Just as cattle are fattened for slaughter, so Rosemary gets the
girl ready to pour out her soul to those ears so accustomed to the
amusing. But Philip interrupts the well laid plans—Philip, who
knows his wife so well, even better than she knows herself! First he
tells her that the girl cannot stay. Philip's wishes mean very little to
Rosemary. But when Philip applies a little psychology, Rosemary is
taken aback. She is utterly speechless! In her fit of emotion, Rose-
mary formulates a plan of action. The girl is paid to leave and to
never return. Miss Mansfield thoughtfully spares the reader the
unpleasant details of this final meeting between the two girls. Rose-
mary returns triumphantly to Philip. However, she wants reassur-
ance, and for the first time her veil of sophistication momentarily
vanishes. She asks Philip about the box. Of course she may have it.
Her loneliness engulfs her as she asks the meaningful, "Philip, am I
pretty?" She is a piteous creature, well symbolizing the superficial
element in society, and a fascinating characterization.

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Twenty-five Pounds of Dog Food for a
Saint Bernard

Marmi Kingsbury

MY EYES BRIMMED with uncontrollable tears, yet I knew she
would find a way, as mothers always do. Large, awkward
feet just would not be crammed into delicate gilt slippers.
My blond curls, which had been so carefully shampooed and pinned
in place, were already becoming straggly at the ends. The party dress
which I had thought was so different and mature in the shop, now
somehow looked very childish. "Pink is a very good color for you,
young lady," the sales girl had said; but now it seemed too delicate
for someone my size. I guess I was too impressed with my own
importance when she said, "... young lady," instead of, "little girl."
My perfume was slightly overbearing; and the faint touch of lip-
stick, which I administered under the careful scrutiny of my mother,
crashed horribly with the shade of my dress.

My brain was playing havoc with the proverb, "Pretty is, as
pretty does," and all the time my heart sank lower.

The doorbell shrilled an ovation; I knew that it was too late to
run away and hide; too late to fake a terrific headache or an upset
stomach. He was here!
The usual “first date modesty” was predominant. We exchanged subdued hello’s; then, red-faced I started toward the living room to make introductions. As we entered the room, I realized for the first time how a performer must feel in the center of an arena. All eyes were upon us. Father managed to grunt something from behind his evening paper, and Grandma peered down her nose and said, “Hello, William,” instead of Bill. Fortunately, Jerry, my younger brother, could not tear himself away from the Lone Ranger long enough to speak. Mother, however, was her same wonderful self. After the usual “be careful” instructions and an embarrassing maternal kiss, we were off.

My voice was weak and unnaturally high as I attempted to greet his parents who were the chauffeurs for the evening. I stepped on the hem of my dress and almost fell headlong into the car; but after frantically grabbing for my date’s arm, I assumed control and completed my dramatic entrance.

The six block ride to the gym seemed an eternity. I felt an obligation to keep up my part of the conversation; but the only interesting thing I could think of was, “It takes twenty-five pounds of dog food to feed a Saint Bernard for two months.” That did not seem to be appropriate, so I compromised by nodding in reply to his mother’s questions.

The dance was a conglomeration of stiff tulle, stabbing rosebud corsages, and aching feet. Everyone faked a pleasing nonchalance, but no one said a word for the first half hour. We all just sat. We grinned at each other stupidly. Once I started to say something but so did Bill, so instead we both just sat some more. Finally, I unwound; and we managed to discuss classes, teachers, and vacations over numerous cups of punch.

Then came the highlight of the evening! My date and I won a prize for being the best dancers present. I was so nervous when my date dragged me to the stage to receive our award, that it was all I could do to force a smile, mumble a word of thanks, and then depart hurriedly. At this moment, however, I sincerely felt that I would have been stiff competition for Eleanor Powell, with my wicked two-step. And the prize—what a prize—a twenty-five cent war stamp!

Then too soon the dance was over. I thought, as we re-enacted Cinderella dashing home for my eleven o’clock curfew, that growing up was not too bad after all.