

Was Charlie a Coward?

by Rosalys Stockwell

Jean and Charlie Merritt were home from India with their parents for a holiday. It was an exciting time for them. They had read out a letter from Uncle John, asking them to spend their Christmas and New Year's holidays on his farm in Devon. "Our youngsters are about the same age as yours, and the girls are as good a sport as her mother," he wrote.

"Do let us see," the children pleaded.

So Mother packed their boxes for the journey. At the station Uncle John was waiting with Mavis and Ted to meet them. Soon they were all packed into the car for the homeward drive across the moors.

Aunt Pam saw them a warm welcome and the children's eyes sparkled when they saw the tea-table spread with eggs and bacon, hot scones, a meat pie, cake, strawberries and a dish of cream.

Soon they were all seated round the table enjoying the good fare. Aunt Pam shared tales of hard winters when she was a girl, and the fun they had with sleighing, tobogganing and skating.

"I do wish the snow would come now," said Bonnie, 10-years-old Mavis.



With his muffer round his head "I'll come sooner than you think," said Uncle John, as he tapped the barometer, while Jean and Charlie felt rather excited at seeing real ice and snow which they had only read of in books.

Jean was sharing rooms with Mavis. Next morning when she woke the room was very dark and cold. She jumped up and drew the blind, and gave a wild shout.

"Look! Look! Mavis! It's all white. I can't see the beds."

"Yes, it's a perfect fall. Now we'll have some fine fun these holidays."

Their aunt came in and found Jean still staring at the unfamiliar scene.

"Hurry up and get dressed," said Aunt Pam. "The boys are down already, and Ted is eating the to-boggans."

After breakfast Ted and Mavis took their cousins to a steep sloping field where they had great fun sliding down and sometimes upsetting in the snow. But delicate Jean found it toboggans up the hill asin.

Ted and Mavis were amused to see the surprise on their cousin's face when they saw the tracks of hares, rabbits and small beasts, all neatly printed on the snow.

"How big a tiger's pug would look!" cried Jean. But it wasn't all fun for the children from India for the cold nipped their fingers and toes, and tweaked their noses. Charlie wasn't sorry when the big farmhouse bell called them home to dinner.

Ted and Mavis teased their cousins who thought everything so new and strange. But Aunt Pam said: "Wouldn't you look silly Ted, if you were suddenly set down in India and couldn't speak the language?"

On the first Sunday in the New Year they went to church, and Jean and Charlie were delighted to see real holy berries instead of the imitation ones used in India. They heard a sermon on courage which pleased Charlie for he did want to be brave.

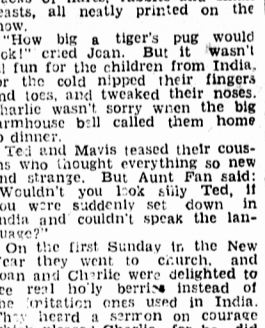
"That evening Ted said: "When the ice comes you will see some sport."

"You won't have long to wait," said Uncle John. "His freezing hard and likely to last. I hear the Manor pond is to be thrown open to-morrow when the ice is safe to bear."

This was exciting news.

"There are several old pairs of skates in the cupboard," said Aunt Pam. "You children had better clean them. Ted, you must teach your cousins to skate properly. I don't want them to tumble about too much and get hurt."

"We'll look after them, Mum," promised Mavis. "They'll soon learn and then we can play hockey on the ice."



The small figure crept over the ice. "Now throw," shouted the keeper when Charlie got near enough. Charlie sidestepped himself and threw with all his strength. The Hibernian fell just within reach of Mavis. She grasped it with one hand, then with both. Her strength was failing, the rescue was only just in time. Gently she was drawn over the thin ice to the safety of the bank.

Charlie heard loud shouts of "Hooray! Brave lad!" But he did not stay to be thanked. Hastily he took off his skates, he ran back to the farm by a short cut.

The house was all astir, making ready to put Mavis to bed with a hot drink and blankets. Charlie crept up to his bedroom, feeling glad that nobody noticed him much. He hoped perhaps they would not call him coward again, but he had been afraid to crawl upon that cracking ice. He wondered what Ted would say next time they met and hoped he'd say nothing at all.

Ted had told the family all about the rescue. Uncle John patted him on the shoulder and said: "My lad we can never thank you enough for saving our Mavis. It's the highest form of courage doing brave deeds when you are secretly afraid."

Aunt Pam agreed, and they all made much of him.

Charlie felt that it was prayer that had helped him to come forward and save his little cousin. In his heart he thanked God for sending him the courage he had asked for.



(THE END.)

FORTUNE-TELLING GAMES for the CHRISTMAS PARTY

We all like to have our fortune told at Christmas time. Although we may look upon it just as a party fun, it is always interesting to hear what the future has in store for us, and the guest who can tell fortunes is likely to be the most popular person at the party.

But although it is thrilling to have your fortune told in actual, waiting, your turn is apt to become tedious, especially where there are a large number of guests. A much easier plan for the party hostess who wants to keep everyone happy at once is to have some fortune-telling games in which everyone can take a go.

Remove from the pack of 16 the card representing yourself or the "subject" whose fortune you are telling, choosing it as follows: King of Hearts represents a young, fair man, King of Diamonds an older, fair (or grey-haired) man, King of Clubs a young, dark man, King of Spades an older, dark man, Queen of Hearts represents a young, fair woman, Queen of Diamonds an older, fair (or grey-haired) woman, Queen of Clubs a young, dark woman, Queen of Spades an older, dark woman.

Keeping Company
Would you like to know what friends you are going to make in 1944? Then from a pack of playing cards all the court cards—that is, the ace, king, queen and knave of each suit, 16 cards in all. Remove from the pack of 16 the card representing yourself or the "subject" whose fortune you are telling, choosing it as follows: King of Hearts represents a young, fair man, King of Diamonds an older, fair (or grey-haired) man, King of Clubs a young, dark man, King of Spades an older, dark woman.

Draw three cards, face down towards the remaining ones, add the "subject" to these shuffle and turn up. By noting the details below you can foretell the company you will keep in the coming year.



FIG 1
Kings and Queens have the meaning already given. In addition, Kings frequently suggest people of authority or superior social standing. All Knaves indicate a slight "spot of bother." Black Knaves (and also black Queens) suggest gossip or slander; red Knaves show flirtations, or people in uniform (perhaps a policeman stopping your car, or a postman bringing your one-tax form).

Ace of Diamonds means money. Ace of Hearts love and affection. Ace of Clubs work and progress. Ace of Spades slight obstacles or else a change of circumstances.

Two examples are shown in Fig. 1. From which you will soon learn to forecast an interesting fortune. In each case a cross indicates the "subject." Miss Blonde, for instance, if it likely to have a flirtation, or perhaps an interest in a young man about her, but the Ace of Hearts shows that she will find the right "an before long. Her dark-haired brother or superior social standing, as shown in the second example, is all set for a good year in the world of business. Money and promotion is promised by the two nines, while the King of Spades suggests an influential friend who will help to make this happy state of affairs.

Dart Board Fortunes
Every home has a dart-board nowadays and when you grow tired of the ordinary way of playing, try fortune-telling instead. For this, take no notice of the numbers, but let the four main divisions on the board indicate four aspects of life, as shown in Fig. 2, respectively money, home, work and travel. If you cannot remember these four, write them on slips of paper, and fix to the board with drawing-pins.

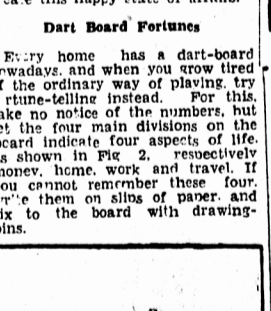


FIG 2
Each person throws three darts either aiming definitely at a particular spot or letting each dart take its chance. If a dart goes off the

board, you may have another throw. When all three have been placed, you can determine the "subject's" fortune from the following meanings:

A dart in any of the named spaces, good progress, happiness and success in that particular aspect of life. Either side of a space—changes and new schemes in that part of your life, but ultimately for the good. "Next door but one" to a

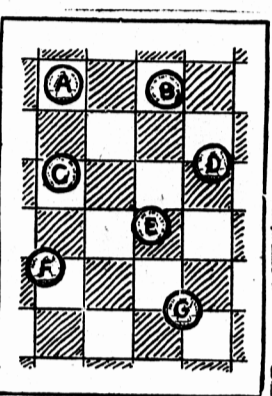


FIG 3
spaces—difficulties and hindrances, which will make or mar your future according to the way you deal with it.

A dart in the centre is specially lucky. To miss a good year all round. To score a "double" means a "double dose" of whatever the rest of the space indicates, whether good or bad, and usually with a "re-bill." A dart in the outer rim of the board shows a rather "melancholy" year to come, with few changes and slow but steady progress. The position of the three darts shown in Fig. 2 may be translated in the following terms: This will be an exceptionally good year financially, with a promise of either new home or an enjoyable holiday which opens new prospects. You and your friends will remain much the same, bringing happiness and quiet contentment.

Spin A Coin
You need a chess or draughts board for this game and a number of "spun" coins, one for each person. The coin will depend on the size of your squares. It should be fairly large in proportion to the squares, similar to the proportions shown in Fig. 3.

Everyone spins a coin, choosing "spun" parts of the board. When all the coins are at rest on the board your luck is forecast according to the positions of the coins, as shown in Fig. 3.

Home and love affairs go smoothly. Make few changes this year.

Irregularly placed within "quiet" new home or an addition to the family. Look for happiness this year within your home circle.

Touching one line—unexpectedly serious—strongly "re-bill" in business—small financial improvement if at home.

Centrally across one line—

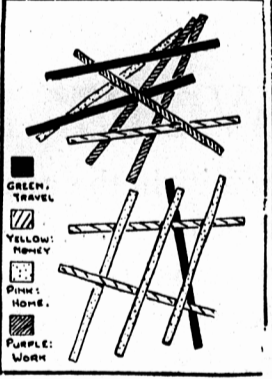


FIG 4
new friends or interests—new money job—ready to settle any opportunity which comes along. Touching two lines—you have to make decisions in the coming year—friends or events are pulling you in two different ways. Touching two lines and a corner—you will go places and do things this year—travel and excitement is in store for you. Centrally at junction of four squares—this is your lucky year—everything will go right for you—Providing you look before you leap, you are sure to leap in the right direction!

Spills For Luck
Have a bundle of coloured spills about the house, those that men use to light their pipes. If you have you can buy a bundle for a copper or so, and they are just the things for fortune-telling.

They are usually in four colours—green, yellow, pink and purple. To each colour allot one of the aspects of your life, as for the dart-board arrangement—green for travel, yellow for money, pink for home and friends, purple for work.

If your spills have a different assortment of colours from those stated here, you can substitute others to suit your purpose, providing you always keep to the same ones.

Give each person twenty spills—five in each of the four colours. If you have sufficient spill, it is good fun to let everyone "spill their spills" together, giving each person a clear space on the floor.

Mix your twenty spills well together, hold them between your two hands at shoulder height, and let the spills drop gently to the floor. You will probably find that they have fallen in one or more small groups, with a few isolated spills lying apart.

Remove all the isolated ones, and if there is more than one group, remove all but the largest. This leaves one group of spills, containing only two or three, perhaps a dozen or so. The size of the group is unimportant.

As you will readily see, many interesting facts can be forecast from the colours and position of the spills in the largest group. A large portion of yellow ones suggests good financial prospects, several green ones suggest that you are "going places," and so on.

A very irregular group suggests a year full of unexpected happenings; where some kind of pattern is formed, your life will go according to plan.

Two examples are given in Fig. 4. The first shows good business prospects with some "turnover" connected with your work, possibly unexpected ones. Take care not to let this work and travel upset your home life too much (note the one "home" spill beneath all the others). The second indicates a peaceful year with home evidence.

CHRISTMAS GREENS

For a great number of people a house not decorated with Christmas greens would be dull indeed. One expert has pointed out, though, that there need be no fear that there ever will be a shortage of the greens good or suitable for use. A dart in the outer rim of the board shows a rather "melancholy" year to come, with few changes and slow but steady progress. The position of the three darts shown in Fig. 2 may be translated in the following terms: This will be an exceptionally good year financially, with a promise of either new home or an enjoyable holiday which opens new prospects. You and your friends will remain much the same, bringing happiness and quiet contentment.

Origin of Yule Gifts
The giving of gifts to the poor at Christmas time originated with the belief that the Christ child sometimes came to the door as a beggar.

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LADIES' READY-TO-WEAR

HERE IS A FESTIVE HARD SAUCE TO GO WITH YULE PUDDING

Even the tasty hard sauce now comes to the table in a gala dress. For instance here are these holiday hard sauce pinwheels to serve with your favorite steamed pudding.

Hard Sauce Pinwheels

1-4 cup butter.
1 cup sifted confectioners sugar
1-4 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1-2 tablespoon cream
2 teaspoons orange juice
1-2 teaspoon grated orange rind
Orange food coloring
Cream butter until soft and gradually beat in sugar. Divide mixture in half and add cream and grated lemon rind to one portion and the orange juice and rind to the other portion. Add food coloring to orange flavored portion to tint a delicate orange. Spread lemon flavored portion on a cold damp cloth and spread orange mixture over it. Roll as for jelly roll and place in refrigerator. When hard, cut in slices and serve with steamed puddings or mince pie.

Not Santa, but 'Nisson' Visits Danish Children

The Danish children do not have a Santa Claus, but instead a Christmas brownie, called "Nisson", a little old man with a long, gray beard who supposedly lives under the ground.

The chief features of a Danish Christmas dinner are roast goose, rice and apple fritters.

When the stocks have left their nests in autumn, bottlenecks of coarse brown crockery in the shape of little pigs, with a slit in the

For the Soldier

Are you wondering what to send to your friends and members of your family who are serving with the armed forces? A lot depends on where they are stationed. But there are some things all service men want, and here they are:

House slippers
Wrist watches
Handkerchiefs
Pocket knives
Scrap books
Tan shoe polish
Nail files
Soap
Tooth brushes
Tooth paste
Sewing kits
Clothes brushes
Metal Polish
Fountain pens
Postage stamps
Lighters

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Noel Evensong

The children dream on Christmas Eve Sweet dreams that never die— A fairland of Make-believe— (As once did you and I) Ah, touch them not, nor undecieve, They'll need them by-and-by!

Come let us dream our Christmas dreams And when we're growing old, We'll see them, shine in purple streams Amid the Sunset's gold: Dear friendships made that never fade Peace, blessings manifold. Douglas Buchanan.

School for Santa

Last year at Buffalo, N. Y., a night school to train new recruits into a crop of finished Santa Clauses was opened. The time may come when every jovial, red-garbed street-corner bell-ringer's whiskers mask a Bachelor of Santa Claus Psychology.