

# THE DANA KIDS

BY  
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CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

## CHAPTER VII.

**A** YEAR had gone by and it was June again. The past winter had been one of comfort and freedom from care—quite different from the last spent at Dayton.

The Dana boys were growing fast, and Trux was already as tall as his mother. Bright, active and industrious, he was the life of the family, with promise of being a man of affairs when really grown up. Everybody liked Trux Dana. Willing, well-mannered and good-tempered, he made friends wherever he was known, and the wealthy young fellows who comprised the Arno Hunting and Fishing Club and had a bungalow two miles from the village, when they left the previous September presented him with a handsome rowboat as a mark of their regard. Every day during the season he had fetched their mail, and the city papers, and anything else they might require, from Lakeview. In this wise he had made himself not only useful, but won the club's lasting friendship also.

Trux and Cale were out in their boat one day when a smart pony cart, in which were seated a man and a boy, stopped on the shore of the lake. The boy was, perhaps, a year or so older than Trux, but so pale and frail-looking that he did not appear half his size. The strange lad seemed greatly interested in what the boys in the boat were doing, and, turning to the spectacled young man beside him, said, wistfully:

"I'd like to be able to do that. Do you believe I ever shall, Mr. Temple?"

"I trust so," replied the man, who was the boy's tutor, in a matter of fact tone of voice. Mr. Temple was not a very sympathetic person.

Noticing the boy's wistful look, Trux, in his frank, friendly way, approached and asked if he would not like to take a row out on the lake.

Before the boy could answer, the tutor shook his head negatively and ordered Patrick, the coachman, to drive on.

"How pale and thin he looked," said Cale, when the occupants of the pony cart were out of hearing. "I know he would like to have had a row if that spectacled chap hadn't been so afraid bossy. I wonder who he is—the boy I mean?"

"I don't know," replied Trux. "He's stopping at the Bellevue Hotel, at least the man with him is. I've seen him quite often, but never the boy, only driving as you saw him now. Sometimes he goes out in the pony cart and has a man in livery with him."

The next afternoon it happened that the boy, in his fashionably-appointed cart, drove along the lake side again, and this time without either the tutor or the man in livery.

At a word from the boy Patrick pulled up the pony just as Trux drew in a two-pound bass. Without a moment's hesitation, he ran up the bank to the road to show his prize to the wan-checked, delicate boy in the cart.

"Wouldn't you like to try your luck?" said Trux, cordially. "It's fine sport when the fish bite, as they are doing today."

"I can't," replied the boy, sadly. "I'm lame."

"Oh, I'm sorry," apologized Trux. "I did not know."

And then he saw that one leg seemed to be much shorter than the other, and the boy wore a kind of iron brace, or shoe, to make up for the difference in length.

"I've often thought I'd like to row and fish and swim and play ball like other boys," continued the pale young stranger, "but I can't. I'm too much of a cripple."

"Oh, no, you are not; come on," urged Trux. "It will do you good. You are not lame enough to always have to ride."

"I'd like to," replied the other, waveringly. "Is the water very deep?"

"Not just here," said Trux. "But out in the middle of the lake it is. We will keep near the shore if you like."

Patrick grinned his approval, and glanced admiringly at Trux, which was as much as he dare do when on duty.

"I believe I'll try it," decided the boy, "but first, will you tell me your name?"

"Why, yes. My name is James Truxton Dana—Trux for short. The fellow in the boat is my brother Cale, and you are?"

"Clyde Elgar," was the quick response. "I'm staying at the Bellevue Hotel. My people thought I'd get strong here. But I don't know," and he sighed doubtfully.

"Oh, I'm sure you will," encouraged Trux, careful not to notice the lame foot as the boy, with difficulty, alighted and stood unsteadily on the ground—something he was not used to doing unassisted.

"Row in, Cale," Trux called to his brother. "Clyde, Elgar is going to try his luck with the fish."

had quite forgotten his painful affliction and was as proud of his piscatorial achievement as a boy could be.

"This is great!" he exclaimed, pushing back his expensive straw hat and wiping his heated brow with a fine linen handkerchief. "I never went fishing before. Where do you live?"

"Just across the lake, in that white house you see beyond the two big elms," replied Trux. "There are five of us kids—four boys and the baby—a girl. How many are there of you?"

"Only myself. My father and mother are in Europe," answered Clyde. "They will not be home until November. A friend of my mother's told her about this place being so healthful and was certain I would be greatly benefited if I came here. I'm sure, I hope so."

"Oh, you will. You can't help it," said Trux. "I wouldn't mind being a little lame like that if I were you. I'd just fish and row and swim with the best of them, and make up for things that I could not do for things that I could."

"That is just like Trux," laughed Cale. "You couldn't floor him if he had no legs at all."

"Yes, you are both strong," rejoined Clyde, looking at his own thin, white hands and then at Cale's brown paws. "You are out in the sun most of the time, and can get about without anyone's help."

"And so can you, if you only try," said Trux. "Come across to supper with us, and you will see my mother and grandmother. Father is dead, and we had hard times at first until we were helped by a fairy god-mother."

Clyde looked incredulous, but Trux seemed perfectly sincere in his statement, and continued:

"You can send the pony cart around the lake by the lower road. We will row you across, and we will have the fish cooked for supper."

Clyde readily assented. Patrick was directed to come for him at eight o'clock, and that is how the "Dana kids" came to know, one, later, love Clyde Elgar.

Mrs. Dana welcomed the invalid boy with a mother's sympathetic tenderness for his misfortune, and grandma could not do enough for him. With all his wealth and hired attendants he seemed so lonely and apart from all sturdy, boyish companionship. Blossy marble friends on the instant, and showed him her doll and woolly sheep and various others of her personal treasures.

Clyde declared it was the best and jolliest day he had ever known, and could he come again?

"Yes," answered all the "kids" in one voice. "Come every day."

"You don't need a tutor always tagging after you, and acting as if you were not able to do a single thing for yourself," said Trux. "We will show you life at Parker Place, and a kind of society you never dreamed of. We'll introduce you to Uncle Silas, the best old fellow going, and Miss Jane Wiggins, a benevolent lady of our more youthful days, and Joe Barney and his charming sister, Sue. That will be a variety to make you laugh, and you will be so changed."

"Come out to the barn now and see my chickens," invited Winch. "I've got fifty chickens, and Cale's got twenty-two turkeys and as many ducks."

"And my three little pigs," spoke up Tommy, determined not to be left out of the party, or have his individual possessions slighted.

So they bore Clyde off in triumph to the barn, not one of the finely-natured little chaps appearing to notice his painful limp, and showed him the kind and number of their several special properties. When they returned to the house supper was ready, and Clyde was regaled with the fish that were swimming in the lake two hours before. It

was quite dark when Patrick came with the pony cart, and amid the enthusiastic waving of hats and hearty shouts of "come again soon, and stay all night," Clyde was driven away, pretty well tired out, but filled with a new sense of hope and self-help, that there was something in life for him to do and live for. Privately he told himself he meant to be as near like the Dana boys as possible—high-minded, courageous and manly.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**I** F Mr. Temple, the very correct tutor, objected to the new order of things, it was merely in a perfunctory way. Master Clyde was at Lakeview for his health and pleasure, and as he had, upon careful inquiry, learned that the Danas were the right sort of boys, it might be as well to let his delicate charge have a free rein during his vacation, and perhaps it would ultimately be of great and lasting benefit to him. Clyde needed companions of his own age, and a little acquaintance with "the middle classes," as Mr. Temple was pleased to term it, would do him no harm.

In a comparatively short time Clyde could fish and row as well as any of them. His blistered hands at first rather dismayed him, but he wouldn't give in, and kept at it until his palms were as hard as Cale's, and he laughed at tan and sunburn, even a few freckles was nothing to care about. Of course, he could not run, or join in any of the usual boyish games, but when the harvest apples were ripe, and Cale and Trux shinned up the crooked old trees like squirrels, and Winch and Tommy were not far behind, Clyde thought he might venture to at least go as high as the first large branches.

Success thus far, however, served only to fire his ambition to greater deeds of daring and up he went unmindful of his lameness, and then—it happened so quickly nobody knew just how, anyway, down he fell, and the first Trux knew there was a crash, and Clyde was lying on the ground with a broken leg and "groaning for all he was worth," as Winch graphically expressed it. Trux and Cale got him to the house as speedily and carefully as they could, and once on the lounge in the sitting room Trux made record time for Dr. Smedley. And you may believe the old doctor was hustled to the aid of the injured boy with a haste and insistence that would brook no delay. The broken bone was set, the leg encased in a plaster cast, and, with a twenty-pound bag of sand attached, Clyde was made as comfortable as possible.

In reply to Mrs. Dana's anxious inquiry Dr. Smedley assured her that it was a clean, simple fracture. The boy would be all right in six weeks at the most. He would come again in the morning and see how the patient was getting along.

After the doctor was gone it was Trux, as usual, who essayed the role of comforter. "Never mind, Clyde," he said. "It's your short leg any way, and that's a good thing, for it can't make it any worse than it was before. I'll have to let Mr. Temple know, though."

"That's so," replied Clyde. "But he mustn't make a row, or write to my father about it. I'll never forgive him if he does."

Mr. Temple, when duly informed of the accident, promised, if there were no serious complications, to keep silent, otherwise his duty would oblige him to tell Clyde's parents.

When Dr. Smedley came the next day, after taking the patient's temperature and giving him a thorough looking over to make sure there was no fever, he announced, with professional certainty, that everything was progressing favorably, and so far as any permanent injury was to be feared it was quite the reverse. There was, in fact, a possibility that the accident might result in lasting good.

The fracture in healing might induce or stimulate natural growth in the shrunken

limb, and where the best special treatment had failed the ordinary skill of a mere country doctor might succeed, or rather a broken bone in knitting might cause renewed vigor of a perfectly normal nature, thereby increasing the circulation and consequently the healthy growth of the withered member. If this were to be, Clyde would in time have as good a leg as any boy could wish, for there was no deformity. It was such a glorious possibility that Trux was afraid to speak of it to Clyde lest the hope end in disappointment, for Dr. Smedley had taken pains to say it was "only a possibility."

However it might be with his broken leg, the rest of Clyde Elgar was surely growing, for in three weeks' time he had gained, Trux was certain, ten pounds in weight. His dark, earnest eyes were bright with youth and returning health, his cheeks plump and rosy, and he was getting muscle, as anyone could see, and outgrowing all his clothes, at an amazing rate. Trux hoped great things from the stretching effect of the bag of sand when the plaster cast was taken off.

Dr. Smedley smiled and rubbed his hands together in a pleased way more and more at every visit, and winked knowingly at Trux every time he caught his eye.

And what didn't those "kids" do to make the time pass pleasantly to Clyde? As soon as he was deemed convalescent they hung around his bed—the whole four of them, anxious to be of use, and Blossy begged to be lifted up for a "tiss" about every fifteen minutes. When he was able to sit in an invalid's chair they had him out on the porch, where he could enjoy the clear sunshine and breathe the pure, invigorating air, blowing cool and fresh over miles and miles of garnered fields and hilly heights.

Mr. Temple came every day, as in duty bound, to see how his young charge was progressing and departed each time well satisfied that Clyde was in good hands and getting along finely.

Mrs. Dana and grandma made no end of dainty dishes to tempt the invalid's appetite, which was now growing robust, and gaining "a pinch or two every meal," as Cale inelegantly noted it.

Finally came the great event—the removal of the plaster cast. Dr. Smedley looked exceedingly grave, yet, withal, confident at the critical moment. At last, after a careful examination, he said, heartily:

"Clyde Elgar, my boy, I congratulate you! I was almost afraid to think it, but you have two as sound legs as any boy living! The fracture and consequent inflammation was the direct cause of renewed vitality in the puny limb you are improving, too, otherwise, Grow? Why, you are two inches taller than you were before you had that lucky fall!"

Then Trux and Cale could keep still no longer. With one accord they fell to hugging Clyde with bear-like energy.

"Bless the old harvest apple tree and Dr. Smedley!" exclaimed Trux, delightedly. "When you are a little stronger, old man, and it gets a little used to doing the right thing, you will dance a two-step on that leg. You will make a home run sure, and a tackle that will beat the band! Why, your folks will be so overjoyed they won't know what to do. And we—"

Words failed him. Trux stopped short. There was a general howl of applause, in the midst of which Mrs. Dana begged that there be less noise lest they excite Clyde too much.

But it was no use. Clyde was "all right" Nobody ever died from joy. "Hurra!" shouted Trux, as a climax, and "Hurra!" came the jubilant chorus. Even Dr. Smedley joined in, so infectious was the rejoicing.

And then it was seen that Trux's eyes—those wonderful, magnetic, blue-gray eyes of his, were full of tears, and so were Clyde's. The glad "hurra!" had its inspiration from a warm, tender heart.

Dr. Smedley said, "Well, well! half to himself and turned away with a rising in his throat that really surprised him. It had been so long since he had experienced anything of the kind.

When the happy tumult had somewhat subsided grandma bent over and kissed the boy on cheek and brow.

"His mother will be so glad and thankful," she prayerfully whispered. "Her dear and only child! How rich a blessing has the kind Father given her this day!"

Mr. Temple, the next morning when he called, heard the good news with genuine feeling. He had become so accustomed to Clyde's hobbling limp that to see him with two normal legs seemed little less than miraculous.

It so happened that Uncle Silas unexpectedly came over from Dayton that morning, and he, too, had a spell of sincere thanksgiving, and said Clyde was a brave, sensible chap that no amount of money could spoil.

But the help being that when he was with the Dana kids. They were straight goods, all of them, but Trux was his favorite.

Even Joe and Sue came to offer congratulations—the latter also to show her new hat, with its wreath of stiff blue cornflowers. Sue's nose still turned up, her sandy hair was as hard to manage as ever, but she was not so thin, and "in time she might be passable," as Uncle Silas remarked, not unkindly.

As to Miss Jane Wiggins, she was too busy with her all-important "church work" to sympathize with anybody, and as one of the managers of the Haven Hill Home, she had no time to make a fuss over a boy getting well of a broken leg.

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**A SCREECH-OWL SAT ON A LOSTY PEBBLE.**  
His mind intent on printed letters,  
Thought he, "Sure, such a learned bird  
Was never seen or known before!"



**A PERU WOODPECKER SIGHTED THE SPOT.**  
His thoughts on bugs entirely bent,  
He spied his prey, he struck it so far  
Down from his perch that 'twould soon

THE OWL AND THE WOODPECKER.

(A Fable.)

M. L.

Remember, be on short or tall.

Read often goes before a fall.