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SUNDAY CALLE

Magazine Section

HERE are some things better than to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth.

One of these is to be born with a great gift and then, just at the right moment, to have a fairy-godmother appear.

In this story Edna Darch of Los Angeles is the good little girl and Calve—capricious, captivating, quick-pulsed Calve—is the fairy-godmother, and Hans Christian Andersen couldn't do anything better if he tried.

The Darches are poor, but Edna has a voice, and Mme. Calve has promised to see that she has a future.

In other words, Calve is to do for the child what the parents would gladly do for her if they could—have her voice trained by the best masters and fit her for the operatic stage. More than this, Calve herself will take her for a time under her own tuition.

Did any princess in a fairy-book, or out of one, ever fare better than this?

And it has all happened so suddenly and unexpectedly that Edna Darch feels as though she were afraid to open her eyes wide lest she find she has been asleep and it was only a dream.

She knows how that feels, for she tried it once—just the night before she sang for Calve. She had dreamed that Nordica heard her sing and had taken her away to Europe and made her a great artist. Just as she was singing, with all the world at her feet, she woke up.

"Do you believe in dreams?" asked her older sister when Edna told her of the beautiful dream.

"No. But I wish they came true."

Even then, unknown to the child, a letter had been written to Calve asking her to hear Edna sing.

Not that Edna's teacher hoped for anything more than a word of praise that might be used to advertise a benefit concert which it was proposed to give in January to help a little with the expense of music lessons. The wages of a clerk in a lumber-yard do not warrant the training of nightingales.

Calve, seeking rest at Pasadena, had shut herself away from all visitors, and that she should take time to listen to an aspiring child singer was almost a vain hope. But Edna had a teacher who knew that her pupil was a genius, and for more than a year her one wish had been that the child should sing for a truly great artist.

Something in the letter struck a chord in Calve's warm heart. She consented, and on the very day of Edna's dream the vision of the night was partly realized.

Edna Darch, in a plain little cotton frock, with a voice that faltered just the least with excitement, sang for the great song-goddess, the unrecognized fairy-godmother.

"Beautiful, ravishing, magnificent," whispered the artist as the child sang. It took but one look from the deep, wonderful eyes of the diva to tell the child that all was well, that the soul of the other understood.

After the song there were more hugs and kisses and more adjectives.

And then all in a moment Calve made her plans.

She must take Edna with her, teach her, have her study and hear other great artists, and have pretty frocks and furs—but simple, mind you, for a petite. And then Paris, and then—the world.

No wonder the child blinked hard and pinched herself to make sure she was really awake.

Edna Darch has always loved music, always lived for it.

When a baby, tied in her little rocking chair and left to amuse herself, she sang and sang, rolling her eyes far back and rocking vigorously to help make the high notes come.

Her mother had the love of music and an ear for it, without the knowledge of it, and her father had a voice. Edna's gift was a natural one, and when she was old enough both parents meant that she should have the best help they could give her.

But the best is not to be had for the least money, and it was not until a family friend came to the rescue with an open purse that Edna could have instruction worthy of her art.

For a year or two she studied only for piano, but that other longing would not cease. Still she must sing, stretching her voice from its highest to its lowest pitch.

Then, when she was nearly 12, she began to study voice culture with Miss Elizabeth Carrick. There were no more wild, unstudied bursts of song. She must sing not higher than D for a whole year, and not more than an hour a day in fifteen-minute periods.

When she was just slipping into her teens there was a short rest, and she was not allowed to sing a note.

In those days Edna was restless and unhappy, but she obeyed her teacher. Yet the music must out, and the child would shut herself away in a room and whistle until her overburdened soul found relief.

When she went back to her lessons again her tones were rounder, fuller, more mature. But now she must not go higher than E, with an occasional F with Miss Carrick, by way of a treat.

Not only must Edna thank Miss Carrick for her first training, but for this great opportunity that has come to her. Had the teacher known less of the value of Edna's voice she might still be working hard to play and sing for a recital which at most would bring her but \$25. It was really Miss Carrick who discovered this embryonic artist. A year ago she had the child sing for Damrosch, and the great interpreter of Wagner praised her.

"Did he say no more?" asked Calve in surprise when told that he had heard it. But she was reminded that a year ago the voice was but half of what it is now.

Edna and her mother had their Thanksgiving dinner with the fairy-godmother, and it was a dinner that none of the three will ever forget.

Mrs. Darch was the silent one, for back of the thankfulness for her child's good fortune was the thought of separation.

"But I shall not steal her away from you," said Calve. "She will still be your daughter. But from to-day I must attend to her needs, give her everything

and attend to her education for three years. Then she will be ready to make her debut. She shall sing Micaela when I sing Carmen—or, no, she will be an ideal Marguerite."

The diva talked on, carried away with her plan.

"I would take you with me to-day, but that is too soon. You will wait and come with your mother and meet me in New York December 20. We will have Christmas together; then when the mother sees that you are happy in your new home she can come away."

"No, you must not live with me. You must learn nothing now of the theater, not yet. You must remain sweet and good and pure as you are now. You will live with some friends, and study German, Italian and French, for the last year will be spent in Paris. You must

At the train when she left Los Angeles Calve met Edna's father, and when he saw the great songstress clasp his child in her arms and kiss her again and again he felt that she had found a place in a warm mother-heart.

And now before leaving the home where she has worked so hard for her art Edna is busy and happy as a bird. She spends three or four hours a day studying French, for she must not sing again until she is with Calve. Then there is the dear piano nearly filling the tiny parlor which she cannot abandon all at once. And as she sits and dreams and plays, the faces of Beethoven and Mozart and Paderewski and the rest seem to speak to her from out their frames, encouraging her to work, work, work for the great art.

"I feel as if I had been away up in the



EMMA CALVE

Emma Calve's Protege— Edna Darch



EDNA DARCH AS SHE SANG FOR CALVE



EDNA DARCH IN THE HAT CALVE GAVE HER.



THE DARCH COTTAGE EDNA, HER SISTER AND PET DOG.

know French, for my sake... so much is lost when everything must be repeated between us."

To the mother Calve said in parting: "Je suis devot-moi. I believe in le bon Dieu and his wisdom. I shall not let the petite forget that God is over all. I shall arrange everything so that if I die the child shall not suffer. I am now responsible to you and to God for the little one."

Before leaving for San Francisco Calve took measures for the pretty things she is to buy for her protege, and these will be sent to her for her journey to New York.

air and then dropped away down, and had just come up to the surface," she said as she finished a serenade of her own composition. "But I am so happy."

"See, here is a chain Calve gave me," and she held out a thin gold strand with a strange little pendant.

"That is an Egyptian charm, and stands for strength, force, perseverance. I felt something cool on my throat and Calve turned me to the mirror."

"There," she said, "you must wear that because you were sweet and innocent when you came to me and you must be sweet and innocent always."

"She had on her neck a wonderful

rope of pearls, and as I kissed her my hand passed over them. I could not help asking if they were real. She took my face between her hands and said, 'Ma petite, mon enfant, I would not wear them if they were not. If you cannot have what is genuine have nothing. Let nothing about you be sham.'

"Oh, yes, and she gave me a hat that she had brought from Paris. It is so pretty and plain, just black straw with a bit of ribbon and a feather."

"You must wear it when you come to meet me in New York, and I shall have one made just like it to wear myself when I come for you."

"You must wear it now," she added, and took the rubber from my red hat and pinned it in and put the hat on my head.

"But you must always keep the little cotton gown and the jacket and red hat so we can look at them sometimes and think of the time we first met."

"This made me feel very near to her, and already I love her very much. And my mother, too: when she first saw her face she felt drawn to her, and when we were at the table on Thanksgiving day mother could scarce eat for watching Calve's face."

Edna will be 14 in January. She is the picture of health, with a clear skin, a winning smile and the very dearest bit of simple just where the smile stops. In spite of praise and good looks enough to turn many a head, she is still thoroughly unspoiled.

"I have always wanted to be a great musician, always," she said. "I have worked hard, and it is hard work to become great when one is poor."

"And when I am a great artist? Well, I shall try to do something for those who have been so good to me."