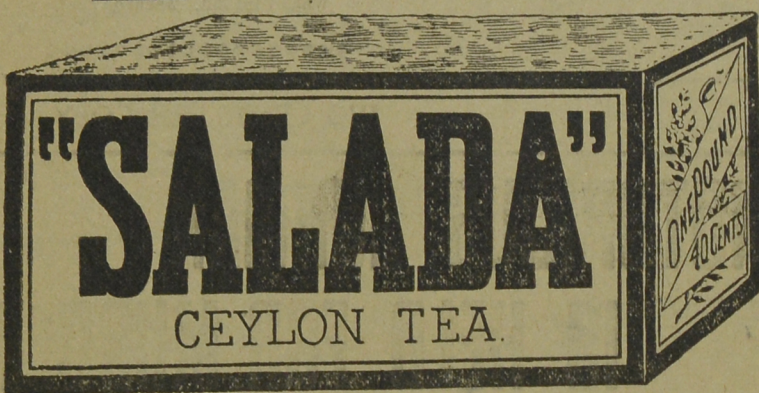


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## GIRL BORROWED \$1000 IN SMALL SUMS FROM EMPLOYER

New York, July 10.—Catherine Van Houten, a bookkeeper, accused of embezzling \$1,500 from her employer, Samuel Bloomfield, of 200 Wooster street, was released in \$2,500 bail yesterday, after being in the Tombs since Wednesday. The bail was furnished by E. E. Olcott, president of the Hudson River Day Line, whose sympathies were aroused by the young woman's story that she stole to provide food and medicine for her mother, 82 years old, with whom she lives in Hackensack (N. J.).

Many other wealthy persons in this city and Hackensack are eager to help the woman in every possible way. It is believed that when she is arraigned before Judge Swann, in general sessions tomorrow something will have been done to recompense Miss Van Houten's employer, and if she pleads guilty that she will be released on suspended sentence.

"I don't know how to thank you," she said, with tears in her eyes, to Mr. Olcott, after bail had been arranged.

"I don't want any thanks," he told her, "I did it only because of my feeling toward you and your invalid mother."

Then he hurried the woman on her way to comfort her aged mother, who has been asking repeatedly for her daughter ever since Wednesday. No

one dared to tell the aged woman of her daughter's plight for it was feared that Mrs. Van Houten might die from the shock.

When Mr. Olcott was asked what had caused him to be interested in the young woman's case he said:

"I never should have known about the case had it not been for the newspapers. My attention was further called to the matter by my friend, John Wood, of the general board of Episcopal church. I made inquiries in Hackensack and found that everything Miss Van Houten did in Hackensack was exemplary. The Rev. Harris Freer, pastor of the North Hackensack Reformed church, spoke highly of her. She belongs to an old and respected family. Her mother owns property in Hackensack and both Mrs. Van Houten and her daughter were getting along nicely until Miss Van Houten's two brothers died about ten years ago.

"Since then Miss Van Houten has been obliged to work for a living. She went to work for a cloak manufacturer, earning \$12 a week at first and being raised finally to \$13. Assessments began to pile up against her mother's property. The young woman was struggling against awful odds. She succumbed to the temptation and began paddling her employer's payroll.

"Her mother's property is covered with mortgages. She knew her mother needed medicine, the care of a nurse and plenty of food. The mother was stricken with paralysis two years ago.

Miss Van Houten kept hoping that the property would be sold and she could repay the money she took. It was the old story of not meaning to steal."

### MADE A PATHETIC FIGURE

It is estimated that Miss Van Houten took from \$1,000 to \$1500 in all, in the course of two years. As she came to see her visitor in the prison waiting room, she was a pathetic figure. Tall, thin, with a face lined and wrinkled, though she is only thirty-eight years old; her eyes red from crying, neatly dressed in a dark blue skirt and white shirtwaist, no one would have taken her for a self-confessed thief or for a woman who was trying to work up sympathy with a sad story about an aged mother. There was nothing of the pouter or the sensationalist about Miss Van Houten. She was plainly just what she said she was, a woman who had been working since she was ten years old, when her two brothers died, in quick succession, from consumption, leaving their sister to support her mother.

For a while she was employed at \$18 a week by a baking-powder company at 15 Reade street, but when the firm went out of business, she had to get work again quickly, so she took a place at \$12 a week with Blumenfeld.

"I kept thinking I'd get more," she said. "And he did give me a raise of one dollar last January, after I had been with him two years. The girl who was there before me got \$15 and I did more work than she. I worked as hard as I could every day, all day long, and had a very responsible position. My employer seldom interfered with my part of the work. If he found some one he thought would take the responsibility he'd let them, and he thought I was all right so he let me alone."

"I was kind of afraid of what I was doing when I realized that the sums I was borrowing from week to week in ten-dollar amounts were mounting up but I thought I could pay it back in time. I thought we could sell the place perhaps, and I could pay it all up."

Last Monday Mr. Blumenfeld came to me and said that he thought the payroll was rather large considering the number of employees, and asked me where all the money was going. There wasn't any use in trying to lie about it, so I just told him I was borrowing ten dollars a week. He didn't show any surprise. He didn't even seem provoked, but told me to go on with my work. Later he came around and told me that it was all right, and that I could pay him back three dollars a week out of my salary.

I worked all that day.

### WHEN THE DETECTIVE CAME.

"When I'd got all my work done, he came in with a detective and had me arrested. I didn't even get my week's salary, but had to come away as I was without a cent."

Miss Van Houten has always lived in Hackensack. Her people belong to an old New Jersey family, and she is a member of the North Hackensack Reformed church.

"I have sung in the choir there for twelve years," she said, "but for the 'I have sung' in the choir there for last two years I haven't gone to church very often. It didn't seem as though I could. I knew I was doing something that none of the church people would approve of even if it was for the sake of my mother. The preaching and my taking money from my employer didn't go very well together somehow, and so I stayed away."

In speaking of the report that she had money in the bank, Miss Van Houten says:

"I used to put it in every week and then pay all my bills by check, so as to save my mother the bother and

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worry. I never had much in the bank at one time and the only reason I was allowed to have an account there was because they all knew me and did it to accommodate me. It didn't pay them to have me for a depositor. I had five dollars and my employer the same amount, and I saved ten dollars and put it all in the bank, but that was about the most I ever had there at once.

"Do you want to see a picture of my mother?" she asked, and then went upstairs and brought back a snapshot of an old lady in a black dress. It was a picture of a white-haired mother, with spectacles, seated in a rocking chair on the lawn with her daughter and a niece standing beside her.

"I don't look like a—hardened thief, do I?" asked the daughter, and then for the first time she began to cry.

"It's all so hard," she said. "I've been working over twenty years, and given up everything to keep our home and take care of my mother, and I've been almost worried to death, and now it's come to this. I don't care what happens to me, but I do hope our friend will take care of my mother. It will kill her I think, when she finds out I'm in jail."



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### A Humble Joker

The husband of a great lady author, himself a nonentity, entered his wife's study while she was out, and glanced over the manuscript upon her writing desk.

He read the sentence, "She swept the room with a bright, fresh glance, and, taking up a pencil, he wrote on the margin of the page, 'If she would only sweep the room with a bright fresh broom!'"

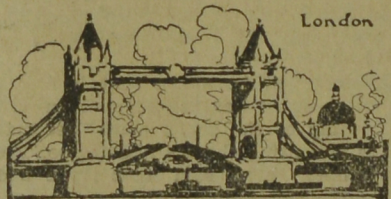
Reading on, he came to, "She touched a button and a footman appeared." His marginal note to this was: "Alas! She will never touch a button!"

And now he came upon the sentence, "She decided to mend her ways." And again he wrote, "Hopeless! She'll never mend anything."

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