

The Cake Lady

By Mildred White



ESSIE LOUISE was making a great deal of trouble. From the time her invalid mother had brought Tessie to the city hospital to be treated for her spine, the golden-haired baby had been the pet of the nurses. And as her stay was prolonged partly because the mother was too ill and too poor to understand the care of her child.

"What in the world," asked the aristocratic young house doctor, "does that child want?"

"Tessie wants a Nora Christmas doll," the nurse said eagerly.

Doctor Bruce wrinkled his brow. "What does she mean?" he asked.

"Miss Nora Dean," the girl answered, "is a young woman who visits the children's ward and has been much interested in them. She lives in a cottage out on the lake shore, and last summer she came in and took two of our little convalescents for a month's stay there. Tessie Louise was one, and she so fell in love with Miss Dean at the time that we could hardly



convince her. But it was necessary that she should come. Yesterday, Miss Dean came to the hospital with a basket of Christmas cakes, made like dolls, with colored eyes and colored frosted dresses. The kiddies were so pleased, they call her the Cake Lady. Doctor Bruce frowned.

"That's bad practice," he complained, "allowing women to come in here and feed out patients. I did not suppose."

The pleasant nurse hurried to champion her friend.

"She has helped us in many ways," she said. "Miss Dean is a philanthropist. If she were not—"

The pleasant nurse paused, "in his circumstances herself."

"The young woman you speak of lives on the lake shore?" the doctor asked.

The nurse nodded.

"Her uncle was an old sea captain," she told him. "Miss Nora made her home with this uncle and aunt when she was as small as Tessie here."

"Now she lives on in the house at the water's edge to take care of her aunt, who is old and crippled. And she's a real good girl."

"Well, she's always trying to do things for others," she finished; "that is the way Nora Dean finds happiness."

"Great Scott!" interrupted the doctor, "there goes Tessie again; that noise must be stopped. She must not disturb the sick ones."

The prettiest nurse came hastily.

"Tessie says she won't stop until she is taken to Miss Nora. I really wish we had made arrangements yesterday to have her driven out to the lake shore for over Christmas."

"How far out is it?" Doctor Bruce asked briskly.

"I'll take her in my car," he explained. "It's closed and comfortable."

Donald Bruce sighted the cottage as he brought his car to a stop in the



roadside. Then he gathered his small charge in his arms and made his way to the white door.

"Come in," Nora greeted cheerily, "the nurse phoned me of your coming. There's a new Christmas doll for Tessie Louise in the oven, and a lot more to take back."

It was a broad, white kitchen, replete with sugar and spices, and an old lady in a rocking chair near the window relieved Tessie of her wrappings.

"You must give the doctor a cup of coffee, Nora dear," the old lady said, "before his cold drive back to the city."

But Donald Bruce seemed in no hurry to return.

"This," he said musingly, "smells like my grandmother's kitchen. Used to spend our Christmas with grandmother when I was a boy."

"We are going to have a roasted chicken for dinner," the old lady suggested tentatively. "I wonder if it might not seem just a bit like being at grandmother's—if you'd stay and eat with us?"

It was remarkable how swiftly the afternoon hours flew in the lakeside cottage.

"I'm so glad," the old lady whispered at parting, "that you decided to wait to take Tessie back with you. It has been a happy Christmas for Nora. I can see it in her eyes, and usually happiness is only Nora's through the giving. She's the dearest girl in the world!"

"She is just that!" Donald Bruce answered solemnly.

His eyes were on Nora, as he clasped the old lady's hand.

The Doctor's Wife

By Mary Graham Bonner



HAD married her in the first place of all because of her lovely, low voice. These had been other reasons, but she had looked for style, for common sense, but mainly and chiefly for a refinement which had drawn him to her had been her voice.

It had seemed during those first years of his practicing and trying to make headway in a seeming irresponsible city, that voices would drive him mad, swelling, complaining, whispering, always discontented.

Even when he met women socially he felt they refrained from telling him anything but a sorrowful tale of themselves.

As for his wife—she understood. She smiled at the poor excuses they made to come and see him at the hospital. They showed of each other, of the gifts they sent him, of senseless reasons they had for telephoning.

Sometimes they would both be invited out to dinner at some patient's home. The doctor's wife ducked as she thought of how little she was wanted.

One day, they looked at her, she knew, rather dimly, and at times, the doctor's wife ducked as she thought of how little she was wanted.

"It must be awful to be a doctor's wife. I'd never have a woman's peace if I were you, with so many women caring for my husband."

"We get used to it," the doctor's wife said, "as we get used to being invited to dinner at some patient's home. The doctor's wife ducked as she thought of how little she was wanted."

"It was Christmas Eve. The doctor had promised his wife that he would help her in those many pleasant evenings before Christmas tasks."

She went upstairs to see that the children were quite asleep when she heard the telephone ring. She answered it, and then heard her husband's voice who was already answering it from below.

"Something, some curious something, made her listen."

"Oh doctor," she heard a voice say, "the voice of the one woman who had lately caused her first pang of jealousy. 'I can't wait another moment. I must see you. I'm sorry, on Christmas Eve too, but I must! Please, doctor, can you come at once?'"

"That's all right, little lady," she heard her husband answer, "I'll be up at once."

"I'm going out for awhile," the doctor called up the stairs. And was gone without a word of regret and with no effort at an excuse.

Late that evening she went out of the house. She would see this other woman. She called a taxi and hurried off. "I'm sorry," the maid told her, "but Madame can see no one." And the door was shut abruptly.

What would she do? What could she do? Finally, exhausted after walking about the streets, she went home, her heart full of dry, choking sobs.

At last she heard the doctor's key. He came in. He looked tired. But she was worn out.

"You've been to—," she began.

"Yes," he answered wearily, as he lighted a cigarette. "I have been there all this time. But she has the finest boy you could hope to see, they're simply delighted."

"Boy?" she shrieked.

"Yes," the doctor nodded. "He was too tired to notice her quick change of expression."

"Oh," he said after a moment. "I'm so glad you didn't finish the Christmas things without me. No matter how late it is, we must always get ready for Christmas together, mustn't we, wife of my heart?"

"After I had left the house," he added, "I remembered I hadn't asked you to wait, and I wanted you to wait no matter how long I'd be. Sorry of me, perhaps, but we must have our Christmas Eve together and get ready for the children's Christmas together, mustn't we, wife of my heart?"

"We must assuredly, must," she answered him, and added to herself, "What fools these women are who pity the doctor's wife. I'm the happiest woman in the whole world."

And the doctor was saying, "My dear, do you know that it is Christmas morning and that I'm wishing you a Merry Christmas?"

"Merry Christmas," she returned and in her heart rang the merriest and happiest of Christmas bells!

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The chorus of voices, the clapping of hands, Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn.

Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born. With glad jubilation Bring hope to the nations!

The dark night is ending and dawn has begun. Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun. All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

Sing the herald of nations, with chorals of love, Sing and the world will sing in the dawn. Till the heart of the people keep time to the sound. And the voice of the world is the voice of the Lord!

Clap hands of the nations In our jubilation; The dark night is ending and dawn has begun. Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun. All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as one!

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And the Postman Passed the House

By MARY GRAHAM BONNER

AS AN Christmas morning dawned, Miss Hiram Paton sat by the window waiting for the postman. Christmas, she had been rather like. It had been from the window, groups of people passing from door to door, young smiling, with gay, happy eyes.

Hiram was old and she had outlived her friends, the immediate family she had had long since gone by. He had given generously to the poor and charitable institutions and a number of personal projects. He was, for example, one of the large benefactors of the city, his large share of the money he had given to the poor and charitable institutions and a number of personal projects.

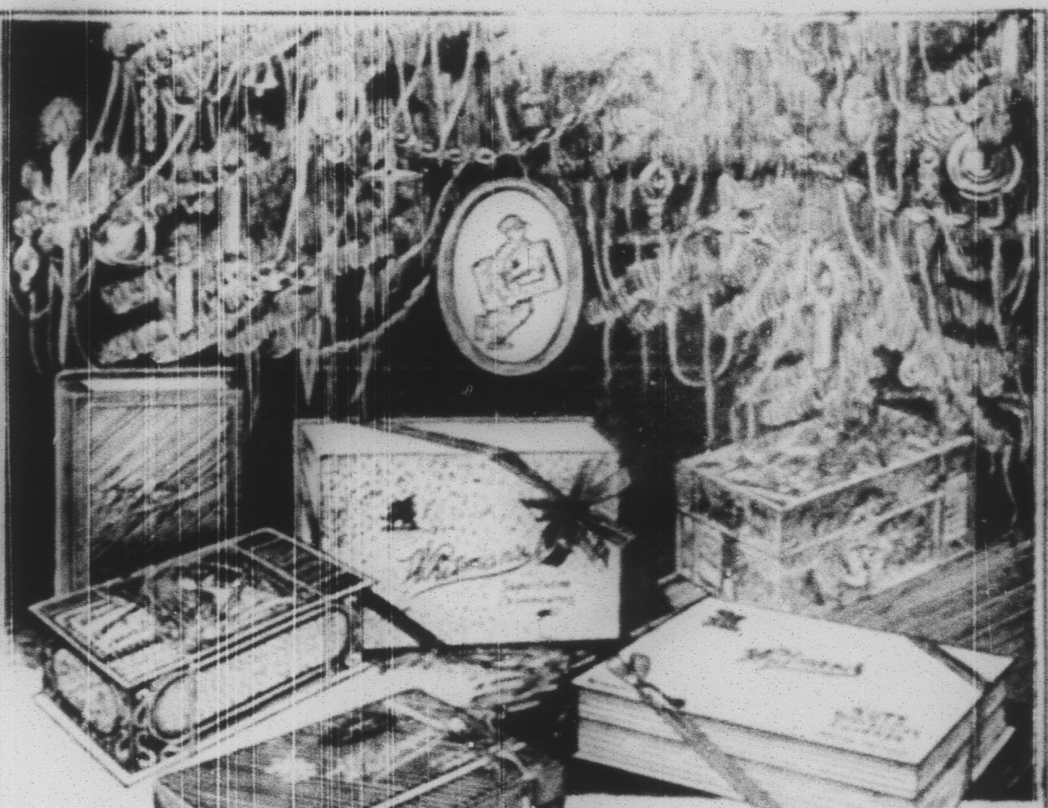
The postman came along the street, carrying his mail. He was waiting for the postman. He was waiting for the postman. He was waiting for the postman.

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