

A Visit from Aunt Eva

M. Sue Clyne

Mommy! Mommy! Please, can I?" It was a typical five-year-old's shriek.

"Can you what?" was my typical tired mother's answer.

"Can I have my counting blocks? Can I? Can I?" Jeffy was excited now and was jumping up and down at the top of the stairs.

"Oh, Jeffy! How can you?" I answered him. They were the first things he asked for in the morning and the last things at night, plus a few minutes in between. I wished he would hurry and learn to read his numbers. I continued, "Come down here, Jeffy, and I'll let you help me."

I must have been a frightening sight—sitting on the bottom step, holding my turbanned head in my hands, and wearing my oldest slacks and a horrible old sweat shirt.

Everything had started out so beautifully that day. The sun was shining brightly, and after my husband had left for the office, I had experienced a sudden burst of energy. I decided that today was the day to paint the den.

I worked feverishly, lugging all the furniture out into the living room and rolling up the rug. While I was going out to the garage for the ladder, I noticed my darling son writing his numbers on a piece of paper, which I recognized as an envelope. Cautiously I asked, "Can Mother see how you are coming along with your numbers?" When I saw that it must have been a newly arrived letter, bearing incidentally Aunt Eva's postmark, I forgot all my child psychology and screamed, "Where did you get this?"

He was very calm as he answered, "The postman gave it to me this morning when you were cleaning house." And when I started tearing it open, he yelled, "He gave it to me!"

I read the note from my husband's Aunt Eva, but I couldn't believe it. It couldn't be true—not Aunt Eva, not today. The house and I, both a complete mess, were to have a visit from Aunt Eva sometime today. She was taking a trip and wanted to spend the night with us.

Aunt Eva was the one I had overheard the day of our wedding, when she said, "Isn't she a scatterbrained little thing? I can't imagine her as a lawyer's wife." She never knew that I crossed my eyes and stuck out my tongue at her straight, straight, stylish back before I put on my bridal smile and got in line for the reception. All of my married life, whenever I wanted to go on a picnic instead of ironing, I'd think of

Aunt Eva and—darn it—I'd iron.

I read the last sentence of the letter again: "Hope I won't be imposing on you if I spend Friday night with you." I became panicky.

"Come on, Jeffy, help me get this stuff back quickly!" I called. Though he tried to help, he got in my way so much that I got impatient and yelled, "Scram! Here are your hat and coat. Go play in the yard a while."

Pretty soon the house was straight and shining, but all of the dirt must have rubbed off on me. The doorbell rang. My heart sank! But somehow I managed to get the door opened to find—Jeffy.

"Mommy, come see if I got the numbers straight! Come on—see!" he pleaded. I was so relieved that I followed him out to the curb, where he read the license number of a parked car. "5-4-6-2! Is that right, Mommy? 5-4-6-2?"

"That's right, Jeffy, 5-4-6-2," I assured him and ran back into the house to get cleaned up.

When Aunt Eva arrived, everything was perfect. Jeff, Sr. and Aunt Eva were keeping me company in the kitchen while I prepared an extra special dinner, when Jeffy ran in. Wildeyed, he announced, "There's a policeman out on the porch! Come on, quick!" I saw the shocked look on Aunt Eva's face as I left the room to answer the door. Sure enough, there was a policeman. He explained that a nearby store had been robbed of considerable merchandise and that he was inquiring throughout the neighborhood whether anyone had seen a strange person or strange car in the area. All I could think of was the old black car with the license number 5-4-6-2, and I said that it probably belonged to someone working in the neighborhood.

As we ate dinner, I explained the policeman's visit to my husband and Aunt Eva. The rest of the evening passed ideally. Just as we were preparing to go upstairs to bed, the doorbell rang, announcing the policeman's second visit. He had come to thank me for the information leading to the capture of the bandits and the recovery of the stolen merchandise. Along with the policeman came several reporters from local newspapers. Their cameras were flashed, and their questions were fired in rapid succession. We had to wake Jeffy up to pose for pictures. After they had finally gone and I was wearily scooting Jeffy back to bed, I remembered Aunt Eva. How could I have forgotten *her* during all the excitement?

She was sitting on the davenport at one end of the living room, looking very bewildered.

When I asked her if she wanted something to eat before going to bed, she thanked me and said that she "re-e-ally" had better take the midnight train. As she was leaving, she gave me a limp handshake as she begrudgingly said, "My dear, you were re-e-ally very composed."

I finally crawled into bed, but before I dropped off to sleep, I crossed my eyes and stuck out my tongue at Aunt Eva. The poor dear! She never knew that I wasn't really composed, that I was simply numb from moving two tons of furniture that morning.



Science and Humanity

Donna Jackman

Science was originated thousands of years ago in primitive man's bitter fight for existence. If all the details could be gathered up, all the gaps filled in, the trail of science would be found leading back to half-human creatures who in terror and confusion were seeking to be men. Those details are lost, those gaps can never be filled, and all memory of the origin of fire, of clay modeling, of the bow and arrow, has vanished forever. The story of science then is without a beginning and without an end, but it is forever unfolding. Nations rise and fall, dynasties rule and pass away, religions wax and wane; but science, building upon failure, inhumanity, and aspirations, moves steadily forward. Its rate of advance is uneven, but for twenty-five centuries it has not come to a dead stop. Science had its start with the origin of man, and although it seems to have been quite simple to begin with, it has become more complex as has our civilization. Man now lives in a scientific age in which progress is so rapid that no one can keep abreast of the various fields of science. Science is not, as some misinformed persons seem to believe, only for those with what is known as a scientific mind. Naturally, everyone cannot go into the laboratory and come out with some astounding discovery, but he can obtain a general knowledge of the subject, which in this day seems to be required in order to be considered educated at all. It is most important for one to have some knowledge of the laws and principles of the basic sciences if he is to know and understand anything about the world in