Little Sister’s Influence

Roy Kyner*
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By Roy Kyner, ’40

ALTHOUGH I didn’t know it for seventeen years, Heywood Broun was right when he said that there is a very special kind of fun and elation which men miss by lack of intimate association with very young children. Before the advent of my little sister, Janet, I considered babies very nice, of course, but only in the eyes of their parents were they very beautiful and highly intelligent. Those I saw seemed to have dirty faces most of the time, were addicted to scattering the floor with miscellaneous toys, frequently cried, and required the use of great numbers of large soft squares of cloth.

But Janet has changed me. Now I see beauty and intelligence in any youngster. I know their apparent faults are minor, for Janet taught me something of patience, trustfulness, responsibility, and love; and of these, patience came first.

Did you ever try to take candy from a child? The man who originated the saying, “Easy as taking candy from a baby,” was not a father. Not only is it hard to get away, but it is hard to keep away. Try it—try reasoning with the child, but I warn you: You will need patience, and if you lack patience you will have to develop some. I did.

When she holds your hand as you walk down the street or when she looks up into your eyes as you explain some story to her, then you know what trustfulness is. The grip of her tiny fingers produces an elated and responsible feeling. You want to do everything for her, smooth her path through life, protect her from any hurt, make her fine and kind, make her happy! You decide to reform some of your own little faults to be a better influence for her. The sense of responsibility produces a glow of nobility within that is renewed every time you re-decide to reform.

May, 1937
Finally, there is a very special kind of love for a little sister. She gave me some idea how parents must feel toward their children. When she sleeps, speaks, laughs, gets up cheerfully after a hard fall—then I feel a flood of tenderness toward the charm and innocence of childhood.

No Fragile Thing

By Agda Gronbech, '38

LOVE is no fragile thing—but northern wind That sweeps across a plain and brings a snow To bite into your face, and make you know The cruel power of beauty. Love is not kind When you are northern-bound and cannot turn. Yet stand a moment! Yonder bare-limbed strength Of tamarack tree that does not stoop, at length Will find an April beauty. Only learn:

That love, though beauty, carries stinging pain; That through its blowing drifts there comes a light Of candle in a window—For the trail Which pointed northward must lead home again. I only know that love this winter night Has faced its biting wind and did not fail.