

ALL ON ACCOUNT OF A LACK OF FRIENDSHIP, OR THE TALE OF TWO CATS

BY JANE WHITAKER

A girl told me a very amusing tale last night as we were having a friendly chat.

She buried her mother five years ago, and she has been through all of the loneliness that a girl feels when mother is gone, but she is very well-balanced, with a strong sense of humor.

"I came to Chicago two years before father died, Jane," she said, "and when I brought mother here after his death I had lost sight of the fact that she had spent her life in a little town where everybody is friendly, where the affairs of each individual are the affairs of the village, and even the ministers gossip.

"Consequently, when I installed mother in a tiny flat in a flat building I felt that I had done my share and went to work with a light heart.

"Mother never complained of being left alone, though her health was poor and she could not go out. But she was as eager as a little child to know everything that was going on in the world, and if I told her any tales of the men in the office she pictured each one as a possible suitor.

"Once she embarrassed me terribly when the bookkeeper, the father of five children, dropped in with some work he wanted my assistance on that night, and mother told him what an excellent cook I was and how lucky any man would be that married me. To stop her, I had to ask him about the health of each of his children.

"She used to sit at the window each night watching for me, and one night I looked up to see a horrible sight—something was extended in front of mother's eyes that I could not discover the meaning of, and I rushed up the stairs frantically and into the flat.

"Mother seemed a little frustrated,

but there was no evidence of the thing I had seen, so I questioned her.

"Why, Florence," she said, innocently, "what an imagination you have."

"At that moment something fell to the floor with a bang, and I discovered father's field glasses.

"Mother was quite defiant. I don't care," she said, "you leave me alone all day and nobody will make friends with me. I waived to the woman across the street a dozen times, and she won't waive back, and the other day I called out the window for her to come visit me and she never answered."

"But the field glasses, I insisted.

"I was only trying to see what kind of furniture they have in that flat across the way. Florence, I must have some pleasure."

"What was the use of arguing? I didn't. And I won't tell you of all the things that happened which finally showed me that mother couldn't get along in the city, but I want to tell you the funniest of all.

"I found a little cottage in the suburb, in an aristocratic place where I was sure the people wouldn't pay much attention to the vagaries of anyone living in such a humble home as we had, and my heart was light again.

"One evening, however, mother informed me that the people in the big house—about a quarter of a block away, Jane—had the most beautiful yellow cat. When I asked her where she had seen it she said it was on its own porch.

"Of course I knew she had been using the field glasses again, but she was such a little mother and she had that way of perking her head just like a sparrow that I simply couldn't scold.

"Two night later I came home,