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Default having been made in the payment of a mortgage made and executed by John W. Likins and Mary Likins to Richard C. Dolson, bearing date May 4th, 1892, recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds for Shiawassee County, Michigan, May 14th, 1892, in liber 57 of mortgages, on page 162, upon which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date of this notice for principal, interest, attorneys' fees and taxes and insurance paid, the sum of fifteen hundred eighty-eight and 86-100 dollars. Notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises at public vendue to the highest bidder at the west, front door of the court house, in the city of Corunna, Shiawassee County, Michigan, (that being the building in which the circuit court for the county of Shiawassee is held) on the 27th day of February next, at one o'clock p. m., to satisfy the amount claimed to be due on said mortgage, and all legal costs, to-wit: That certain piece of or parcel of land situate in the city of Owosso, County of Shiawasse, State of Michigan, described as commencing twenty two rods west of the east line of the east half of the south west quarter of section eighteen (18,) town seven (7) north of range three (3) east, on the north line of Oliver street, in said city; thence north twenty rods, thence westerly on a line parallel with Oliver street sixteen rods, thence south twenty rods to north line of Oliver street, thence easterly on north line of Oliver street to the place of beginning, containing two acres of land, excepting and reserving therefrom the following described parcels, viz.: Commencing twenty-two rods west of the east line of the east half of the south-west quarter of said section eighteen, on the north line of Oliver street aforesaid, thence north eight rods, thence west parallel with Oliver street four rods, thence south eight rods, thence east four rods on north line of Oliver street to beginning; also commencing thirty-eight rods west of east line of east one-half of south west quarter of said section eighteen, on the north line of Oliver street, thence north eight rods, thence east parallel with Oliver street four rods, thence south eight rods, thence west on north line of Oliver street four rods to the place of beginning.

Dated, November 26th, 1898.

Margaret S. Dolson,
Executrix of the Estate of Richard C. Dolson, Deceased, Mortgagee.

D. C. Griffen,
Atty. for the Executrix, Ypsilanti, Mich.

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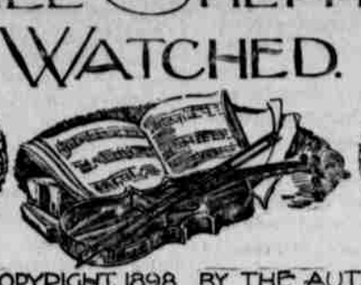
WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED.

A CHRISTMAS STORY



BY ADELINE SERGEANT

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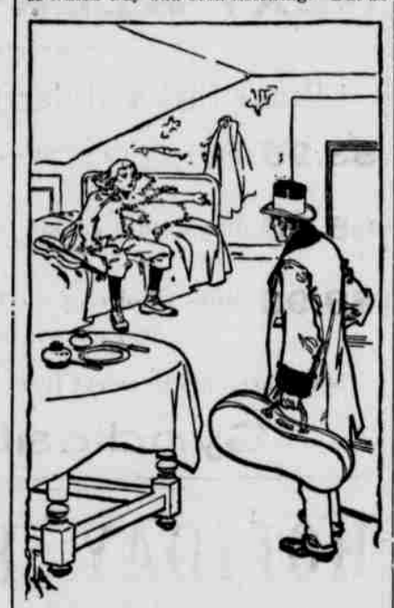
A tall, spare, dark eyed young man, with a violin case in his hand, came up the narrow stairs three steps at once, as though he were anxious to reach the little attic room which was his destination. There was a lamp in the hall below, but no light on the stairs or landings, save the dim gleam which came through a skylight in the roof, and at 6 o'clock in the evening of the 24th of December it is needless to remark that the top story was enveloped in total darkness. But Guy Fairfax seemed to know his way by instinct and did not pause until he reached the scratched and shabby looking door which formed the entrance to his abode. There he stopped short, waited and listened for a moment, arrested by a sound that issued from the room.

It was the sound of a violin, faintly played, as though the instrument itself were small and the hand of the player weak. Presently there arose also a sweet little thread of a childish voice, singing to the tune picked out on the violin the words of a well known Christmas hymn:

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground."

Guy's face contracted a little as if with pain. Then he smoothed it resolutely, called up a smile and opened the attic door.

It was a miserably bare room, not very clean nor very tidy, and the small fire that burned in the rusty grate did not avail to warm the atmosphere. On the bed, with an old fur cloak tucked round him for warmth, a little boy was curled up, his hands holding the tiny fiddle, to the notes of which Guy had been listening. But he



"DADDY, DADDY! ARE YOU BACK SO QUICK?"

put it down at once and held out his hands with a little crow of delight when Guy came in.

"Daddy, daddy! Are you back so quick? I thought you wasn't coming till ever so long!"

It was a sweet little voice, a sweet little face, but the lad's body was very frail and weak, and the dark eyes looked pathetically large for the delicate little face. It was with a sort of passionate yearning that Guy Fairfax pressed his child to his breast for a moment and then looked at him with a mournful foreboding which rendered his voice less cheerful than he meant it to be.

"I've run home for half an hour, Tony, to see that my boy is warm and comfortable," said the young man, holding the child close to him as he spoke.

"Oh, yes, I'm quite comfy!" said Tony contentedly. "I put on your old cloak and p'tended I was a bear. Then I was a little choir boy singing carols in the street—Christmas carols, you know, daddy, because Christmas is tomorrow, and it was tonight that the shepherds was watching their flocks, all seated on the ground"—

His voice passed almost unconsciously from speech to song. Indeed, although Tony was only 6 years old, singing was as natural to him as speech. He came of a musical race. His father was a musician, first by choice, then by necessity, and his mother, who died when he was only 9 years old, had been a professional singer, belonging to a family who had lived half their lives upon the operatic stage. Tony inherited her tastes, just as he inherited her golden hair, but he had his father's brow and his father's eyes.

"You like carols, Tony?"

"At Christmas time, daddy. Will the singers come down this street tonight, do you think?"

"Perhaps so. There used to be plenty of them when I was a boy."

"You lived here when you was a little boy like me, didn't you, daddy?"

"Not here in the town, Tony—a little way outside—at the big house I've told you about before."

Tony regarded his father with baby seriousness. "Won't you take me to see it while we're here, or is the comp'ny going away tomorrow?"

Fairfax belonged to a traveling operatic company and could not afford to do otherwise than the other members of the troupe, but he would have given a good deal to find himself in any place rather than the big northern manufacturing town where, unfortunately, his family had been well known for many generations. He had broken with his relations long ago, but—well, it was trying to find himself so near the dear old Grange where his father was still living, two miles outside the town, and not be able to go near him or even let him know that his son and grandson were so near.

"I can't take you to see it," he said in a low voice to the little son. "They—there wouldn't be time."

He was ashamed of the subterfuge as he looked into Tony's innocent eyes, but Tony was only half attending after all.

"And Santa Claus?" he said. "Will he come down the chimney to give me things, as he did you when you were a little boy?"

"Really, Tony, we must look after your English. Chimney, indeed! You know better than that!"

"It don't matter," said Tony fearlessly. "Will he come down it—that's what I wants to know?"

"Not down attic chimneys, I'm afraid," said the father, with a sigh.

"Oh-h, but in at the door maybe! Perhaps his sack would be too heavy for the chim—ney. He'll come all the way up the stairs, bump, bump, bumpity-bump, won't he? And I shall stop awake and hear him."

"Better not," said Guy rather sadly. "Santa Claus has forgotten us this year, mannie. He comes only to rich people."

"That's a shame," said Tony. "We aren't rich people, are we, daddy?"

"Certainly not," answered the young man, thinking of the guinea a week—not he was accustomed to receive on a—day. "Not precisely rich, Tony, but not paupers—yet."

The bitter accent in his voice was caused by a vivid remembrance of some words that the angry old father had once addressed to him. "You need not darken my door again, sir, and when you and your wife are paupers don't think that you will get money out of me!" The word "paupers" always recalled the bitterness of that moment to his mind.

"What's paupers?" said Tony. Then in an abstracted tone, "I suppose Santa Claus always came to the big house where you lived?"

"I suppose he did."

"And does he come still?"

"If there were any children there, I dare say he would."

"Oh!" said Tony, with a very solemn face. Then he said no more, but sat motionless, looking thoughtfully at the opposite wall, while his father rose from the bed and began to busy himself about various household matters, which might have seemed to an observer almost pathetic when done by the clumsy fingers of a man. Not that Guy's fingers were clumsy; they had all the delicacy of the born musician and the gentleness of a woman, and it came quite naturally to him to build up the fire, hang Tony's flannel nightgown before it, warm some bread and milk for the child and finally make and drink a cup of strong tea before he went back to the orchestra.

"Good night, Tony! Go to bed soon, there's a good boy! Shall I unfasten your clothes?"

"No, thank you, daddy! I'ze not a baby," said Tony, with dignity. And Guy went away laughing at this manifestation of infantile pride. He had little enough to laugh at, and it was a good thing for him that Tony's smiles and frowns and baby wiles as well as the child's innate genius for music kept his heart from growing hard. The amused light was still in his eyes when he reached the theater, but it would soon have died away had he known what Tony was doing while he was gone.

"It's a dreat pity," Tony soliloquized as he ate his bread and milk when his father's steps had died away—"it's a dreat pity that Santa Claus does not come to poor little boys as well as rich ones. I s'pose he'll never think of coming here, but if I lived in the house where daddy used to live he'd come, because daddy said if there were any children there—oh, I

A CROWD OF BELATED SHOPPERS HUSTLED EACH OTHER ON THE PAVEMENTS.

wish I could go to daddy's old house and see Santa Claus for my very own self! What a pity that daddy does not live there now!"

He put away his empty bowl in a little wooden cupboard and came slowly back to the fire. Then he yawned and thought the room looked very lonely and wondered what he could do to amuse himself. He was a self reliant little lad, not often in want of occupation, but just now it seemed to him as though something had gone wrong with the world. He was vaguely dissatisfied and knew not why.

Then a sudden idea occurred to him—one that sent the blood to his cheeks and the sparkle to his eyes. "Tony's ideas" were sometimes a trouble to his father. They were always original, but apt to be impracticable and even dangerous. The idea that had come to him now was that he should go to the house where his father had lived and ask to be allowed to wait for Santa Claus when he came down the chimney that night.

"It would be lovely!" said Tony to himself. "I shouldn't be no trouble to nobody, and very likely I should be home again before daddy got back from the theater. I should run all the way, and I should take my fiddle and play 'While Shepherds Watched' and sing the words, and then the people of the house would say, 'Oh, there's the waits!' And they would open the front door wide and let me in."

The idea took complete possession of his little soul. As it happened, he knew the name of the house where his father had once lived and had a general idea of its locality. It was two miles from the big town, but there was an omnibus which would take him almost all the way. And Tony, although kept as closely as possible to his father's side, had a good deal of ex-

THERE IN THE HALL STOOD A CHILD.

perience concerning trams, omnibuses, trains and other modes of transit, and he was not at all dismayed at the notion of making his way to a strange part of the town. He proceeded in haste to make preparations for his expedition. First he found a piece of paper and scrawled upon it in enormous, sprawling letters: "Plese, daddy, I have gone to your old house to find Sandterklawse, and I shall tell him to bring things to poor likkle boys as well as ricche ones.—Tony." Tony's spelling was not his strong point. Then he put on his cap and his little overcoat, rather thin and very shabby, took his violin under his arm and so set forth.

The sky was overcast and the wind cold, but out in the streets the lamps were lighted, the shop windows were resplendent with holly, and a crowd of belated shoppers hustled each other on the pavements, so that Tony, in his delight at this novel and beautiful scene, did not feel the cold and knew not the meaning of fatigue. At first he even forgot that he meant to get into a tram and go to Stoneley, the suburb in which his father's home as a child was situated. The name of the house was Carston, as Tony knew, and in his ignorance of all difficulties he intended to go by tram car to Stoneley and then ask the first passerby his way to Carston. That the place might be utterly changed from the time when his father was a boy never entered Tony's head.

However, the innocent and ignorant sometimes seem guided toward right ways, right things, right people, in ways we do not know. Tony looked up straight into the face of the omnibus conductor at a street corner where several omnibuses were waiting and said, "Are you going to Stoneley, please?"

And the man looked down at him kindly and said:

"Aye, that I be! Do you want to go to Stoneley, little master?"

"Yes," said Tony, promptly scrambling up the steps, "and I want to go to a house at Stoneley—a house called Carston. Do you know where it is?"

"Why, yes," said the friendly conductor in rather a doubtful voice. "I know Carston well enough, and we go almost past the gates, but what might you be wanting at Carston, I should like to know?"

"It's where my daddy used to live," said Tony, settling himself into his seat.

"Oh, I see!" said the man, feeling more satisfied. He supposed the boy must be the son of some coachman or gardener who lived at Carston, and Tony had so much self possession and confidence that no more questions seemed necessary.

More passengers got in, the conductor shouted, the driver cracked his whip, and the omnibus moved on. It seemed a long time to Tony before it stopped to put him down in a dark road, where the conductor pointed encouragingly to a white gate at the end of a little lane and told him that that was the way to Carston. "There'll be a bus back to town every quarter of an hour," he said, "but maybe you won't want one? You're going to spend Christmas with your father, I reckon?"

"Oh, yes!" said Tony, not at all suspecting the drift of the question. And then the omnibus rolled away, leaving him all alone in the dark with an unaccustomed sensation of fear and—an unusual thing for him—a strong disposition to cry.

But he mastered the weakness, and, grasping the violin faster, he turned toward the white gate at the end of the lane. It was unfastened, and when he had passed through it he found himself on a graveled walk winding whitely between trees and plantations toward a large, dark looking mansion, which Tony divined to be Carston, his father's old home.

He followed the path until he came to the garden, and then he lost himself a little, but by and by he emerged from the shadows and found that he was fronting a wide flight of steps which led up to the terrace in front of the dining room and drawing room windows. Tony nodded quite joyfully when he saw the terrace and the steps. His father had told him about them many a time. He mounted them slowly and carefully; then, standing on the terrace, he looked about him a little while and decided that it was time for him to begin to play. He felt rather cold, now that he was not moving, and a snowflake or two melted upon his nose and made him uncomfortable. Nevertheless it was with great resolution that he drew his bow across the strings of the fiddle and began his favorite tune:

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground."

"What's that caterwauling in the grounds, Norris?" said the master of the house to the butler in his crustiest tones. He was at dinner, and the notes of a violin fell strangely upon his ear. "Did I not tell you that I would have no parties of carol singers this year? They only trample down the plants and destroy the young trees in the plantation. Go out and put a stop to that noise directly."

Norris went out with rather a grave face. It was a troubled one when he returned.

"It's not the carol singers at all, sir. It's—it's only a little boy."

"Send him away at once then."

"If you please, sir, he says he wishes to speak to you. I—I think he's a gentleman's son, sir."

"What if he is? He can have no business here. Send him off. Some begging trick, I dare say."

But as the general—for that was the rank of the master of Carston—spoke the music waxed louder and louder, and a sweet child's voice rang out like a bird's. To the vast surprise of master and servant alike, the door of the dining room was pushed open, and there in the hall stood a child, with shining hair and big brown eyes, playing and singing, as he had done at first:

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground."

The general's white mustache bristled fiercely, and his voice was harsh and rasping when he spoke:

"Boy—you there—stop that noise!"

Tony desisted, but turned a look of angelic reproach upon the speaker. "Don't you like it?" he said. "It's my greatest favorite, and you must know it quite well, because daddy says he used to sing it to you when he was a little boy."

"When he—your father—what do you mean, child?"

"I ain't a child," said Tony, with dignity. "I'm a boy. It's quite a long time since I was a child."

"What's your name?" said the general, softening and smiling in spite of himself, but the answer banished all smile from his face.

"Anthony Liscard Fairfax," said Tony triumphantly. "Isn't it a beautiful name? It's my grandfather's name, daddy says, but I haven't never seen him in all my life." And his innocent, trustful eyes looked straight into the face of the very man who was his grandfather.

Norris gasped. He expected an explosion of anger; he almost feared violence, but for a minute or two the general stood perfectly silent. Then he said to the man "You can go."

"Shall I go too?" said Tony.

"No. Stand where you are. Now, tell me who told you to come here tonight?"

"Nobody told me. I thinked it for myself."

"Do you see these grapes and sweets?" persisted the general. "You shall have as

THE GENERAL SAT IN HIS ARMCHAIR.

many of them as you like if you will let me know who suggested—who put it into your head—to come."

Tony's face grew red. He saw that he was not believed, but he answered gallantly:

"I told you—I thinked it for myself. Nobody said one word about coming, and I thinked of it only tonight when daddy had gone to the theater. He's told me lots of things about this house and how boo'ful it was."

"So you wanted to see it for yourself?"

"Yes, I wanted to see it, but that wasn't all. Santa Claus comes to this house, don't he?"

Tony pressed eagerly up to the general, who seemed not to know how to answer him.

"I can't say. When the children were small—perhaps"—

A vision came to him of himself and his wife stealing from cot to cot to fill small stockings with toys and sweets in days long passed away. He could not finish his sentence.

"I know!" cried Tony. "Santa Claus always came here when daddy was a little boy, and when I asked him why he never came to me daddy said that he only came to rich children and not to poor little boys like me."

"Are you poor?" said the general hastily.

"We're not rich," replied Tony, quoting his father, "but we ain't paupers yet. Daddy says so. What is paupers? I wanted daddy to tell me, but he had to go to the theater"—

"So he goes and amuses himself and leaves you with nobody to care for you?"

"It ain't very amusing," said Tony. "It makes him awful tired to play such silly tunes every night in the orkistra, but he has to do it, or else there wouldn't be no bread and milk for me nor no baccy for daddy."

"Where is your mother?" said the general.

The child's face grew grave. "God took her away," he answered. And the general suddenly felt that his old hatred of that singing woman who had beguiled his son into making her his wife was small minded and despicable. But another notion made him frown.

"So you came here to see what you could get? You wanted Santa Claus' presents?"

"Oh, no, I didn't! I only thinked I'd like to come, 'cause daddy says Santa Claus always came here at Christmas time, and it would be awful nice to see him, but I don't want anythink myself. I just want to tell him that there are heaps of little boys much poorer than me and that if he would go to the poor children it would be much better than going to the rich ones, don't you think so?"

"Well—sometimes," said the general.

"I thought, if you'd let me, I would stop here till quite, quite late," said Tony confidentially. "I'd wait about till he came, and then I'd speak to him about the poor little boys. Then I'd go home to daddy. But may I stop here, please, till Santa Claus has been?"

To his surprise, the old gentleman with the white mustache stooped down and took him into his arms. "My dear little boy," he said, "you may stop till Santa Claus comes, certainly, and you may stop forever if you like."

* * * * * * *

When Guy Fairfax, half distracted by the note which he found on his table, arrived, panting with haste, at Carston that night, he was shown at once into the dining room, where the general sat in his armchair with a child's figure gently cradled on his knee. Tony was fast asleep, and the general would not move or disturb him. He only looked at his son for a moment and then at the sleeping child.

"Forgive me, Guy!" he said at last. "You—and this boy—are all that remain to me. Let him stay—and stay yourself, too, and cheer the few last years of my life. I was wrong—I knew I was wrong—but you must come back to me."

And when Tony woke next morning in a soft white bed and a cozy room, such as he had never seen before, he was a little bit grieved to find that Santa Claus had filled a stocking for him while he had been fast asleep, but he was quite consoled when Guy told him that the old gentleman with the white hair and mustache, who must henceforth be called grandad, was the best Santa Claus that he had ever seen and that Tony might go to him after breakfast and sit on his knee while he sang how shepherds "watched their flocks by night" as the Christ Child came with gifts of peace and joy and good will to men.

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