, although, stupidly, he gaped her.

"How did you manage to wake up?" he asked.

"Oh, just," she said.

(To Be Continued.)

"Consumption"

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It has long been known that the balsamic odor of the newly cut pine tree heals and invigorates the lungs and consumptives improve and revive amid the perfume of the pines. Since but few can command the luxury of a visit to the pines, it will be good news to many to know that the essential healing principle of the pine has been separated, and refined, and combined with other absorbent, expectorant and soothing medicines of recognized worth in the manufacture of Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup.

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WAR UPON RATS IN BRITISH COUNTY

London, Nov. 7—England was startled last week by the discovery that a pneumonic plague, even deadlier than the bubonic plague, is established in Suffolk. A child in the village of Freston died on Sept. 16. The mother and father and a neighbor, who had helped nurse the child, all died within a few days. The illness was then diagnosed, but was considered so malignant that even neighbors were isolated in hospitals. There has been no other cases as yet, but a number of hares and rabbits have been found dead all over the countryside. The true nature of the disease was then established. Official notice has been posted calling the public to assist in the destruction of rats, which must not be touched with the naked hand, and also warning everybody not to eat hares or rabbits killed in the district. The introduction of the disease is attributed to plague infected rats from Odessa grain vessels. The local government board has sent inspectors to organize the local authorities in a campaign for the total extermination of rats in the peninsula of Suffolk, which is enclosed by the Rivers Orwell and Stour. An army of professional rat-catchers from all parts of the country has been engaged, while the villagers are busy with guns and traps and poison. Thousands of rats are killed daily, while hundreds are being found dead of the plague. The authorities are determined upon the complete extinction of rats in the district. The land owners are burying all the hares and rabbits shot on their estates, which the people everywhere refuse to eat. The panic has grown to such an extent that even pheasants, partridges and grouse shot in the neighborhood are refused as gifts. The pneumonic plague is the most infectious and most fatal of all types of disease. It corresponds with the black death, which from 1348 to 1369 desolated the world from China to Ireland, destroying one-third of the whole population of England.

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