

A Catspaw

It was generally understood in Bungtown that Squire Coram's daughter, Betty, was tabooed. Not only "hands off" was her father's order to the young men who coveted her, but tongues off, and even eyes off. She was not to be touched, or talked to, or even looked at, and woe to the daring youth who ventured to transgress the squire's command.

No wonder the young men of Bungtown coveted Betty Coram. Not only was she very pretty, but she was reputed to be amiable and intelligent, and was an heiress.

Among those who went wild after Betty Coram was Excelsior Podd, the only son of Philetus Podd, editor of the Bungtown Banner. Excelsior had been so called because the elder Podd felt a prophetic impulse that his son would rise higher in the world than any one else.

"Why not?" said Philetus Podd. If the boy should inherit his father's intellectual powers, and those powers should be developed under the sagacious instructions of that father, there would be no limit to his capacity for rising in the world. It was well, therefore, that he was named Excelsior.

As yet, however, Excelsior Podd had shown no remarkable appreciation of the exalted destiny that awaited him. He had just advanced beyond the position of "devil" in his father's printing office, and had been promoted to the dignity of a "case."

He was chiefly noted for being an overgrown, gawky youth of nineteen, who had "no more sense than the law allows," and was often the butt of the village wits.

But Excelsior had no knowledge of his deficiencies, his opinion of himself being reflected from that of his father, who looked upon his offspring with admiring eyes. As his bump of self-esteem was well-developed, he did not consider that he was at all presumptuous in aspiring to the hand of sweet Betty Coram, or in believing that he might succeed where so many had failed.

His disadvantages, of course, were the same as those which the other young men labored under, but he showed considerable ingenuity in overcoming the principal obstacle. He invented all sorts of pretexts for gaining admission to Squire Coram's house and for obtaining interviews with the lovely Betty. In these efforts he was often successful, the more so, perhaps, because the squire did not believe that his daughter could be in the least endangered by the presence of Excelsior Podd.

Excelsior thought otherwise. He believed himself to be a lady-killer, and was sure that Betty Coram had fallen before his invincible onset. The truth is that Betty was kept so secluded that the visits of even Excelsior Podd were a relief to her, and she did not try to conceal her pleasure at the sight of a young man.

This particular young man was sure that he had made a conquest, and his assurance was rendered doubly sure when George Deering, the son of the postmaster, brought him a note, directed in a delicate feminine hand.

"You are in luck, Excel," said Deering. "Here is a note for you from Betty Coram."

"Creation, George! how did you get hold of it?"

"Easy enough. She came to the office this morning with the squire, and managed to slip this into my hand. I supposed it was for myself, and was right mad when I saw that it was for you. I don't know how it is, old fellow, that you have got so far ahead of all the rest of us, and I can't help envying your good fortune."

Excelsior eagerly grasped the note and went off to read it by himself. It was in these words:

"My Dear Friend, Excelsior Podd: I have noticed your looks, and believe that you love me. If you do, now is the time to prove it. I can no longer endure my father's tyranny, and am anxious to leave home. If you are willing to take me out of here, I will trust you to do so. Come to-night, at 11 o'clock. The dog is chained, and there is no one to fear but father, and I am sure that you are smart enough to keep out of his way. Do not fail me, and I am—Yours ever, BETTY."

Excelsior was in ecstasies, he hardly knew whether he stood upon his head or his feet. Here was the beauty of the village, the heiress of Bungtown, actually proposing an elopement, and with him! Of course he would seize the opportunity. There could be no question of that. He would jump at the chance.

During the rest of the day he was in such a state of excitement and distraction that he was unable to attend to his duties at the printing office. At night he arrayed himself in his best, stole out of the house, and directed his steps toward Squire Coram's mansion.

Although Betty had not given him any directions, he knew what to do. He knew where her room was, and where he must get over the fence, in order to take the nearest route to her window, and that was the point he desired to reach.

Then he began his progress toward the house, moving slowly and cautiously, peering through the darkness in every direction at every step, to guard against discovery, or to make his escape in time.

When he was half way across the lawn, he was startled by the deep-voiced barking of Squire Coram's bulldog. Excelsior felt a sudden sinking at the heart, as bark after bark issued

from the throat of that formidable animal; but he recovered his courage when he remembered Betty's assurance that old Towser was chained.

The only fear was that the dog would alarm the house, and that fear was soon realized. The voice of Squire Coram was heard, speaking to the dog, and it was apparent that he was about to issue from the house with the intention of searching the grounds.

Excelsior was equal to this emergency. He ran to the garden fence, jumped over it, and hid in the currant bushes. But he was oppressed by a terrible fear.

"Suppose the squire turns the dog loose!"

But the squire did nothing of the kind. He looked about the lawn a little, muttering that old Towser had been barking at some cat or stray dog, addressed some words of reproof to the animal, and returned to the house.

"Faint heart never won fair lady," thought Excelsior, as he prepared to jump over the garden fence and renew his attempt.

The night was very dark, and he did not try to find the precise spot at which he had previously climbed the fence. The result was, that when he leaped over he found himself standing in something soft and sticky, that slushed up about his legs very unpleasantly.

He felt it, and discovered, to his infinite disgust, that he was standing in a pot of soft soap, which had been made during the day and left out to cool.

This was very mortifying, and it left his clothes in an unpleasant predicament, although he rubbed off as much of the greasy mixture as he could.

"Never mind," he thought; "if she loves me, as I am sure she does, she won't care about the soap."

Again he worked his way toward the house. To his great delight, the dog was now quiet, his master's reproof having had the effect of restraining him from barking.

There was a light burning in Betty's window, and toward it, as the guiding star of his hope, Excelsior directed his steps. But, just as he came beneath the window, it was extinguished.

While he wondered at this, a side door opened, and Betty herself appeared before him. She was attired in a traveling dress, and carried a shawl and a reticule. She was evidently prepared to elope, and the young man's happiness was complete.

"My brave Excelsior!" she exclaimed. "My noble Podd! How shall I ever thank you for this? But what is the matter with your shoes? They sound so queer."

"The fact is," stammered the young man, "that I got into a pot of soft soap out here."

"Have you endured that for me? What a splendid fellow you are! I am ready. Let us hurry. But let me first speak to the dog. I was so afraid that father would find you, or that he would turn Towser's loose."

Betty stepped lightly to the bulldog's kennel, petted him on the head, and spoke kindly to him, and then returned to the young man.

"Can you get me over the tall fence?" she asked.

"Yes; I put a step-ladder there."

"Let us make haste, then."

They reached the fence speedily, and without difficulty. Excelsior went over first; then Betty climbed the step-ladder, and jumped off, and he received her in his arms. Blessed privilege! Glorious possession! The beauty and the heiress of Bungtown was now all his own, his own forever! He even forgot the soap in his shoes.

He was beginning what he intended to be a very pretty speech, expressive of his love and devotion, when Betty interrupted him.

"There is no time to speak of that now," she said. "I am safe, and will be far from here when father awakes; but there is no time to lose!"

"Where shall we go to, Betty?"

"I will show you. It's all arranged. Come with me."

She led him through the grove to the road, where a horse and buggy were standing. At the horse's head was a man, whom Excelsior presently recognized, to his great surprise, as George Deering.

Why, George, what on earth are you doing here?" he asked.

"I knew what was going on," replied Deering, "and brought a buggy to help the young lady off. I always stand by my friends, especially when they stand by me. Have the kindness to assist Miss Betty into that vehicle, my dear Podd; and soon everything will be lovely."

Excelsior did as he was requested to do, and was about to follow the young lady into the buggy, when Deering halted him.

"Wait a moment, my dear fellow," said the latter. "We must consult the safety of Miss Betty. No one but myself can manage this horse, and I must get in first."

Excelsior stood aside while the other got in and seated himself by the side of Betty. Deering then whipped up the horse, went ahead a short distance, stopped, and looked back.

"Farewell, my dear Excelsior," he said. "You are the best Podd that ever grew on a beanstalk. Whenever any of my friends want their chestnuts pulled out of the fire, I will be sure to recommend you."

In a few moments the buggy was out of sight.

"I swear to gracious!" exclaimed Excelsior; "I've a great mind to go and tell the squire."

But he didn't. He went home, cleaned the soap off his clothes, and held his tongue.—EDWARD WILLET.

Mercantile Appraisal.

The vendors of domestic and foreign merchandise etc. in Sullivan county, Pa. will take notice that they are appraised and valued by the undersigned Appraiser of Mercantile and other business for the year 1912, as follows, to wit:

Bernice Store Co., Cherry Twp., Retail Merc.	do	do	do
Boil Peter	do	do	do
Baldwin, J. H.	do	do	do
Conner, J. J.	do	do	do
Daley, John	do	do	do
Deer, John	do	do	do
Edgel sandor	do	do	do
Finan Francis	do	do	do
Grossberg Simon	do	do	do
Gross John	do	do	do
Gatta, Lewis	do	do	do
Gratley, W. C. & Lewis	do	do	do
Hymen, Bro.	do	do	do
Hyman, B. H.	do	do	do
Heigman, Joseph	do	do	do
Hope, C. P.	do	do	do
Hood Mrs. Paul	do	do	do
Hartzig, Harry B.	do	do	do
Leverton, L. E.	do	do	do
Lowry, Lawrence	do	do	do
Meyer, Frank	do	do	do
McGee, Patrick	do	do	do
Pauch Samuel	do	do	do
Peyser, Fred	do	do	do
Ramsay Robert	do	do	do
Ramsay, James	do	do	do
Schmidt, H. J.	do	do	do
Sick, Francis	do	do	do
Sammons Geo I.	do	do	do
Sick, C. S.	do	do	do
Sick, Joseph	do	do	do
Toutley John W.	do	do	do
White, John F.	do	do	do
Whitkin, Joseph & Son	do	do	do
Easting House	do	do	do
Kennedy Jim. E.	do	do	do
Colley	do	do	do
Bark Wm.	do	do	do
Collins P. J.	do	do	do
Duffenbach Wm. F.	do	do	do
Dyer, A. H.	do	do	do
Fulmer & Heverley	do	do	do
Hrubenak Joseph	do	do	do
Halabuk, Steve	do	do	do
Hartman, Ike	do	do	do
Johnson, W. L.	do	do	do
Johnson C. A.	do	do	do
Kellogg, H. M.	do	do	do
Leyfer, Fred	do	do	do
Lopez Drug Co.	do	do	do
Lozoff, C. A.	do	do	do
Lozoff, F. P.	do	do	do
Martin, Irvin	do	do	do
Pealer, D. W.	do	do	do
Pealer, E. B.	do	do	do
Rouse, A.	do	do	do
Rohe L.	do	do	do
Shindak, John	do	do	do
Shindak, Alex.	do	do	do
Simon Abe	do	do	do
Sulich, Mike	do	do	do
Weinstein Jacob	do	do	do
Yarish Simon	do	do	do
Davidson	do	do	do
Buck Art. John	do	do	do
Boudman, Smith	do	do	do
Basky, Harry	do	do	do
Bist, Nora	do	do	do
Houcknecht, B.	do	do	do
Lorch Miss Ida	do	do	do
Meyer, James	do	do	do
Moran, J. W.	do	do	do
Miller, J. P.	do	do	do
Magargel, Frank	do	do	do
Meyers, Fred	do	do	do
Phillips, Henry	do	do	do
Shore Mrs. Forbes	do	do	do
Starr, Clara	do	do	do
Taylor Bros.	do	do	do
Whitton, Jacob	do	do	do
Watson, John	do	do	do
Dushore	do	do	do
Connor Margaret	do	do	do
Cunningham, James	do	do	do
Connor, F.	do	do	do
Croft, Chas.	do	do	do
Crimmins, J. H.	do	do	do
Carroll, D. E.	do	do	do
Carroll, T. W.	do	do	do
Cole, Saml.	do	do	do
Duffenbach, W. H.	do	do	do
Deegan, Geo. T.	do	do	do
Farrall, F. H.	do	do	do
Finan, J.	do	do	do
Fulmer & Heverley	do	do	do
Grace, P. E.	do	do	do
Hamer, John	do	do	do
Hilman, John Jr.	do	do	do
Hutton Harold H.	do	do	do
Hoffman F.	do	do	do
Hoffa, A. W.	do	do	do
Hoffa, J. S. & Co.	do	do	do
Hammont O. M.	do	do	do
Harrington, J. S.	do	do	do
Holmont V.	do	do	do
Kraus, Wm. H.	do	do	do
Kline, Bernard	do	do	do
Kschiba, W. R.	do	do	do
Keefe, Den.	do	do	do
Lusch, Frank	do	do	do
Moser, Willis	do	do	do
Meyer, Raul	do	do	do
North, P. W.	do	do	do
Messersmith G. H.	do	do	do
Olbert, H.	do	do	do
Pealer, Chas.	do	do	do
Reeser, J. D.	do	do	do
Rittenburg, Mrs. Bernice	do	do	do
Sylvan, G. W.	do	do	do
Saxer, B. F.	do	do	do
Stasford Geo. W.	do	do	do
Tubach A. J.	do	do	do
Williams, C. M.	do	do	do
Wagner, Winifred M.	do	do	do
Yonkin, J. H.	do	do	do
Orange Boy	do	do	do
Driesbaugh Miss	do	do	do
Kriener, Daniel & Son Eagles Merc.	do	do	do
Bloom & Foshage	do	do	do
Laird, Wm. L.	do	do	do
Farminger William	do	do	do
Speight, Estelle	do	do	do
Shogry Regina	do	do	do
Taylor, W. I.	do	do	do
Hartung August	do	do	do
Bedford U. G.	do	do	do
Hugo, Geo.	do	do	do
Hart, William	do	do	do
Jennings, E.	do	do	do
Jennings, C. B.	do	do	do
Kay, Albert	do	do	do
Mulnix, A. T.	do	do	do
Snyder, J. L.	do	do	do
Norton Powell	do	do	do
Acker & Wozick	do	do	do
Fawcett B. W.	do	do	do
Calking, Wm.	do	do	do
Randall W. J.	do	do	do
Kogers and Sons	do	do	do
Campbell, A. E.	do	do	do
Ayers Charles J.	do	do	do
Casman, C.	do	do	do
Bedford, Mrs. Joe	do	do	do
Fanning, W. H.	do	do	do
Hill, E. W.	do	do	do
Kilmer A. B.	do	do	do
Kilmer C. A.	do	do	do
Raub Mrs. C. E.	do	do	do
Williams, O. J.	do	do	do
Hillsgrove	do	do	do
Galough, S. T.	do	do	do
Hoffman, C. M.	do	do	do
Tompkins Thos S.	do	do	do
Flester, G. M.	do	do	do
Northmont Supply Co.	do	do	do
Snyder, W. B.	do	do	do
McFarlane, Jas.	do	do	do
Buschhausen A. H.	do	do	do
Bahl Julius	do	do	do
Crosley F. M.	do	do	do
Carpenter Joseph	do	do	do
F. H. Farrell	do	do	do
Kraus, Henry	do	do	do
Hansen, John Jr.	do	do	do
Loeb, William	do	do	do
Smyth, John L.	do	do	do
Rocks, Wolf	do	do	do
Stackhouse, J. H.	do	do	do
Atlantic Refining Co. Dushore, wholesale Merc.	do	do	do
George W. Snyder Forksville	do	do	do
Kiess, E. R.	do	do	do
" "	do	do	do
" "	do	do	do
" "	do	do	do
Censuskey Frank	do	do	do
Hymen, B. B.	do	do	do
White, John F.	do	do	do
White, John F.	do	do	do
Carpenter, C. D.	do	do	do
Leyfer Fred	do	do	do
Bahl Julius P.	do	do	do

REPORT OF THE CONDITION OF First National Bank of Laporte,

at Laporte, in the State of Pennsylvania at the close of business Feb. 20, 1912.

RESOURCES.	
Loans and discounts	45,777 11
Overdrafts, secured and unsecured	11 17
U. S. Bonds to secure circulation	29,000 00
Premiums on U. S. Bonds	292 82
Bonds, securities, etc.	970 00
Banking house, furniture and fixtures	8,418 46
Due from National Banks (not reserve agents)	
Due from approved reserve agents	3,471 29
Checks and other Cash Items	191 33
Notes of other National Banks	1,985 00
Fractional paper currency, nickels and cents	103 14
LAWFUL MONEY RESERVE IN BANK, VIZ:	
Specie	\$4,636 15
Legal-tender notes	1,635 00
Redemption fund with U. S. Treasurer (5 per cent of circulation)	1,250 00
Total	\$93,831 27
LIABILITIES.	
Capital stock paid in	\$25,000 00
Surplus Fund	2,500 00
Undivided profits, less expenses and taxes paid	278 08
National bank notes outstanding	24,300 00
Due to other National Banks	252 33
Individual deposits subject to check	25,215 31
Demand certificates of deposit	16,276 31
Certified checks	
Cashier's checks outstanding	9 21
Total	\$93,831 27

State of Pennsylvania, County of Sullivan, ss: I, Edward Ladley, Cashier of the above named bank, do solemnly affirm that the above statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

EDWARD LADLEY, Cashier.

Subscribed and affirmed before me this 26th day of February 1912.

ALBERT F. HEISS, Prothonotary.

CORRECT ATTEST:

A. H. BUSCHHAUSEN,
E. J. MULLEN,
F. W. MEYLER
Directors.

The price of the News Item is 75 cents per year. Subscribe NOW.

Leap Year Poetry.

A number of girls have suggested that we published something about leap year so we have composed the following something:

Tell us not in idle jingle "marriage is an empty dream" for the girl is dead that's single, and things are not what they seem. Life is real, life is earnest, single blessedness a fit; "Man thou art, to man returneth," has been spoken of the rib. Not enjoyment and not sorrow is our destined end or way, but to act that each tomorrow finds us nearer marriage day. Life is long and youth is fleeting, and our hearts, though light and gay, still like pleasant drums are beating wedding marches all the day. In the world's broad fields of battle, in the bivouac of life, be not like dumb driven cattle--be a heroine--a wife! Trust no future, however pleasant; let the dead past bury its dead; act--act in the living present present, heart within and hope ahead. Lives of married folks remind us we can live our lives as well, and, departing leave behind us such examples as shall "tell"--such examples that another, wasting time in idle sport, a forlorn, unmarried brother, seeing, shall take heart and court. Let us then be up and doing, with a heart on triumph set; still contriving, still pursuing, and each one a husband get.

John Gumble of this place is a candidate for delegate to the Republican State Convention. Mr. Gumble says that if elected he will support Theodore Roosevelt for president.

WAWERLY OIL

Waverly--the best petroleum products made--all made from high grade Pennsylvania Crude Oil.

Gasolines, illuminating oils, lubricating oils and paraffine wax for all purposes.

100 Page Booklet Free--tells all about oil.

Waverly Oil Works Co. Independent Refiners PITTSBURG, PA.

Executors Notice.

In Re: Estate of A. C. Little, Deceased. Letters Testamentary on the Estate of A. C. Little, Late of Eagles Mere Borough, Deceased, having this day been granted to the undersigned, by the Register of Wills of Sullivan County, notice is hereby given to all persons indebted to said estate to make payment, and all persons having claims to present them, duly authenticated, for settlement, to,

FRANKS, LITTLE, Executor, Eagles Mere, Penn'a., February 29, 1912.

Roll Call.

Bernice and Mildred	Absent
Sonestown	Present
Muncy Valley	Absent
Ricketts	Absent
Northmont	Absent
Forksville	Absent
Hillsgrove	Absent
Eagles Mere	Absent

Remember