

# Uncle James' Victory

By CLINTON DANGERFIELD

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Uncle James helped himself to another portion of the very appetizing roast chicken before him.

"It's a light meat and agrees with me when properly cooked like this," he observed, with the delightful confidence most people have that their individual tastes are unfailingly interesting to every one. "My present cook understands meats to perfection."

The Boy, generally referred to by the ladies of his acquaintance as "really a lovely fellow," made haste to agree with his uncle's estimate. In reality he could not have told you whether he was eating chicken or ham sandwich, his mind being absorbed by thoughts of momentous importance, all connected with one problem. This problem, no easy one to solve, was how to approach Uncle James in such a way as to incline his heart toward the lady of the Boy's choice.

For the Boy was nearly twenty-four, and in his mature judgment Helen Vanderveer was the perfection of feminine beauty. But Uncle James had a disagreeable way of harping on usefulness and ignoring beauty altogether. Helen belonged to what New York calls her "smart set," and the Boy had his doubts as to Uncle James' opinion of his choice.

"You're not eating," growled his uncle. "You've got something on your mind, or what you call your mind," he added, with the charming frankness of near relatives.

"Helen Vanderveer," blurted the Boy, his nervousness in this crisis scattering his diplomacy to the winds.

Uncle James laid down his fork as hastily as though the tender pullet had been a sitting hen.

"Helen Vanderveer?" he shouted. "Are you going to marry into that set of tailored idiots after all I've said to you?"

"If I can get your approval," said the Boy meekly. Let no one think the worse of him for his humility. He was



"DID YOU RING, SIR?" DEMANDED A SWEET, FAMILIAR VOICE.

penniless, and Miss Vanderveer had been curiously notified by a very determined pair of parents that unless she secured a count at least she need expect no income. Vanderveer pere had waded through much discomfort to attain his present position, and he meant to show the world that he was as good socially as his check was financially.

Thus the outlook for Helen and the Boy was depressing. Uncle James was as determined as the elder Vanderveer. "My approval!" he cried furiously. "Why, you young jackass! That girl would ruin you in three months! No, sir, you shall be saved from yourself." He leaned back in his chair. "I've chosen a wife for you myself, a woman that will be the making of you, the kind of woman that will help to make my old age a pleasure to both of us."

"You!" gasped the Boy, turning pale. "You've chosen a wife for me! I shan't marry her!"

"Oh, yes, you will," returned Uncle James composedly. "When I adopted you, a helpless orphan, I said to myself, 'I'll see he gets the right wife.' And you shall have her, with my blessing."

The calm of desperation came to the Boy. Rather than give up Helen he would join the "white wings" and earn his bread and hers on the street. Then he shivered to think how Helen would figure in such a programme, his dainty Helen, whom he had always seen in trailing gowns except for a change to her spotless yachting suit.

"May I ask," he said, trying to suppress his rage, "whom you have selected for me?"

"My cook," said Uncle James coolly. "You needn't start up and snort like a wild horse. She is a lady born, but forced to earn her bread by reverses. Instead of pounding on some infernal piano or screeching on the stage or herding half a dozen spoiled youngsters as a governess she had the sense to take up a woman's highest profession, cooking."

"Cooking! You have a fine idea of a woman's ability!" muttered the Boy.

"Certainly I have. The good cook conserves man's intellectual powers, leaving him undistracted by dyspepsia or other nightmares. Since this girl has been with me my brain has been 50

per cent clearer. As to all this rot about woman's companionship, I tell you a well roasted piece of meat or a light loaf of bread is a better stimulant than all the companionship of the best petticoat going. Look at the table, beautifully set! Remember the promptness of our meals for the past fortnight. She's waiting on the table today because the maid is sick. She's never sick."

The Boy rose, choking with rage. "Understand me, sir," he said as soon as he could speak clearly, "that from now on—"

"Did you ring, sir?" demanded a sweet, familiar voice.

The Boy whirled around to be confronted by a slim, demure vision in cap and apron. The vision ignored him completely, her eyes being fixed respectfully on Uncle James.

"Did you ring, sir?" she repeated. "I was sure I heard the bell."

"No, Mary, I didn't ring," said her employer complacently. "But since you are here you may fill my glass again with water."

Mary complied. The Boy, standing dumbly by his chair, watched her slender, steady fingers as she served his uncle.

When the girl disappeared Uncle James demanded triumphantly:

"Isn't she neat and pretty?"

The Boy attacked his dinner with an appetite which he had failed to show before.

"She's neat enough," he said coolly. "With your permission I'll help her clean up the dishes after dinner and see what I think of her."

A few minutes later Helen Vanderveer and the Boy faced each other in Uncle James' kitchen, with a sink full of dirty dishes between them.

The Boy, coat off and sleeves rolled up, was turning the hot water on with one hand and flourishing a dish mop in the other.

"What in the wide world ever made you think of such a gloriously foxy move as this?" he demanded.

"Why," confessed Miss Vanderveer, laughing and yet blushing a little, "I owe it all to a sharp tongued old woman on Hester street. Some of us were down there slumming, and I carried an armful of flowers. I offered her a rose, and what do you think she did with it?"

"Wore it next her heart forever more," said the Boy promptly.

"Not she. She threw it in the dirty grate and with arms akimbo delivered an address. 'I've heard about you rich folks,' quoth she; 'how you come noshin' round poor folks' rooms, puffin' yourselves up that you are teachin' us some-thin'. Teach, indeed! When you know enough to fill a workman's pail with a decent dinner, then I'll hear to your flower missions an' your religions.'"

"We got out of there promptly. The others said they were simply paralyzed by her impudence, but her words stuck in my head. I determined to show that old woman something, and I did. Afterward, when I found from you that your uncle was an economical gourmet, I saw reason to bless my secret lessons at the cooking school. I am supposed," she added, laughing, "to be with the De Peysters in Philadelphia."

The Boy dropped the dish mop and folded her in an ecstatic embrace, from which they were finally aroused by a sharp voice at the pantry door:

"Turn off that water, will you?"

The Boy leaped to the faucet, for the forgotten dishwater in the sink was pouring over the edge, spluttering greasily everywhere. But the gourmet apparently did not mind.

"You seem to have come to a good understanding," he said dryly.

How He Got the Vote.

A story is related of an ambitious gentleman who, rather unwisely, stood as a candidate for some office and who at the close of the poll was found to have received only one vote. The candidate was excessively mortified, and to increase his chagrin, his neighbors talked as if it were a matter of course that he had given that one vote himself. This annoyed him so much that he offered a two and a half guinea suit of clothes to his only supporter if the individual would come forward and declare himself.

An Irishman responded to his appeal, proved his claim and called for the reward.

"How did it happen," inquired the candidate, taken quite by surprise—"how did it happen that you voted for me?"

The Hibernian hesitated, but on being pressed he answered:

"If Ol tell yez, ye won't go back on the suit o' clothes?"

"Oh, no. I promise that you shall have the suit anyhow."

"Faix, then, yer 'anner," replied Pat, "shure Ol made a mistake in the ballot paper."

Robbers Among the Bees.

To the person who knows nothing about bees they represent the supreme type of industry. But even the bee communities are disturbed by those of their own kind who break through and steal. Robber bees are always a source of anxiety to beekeepers, and during fall and winter the marauders seem particularly active. Having gathered no honey, or, at any rate, an insufficient supply for themselves, they will descend upon a hive, kill its industrious occupants and carry off the golden treasure in an astonishingly short space of time. We know of a recent instance in which the attack was developed and the home bees killed in a couple of hours. Sometimes hives will attack neighboring hives. In such cases the old straw "skip" was better than the modern arrangement, for a knife thrust through the top would break the comb and set the honey free, at which the thieves would instantly return to seal up their own store. It is not primarily in their industry that bees are human.

—London Chronicle.

## 5¢ MAN FROM NEW YORK

By JAMES NORFLEET

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It was by no means an unusual item in the morning papers. It consisted of less than twenty lines and was to the effect that the cashier and confidential man of the B. and O. Broadway, had been missing for two or three days and that upon examination it had been found that he was short \$15,000 in his accounts. The usual explanation was put forward—the races, the stock market and an uptown apartment—and it was added that the police were on the defaulter's trail.

A Cuban who wandered down to the north shore of his island one morning soon after daylight for a dip in the surf came across a sight which startled him and sent him running back to his sleeping comrades among the trees.



HE FOUGHT HIS LAST AND GREATEST FIGHT.

There was a battered old cliff on the sands, and a few feet from it lay a man asleep.

"Caramba! Wake up! Wake up!" said one of the half dozen Cubans who came down and surrounded the sleeper and wondered who and what he was.

"Well?" asked the man as he rubbed his eyes and sat up.

"Who are you?"

"You can call me the Man From New York."

"How did you get here?"

The man pointed to the old boat and rose to his feet to yawn and stretch.

"What do you want here?" continued the questioner.

"Take me to General Garcia. I guess he always wants recruits, and I am ready to join."

That was the introduction of the Man From New York. He gave no name and no information about himself. He simply said he was ready to fight for the cause, and he was assigned to the ranks and given arms. After the first skirmish he was made a sergeant; after the second, a lieutenant. He was a cool, fearless fighter and an acquisition. No questions were asked of him by the Cubans. He was one of a hundred Americans who had found their way to the island to take a hand in the revolution. Among themselves, however, they said:

"He is a fighter—too much of a fighter. It must be his desire to get killed. He came to us because he had done something to disgrace his name in the States, and he feels that he can never go back. We do not care to know what it is. If we had a thousand more like him we could capture Havana."

For a year Garcia's band neither won a victory nor suffered a defeat in which the Man From New York did not participate. As time went on he grew more morose and vindictive. His voice was seldom heard except in connection with duty, and the Spaniards came to know him as a terror. A price was put upon his head. Men hunted for him as dogs hunt for game, but they failed to catch him. Two or three times the proffered reward brought about his betrayal by men he had led to victory through forest and swamp, but he escaped falling into the hands of the enemy until the cause of freedom was almost won.

A thousand Spanish soldiers had crossed the famous trocha to beat the forests. Garcia had planned their destruction and gathered reinforcements from every quarter.

In the gray of the morning the Man From New York led thirty men against the flank of the thousands to produce a diversion, and for a time the thousands were thrown into a panic and suffered great loss. Then the Cuban general's plans went wrong, and the enemy were allowed to take heart and rally. The regiment swung about and attacked the thirty. The thirty soon became only twenty-five, then twenty, then ten. Then the ten surrendered. The Man From New York stormed and raved and entreated. He cursed them in one breath and entreated in another, but the ten had had enough fighting.

"So it is you!" exclaimed the Spanish colonel when the leader of the ten had bowed to the inevitable. "I would rather have captured you than Garcia himself. You shall die in the streets of Havana after the governor general and the people have had a good look at you. As for the others, let four be taken out and shot at once. We will decide the fate of the others later on."

The five were confined in a sugar

mill for the rest of the day and night, and the Spaniards looked as ever a great victory. For a time the Man From New York sat apart from the others and did not enter into their hopes and fears. Then a Cuban sergeant, a Cuban who had lived in Boston for years, but had made his way back to his native land to give his life for liberty, crossed over to him and said:

"They may spare us, senor, as we are Cubans, but your death is certain."

"Only a matter of a couple of days," was the reply.

"We have known you, and yet we have not known you well," continued the sergeant. "You have a name; you have friends in the States; you want to send a last message to some one."

"I have no name, no home, no friends," replied the lieutenant after a moment. "There is no one to whom I would send a message. If any one thinks of me it is with contempt."

"A mother?" softly queried the sergeant.

"Yes, but no message."

"A girl—a sweetheart?"

The lieutenant shook his head, and the sergeant drew away a pace, and sighed. Presently he whispered:

"Senor, we have been proud of you. You have been a devil in battle. You have made your mark, and you have got to die because of it. We wish to remember you as a fighter."

"Don't worry, my man," said the officer as he laid a hand on the other's arm. "I see your drift. You don't want to think of me as standing blindfolded against a wall to be shot at. Well, that shall never happen. Leave me alone now and wait for the morning."

An hour later the officer was put into a room by himself and told that at daylight he would be started for Havana under escort. He was awake and alert at daylight. When the corporal's guard came to lead him forth he fought his last and greatest fight. The Spanish soldiers told of it to the last day of their occupation of Cuba. When at last he was killed his enemies stood around the dead body and removed their hats in respect. "Two dead and three wounded" was the corporal's report.

One morning last month a daily paper raked up the old case of defalcation in connection with another affair and closed by saying, "As far as we can learn the police have never secured a clue to the defaulter's whereabouts."

A Comical Situation.

In a volume of war reminiscences Major Stiles, a Confederate soldier, tells this story of the retreat from Richmond just before Lee's surrender at Appomattox: "I remember in all the discomfort and wretchedness of the retreat we had been no little amused by the naval battalion under that old hero Admiral Tucker. The soldiers called them the 'Aye, Ayes,' because they responded 'Aye, aye!' to every order, sometimes repeating the order itself and adding, 'Aye, aye, it is, sir!' As this battalion, which followed immediately after ours, was getting into position and seamen's and landsmen's jargon and movements were getting a good deal mixed in the orders and evolutions, all being harmonized, however, and looked into shape by the 'aye, aye,' a young officer of the division staff rode up, saluted Admiral Tucker and said, 'Admiral, I may possibly be of assistance to you in getting your command into line.' The admiral replied, 'Young man, I understand how to talk to my people.' And thereupon followed 'a grand moral combination' of 'right flank' and 'left flank,' 'starboard' and 'larboard,' 'aye, aye,' and 'aye, aye,' until the battalion gradually settled down into place."

The Club Among Savages.

The club, or mace, was probably the first, as it is the most universal, weapon, and every nation would seem to have some form peculiar to itself. The Maori spent years of labor in grinding to shape his battle-axe-like "mace" out of jade or greenstone. The New Britain savage makes a hole through a granite pebble by dropping water on it while hot and thus forms the head of his club. The Fijian found ready to his hand a tree whose evenly radiating roots he trimmed into an exact likeness of the medieval "morgentester," wherewith the Swiss battered down the Austrians at Sempach.

The mace of the Persian horseman was of steel, with a blade formed of six or more radiating heads or edges, and had often a basket hilt like a sword. The terrible Mahmud of Ghazni, like the knight of Border song, "at his saddle girth had a good steel spertie full ten pound weight and more," and it was with this that he shattered the idol of Somnath before the eyes of the horrified priests, strewing the temple floor with the jewels hidden within.—Chambers' Journal.

How Buffaloes Were Slaughtered.

The buffaloes traveled "on the run" and in great herds. It was always a helter skelter dash at full speed, heads down, long, shaggy hair tossing over gleaming eyes and every one for himself. If an animal fell it was trampled to death by the thousands passing on. The annual migration was simply a wild dash for food. The leaders were not always so wild and stupid as the rest of the herd which they led in the awful scramble. They would scent danger, but that often availed little with the galloping, bellowing ones behind them.

So the hunters used to frighten the leaders into taking a direct line for a ravine, where, if the front ranks halted, they would be pushed over by thousands. It was a reckless, wholesale slaughter of noble animals and accounts partly for the scarcity of the buffalo in later years.—J. L. Vance in Our Animal Friends.

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