

### Her Too Kind Friend

"What a beautiful sable scarf!" said one of Elsie Baker's friends. "Did you get it in Europe or did Santa Claus bring it to you?"

"I got it in quite a different way from either of those you suggest," said the owner of the scarf.

"It is a perfect beauty," declared the appreciative friend.

"I only wish," said Elsie, sadly, "that it wasn't so elegant. There is a story that goes with the scarf."

"You know I had been saving my money for ages for a European trip and the last of September, the manager of our office gave me an eight-weeks' leave of absence. Well, I gayly left Chicago one chilly evening. You have no idea, Bess, how often I've regretted that evening wasn't warm. If it had been I should have been saved a world of worry and expense.

"My one wealthy friend, Mrs. Barclay, was among those who came to the station to see me off. She wore a beautiful fur scarf. It was so pretty and becoming that I admired it openly. To my great surprise, she removed it from her own neck and threw it around mine.

"You must take it, Elsie," she said. "It will be just the thing on the ship."

"Of course, I protested, but she insisted that I would need it. She simply wouldn't allow me to decline it, and I could only accept her kindness gratefully.

"By the time I arrived in New York there was a decided change in the weather. The morning I went down to the steamer it was so warm that I couldn't even wear my serge traveling coat. In my excitement over the new scenes about me I went to the ship very early and had the fun of watching the other passengers come aboard. It wasn't until a delicate old woman, wrapped in furs, came up the gang-plank that I thought of the sable scarf. Then I realized with sickening clearness that I had left it in my room in the hotel!

"I rushed to the first man I saw who had brass buttons and asked how long it would be before we should sail. He said we'd go in about an hour. I flew down the gang-plank and called wildly to a taxi chauffeur who was just leaving after bringing a party to the boat. I told him that if he would take me to the hotel and back in three-quarters of an hour I'd give him two dollars in addition to the regular fare. He whirled me away and, to my great relief, I recovered the scarf.

"We got back to the ship in less than 45 minutes—and then we didn't sail until night!

"Think of all the money I had wasted on that unnecessary cab! But that was just the beginning of a long series of mishaps with that ill-fated scarf.

"I wore it on top of a bus in London and a portly man, forcing his way by me to take his seat, brushed it off my shoulders and it fell to the pavement. I stopped the bus and, descending hastily to the street, caught my skirt and tore the braid off and tripped myself in it as I started to run back half a block to get the scarf. A big London bobby helped me to my feet and picked up the fur. Then he sternly told me to be more careful, meanwhile staring at me quite suspiciously.

"Things like that were always happening to me throughout the trip. Every recollection I have of my travels is fraught with some trying experience with that scarf. But the grand finale was on the voyage home.

"One frightfully windy day the scarf was blown off my steamer chair, where I had left it while taking my morning walk. The last I saw of it the horrid thing was sliding down the steep incline of the deck under the rail into the ocean!"

"Couldn't you catch it?"

"I tried to, frantically, but the sea was so rough that I couldn't run. There was no one near to rescue the fur, so it was lost at sea.

"The first thing I did after I got home was to borrow money to buy another scarf for Mrs. Barclay. I don't mind telling you that in consequence I shall be financially embarrassed for some time.

"I got a sable scarf as near like the other as possible, paying a slightly reduced price with the condition that the purchase was not to be returned or exchanged under any circumstances. Then I went to see Mrs. Barclay.

"As I started to give her the scarf she said: 'Why, Elsie, my dear child, that scarf is yours, not mine. Didn't you understand that I meant you to keep it as a gift from me?'

"Really, Bess, it was hard for me to look properly grateful. In fact, it was all I could do to keep from saying bitterly: 'Why didn't you tell me so in the first place?'

"I don't wonder that you were angry," said the sympathetic friend.

### LUCILE'S DIARY

When I learned last week that Miss Van Rensselaer of New York was visiting Mary Townsend I decided to give a bridge luncheon in her honor.

"We needn't have a caterer," I said to mother, who, as usual, objected on the score of expense, to my entertaining. "I wish to have just a quiet, informal little affair and I really think that Cousin Fannie's delicious cooking is more elegant than anything we could get from a caterer."

"But Fannie intended going out to your Uncle John's this week," protested mother. "I suppose I could get up the lunch myself."

"Indeed, you couldn't," I replied. "I want you to be dressed in your gray satin and help me receive and entertain the guests, as good form dictates that a mother should. Cousin Fannie won't in the least mind postponing her visit to the farm. She wouldn't be so selfish as to go when we need her so much at home, would you, dear Cousin Fannie?" I asked, as she entered the room where mother and I were talking.

Although mother protested that she must not change her plans for us, Cousin Fannie, after I had told her how much I disliked having mother cook—for it always makes her so unbearably hot and flustered—said she would give up her trip to Uncle John's place for the present.

I really felt that I had done her a good turn by inducing her to stay at home, for it must be dreary in the country now.

As soon as I had set the day for the party and had telephoned my invitations I went out to Frances Marsden's, for in looking over the linen for the luncheon a happy idea had occurred to me.

"I happen to remember," I said to Frances, "that you have some handsome napkins, which match our tulip pattern tablecloth. I wonder if you will lend them to me for a little bridge luncheon I am going to give for Miss Van Rensselaer."

"Oh, are you going to entertain for her?" asked Frances. "Of course, you may take the napkins. I'll be glad to help you in any way I can. I shall be so pleased to meet Miss Van Rensselaer, for I've heard she is most interesting."

I can't understand why Frances should have been so gauche as to assume that she was to be invited. It was very awkward for me to have to explain that I was asking only girls. Her manner of staring at me in cold surprise did not make it any easier for me.

"But, dear," I said, in conclusion, "if any one of the girls can't come I'll make an exception and have you, even if you are married."

"That's remarkably kind of you, Lucille," she answered, "but now that I think of it I'm quite certain I shall be engaged on the day of your luncheon. Here are the napkins. I'm sure that I don't have to tell you that I am very choice of my best linen, which was part of my wedding outfit."

"I shall take the pleasant care of them," I rejoined, pleasantly, though I did think it rather unmannerly of her to remind me to be careful of things that I borrowed. Poor Frances is occasionally crude in some of the little things of life that really count so much.

"Lucille," remonstrated mother when I showed her the napkins, "why did you get these? Ours are good enough, even if they don't match the cloth, and I'm sure that Tilly can never from these to suit Mrs. Marsden, who is very fastidious."

"Now, mother, please don't borrow trouble about that, for I shall take all the responsibility," I said, in the gentle, reassuring tone that I am cultivating.

"Surely you don't think you can iron them yourself," said mother.

"Just leave the matter to me," I smiled in answer.

The morning after the luncheon, which was completely successful, I sent the napkins to a steam laundry with father's shirts and collars. When they came back Saturday I took them right over to Frances, who untied the package at once.

"Why, Lucille, what's this?" she asked, in a horrified tone. "They have ink marks on them!"

I was much surprised to see father's three initials printed in indelible ink on each napkin.

"Oh, dear!" I said. "How absurd of those laundry people! I never thought of their doing such a thing. How very annoying!"

"Annoying! I should say it is annoying," snapped Frances, fairly glaring at me over the napkins.

She appeared so frightfully upset that I thought she would be better alone, so I quickly took my leave. She scarcely looked up as I said good-by.

What a mistake it is for people to make such tragedies of the small mishaps of life! I think it indicates a narrow nature. It certainly shows a sad lack of poise.

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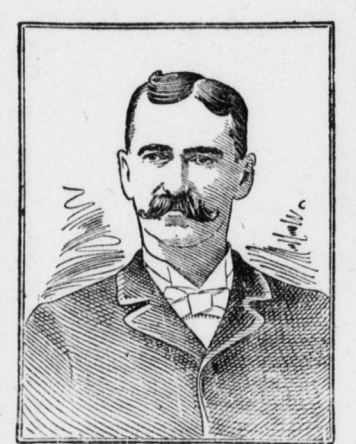
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