

(3)

was only about two feet deep, and she ~~was~~ ^{knelt} ~~to~~ will ~~in~~ the paddles
on her toes. One April morning, while ~~a~~ ^{she} ~~about~~ the birds were
singing in ~~the~~ ^{the} Kent and a ~~few~~ ^a thick yellow cold, chattering, yellow fog
came from the London chimneys ~~darkened~~ the ~~post~~ and ~~darkened~~ the ~~water~~
made the ~~to~~ ^{to} Francis bells, ~~changed~~ ~~changed~~ and ~~nothing~~ ~~then~~ and

which ~~gave~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~to~~
for ~~the~~ ~~darkened~~ the sky of London, S.E., she rose with a
for weed in her ~~bill~~ ^{bill}. Teak had been chasing her ~~for~~ on land and
in ~~the~~ ⁱⁿ ~~water~~ ~~some~~ weeks before, and she ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~almost~~ ~~seen~~ it had been nice;
~~so~~ ~~day~~ and after a few days ~~to~~ ~~but~~ he had caught her, and it
had been nice. She rose to the match-stream surface ~~as~~ with the
weed, and indifferent to the fog, ~~she~~ paddled with it to the
island ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~she~~ ~~then~~ flew on to a branch of a Hawthorn with the
growing there, and ~~she~~ ^{she} ~~dropped~~ the weed on a platform which she had
been building ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~some~~ ~~time~~ ~~ago~~. Her ~~while~~ ^{while} in nest-building
would not have turned a chaffinch, that perfect weaver and felter and
mender, into a greenfinch with envy. She merely opened her bill
and dropped the wet vegetation ~~into~~ ^{into} ~~at~~ the joining place of
these branches. She made many ~~under-water~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~journey~~ ~~that~~
day, and at nightfall she ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~it~~ ~~was~~ the nest was finished. It
was made of weed, rush, a bootlace, ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~cardboard~~ a
fragment of cardboard marked Goldflake, and ~~a~~ ^a ~~piece~~ ~~of~~ the
Daily Mail that, a week before, had held two ~~pieces~~ ^{pieces} ~~of~~ the
pink fish-and-chips. ~~The~~ ^{The} ~~next~~ ~~morning~~, before the ~~first~~ ^{first} ~~branch~~
ground the growing wheels, Teak laid an egg ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ~~egg~~
platform, six feet ~~from~~ ^{from} ~~the~~ ~~ground~~. ~~The~~ ^{The} ~~egg~~ ~~was~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~egg~~
was between that of a hen and a pigeon, it was a light brown
speckled and spotted with red-brown. The ~~size~~ ^{size} ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~nest~~
was the size of a man's hand

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Just ^{glancing} looking round to see if a policeman was watching, flying a stone at Teank. The man made a humming noise as he glanced with nervous anger at the unshaven one, but little Teank, a common and self-effacing bird, ~~stayed~~ lolled under and swam to the island, coming up beside a low branch on which ~~hung~~ ^{hung} ~~stayed~~ used for flood-line, but now dry and dead. She ~~she~~ ^{she} crept ~~across~~ ^{across} through the ~~so~~ docks and ^{hollow} dry ~~to~~ stacks of water-henley to the other side, where Teank was feeding. The ~~mainland~~ pond on this side was ~~dammed~~ ^{dammed} by a bank higher than the flat allotments beyond. There were rushes ~~out~~ ^{out} of the water-side, and trees over the bank. [The next morning, ~~soon after dawn~~ long before the smoke ~~was~~ began to rise from the chimney pots of the brick houses near London, Teank laid her second egg, which was just like the first egg. As she ~~climbed~~ ^{climbed} ~~left~~ jumped ~~down~~ off the nest, it ~~rolled~~ fell to the ground and was ~~shattered~~, but ~~and~~ although she heard the noise of the breaking shell, she did not realize that it was her egg. The first egg remained in the centre of the platform, resting in a ~~small~~ ^{small} slight hollow. Teank and Teank, their neck-and-^{tail} ~~tail~~ ^{tail} flapping as they peered left and right, then swam to the bank and waddled down to the allotments through the thorn and willow trees. ~~Several~~ ^{Several} worms and insects they found, but a dog disturbed them and ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~heavy~~ ^{heavy} flights, for their wings were shot, they returned to the pond of ~~Southend Village, London, Essex~~.

The nest being as small as the palm of a man's hand, the third egg rolled off as soon as laid, and so did the fourth and the fifth and the sixth eggs, but Teank did not miss them. The ~~good~~ ^{good} shattered yolks below gave a rat a small meal, and ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~he~~ ^{he} left the ants and flies removed. As soon as her ~~nest~~ ^{nest} ~~was~~ ^{was} laid, Teank began to ~~roost~~ ^{roost}. Previously she ~~was~~ ^{was} had roosted on a low bough of an alder, near Teank, but now she ~~slept~~ ^{slept} on the platform platform, with the egg between her legs. She was there for ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~day~~ ^{day} ~~time~~ ^{time} as well, ~~except~~ ^{except} for hurried searches for food. The ~~nest~~ ^{nest} white lark of the northon

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swelled and burst among the green leaves, and a chaffinch was sitting
in the deep cup of her nest a yard ^{from} above the ^{mouth} of the stream. Swallows had come
back to the stilt village, and they dipped their breasts in the pond, ~~for~~
~~the sun~~ ~~was~~ ~~shining~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~sun~~ ~~was~~ ~~melting~~ ~~the~~ ~~ice~~, which
the sun turned to silver as of old, and the ~~shirt~~ ^{the} ~~of~~ ~~water~~-~~shirt~~ became bright.
There was a pair of sedge-warblers in the nest reeds, and at night the
lights of motorbikes and trances made the cockbird sing his joyous
chattering song. A cuckoo, with a cracked voice, sang ^{early} ~~calling~~ ~~for~~ ~~many~~
~~and~~ ~~for~~ ~~many~~ ~~hours~~ ~~calling~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~very~~ ~~early~~
morning, but the noise of traffic ~~did~~ ~~not~~ ~~last~~ ~~long~~ ~~during~~ ~~the~~ ~~day~~.
These unsteady men and gulls lounged by the railings, ~~but~~ Teak ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~set~~
on his egg. ~~One~~ ~~morning~~ ~~something~~
began to tick-tick-tick inside, and this happened like the afternoon, when
the egg still opened and a head looked out. It had ~~very~~ ~~small~~
~~eyes~~, an appearance of extreme old-age, with tawny black ~~dots~~ ^{speckles}
and weary, time-worn eyes. Weep-weep, it said, opening its ~~mouth~~
bill. Weep-weep, as it tried to be free of the ~~shell~~ ^{shell}, weep-weep
as it ~~tried~~ ~~to~~ ~~stand~~ ~~on~~ ~~tiny~~ ~~legs~~. Weep, as it fell asleep. Teak!
amid the mother, and ~~for~~ ~~the~~ Teak! for he notes, who for half an
hour had been pushing a floating crust with his bill as he tried to
peck it and break it up.

The next day was a Sunday, and in the ~~at~~ ~~noon~~ ~~the~~ ~~railings~~
was thronged with mothers and fathers and children, in best clothes, ~~not~~
boots and hats. Hundreds of brown fragments of biscuits and bread were
thrown at the ~~middle~~ ^{point} of the ~~the~~ ~~broken~~-~~down~~ ~~mill~~. No swans
were fed, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~was~~ ~~very~~ ~~dirty~~, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~was~~ ~~very~~ ~~dirty~~, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~water~~ ~~was~~ ~~very~~ ~~dirty~~,
wraps folded, but with ~~an~~ ~~open~~ ~~eyes~~. Sparrows flitted and hovered over
the sodden bits, trying to peck a meal. Teak was ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~still~~ ~~pecking~~ ~~another~~
~~crust~~ ~~round~~ ~~the~~ ~~pond~~, ~~with~~ ~~his~~ ~~bill~~, ~~but~~ ~~and~~ ~~his~~ ~~bill~~ ~~was~~ ~~so~~
healed it it ~~too~~ ~~sank~~, and the ~~glass~~ ~~was~~ ~~hardly~~ ~~strong~~ ~~enough~~ ~~to~~ ~~break~~
it up. ~~There~~, ~~he~~ ~~remained~~. Banana skins and ~~orange~~ ~~peel~~ ~~was~~
gluing in, but they sank to the bottom, with other things rotting. Empty paper

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of five hundred acres,

there was talk of a whole new Garden Suburb, to be built upon the Sea Fields of that
Sea Fields (where are locks and piers now), an extension of trams into
a parcel adjacent of London, S.E., an extension of trams, and a sewer
network to empty the drain-water into the pond.

I looked at the island, which during the cleaning of
the pond had been tidied and cleared of undergrowth. The nests
were there by the bank, but only a small jungle of them. A boathouse
had been built, and there were hundreds of little boats for the delight
of London children in the summer. The motor traffic hurried by
in the icy north wind, and the surface of the pond was
wrinkled, and waves broke against the island where ~~the~~ Teank
built her nest in the tree, ^{with cherry} ~~no doubt~~ ^{honestly} thinking ~~that~~ ^{that} she would be ~~there~~
~~an~~ equal in social position to the rooks. The water-spirit would
rejoice in the happy kids - pirates, explorers, deep-sea fishermen, and
peasants, as who late in life would seek the Golden Fleece for
mentiad. A red bus with yellow ~~eyes~~ ^{lamps} ~~was~~ ^{was} there when me, and
as I turned to board it I heard a ~~watering~~ ^{watering} ~~for~~ ^{for} over the water darkening pond
a watering cry of Teank!, and from the nests came
an answer, Teank!

Feb 1924

H.W.