

The Bisque Token

By JOHN ERIC VIRGINI
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The long sand beach seemed to be deserted—not a single soul in view. Suddenly from the gray timbers of a wrecked vessel's stern rose Dickie Boy's head.

Half kneeling in his worn and scanty garments, he rested a hand on the jagged edge of a beam and, craning his neck, looked up and down the beach.

For a second he knelt there, facing the gleaming sea. The sun was in the west, but it was still bright. It was early yet, and the sun was a bit nearer sunset time. He hastily dived into one of his pockets and from the tangle that crammed it extracted three marbles, a fishhook and his dearly bought treasure.

The salesgirl had wrapped it daintily for him with narrow white ribbon, and he held it reverently, almost reverently, in both brown little hands.

"Jiminy, I'm glad I've got something to give her before she goes away—something to remember me by."

For a quarter hour more the sun marched toward the western horizon, and then she came. But, alas, she was not alone. A man was with her—not one of her numerous summer admirers, but a man whom Dickie never had seen. He was young and vigorous, but there was something about him that bespoke age—a sternness, even a hardness, as of one who had fought battles.

They passed the corner of the wreck whence Dickie Boy's head had risen just before and went down to the other end of the vessel, where some fallen timbers made a sheltered seat. They were both looking away from the dismantled stern, and through a convenient opening in its joints a pair of blue eyes watched them eagerly. It was not Dickie's character of youthful traditions to sneak or hide, even less to be an eavesdropper, but somehow a curious shyness had invaded him at the sight of the stranger, and he found himself unable to go forward or speak, but the conversation which reached his ears was still such a mystery.

"How plainly we hear the boy?" said the girl, arranging the border of her blue serge skirt close to her russet shoes. She was intent upon speaking of impersonalities. The man looked out to sea, where the surf was lapping at disconcerting intervals.

"What makes it so sad?" she speculated idly, picking up a pebble and throwing it into the surf. "The irregularity of the sound, do you think?"

"Irregularity is not necessarily sad," the man objected. "It might be, perhaps, if it's the amissness, the futility of it, dear. A bell ought to call people together, and this one warns them off. Therefore it's lonely. It must ever be lonely. That's why it's sad, little girl."

The bell swung at the mercy of the wind and water. Its sound came to them in the pattern of the surf.

"Keep away, keep away," chanted the girl, with the same measured intervals. "Yes, I don't know but you're right. It's a rather doleful burden."

While the girl looked silently out to sea he reverently studied her face, with its somewhat pale beauty—the effects of the gold hair under the yachting cap and that of the chastening indifference of her eyes.

Suddenly he rose and stood before her, his broad shoulders silhouetted against the growing pink of the western sky.

"I'm going away again, Eleanor," he said. "I'm going tonight, but I thought when I came back that you might love me. Perhaps you do. I don't know. You don't know yourself. But I've lost my old boyish faith, you see. I distrust you, and you distrust yourself—and so it is hopeless."

He spoke with a bitterness that seemed voluntary. Then for one brief second he stooped and laid his face against the soft hair on her forehead. She could not see the yearning tenderness of his expression, but there was a flush on her cheeks and a light in her eyes.

"You see, Blair," she said slowly, "it's so hard for me to know my own mind. I—"

"Yes," he threw in, a little frown on his forehead, "and it wasn't so very different five years ago."

"You mean to reproach me, Blair?" The flush on the girl's face was deeper now, but the light had died out. The note of trouble in her voice melted him. Unconsciously he sat down again on the timbers.

"I mean that I have lost five good years out of my life because you didn't know your own mind, little girl. If you had known—"

She held out her slim hand to stop him. Then his eye fell on a tiny ring on the third finger—a ring with a bit of red stone like a drop of blood. He reached over and took the outstretched hand.

"Poor little ring," he said musingly. "You would not take it, you remember, Eleanor, till I promised that it should bind you to nothing. It was to be a reminder merely of our friendship. But in these five years all my thought, all my labor, has been for you. I've never been wholly happy, but now the prospect of hope is gone. He relinquished her hand gently. "And tomorrow—well, the years that stretch before me seem a bit black and long."

"Blair, I don't think it's kind of you to talk like that. The girl broke in, with a nervous little laugh that was half a sob. "It makes me feel it makes me feel positively guilty, as if I might slip from the shadow of the big hat if its owner let the suit case drop to the porch. It landed squarely on Mr. Lloyd's toes and brought the tears to his eyes."

"I'm the baby," she laughingly said as she stood for a moment on the threshold of the door taking him in from head to foot, striving to fix the identity of her mysterious cross-examiner. "I am 'baby' still, despite my advanced age and the centuries of futile protest at my mother's tender forgetfulness. Did I not do well for an infant—this very sanctity and bodily—to travel way from Albany to Blairville all alone, only to meet a severe interloper or harridan to the entrance to my aunt's home?"

"But Martha?" was all Mr. Lloyd could say.

"Is my mother, who will arrive tomorrow. I'm ahead. Does this satisfy you, Mr. Hixson? Please remove your foot from beneath my luggage and carry it into the house. Babies, you know, must have attention and attendance."

The "Baby"

By EDWARD L. RECKARD
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Mr. John Lloyd suffered the guilt of an eavesdropper, and for the moment was deeply and regretfully conscious of his crime.

He mechanically removed from his mouth an unlighted cigar, and pressed his lips alternately. There could be no mistaking the words spoken in Mrs. Melton's soft, motherly voice.

Mr. Lloyd stopped still on the staircase and deliberately listened.

"Martha is coming with the baby tomorrow on the 12 o'clock train from Albany."

Mrs. Melton was saying. The meaning of her words was plain as plain as if he were in the sitting room itself.

"And to stay a whole month!" cried Miss Edith, the one remaining member of the Melton family who as yet had escaped, through no fault of her own, the matrimonial snare.

Miss Edith came when she was in the house when he took up his residence with the Meltons a year ago.

Next to babies, Mr. Lloyd abominated spinsters of certain age out of pure fear of their possible designs upon innocent and unsuspecting bachelors.

"They can have the big spare room, can't they?"

Mr. Lloyd did not wait to hear the conclusion of the sentence, spoken in Mr. Melton's hearty tones. He stepped quietly out of the wide, old-fashioned hallway into the twilight and moodily walked to his law office, adjoining what used to be his law office, and moodyly walked to the courthouse at the other end of the prosperous little county seat where he had won a name for himself in the few years he had resided in Blairville.

The spare room was across the hall from Mr. Lloyd's own ample and handsomely furnished snugery. So "Martha and the baby" were to go in the spare room, were they? The doors were to hang, the baby was to be and all of the members of the household were to run up stairs and down again forty times an hour for eighteen hours a day, and Mr. Lloyd's sympathy and pitifully devoted understanding as to babies, eighty-one hours a night, waiting on "the baby," making life miserable for the baby's boarder and supposedly delightful for everybody else? Not if John Lloyd knew it! He would return to the home he had left in the village, at which he had been a central figure until the day he had gone with the Meltons to their big, rambling home on the hill among the maples. Home life had its drawbacks, but the proprietor had been under contract not to room doing mothers and leathery lunged infants without the bearing of Mr. Lloyd's apartment.

The next morning at breakfast Mr. Lloyd's silence and gloom were in marked contrast with the animated table conversation regarding the visitors who were to arrive that day. He had tried a dozen times during the meal to tell them that he was to give up his room and return to the hotel, but each time the words stuck in his throat. He finally decided that he would quietly return to the house during the morning, put his things in order and later send for them with a polite note of explanation at the suddenness of his departure.

True to his resolution, Mr. Lloyd crept into the house unobserved and placed his effects in some semblance of order for removal. With every sound from below he fancied he distinguished agonized squalors in infantile trouble, mingled with the chorus of adult voices in soothing efforts to quiet the tempest. Warm and flustered for a dignified bachelor of thirty-five, Mr. Lloyd slipped down the side staircase, out on the little porch to which led the short cut up the hill from the railroad station.

None of the family had observed his burglarious entrance or his exit, but shades of Blackstone, a woman was coming along the narrow path over the rear lawn, directly up to the little porch—a woman in a neat traveling gown and carrying a suit case.

"Caught!" growled Mr. Lloyd aloud, and he felt a hot glow of shame and vexation sweep over him. Here, for a moment, he was caught in the act, by all that has to do with babies, fat or lean, squealing or cooing.

The feminine gender in the traveling gown passed at the foot of the steps, gazed in amazement at Mr. Lloyd's stern and heated features as displayed from beneath a big hat that hid the face of a very pretty girl. Mr. Lloyd had not seen her profile because of the hat, and he looked again and did not remove his eyes from the roughish ones that sought his so indignantly.

"Martha, I suppose," he ventured, impolitely, scornfully and audibly.

"Sir!" The red lips parted laughingly, and the trim figure straightened perceptibly in the traveling gown at the strange salutation.

"You're Martha, Mrs. Melton's sister, of course, but where?" Mr. Lloyd's voice dropped out of hearing as suddenly as his courage.

"I'm not Martha," she answered sharply.

"To be sure you are," insisted Mr. Lloyd, very firmly. "Where's the—the baby?"

"The what?" cried the young lady wonderingly.

"The baby—Martha's baby. Where is he, she or it, or whatever you call 'em?" Mr. Lloyd was desperate; but, as baby boys and girl babies all looked alike to him, his mixture of gender was excusable.

An unmistakable girlish giggle of a had purposely broken your heart. You wouldn't want me to marry you if I didn't surely make up my mind, would you? And I can't let it be if nature deliberately made me a coquette—so there!" She tossed a handful of sand into space. She was angry with herself for the foolish tears that had started.

Then there came a startled little cry of pain. Some of the sand had blown directly into Dickie Boy's blue eyes. A few moments later, when he had been drawn out into the light and had stammered his honest excuses, he laid the ribbon wrapped packet in his lady's lap and would have turned and fled, but his limbs seemed to have lost the power of locomotion.

Eleanor swiftly untied the ribbon which Dickie watched her adoringly. He was not afraid of her, ever, but of the big strange gentleman with the serious eyes.

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Eleanor. "What a dear, cunning little heart!" She held up a heart-shaped pin tray between her eyes and the light. "And I've bisque real bisque. But who sent it, Dickie Boy?"

"I bought it, I did," assured Dickie, swelling with dignity.

"Why, Dickie, Dickie Boy! Wherever in the world did you get so much money?" she said tenderly, drawing him down to her side and pushing back his locks of hair while she looked into his eyes.

"Worked," answered Dickie laconically, displaying his hard, brown little hands, which showed unmistakable signs of wrestle with a stubborn soul.

BLACK FRIDAY.

The Mad Scene in the Gold Room on That Eventful Occasion.

In the middle of the gold room was a small fountain. About his daily proceedings began, writes T. Hendrick in the American Magazine, Jay Gould's own brooms, pale, haggard, half-distracted and half-ashamed of their work, started the bids. Gold had closed the day previously at 144. Now a Gould broker offered 145 for \$100,000 gold.

His only response were the curses and fist shakings of a bedraggled, perspiring crowd.

"One hundred and forty-six for \$100,000 gold!"

Still there was no response.

"One hundred and forty-seven."

Each advancing point meant millions in profits to Gould and likewise millions in losses to the community. At every advance the crowds, losing all restraint, alternately roared and wept.

"One hundred and forty-eight!"

"One hundred and forty-nine!"

"One hundred and fifty!"

At this point the bidding began. Hitherto the crowd had been held magically spellbound. The audacity of the Gould brokers had paralyzed all. Board brokers were particularly dazed. In face of the eldritch demonstrated power to make the feeblest attempt to check the terrible rise.

A few uptown merchants now, however, started to purchase. Soon the bidding degenerated into panic. Every one scrambled to get his gold now while the price, judged by what had already happened and the unquenched power of the gold, seemed so high. All purchases, however, meant enormous losses.

Fortunes accumulated through years of self-sacrificing toil were swept away in a moment. In their crazy men ran aimlessly about the room, moaning, screaming, vainly appealing for help. Outside the crowds lawlessly waited announcements, the same scenes were repeated. Rained men, unable to get into the building itself, pushed, cursed and fought. At each rise in the price the rage against Gould increased.

When the bid reached 150 there were cries of "Lynch! Lynch!"

The crowd, which was the plotters of all this mischief doing? He was selling gold. To whom was he selling? To Fisk and all his own associates. He was the only man who really understood the situation—who knew, that is, upon what a flimsy basis "corner" was made. It was Fisk, Belden and Speyer into the gold room to advance the price ostensibly for the benefit of the eldritch, and when it had reached a certain point unloaded on his own account. He had sold largely, unknown to his confederates, the day before.

The Amazon is the king of streams. From first to last it receives over 1,200 tributaries, of which more than 100 are large sized rivers and rise so far apart and have their floods and ebbs at such different seasons that the Amazon is at about the same height the year around. At some points on its lower course one bank is invisible from the other. The beholder seems to be looking on a great yellow sea of fresh water. When discovered, some tribes of Indians on the lower portion know nothing of the existence of the sea, and did not believe that it existed, saying that "the great river flowed all around the world." Its mouth, including that of the Para, is 180 miles in width, and it is navigable for large sized ocean steamers for 1,000 miles from the sea, and was the flood that the ocean is tinged yellow for 100 miles from the coast of Brazil.

The Achaean League was formed by the twelve towns of Achaia for mutual protection against foreign aggression. It was broken up by Alexander the Great, but reorganized B. C. 250 and again dissolved B. C. 147. The second of these leagues comprised all the leading cities of the Peloponnese and, indeed, most of the cities and states of Greece. It was this league which contended with the Romans for the independence of Greece; but, its troops being defeated by Metellus at Scarpheia and by Mummius near Corinth, the league was dissolved, and all Greece submitted to the Roman domination.

The secret of success in society is a certain heartiness and sympathy. A man who is not happy in company cannot find any word in his memory that will fit the occasion. All his information is a little impertinent. A man who is happy there finds in every turn of the conversation occasions for the introduction of what he has to say. The qualities of society are able men and of more spirit than wit, who have no uncomfortable egotism, but who exactly fill the hour and company, contented and contenting.—Emerson.

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PARISH REGISTERS.

The Sort of Entries They Keep in the Old Bury in England.

A vicar, John Printer of Worle, is accused in L.S.T. of having got so drunk "at a Tavern in London, being the house and sign of the Swan in old Fish Street," that he had to be "carried to his Lodgings, or some other convenient place, one being so dronke, not habbe hymself to goe." That is, well, he is also charged with being "a common player at Bowles in the churchyard of Worle his own parish and a common haunter of Tavernes, richouses, Beerbeating (baiting) and Bullbeating, yea, upon the Sabbath daies, and an usual player at Tables (backgammon) & Charles in the alehouses and Tavernes."

On Sept. 25, 1621, John Brook of Dundry is presented.

"For unlawfully playing of the flutes and cutlins in the churchyard there on Sabbath daies and hollie daies, as manellie law, with others, did see upon St. Marthe's daie past, and being reproved by the churchwarden for the same, he came him a froward answer, saying, we came at exercise to doe the kings service, & you will not suffer us, but the whilles you cut your neighbors throats."

"That on Sommdaie, 1 Julij, & on Sommdaie 24 Junij ult, hee, Arthur Payton, and Edward Ward, taylor, did dance in the churchyard thereof, and Richard Hulford "played upon his instrument to those that usually dance in the churchyard there."

London Academy.

THE BIRD OF DEATH. It is the Only Venomous Member of the Feathered Tribe.

Among all the thousands of feathered creatures classified by the trained or untrained biologist but one, the riper n'ook, or bird of death, is known to be venomous. This queer and deadly species of the winged and feathered tribe is a native of the island of Papua, or New Guinea. The bird is described as being about the size of a common tame pigeon, of gray plumage and a tail of extraordinary length, ending in a tip of brilliant scarlet red. It is a marsh bird and is found to inhabit only the immense stagnant pools adjoining the lakes of the interior of the island. The riper has a hooked beak as sharp as a riper's spur and hollow. The venom with which it inoculates is distilled in a set of organs which nature has provided for that purpose and which lie in the upper mandible. Just below the openings of the nostrils. Under this poison secreting laboratory in the roof of the mouth is a small fleshy knob. When the bird sets its beak in the flesh of a victim this knob receives a pressure which liberates the venom and inoculates the wound. No man, native or otherwise, was ever known to recover from a bite inflicted by a riper n'ook. The suffering in such cases is said to be much more agonizing than in cases of rattlesnake and Gila monster bites.

The Fish Net.

A curious custom was at one time in vogue at Gloucester, Mass., which illustrates the swiftness which seems to surround a fish net and the protection which the law affords that class of property. Whenever it became necessary to quarantine a horse because of smallpox or other contagious disease the quarantine was effected by stringing nets about the building on the outside. The penalty for disturbing a net was so great that no one dared to meddle with the barrier.

A King's Race.

Alfonso, king of Aragon, was one day examining the different articles in his jeweler's shop in company with many ladies of his court. He had scarcely left the house when the jeweler raised a diamond of great value and ran after him, complaining of the theft. The king, not willing publicly to disgrace any of his attendants, commanded a large basin full of sand to be brought him, into which he directed each person to put in the hand-diamond and to have it out that. By this means the diamond was left in the sand, unknown by whom.

The Ducking Stool in England.

The latest record use of the ducking stool in England (the designation of the ducking stool is, of course, synonymous in the days of Queen Elizabeth was in 1809. It was at Leonia Piper, alias Jane Corran, was paraded through the town on the ducking stool and ducked in the water near Kenwater bridge by order of the magistrates. In 1817 another woman, called Sarah Leake, was wheeled round the place in the same chair, but not ducked, as, fortunately for her, the water was too low. The instrument of punishment in question has not been used since then.—London Notes and Queries.

WINDS AND DRAFTS.

The Former Are Beneficial, but the Latter Are Dangerous.

By a draft is meant the currents of air in an inclosed space. Our forefathers attributed nearly all the evils that beset them to drafts, and they would not have slept in uncurtained beds for anything. Of course their windows and doors were shaky, and houses stood far apart, so drafts were necessarily inevitable. But the modern scientific world tries to deny drafts altogether and calls them winds, which are harmless and even healthy to a certain degree.

Any one who cares to find out the difference between a wind and a draft can do so in any apartment which has windows on different sides of the house. Let him open a window on a windy day on the side of the house toward which the wind blows. The air which comes in is quite harmless if the person exposed to it is dressed in warm clothes, and little children may take the air in a room thus ventilated. But let him open a window past which the wind blows, and it will be found that the air in the room is moved by a cold current, all of which strive to reach the opening. It is the passing wind which sucks up the air in the room and draws it out, and this causes the room to have what is called a draft.

The effect upon sensitive persons is immediately felt, like the forerunner of a storm. A draft will always be felt as colder than the wind. Very dangerous drafts are those that are produced in railway cars by the rapid motion of the train. It is not wind that gets into the carriages, but the air of the car which is sucked out. A lighted match held to the chink of the window will prove this, as the flame will be drawn toward the window, not blown from it.

"The Bridge" Born of Sorrow.

"My poem entitled 'The Bridge,'" said Longfellow, "was written in sorrow, which made me feel for the loneliness of others. I was a widower at the time, and I had intended to go over the bridge to Boston evenings to meet friends and return near midnight by the same way. The way was silent, save here and there a belated footstep. The sea rose or fell among the wooden piers, and there was a great throng on the Brighton hills whose red light was reflected by the waves. It was on such a late, solitary walk that the spirit of the poem came upon me. The bridge has been greatly altered, but the place of it is the same."

The Beggar.

"You ought to take this horse," said the doleful, "it's a bargain."

"Well, then, I don't want him," said the customer. "I want something to drive, and I never could drive a bargain."

The most manifest sign of wisdom is a continual cheerfulness.—Montaigne.

TONS OF GOLD TREASURE.

Last Store of Wealth Emptied From New World Into Old.

It has never been told how vast was the treasure that was emptied from the new world into the old in the glorious days of the Spanish dominion. We can only judge of how great it was by cultural evidence. The bottles of Cortes and Pizarro are famous in annals of new world history. In them we have read how the soldiers of the former carried away only a small part of the treasures found at Mexico, yet were so loaded down with stolen gold that when they fell from the caseway into the lake in the memorable retreat from Mexico they sank and drowned as weighed with plunners of lead; also we read how Pizarro exacted as a tribute for the liberation of the Incas Atahualpa 250,000 that filled to the depth of several feet a room seventeen feet wide by three feet two feet long and that was valued at 1,200,000 pesos (for, the equivalent of nearly \$15,000 of our money).

When Drake sailed the south sea in the Golden Hind upon his piratical voyage of circumnavigation in the years 1577-79 and when he captured the Nuestra Señora della Concepcion—named the Cacafuco or Spillfire—of Cape San Fernando, it took three days to transfer the treasure from the captured ship to his own. In that single haul there was realized a "purchase," as it was called, of over twenty-six tons of silver, besides eighty pounds of virgin gold, thirteen chests of pieces of eight containing over \$1,000,000 in money and an enormous amount of jewels and pearls.

From the evidence of John Drake we read that when the Golden Hind laid her course for England, by way of the Cape of Good Hope, she was so heavily "ballasted" with pure silver that she "tried" exceeding deep in the water.—Harper's Magazine.

THE MOONSTROKE.

A Sailor's Experience After a Night Nap on Deck in the Tropics.

"People laugh at moonstrokes," said a sailor. "They call them shellbacks' superstition. I once had a moonstroke, though, and I tell you it was no laughing matter."

"It's a fine moon one night in the tropics I fell asleep on deck. The moon shone directly on me. I lay in a white pool of moonlight. So three hours went by."

"Then, when they woke me, I felt like a man in a dream. My mouth hung open, as it does when I sleep, and I couldn't close it, and my head lay over on the side, and I couldn't straighten it up."

"No could I understand what people said to me, nor could I obey orders. Voices I'd hear far away. My thoughts seemed meaningless, unpleasant. I was very drowsy. All I wanted was sleep."

"They worked on me for two days, rubbing me down with cold water and dosing me with opium oil, before they brought me on deck. And always after that I have been careful never to get where the moon's rays could get at me. My moonstroke happened eight years ago, but still at every full moon I am stupid and drowsy, and my mouth drops to one side, and my mouth tends to hang open."

"There's many a sailor has been moonstruck, but this accident never befalls busmen, landsmen, you see, never sleep out of doors."—New York Herald.

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