

Mr. Fix-it

Shirley Jo Waltz

As I write this, I can look across the room and see a gray-haired gentleman whom I call Daddy. There is a twinkle in his eye, and although he laughed when I told him that he was the subject of my theme, I think he is secretly pleased. As he sits there in his favorite easy chair, his slipper swings on his long foot in time to the music which is softly pouring from the radio. The only lights in the room are from the radio and the Christmas tree. Daddy has always liked to sit quietly in a room with soft lights and music. In his day he was quite a dancer and a Sir Gallahad too, I understand. He is still very handsome and gallant, in my opinion, even though he is getting a "middle-age spread" and his hair is silver.

My friends all like to come to our house in order to talk to Daddy and to hear him laugh. The children in our neighborhood say that Mr. Waltz laughs just like Santa Claus. His

laughter comes from deep within him, and it seems to bubble out slowly, ending in a loud roar. I never hesitate to leave a friend in my father's hands when I am late or not quite ready. I know that he will soon make my friend feel at home. My only worry is that Daddy will talk about me. He is overly proud of me and my few small accomplishments, but I love him for it. He used to tell me the most glorious stories when I was small. I can remember curling up on his legs as he would wrap a blanket around me, rock me to and fro, and tell me wonderful and fantastic stories. I could never get quite enough of them, and Daddy was very relieved when I finally went to school and learned to read my own stories. I think his supply was almost exhausted.

On top of all this, Daddy is always willing to help. Whenever a pipe bursts or there is a short circuit in the wiring of one of our neighbor's homes, our phone rings, and Daddy is off to the rescue. We have nicknamed him "Mr. Fix-it," and the title fits him perfectly. I think he should teach a class in family relations. He hears all the stories of the lovelorn, the broken homes and marriages, and gives his advice on the problems brought to him. When the man next door dropped dead in the night, the first person his family called was my father. Daddy never turns anyone away. Because Daddy was one of many children, he was not able to extend his education as far as he desired, but he has been taught many things through life and has benefited by his experiences. I only hope that from being near him, I might acquire some of his wisdom and his kindness toward all mankind.

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The Hand of Fate

Marjorie McDowell

The other night a policeman, Leonard Dean, and a friend of his, Jim Houston, met on a street corner. Jim asked, "How are things down at the station?" "Well," Len said, "last night I saw a man rushing out of his house, screaming and waving his arms. As he ran across the street, a car hit him. I went along in the ambulance, and as we rode I watched the elderly man struggle for life. He was about seventy years old. His hair was iron gray