

'A Little Lonely Lad'

By

Velda Lillian Dunn age 14 (1928)

{transcribed as written}

It was Christmas eve and most people were home enjoying themselves.

It was a dreary cold night but Sir James Barton had important business to attend to for a few days and being as he had no family to be with he left and Nora the housekeeper stayed and went about her work.

As Nora was clearing away the remains of her Xmas eve meal the door bell rang. To her surprise she opened the door to behold a small lad shaking with the cold and a look of hunger on his thin face. Without a minutes loss she ushered the lad into the drawing room where a bright, cheery fire was burning. Then telling the boy to sit down and get warm she hurried into the kitchen.

On looking around the boys eyes rested on some paintings which held his interest until Nora was at his side with a large bowl of hot soup.

Nora didn't have to say "drink the soup he started right in. So sitting on the couch next to him she started to question the lad.

How did it happen that you are so hungry & cold and came to this place?

Well he began as he put down the empty bowl I'll tell you just what happened.

When I was about 6 years old my mother died and father at that time could not afford to keep me with him he was learning to be a painter and his time was all taken. Then one of my mothers best friends wanted to care for me in the worst way and after a long talk Dad promised I could go with them on a long trip they were going to make He said I would have good care and it would give him a chance to straighten things out at home.

I was old enough to realize the loss of my mother and I missed her terribly but I soon learned to love Mrs. Winston and she loved me. Then when we had been gone for a few months we started back home we had gone almost around the world when on one of the trains we had an accident the train wrecked. Many people were killed including Mr. & Mrs. Winton. I don't know how it happened, but I was saved. My dad never heard about it, the address was lost and I didn't know it. I was taken to an Orphan Home. I was there for about four years when I was adopted. My parents as I soon learned to call them moved to San Francisco I was treated lovely for the first few months then my father started drinking I was beat and treated like a dog. I loved to mess around with paints and draw but my dad wouldn't stand for it so I would sneak away in some corner and draw all day then hide my precious drawings.

Finally as I grew older I resolved to run away and try to find my long lost father who I knew must be around some place. I had a small picture of him that I managed to keep through the years.

So I started out about 2 months ago hunting in vain for a trace of him Then I started out in this district I watched& waited I grew more and more hungry and cold I begged for food but got very little. Then thinking my search was all in vain I stumbled up to your house thinking I might be able to get a little food and shelter. I don't want to go back to those people but I don't seem to be able to trace my dad.

You're the first one I have told my story to because I think you are very kind to me and I thank you very much. Nora all this time sat very still hardly breathing then she finally asked what his name was.

Bobby is my name but I can't remember my other real name because I've had a couple of others.

Would you remember your father if you should see him? No only by this picture I have and Bobby handed Nora the picture.

With an exclamation of pure joy Nora let out a yell and putting her arms around Bobbys neck she said Bobby dear you are in your own fathers home right this minute. Look Bobby see that picture on the wall compare it with yours.

Bobby couldn't speak he cried with joy.

Then Nora told Bobby her story of how Mr. Barton had hunted high and low for him when he had not heard from Mrs. Winton then when he did hear of the train wreck he heard you were killed also.

There never was such a heart broken man as your father was after that.

Ive been keeping house for him ever since and he and I have learned to love each other dearly and are to be married in a short time He was called away on some important business concerning his paintings, because he has become one of the greatest painters of the year and now has all the money he could ever wish for. But when he comes home and finds his son is alive and here his life will be complete.

Now dear son come and I'll show you where you can sleep as tomorrow is Xmas and weve found our presents already so now we must rest youve had a very hard time of it.

II

Xmas morning dawned bright and early and Nora was busy stirring about the kitchen getting a good hot breakfast for three as she had called Mr. Barton home on more important business than he was attending to.

Bobby dressing in a hurry and coming into the kitchen saw the table set for three. Nora who are we having for breakfast?

Well my dear I'll tell you. Ding Ling, Oh, theres the door bell and throwing off her apron she ran to the door. Bobby was walking through the drawing room admiring his fathers beautiful paintings when someone gently put their arms around him. Words couldn't express the meaning of expressions exchanged between Father & Son.

Then Mr. Barton motioned for Nora to come to him Now my son I want you to meet your new mother.

Mother! Son! was all that was said between the new relations.

III

The Bride & Groom came out of the church arm in arm and following very close at hand was the son. And what a joy it was for the three to be together again.

The end