

# CALL'S DIET SQUAD GIVES REPORT – SHE IS 48 CENTS TO THE GOOD

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*New York Call* Sunday, December 10, 1916, page 3

She Consumed a Lot of Rolls, Cocoa and Potato Soup, and Devoured Steak in Butcher Shop with Her Eyes.

Recipients of the United Charities aid are allowed 32-cents a day per unit for food. A woman is allowed less. And children still less. In order that the mother of the house may not go out and recklessly spend the whole amount for caviar or lobster she is given a sheet by the Charities on which she sets down all that she has spent. It is a very official-looking budget, and red lines divide it up into the days of the week on the top half of the sheet and on the lower half into an itemized account of all the week's expenditures. It takes a mathematical genius to balance the upper and lower halves.

Then, down in the lower right-hand corner, there is a weekly statement – the money saved from the previous week, money received during the present week, money saved for the following week. Then one signs one's name to all this and one's address as a guarantee of honesty. Any dissipation can be immediately checked up by the officials unless the housewife is a prevaricatory genius.

## ***Call Diet Squad Reports***

The first sheet of The Call diet squad of one has been duly filled out and signed and is ready for examination. Food for the week cost \$2.31; fuel 6 cents (including gas and candles to furnish light while the gas stove is in use); soap 5 cents; utensils (including small gas stove and a frying pan and saucepan) 60 cents; rent \$1.25. Expenditures during the entire week amounted to \$4.87 and there is yet 48 cents to spend. I am informed that working girls with such prodigious incomes should put aside all money that is left over at the end of the week for clothes. But I hereby state that I am going over to Chinatown and get a 25-cent meal. Then I shall spend 10 cents for a sundae with hot chocolate on top and a dash of whipped cream; 3 cents for chewing gum and have 10 cents still to buy a magazine with adding a nickel from next week's wages.

Upon going over my budget, I find I have been very extravagant in the way of food. The amount provided was \$1.82. Forty-nine cents went for food that should not have gone. Three times, at 12 o'clock, I was impelled by an unseen force to dissipate. Three times at midnight,

after my work was done, I stopped into a bakery and had rolls and coffee. Twice, I bought a nickel's worth of candy to suck while I read in bed. And what did I do with the other 9 cents? Who knows? I don't. They went.

The more I look at the intricate budget, the more dizzy I become. I confess frankly that the top and bottom sections of the sheet do not balance. I should have saved 54 cents and I saved only 48 cents. I pause for thought – Ah! I have it! Last night I lost my handkerchief and not having the time to get back to my room to get one, I bought one for a nickel. I think, now, that every penny is traced but the above mentioned 9 cents.

My diet has been chiefly vegetarian aside from one plate of soup that I was treated to last Sunday night and a dinner last night. Breakfast was farina, milk, rolls and an apple; or rice, cocoa, rolls and a banana; or rice and cocoa, or rolls and fruit. Sometimes, to vary the monotony of a solitary breakfast, I eat rolls, then go out to take a shower at the public baths, then return for cocoa, then go out and shop then return for fruit. This active breakfast takes more time, of course, but when I have no appetite upon arising, I cannot create one. The only trouble is that, after I have trotted up and down stairs three or four times, my appetite has increased to such an extent that I can afford only two meals instead of the three which I am supposed to have.

### *Sounds Pretty Fair*

The evening meal has, so far, consisted of potato soup, rolls and cocoa. I eat cheese this meal to take the place of meat.

At twelve, there is usually rice and cocoa and I finish up the rolls that are in the box. Every day I have had a quart of milk, five cents worth of rolls, cheese and vegetables and fruit. My diet is well balanced, but I long for a steak. Next week I shall have fifteen cents put by for a small one. Some vegetarians that I know object to eating meat on the grounds that it arouses your animal appetites. I believe that the absence of meat is more likely to have that effect.

### *She Eyes the Steak*

To go past a butcher's shop and see nice, juicy pieces of meat in the window and to know that all that you have at home is tasteless potato soup or still more tasteless rice, is far more likely to arouse animal appetites. I have seen men walk up and down the Bowery with a hangdog, desperate animal expression on their faces, and it was not due to too much meat. Oh, no!

Well, my budget is before me. I am contemplating framing that as I did the fingerprints that were taken for me at the night court just one month ago. They are fitting companions. They are both legal looking, of the same size and shape. As I look at them, the idea strikes me that if we had food budgets to be filed away with finger prints, we would have a far better understanding of the man who is brought in for stealing and the girl who is taken soliciting.