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Sandman's Goodnight Stories

By Abbie Phillips Walker

Illustrated by Rhoda C. Chase

Harper & Brothers, Publishers

To My Sister
MARY P. BABCOCK
I Lovingly Dedicate
These Little Stories

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THE EATYOUP

The Eatyoup

Dicky Duck was a very wise young fellow. He swam about the pond alone long before his brothers left their mother, and such worms and bugs and things of that sort as he found made all the other young ducks quite green with envy.

But one day Dicky Duck almost lost his life by thinking he was so wise, for he was swimming around the pond when he came to the woods where Mr. Fox was hiding back of some bushes.

Dicky did not go near enough for Mr. Fox to catch him, but Mr. Fox could see that he was a nice plump duck and it made his eyes shine with longing to look at him.

"Ah me," he sighed as Dicky swam by, "if only I knew some wise creature to ask! I am far too dull to know anything myself."

When Dicky heard the word "wise" he felt sure that meant him, for was not he the wisest duck of his size and age? So he stopped swimming and looked around.

Mr. Fox had hidden himself well under the bushes now. Not even the tip of his nose could be seen and he made his voice sound very weak, as if he were a very small animal.

"Who is it that wants to know a wise creature?" asked Dicky Duck.

"Oh, a poor little animal called Eatyoup," answered Mr. Fox, laughing so at his joke that he could hardly speak. "I am very stupid and do not know much and I have no wise friends."

Dicky Duck had never heard of an Eatyoup, but he had no intention of letting anyone think there was anything he did not know, so he swam nearer and said, "Well, I am wise, and if you wish to know anything ask me. Come out where I can see you and we can talk to each other better." He was trying all the time to get a glimpse of the new animal, but Mr. Fox was a wise creature himself and he had no intention of being seen.

"Oh, dear! I should hate to show my miserable little self to such a big, fine-looking creature as you are," he said. "It is bad enough to have you know I am stupid, but if you will come closer I will tell you what it is I want to know."

Dicky Duck by this time was very brave, for what had he to fear from so small a creature as the Eatyoup. So he swam right up to the side of the pond and out bounced Mr. Fox and almost caught him.

If Dicky had not used his wings as well as his feet he would not have escaped, but he was in the middle of the pond, swimming for dear life, by the time Mr. Fox was in the water, and as the farm was not far off Mr. Fox decided not to risk his life.

When Dicky Duck reached the barnyard he told all the fowl about the strange animal he had seen, called an Eatyoup, and that, while he had a very weak voice, he was almost as large as big Rover, the dog.

Of course everyone thought Dicky wiser than ever when he told this, but for all that he was very careful not to swim near the woods again, for, though he had told the fowl he had seen an Eatyoup, he was pretty sure in his own mind that he had met Mr. Fox.

THE TELL-TALE GOBLIN

The Tell-Tale Goblin

Once upon a time there was a Little Fairy who loved to wander by the river, and as the Fairy Queen does not like her subjects to go too near the water, the Little Fairy had to steal away.

Always when they held a revel this Little Fairy would fly away from the dance and wander down by the river to watch the ripple of the water as it flowed over the pebbles and stones.

One night a Goblin, who always watched the fairies, happened to be sitting under a bush and saw the Little Fairy.

"What is she doing here all alone?" he said to himself. "She has run away from her sisters, and I am quite sure the Queen does not know where she is. I'll watch her, and if she is up to mischief I'll tell the Queen. Maybe she will give me a new red coat for telling her."

Now, this little tell-tale Goblin began to watch, and pretty soon he saw a mist rise from the river; then it looked like foam, all silvery, in the moonlight.

And then suddenly as he watched, the goblin saw a handsome youth rise from the river and hold out his arms to the Little Fairy standing on the bank.

"Ah-ha!" said the Goblin. "She has a lover, has she? Well I'll tell the Queen and I guess these midnight meetings will be stopped, and I am sure now I shall get a new coat for telling."

The River Youth called to the Fairy just then, and the Goblin forgot the red coat to watch what happened.

"Come, my love," called the White Youth, "take the willow path and you will be safe from the water."

The Little Fairy flew to the willow tree beside the river and tripped lightly along a slender bough which dipped its tip into the water.

When she reached the end the White Youth was there to take her in his arms. He carried her to the middle of the river, where there was a little island, and the watching Goblin saw them sit upon the soft green grass in the moonlight, but he could not hear what they said.

"I'll run and tell her Queen and let her catch them," said the Goblin, and, forgetting that his red coat could be plainly seen in the moonlight, he jumped up and ran along the river bank toward the dell.

"Oh, oh!" cried the Little Fairy, with alarm, when she saw the Goblin, "whatever will become of me? There is a Goblin, and I am sure he has seen me and is going to tell the Queen. Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be banished."

The River Youth, who really was a River God, reached for a horn of white shell which hung from his shoulder by a coral chain, and blew a shrill blast, and the Goblin fell upon his face on the ground.

"Rise!" called the River God, "and tell me where you are going?"

"Oh! Your Majesty," said the sly little Goblin, "I was about to go to the Fairy Queen and tell her one of her fairies was being carried off, but of course I shall not do so now. I see whom she is with. I thought it was old Neptune himself and he might change her into a mermaid."

The River God knew the bad little fellow was telling him a wrong story, but something must be done, so he pretended to believe the Goblin, and said: "Well, now you know the Fairy is safe, what can I do for you if you keep our secret?"

"Give me a silver cap," said the Goblin, quickly.

"Very well. Come here to-morrow night at midnight hour and you shall have the cap if you have not told the Fairy Queen what you have seen," said the River God.

The Goblin promised and off he ran to his home in the rocks, and the River God took the Fairy back to the willow tree. "Come tomorrow without your wand, my love," he said; "we must not delay, now that the Goblin has seen us, for he cannot be trusted after he gets the silver cap."

The next night the Goblin was by the river waiting when the Little Fairy arrived.

"Where is your wand?" he asked, for he saw at once she did not have it.

Before she could reply there was splash in the middle of the river and out of the mist and foam the River God lifted his head and called to the Fairy. At the same time he held up a little silver cap to the Goblin.

The Little Fairy went to her lover by the same path as before, but she took from his hand the little silver cap and tossed it to the Goblin before she flew into her lover's outstretched arms.

"Now tell him where your wand is," said the River God.

"I have left it behind me in the dell," she said, blushing and hanging her head.

"What! are you not going back to the Queen?" asked the Goblin, in astonishment. "Are you to become a river sprite?"

"You have guessed it," said the River God. "This night we are to be married at the bottom of the river. Farewell, you little tell-tale Goblin. I hope your silver cap fits your peaked little head."

The Goblin watched the Fairy and her lover as they slowly sank from sight, and then he ran off as fast as he could to the dell to tell the Queen what he had seen. "I'll get a red coat, too," he said. "I did not promise not to tell to-night."

The tell-tale Goblin was so bent on telling the Queen what he knew that he quite forgot his new silver cap until he reached the dell where the fairies were dancing; then throwing away his old cap, he clapped the silver cap on his head so hard he cried out with pain.

For a second he saw stars, and the cold silver felt very different from his soft, warm peaked cap which he had tossed aside.

The little fairies, seeing the Goblin hopping about in the moonlight, called to the Queen: "Oh, look, dear Queen. Drive away the Goblin; he acts quite mad and may mean mischief."

The Queen, knowing that Goblins, when they were quite sane, were not friendly to her fairies, held up her wand and cast a ray of light straight into the Goblin's eye. "Leave our dell," she said, "or something will happen to you that you will not like."

"Oh, wait, wait and hear what I have to tell!" called the Goblin. "I know a secret you must hear."

"Oh, don't listen to him, dear Queen!" said all the little fairies. "It is wrong to tell secrets. Go away, we will not listen."

But the Goblin would not go; he wanted to win a red coat, and he was sure the Queen would give it to him for the secret he could tell.

"If you will give me a new red coat I will tell you something about one of your fairies you would like to know," said the Goblin.

"Oh, what a funny head he has!" said a fairy as the Goblin lifted off the silver cap, because it was so uncomfortable.

All the fairies began to laugh, and on his head he clapped the cap again to hide his queer peaked head, and again the cap made him see stars until he jumped with pain.

"Oh, he is quite mad, you may be sure!" said the Queen.

"I am not mad. Listen and I will tell you the secret, and you will know then I am very clever to have discovered it," said the Goblin. "But first I must know if you will give me the red coat. I shall not tell you if you do not."

The tell-tale Goblin did not think for a minute the Queen of the fairies would refuse to pay to hear a secret, and when the Queen told him he was a bad, mad fellow and to be off, he was quite surprised.

"You will be sorry," he said as he hopped away, and then he thought he would tell it, anyway, for what was the use of knowing a secret if you did not surprise others by showing how much you know.

Back he ran, but the fairies and their Queen put their fingers in their ears and ran away, so they could not hear. The telltale Goblin, however, was bound to tell, and he ran until he was near enough to shout: "She has married a River God and she left her wand in the dell; they gave me this silver cap not to tell."

When the Queen and the fairies heard this they stopped and the Goblin thought they wished to hear more, so he went to them and said he would help them hunt for the wand, if they would come to the dell.

The Queen put her finger on her lips to warn the fairies not to speak, and back they went to the dell, following the Goblin, who was hopping and jumping along before them.

"Here it is," he said, stooping to pick up a little gold wand.

"Hold!" cried the Queen; "do not touch it. I will pick it up, and now that you have told us the secret you shall have your reward."

The Goblin hopped with delight, for he was sure the Queen would touch him with the wand and he would have a new red coat at once.

"You shall wear the silver cap the rest of your life," she said, and before the Goblin could jump away the Queen tapped him on the head, and in place of the tell-tale Goblin there stood a silver thistle, all prickly and shining among the leaves and bushes.

"Your sister has left us, and we must forget her," said the Queen as the fairies followed her home. "Let her be forgotten by you all; her wand shall be saved for a more worthy sister."

The Little Fairy never regretted marrying her River God, for she lived happy ever after, and sometimes when they come up from the river bottom to sit in the moonlight she will say to the River God: "What do you suppose became of the Goblin? Do you think he ever told the Queen?"

"Of course he did," replied the River God. "He ran as fast as he could to the Queen, but the silver cap was so uncomfortable for him to wear that I am sure he has discarded it long before this. So he gained nothing for playing the spy."

"Perhaps his conscience pricked him and he is sorry," said the Little Fairy.

The Little Fairy was right. The Goblin was sorry when it was too late, and the silver thistle swayed in the breeze. It tried to tell the breeze it was sorry for telling tales, but even the breeze did not wish to listen to a prickly thistle, so there it had to bloom unloved and alone the rest of its life.

DAME CRICKET'S STORY

Dame Cricket

"Come, children, it is time to get up," said Dame Cricket to her ten little crickets.

"Hurry, now, and take your bath and put on your little black caps and your little brown suits. The sun has almost gone down over the hill and the birds will soon be asleep."

But the little crickets snuggled under the bedclothes just as if they did not hear their mother's words.

"Come, come," she said, a few minutes later, "you will sleep all night if you don't hurry. Some of our cousins are already singing, and it will soon be dark."

"Oh dear! why do we have to get up?" said one little cricket, poking his head over the clothes. "Lots of bugs sleep all night."

"Yes, but they are up all the daytime," answered Dame Cricket, "and they run a great risk, I can assure you, my dear. Our family used to sing in the daytime, but if we had kept on there would be no cricket family. There is a reason for our sleeping days and singing at night."

"Oh, mother, is it a story?" asked all the little crickets, jumping out of bed with a bound and gathering about their mother.

"Yes, there is a story about our family, and if you will all hurry and dress I will tell it to you," she said.

Very quietly all the little crickets began to dress, and their mother began the story:

"Once, long, long ago," she said, "our family sang in the daytime and slept at night; but one day the Great-grandfather Cricket noticed that our singing was not as loud as usual, so he called all the children, big and little, about him and looked at their throats.

"'Strange, strange!' he remarked. 'You all have fine-looking throats, as fine as ever crickets had, and yet our singing is very faint; there is not as much volume to it as in the old days. I will call on Doctor Frog this very day, and see what he thinks about it.'

"Doctor Frog thought awhile and then he asked, 'How many have you in your family, now, Mr. Cricket?'

"Great-grandfather called us all about him and began to count, and to his amazement he found our family was only about half the size it should be.

"'Just as I thought,' said Dr. Frog, 'the voices are as good as ever, but there are not so many of you, and, of course, the singing is not so loud as it was once.

"'Shall I tell you the reason for this?' asked Dr. Frog.

"Great-grandfather said that was why he called on him, so Dr. Frog told him that the birds were eating our family, and if they kept it up we soon would be out of existence.

"'Horrors! horrors!' chirped Great-grandfather Cricket. 'Whatever will we do to preserve the family?'

"'Easy enough to do that,' said Dr. Frog. 'Sleep days and sing at night as our family do; little chance we would have if we came out and sang in the daytime.'

"So that is the reason we sleep days and sing nights, so the birds and chickens and bug-eating animals cannot catch us.

"Of course, sometimes they do get a cricket, but it is always one who has stayed out too late or gotten up too early, usually a very young cricket who thinks he knows more than his mother or father.

"But the good little crickets who mind and get up when they are called are pretty sure to live to a good old age."

When Madam Cricket stopped talking all the little crickets stood looking at her with very curious expressions on their faces.

"We are good little crickets, aren't we, mother?" they asked.

"Of course you are. Here you are all ready to go out and sing and the sun has just dropped behind the hill," she said.

"Chirp, chirp, chirp, chirp," they sang as they scampered after their mother out into the night.

THE PLAYROOM WEDDING

The Playroom Wedding

Paper Doll had been the maid of honor, but she did not at all approve of the match. "It will never be a happy marriage," she told Teddy Bear the night of the wedding. "Such marriages never are. How I should feel married to a man who wore dresses."

Yes, he did look as if he wore a dress, for he was a Japanese gentleman doll, you see, and when he came to the playroom to live everybody, including French Doll Marie, thought he was very queer looking.

But after a while they became used to Takeo, for that was his name, and when the little mistress announced that Marie was to marry Takeo she did not make the least objection.

"What difference does it make?" she said to Frieda, the Dutch doll, who lived next to her. "I suppose I shall have to marry someone, and truly I could never live with Jumping Jack; that fellow makes me so nervous."

"He seems very quiet," said Frieda Doll, meaning Takeo, "and perhaps you can get him to dress in men's clothes after you are married."

"Yes, he is quiet and I cannot understand a word he says, so we shall not quarrel," said Marie Doll.

And so they were married. Jack-in-the-box was the minister, because the little mistress thought he stood better than anyone else. She put a black cape on him and a white collar, and Jack behaved in the most dignified manner.

Little Paper Doll wore a dress that quite outshone the bride's dress, only no one noticed it; but it was all lace and had tiny little pink buds caught in the flounces, and she wore a beautiful hat with white feathers.

The bride wore a white dress and a long white veil, and there were tiny white flowers all around her head which held the veil in place.

But Takeo was far from looking the bridegroom, to Paper Doll's way of thinking, though Marie Doll gave him no thought at all, for she thought the bride was the important one, and as she told Frieda Doll, "You have to have a bridegroom to be a bride, of course; but really he is not of any importance that I can see."

They had been married a week, and, while Marie talked to Takeo, he, of course, did not take the least notice of what she said. "Poor fellow, he cannot understand," said Marie Doll. "He won't be any trouble, though, because I shall be able to do as I like. He cannot tell me not to."

"These foreigners, my dear," said Paper Doll, "are sometimes unpleasant to live with. I cannot see how you came to marry him. Do make him wear men's clothes."

"Oh, I think he looks quite out of the ordinary, and everyone stares at him when we go out riding in the park with the little mistress," said Marie Doll. "As I am French, you see we both are foreigners, so that does not matter; and then, dear, Takeo is so comfortable to live with. He is no bother at all."

But one night Marie Doll awoke to find her husband quite a different man from what she thought, for beside her sat two little Japanese dolls.

When the clock struck twelve Marie Doll called to everyone: "Come quick and see my baby girls!"

"Oh, dear! they look just like Takeo," said Paper Doll. "This place will be filled with foreigners. It is too bad."

"I shall change their clothes at once," said Marie Doll.

And then it was Marie Doll and all the toys got the surprise of their lives, for from the corner where he sat came Takeo, and when he stood in front of his wife, he said, "Madam will not change the clothes of our sons."

When Marie recovered from her surprise, she gasped: "Sons! They are daughters!"

"They are sons, madam, and sons they will remain!" said Takeo, looking at Marie very steadily.

"I thought you could not understand or speak our language," said Marie, while all the others stood looking at Takeo in astonishment.

"I was made in this country, and so were you; but I was made to represent a Japanese gentleman and I intend to live the life of one. As for speaking, we Japanese never speak unless we have something to say. I had something to say, and I said it. You heard me, madam. Those children are our sons and you will not change their clothes."

Takeo turned around in a very sedate manner and returned to his corner and sat down.

"I told you it would not turn out well," said Paper Doll to Teddy Bear. "Oh, poor Marie Doll, what a life you will lead!"

But Marie Doll was still looking at her husband, and she did not hear what Paper Doll said. She was smiling at Takeo. "Such dignity," she whispered to herself, "and how masterful he is. I shall never dare disobey him.

"Oh, you little darling boys! How I love you! You are just like your handsome father." And Marie Doll hugged her children to her and began to rock them.

"She is crazy," said Teddy Bear. "Marie would never give in if she were in her right mind, I know."

"She is in love," said Paper Doll. "She has found a master, and some women love to have a master."

"You women are queer creatures," said Teddy Bear. "I shall never understand you."

"You are not supposed to understand us. You are supposed to love us," said Paper Doll.

MORNING-GLORY

Morning-glory

Once upon a time there was a very little Morning-glory that grew on the end of a high vine, and one day when the wind was blowing a brisk breeze passed by the little Morning-glory, making it wish it, too, could go along and see more of the world.

The big mother vine knew what was in the heart of her little Glory, so she whispered soft words of love to it and told the little flower that it must never follow the breeze, for he was a wanderer and might take it far from its home, where it would be very unhappy and perhaps die out in the cold world. But the silly little Morning-glory still wanted to leave the big vine, and the next time the breeze came along it pushed up its head and the breeze took it off the big vine and bore it along with it far, far away.

But by and by the wind grew tired of carrying the little Glory, so it dropped it, and when the Morning-glory looked around it found it was in the midst of big tall trees and rocks and briers.

Vainly it tried to crawl along to a tree where it could twine itself around and climb, but it was too small, and then the rain came and made it cold and wet, and even the fickle wind did not come to it again.

Then the cold days came and the poor little Glory grew faded and had to crawl under the dead leaves for protection.

When the summer came again up came the little Glory, but it was a sad little flower. Now it longed to climb, but it was too small to do anything but lie on the ground.

After a while it grew near to a bush and put its weak little vine around it, hoping to get off the ground.

"What do you mean by trying to cling to me?" said the bush. "I have all I can do to take care of myself."

So the poor little Morning-glory dropped back to the ground. By and by it grew long enough to reach a tree and slowly it climbed up the big trunk until it came to the branches.

"Now I shall be able to see the world," it thought. "This tree is big and will shelter me, and I can climb to the very top."

As soon as the big tree saw what was happening it told the little Morning-glory it would not have it climbing about its branches, because it would spoil its leaves.

"What are you doing in our woods?" asked the tree. "You should be growing in a garden, on an arbor or up the side of some little house. How came you here?"

The poor little Glory had to tell how it ran away from its mother with the breeze and was left alone in the woods all winter.

"Please don't send me back to the ground. I cannot see a thing there and I am so lonely," pleaded the little Morning-glory.

"I am sorry for you," said the tree, "but I cannot have my leaves spoiled on any account. I'll tell you what I will do, but you must be satisfied and never ask for more liberty. If you do, back you go to the ground."

The poor little Morning-glory was so lonely and sad it was ready to promise anything to get off the ground.

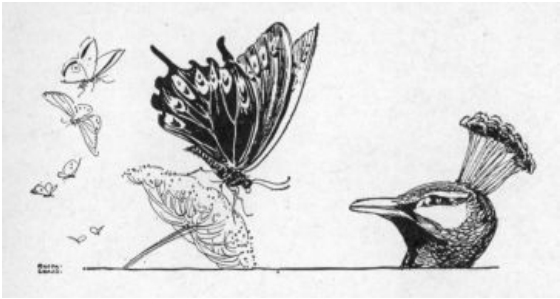
"You should stay where you are, but you cannot grow up any higher. If you do I shall grow my twigs and leaves about you and crush you," said the tree.

So the little Morning-glory had to promise to stay on the trunk of the tree and never grow any higher, but it sighed for its mother vine, and, because it could not climb, never grew any big blossoms,

but tiny little flowers which sighed because they could not stretch out their vines and grow. But the tree kept the little Glory to its promise and not a vine could get above the trunk.

And then one day when the days grew cold and the Morning-glory vine was going to sleep for the winter, the runaway Glory was heard to say to the other blossoms: "Children, be careful of the breeze and what he may tell you next summer. I may not be here to care for you, but he will surely come and tempt you to go along with him. He is fickle and will carry you far, far away and then drop you in a place perhaps worse than this, for we do not belong here, but in a garden with other flowers. I ran away from my mother vine one day, and this is where the breeze left me; so cling to the big tree as long as you bloom, for here you are safe at least, even if you do not live and bloom in a garden." And then she went to sleep.

THE PEACOCK BUTTERFLIES



The Peacock Butterflies

Plain little Miss Butterfly sat on a bush one day, when along came Mr. Peacock, with his tail full spread.

"Oh—oh!" sighed little Miss Butterfly. "How handsome he is! If only I could have a dress like the colors of Mr. Peacock's tail all the other butterflies in the world would envy me.

"But here am I, only a plain little creature, with no color to boast of, while all my cousins have gorgeously colored gowns. Oh, how I do wish he would give me two feathers from his tail that I might have them made into a gown!"

And then this plain little Butterfly, because she was so plain and had no beauty to speak about, began to think about handsome Mr. Peacock. "I wonder if he is vain?" she said out loud.

"Vain! Of course he is. There is no one in the world so vain as he," said a Bee, who was sipping honey near by.

Miss Butterfly did not ask any questions, and Mr. Bee was too busy to say more. But when he flew away Miss Butterfly began to think, and the more she thought the stronger became her intention to fly over to the Peacock and speak to him.

Over she went, alighting on a flower near him.

"Mr. Peacock," she said, "I wonder you never have wished to see yourself, you are so handsome."

"I have," replied Mr. Peacock; "often I have gazed into the pond and beheld my handsome self."

"Oh, that is not at all what I mean," said Miss Butterfly. "Suppose you were to see the very pattern of your beautiful tail flying all about you. Then you could look at your beauty as it really is."

"I do not see at all what you mean," said Mr. Peacock, who was not very quick at thinking.

"I mean if you would give me two tips from your beautiful tail I could have a handsomer gown than any other butterfly in the world," said the little flatterer, "and besides that, you would no longer hear the yellow-and-black and those brown-and-black butterflies say that they were the handsomest creatures in the garden. I should outshine them all."

Mr. Peacock stood up and strutted about, and all the time little Miss Butterfly flew close to him and flattered him.

"Oh, how jealous they would be if I had a dress like your beautiful tail, for there are no colors in the world so gorgeous, and they would call me the Peacock Butterfly! Think of that! You would have the most beautiful butterfly in the world named for you, Mr. Peacock!"

Mr. Peacock could not resist this flattery. He told her she could choose the two tips she best liked

and have some one to pull them out.

It did not take Miss Butterfly a minute to fly to the tree near by where Mr. Woodpecker was at work and ask his help, for she knew he did not bother butterflies. His work was to find small insects.

Before the end of the summer the garden folk saw Miss Butterfly, but not plain little Butterfly now, for she wore the most gorgeous gown in the garden, of blue and black, and the next year all the other butterflies were jealous of the Peacock Butterflies, who wore the handsomest gowns in the world.

Mr. Peacock struts more than ever every time he sees one of the handsome creatures he helped to dress, but no one knows that it was due to the flattery of plain little Miss Butterfly that the family name was created.

THE REVENGE OF THE GNOMES

Revenge of the Gnomes

The Fairies decided to give a party one night, and invited the Goblins, but they did not ask the Gnomes, because they did not think of them.

The Gnomes live so deep in the earth that the Fairies seldom meet them, and so they really forgot and did not in the least intend to slight them. But the Gnomes heard the Goblins talking about the party one night and they were very angry because they were not asked also.

The woods were very beautiful, and some of the trees were wearing their red and yellow leaves, for it was late in the summer. When the moon came out the green and red and yellow made a pretty picture, and the Fairies were delighted with the setting for their party.

The Fairy Queen had a new carriage made from a petal of a white lily and drawn by two butterflies. The Fairies all had new dresses of pink rose petals and they had the fireflies in all the bushes and trees where they looked like so many tiny electric lights.

Their table was spread on a big rock; the rabbits were to wait on the table because their coats were white, and squirrels were to do the cooking in a little hollow. The table cloth was spun by a spider and was so beautiful that the Queen, when she saw it, thought it was a shame to cover it with dishes, so she had the rabbits put the food on a rock behind a tree and leave the beautiful cloth so the Goblins could see it.

But when the Goblins arrived they looked at the table with dismay. "Are not they going to have anything to eat?" they asked one another, seating themselves at the table and looking with anxious eye.

Not a word did they say to the Queen about the beautiful cloth, and she found that it was quite wasted on the greedy little Goblins.

There were so many Goblins that the Fairies were obliged to spread a table on the ground for themselves, and when the rabbits appeared with the food the Goblins jumped up and helped themselves before the rabbits could serve them.

At last the Queen, seeing that it was of no use to have waiters for the Goblins, told the rabbits to put the ice cream and cake and lemonade and all the nice things on the table and let the Goblins help themselves.

The bad Goblins spoiled the beautiful cloth the spider had taken so much trouble to weave; they spilled the lemonade and they crumbled the cake and the poor Queen was in despair.

The Goblins, not getting the food quick enough to suit them, had climbed on the table, which, you remember, was spread on a rock. Now, this rock did not have any moss on it, and it happened that it was one of the doors to the home of the Gnomes.

The Gnomes are little brown men and they hide under the leaves and sticks that are so near the color of themselves that they cannot be seen, so they had been watching all that went on at the party,

and, when they saw the Goblins on top of one of their rocks, part of their number hurried into the earth and opened the stone where the Goblins were.

Some of the Goblins were quick enough to escape, but most of them went into the ground, and all the cake and candy and ice cream with them.

The Queen and her Fairies jumped up and looked around. Everything was changed and the Fairies shivered as they looked.

The trees were brown and the bushes and the leaves were falling from the trees, making the ground look as though it had a brown carpet over it.

The air was frosty and the poor little Fairies looked about in amazement at the dreary scene before them. The Goblins that escaped were running around and calling on the Queen to help them rescue their brothers.

"It is all your fault," they told her. "If you had asked the Gnomes to your party this would not have happened. Now you must help us to get our brothers out of the power of those bad Gnomes.

"What shall I do?" asked the poor Queen. She felt that her party had been a failure and thought if she had asked the Gnomes it could not have been worse.

Just then a Goblin came running toward them. He had been sent by the Gnomes. They told him to say that his brothers would all be held prisoners until the Fairies sent them all the ice cream they wanted.

The Fairies and the Goblins hurried to the kitchen in the hollow, but it was empty. The squirrels and the rabbits had hurried off when they felt the frosty air and saw everything turning brown.

"What is to be done?" asked the Goblins, "You ought to help us," they told the Queen again. "If we had not come to your party we should not have gotten into trouble."

The Queen could not resist replying to this remark the second time. "If your brothers and you had not climbed on the table, but kept your seats, as well-behaved Goblins should, you would not have been in need of help.

"We must go to work," she said to her Fairies. "Fold your wings and pin up your skirts. We must make ice cream for those wicked Gnomes."

They worked all night, and just before it was light the Goblins carried ice cream in nut shells to the rocks of the Gnomes, and by and by the captured Goblins came out and joined their comrades.

"We lost our supper," said the Goblins to the Fairies, "and you should give us our breakfast. We are hungry. If it had not been for your party we should not have lost our supper."

This was more than the poor tired Queen and her Fairies could bear. They took their wands from under their wings and, waving them, they flew toward the Gnomes.

Little sparks darted from the wands, and every time a spark touched a Goblin it left a little red mark, and at the same time it pricked them.

Such tumbling and scampering you never saw as the Goblins tried to get away, and when a Goblin that had a red spot on his face meets a Fairy he hides or runs, for he knows that she will point him out as one of the greedy Goblins who tried to make the Fairies cook their breakfast for them.

THE LITTLE CHINA SHEPHERDESS

The China Shepherdess

On the parlor mantel of a farmhouse stood little China Shepherdess. In one hand she held a gilt crook and with the other she shaded her eyes and gazed far away. Probably she was looking for her

sheep. Her dress was of red and green, and it was trimmed with gilt. Her boots were also gilt.

On the other end of the mantel stood a little china Flute Player. He was dressed in red and white, and his flute was gilt and his boots were red. He held his flute to his lips in a very jaunty manner, but his eyes were on the little Shepherdess. He had been in love with her for a long time, but never a look did she give him.

China Cat stood near the Flute Player, and one day she heard him sigh.

"Why do you sigh?" she asked him. He shook his head, but did not answer. "I know," said the Cat; "you are in love with the Shepherdess, and she will not look at you. Now, let me tell you how to manage. First, you must stop looking at her. She knows that you are always gazing in her direction."

The Flute Player shook his head again and said, "I cannot help looking at her, she is so pretty and I love her so dearly."

"But you must," said China Cat. "There is the Flower Girl on the center table. Look at her and play your jolliest tune and see what happens."

So the little Flute Player took China Cat's advice and began to play a lively air. He smiled at the little Flower Girl, who smiled in return and made him a curtsey. Then she began to dance, keeping time to his music. The Flute Player commenced to dance as he played, and China Cat moved her head from side to side. The little Shepherdess tapped on the mantel with her gilt boot and looked toward the Flute Player. But he was gazing at the Flower Girl, and for the first time she thought him rather good to look at.

"I cannot see what there is about that Flower Girl to attract him," said the Shepherdess; "she hasn't a bit of color about her; she is as white as a piece of cloth; even her flowers are white."

By and by the little Shepherdess began to dance and she moved toward the end of the mantel where the Flute Player stood. China Cat rubbed against the Flute Player's leg.

"Look," she said, "but be careful she does not catch you; the Shepherdess is coming this way."

His heart beat very fast, but he kept on playing and fixed his eyes on the little Flower Girl. But the Shepherdess did not come any nearer than the middle of the mantel, and not once did she look at him. By and by it was dark and the Flute Player could not see the Flower Girl, so he stopped playing and his heart was heavy again.

China Cat, however, was bound to make a match between the Shepherdess and the Flute Player, and she walked over to the little Shepherdess and asked, "Don't you think that he plays well?"

"Who?" asked the artful little Shepherdess.

"The handsome Flute Player," said China Cat.

"Oh, I have not thought much about it," answered the Shepherdess.

"Wouldn't you like to hear him play again?" said China Cat. "It would cheer us up, the room is so dark."

Just then the moonlight streamed in the window and lighted the room. The little Shepherdess looked into the distance again and said she thought it would be nice to hear the music. So China Cat trotted over to the Flute Player.

"She wants to hear you play," she said, "and I think you can win her."

The Flute Player began playing soft music and walking toward the little Shepherdess. The music was so sweet and sad that by the time he reached her side she was wiping her eyes. He stole one arm around her waist and told her not to cry, that he would play a jolly tune for her.

"No, those are the tunes you play for the Flower Girl," she said, hanging her head. "I do not want you to play them for me."

"I did not play any tunes for the Flower Girl," he said, "they were all for you."

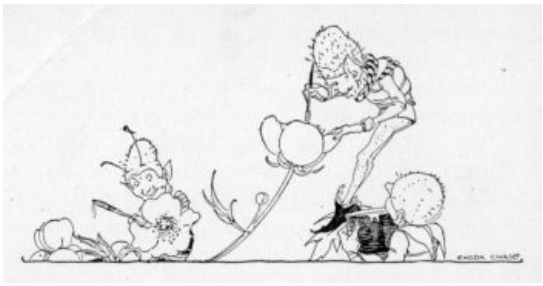
"But you looked at her all the time," said the now humble little Shepherdess.

"I was thinking of you," he replied. "Let us sit on the end of the mantel and I will play to you. What would you like to hear?"

"Play something sad," said the little Shepherdess, for, like all girls, she wanted to cry when she was happiest.

"There," said the Cat, curling herself up for a nap, "I am glad that is settled. She never would have given in if he had not looked at the Flower Girl. These girls are queer creatures," she said, closing her eyes.

HOW THE BUTTERCUP GREW YELLOW



How the Buttercup Grew Yellow

Long, long ago it is told that the flowers were all white and that each received its color by some magic power.

The little Daisy, with its yellow eye, received its golden center when the angry elves pelted the little Fairies with sunbeams.

The Daisy grew to be very proud of her yellow eye and thought it showed off to perfection her pure white rim. One day she was looking about the field where she grew and saw the little White Cups growing all about her in abundance.

"There is too much white in this field," she told the other Daisies. "Our beautiful white borders would show off much better if the White Cups were golden."

"But perhaps the White Cups do not wish to become golden," said her sisters.

"Oh, but we do, dear Daisies," said the White Cups all in chorus; "we have always wanted to be a beautiful yellow like your eyes, but we thought you would not like to have us that color, as we have to live in the same field."

"Oh yes, we would," said the Daisy, "and I am sure the fields will look much more beautiful with you a golden color than white; besides that, we shall be seen to better advantage; so both of us will gain by the change."

"But who will help us to change our color?" asked the White Cups.

The daisy thought a long time, and at length she said: "You might get the Goblins to color you, but the thing is to get them to do it. They are such queer little fellows that if they thought they were bothering the Fairies they would do it quick enough; but if we ask them to make you yellow that we all may look more beautiful they would only laugh and run off."

"Why can't we make them think they would make the Fairies angry if they made us golden?" asked the White Cups; "I am sure we can find a way."

"That would be the very thing," said the Daisy, "but what do you propose to do?"

"We will ask the Fairies when they come into the fields to-night for their frolic," said the White Cups.

That night when the Fairies came flying over the field the White Cups called to them and told them what they wanted.

"Oh, that will be beautiful," said the Fairy Queen, "and we can fool the Goblins easy enough, as you shall see."

The Fairy Queen called her Fairies around her and whispered so low that the field flowers could not hear what she said, but they heard the Fairies laugh as they flew away, and each alighted on a little White Cup and began to sing.

"We love you, little White Cup, Our Lady of the Field;
We will watch o'er you and keep you and from all danger shield;
You are prettier than the Daisy with her yellow eye so bright,
You are like a waxen blossom in the pale moonlight."

Over and over they sang the verse as they leaned over and kissed the little Cups, and by and by from out of the woods came the Goblins, hopping and jumping like leaves before the wind.

"Here they are," they said, when they saw the Fairies. "Listen and hear what they are singing."

When they heard the Fairies' pretty love song to the little White Cup the Goblins kicked up their heels and laughed, each laying a tiny finger beside his nose as he winked at his brother.

Off they scampered to the woods again, and the Fairies kept on singing their song, while the Daisy watched with its yellow eye, wondering how her cousin, the White Cup, would be made the color for which she had wished.

By and by the Goblins came back, but this time they carried bags over their shoulders and they crept carefully through the grass.

The Fairies saw them all the time, but of course they pretended not to, and when the Goblins were quite near the Queen said:

"Come, my children; leave your best-loved flower for to-night. To-morrow you shall come again."

As they were flying away they glanced back, and in the moonlight they saw the Goblins hard at work over each little White Cup.

When the morning sun awoke he opened wide his eyes, for all over the field among the Daisies he beheld little Golden Cups nodding gaily at their cousins with the golden eyes.

The next night when the Fairies came flying through the fields they saw the Yellow Cups. "You are more beautiful than ever," they said to the Golden Cups, "and we will call you our Golden Cups, but you must be known as the Buttercups or the Goblins will discover our trick and make you white again."

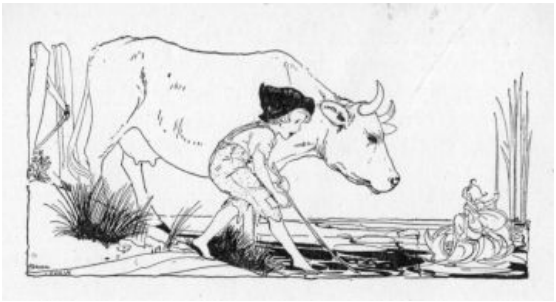
The Buttercups thanked the Fairies and told them they would be glad to be their cups whenever they gave a banquet and that never would they let the Goblins know the Fairies had fooled them.

So they bloom among the Daisies in the fields and are called Buttercups, but they know to the Fairies they are the little Golden Cups, and the Goblins wonder why the Fairies always seem so happy when they fly near the Buttercup and find it changed.

The Fairies are too wise to let the Goblins know how they fooled them and gained for the Buttercups the very color that they wanted, but it is rather hard sometimes not to tell them when the little Goblins scamper about and try to upset their plans.

The Fairy Queen has taught them that "Silence is golden," and they know their Queen is always right.

WAS IT THE FIELD FAIRY?



The Field Fairy

Jack and his sister Nina were two little orphans who had to beg from door to door for their food and a place to sleep.

One day a man named Simon told them if they would work for him he would give them a home.

Jack and Nina thought Simon must be a very kind-hearted man to offer them a home, so they worked just as hard as they could to repay him.

But in this they were mistaken, for Simon was a very greedy, hard-hearted man and only offered to take the children that he might get their work for nothing.

Jack did all the chores about the farm and Nina took care of the house, although they were both much too small to do such hard work.

In return Simon gave them a place to sleep on the floor of the attic and very little to eat.

If he had Nina cook meat for his dinner he would sit by the stove and watch that she did not eat any of it, and when he had eaten all the meat he would leave the bones and gristle for poor little Jack and

Nina, who were half starved.

One day Simon told Jack he was going to sell the big Brindle Cow to the butcher and that he was to drive her the next day to the town, a few miles away.

Jack and Nina were very fond of Brindle Cow and wept bitterly when they heard this. They begged Simon not to let the butcher have her, but he told them he would not listen to any such silly chatter and for Jack to be off the next morning bright and early.

Nina put her arms around Brindle Cow and cried when Jack was ready to lead her away and watched them down the road; but her tears blinded her so she could not see far, and she went back to get Simon's breakfast with a sad heart.

When Jack came to the woods he led Brindle Cow to a stream to drink, and while he sat on the bank, waiting, he was surprised to see a Fairy slip out of a lily as it opened.

"I thought you were never coming," said the little creature.

Jack thought it was to him she was speaking, and while he tried to find his tongue, which clung to his mouth, he was so surprised, Brindle Cow answered.

"We had to wait for daylight, you know," she said.

"Yes, I know; but the sun will soon be up, and I must get home before that," said the Fairy. "Now what can I do for you?"

"Save my life! I am on the way to the butcher now," replied Brindle Cow.

"You told me that day I did not eat the field flower in which you were sleeping that you would help me if ever I was in need of help," said Brindle Cow.

"Last night I saw one of your sisters and told her my sad plight. The Field Flower Fairy would help me if I could only find her," I said.

"'Oh! She will be by the stream in the wood. She sits in a lily until it is time to go home in the morning. I will tell her,' she said."

"'Of course I will help you," said the Field Fairy. "I will change you into anything you like. What shall it be?"

"There is another thing, good Field Fairy," said Brindle Cow. "This poor boy will be punished if I am not carried to the butcher and the money he gets carried back to Simon. This boy and his sister have been very kind to me. They never forgot to bring me water and gave me salt many times when their master did not know it. I should not like to get them into trouble, even to save my life."

"Oh, please do not mind us," said Jack, who at last was able to speak. "Nina and I will not mind being punished if only you can escape the butcher."

"I have thought of a plan," said the Fairy, "that will save you from the butcher, and will not cause your two friends the least harm, either. It is this:

"Instead of changing you into some other shape, why not change your master into a kind and good man?"

"Oh, that would be best of all," said Jack, "that is, if Brindle Cow does not object to remaining a cow."

"I would rather be a cow if I can be sure I am going to live," replied Brindle Cow. "But you can understand, of course, there can be no joy in life for me with that butcher staring me in the face."

"Well, that is all settled, then," replied the Fairy, "and though the sun is getting well up I think I can get to your master without letting the old Sun Man see me, for it is cool and shady along the road to the farm. You two wait here and see what happens."

Jack wondered what the Field Fairy intended to do, but he would not be surprised now at anything, so he began to pick some berries, for he had not had his breakfast, and now Brindle Cow was sure she was not going to the butcher. So she began to eat the sweet grass by the stream.

Jack thought she might speak again and he patted her sides and nose, but the only answer Brindle Cow made was to rub her nose against him and moo.

After a while Jack heard some one calling his name and running down the road. It was Nina. "Oh, I am so glad I have found you!" she said. "Come quickly; something has happened to Simon."

Jack let Brindle Cow take care of herself and hurried after Nina, wondering what the Fairy had done to Simon.

But it seemed that Simon had brought on his trouble himself by trying to save the wood that morning when Nina told him she needed more wood for the fire. Instead of giving her more wood he

had poured on some oil and the flame had blazed up and burnt him.

When Jack and Nina reached the farmhouse Simon was on the floor, groaning with pain.

Forgetting all the unkindness they had received at his hands, Jack and Nina lifted him from the floor and placed him on his bed. Then they did all they could to relieve his sufferings.

Nina bathed his face and hands and Jack bandaged them, and by and by he fell asleep. When he awoke he asked for some gruel, and then he remembered Brindle Cow.

"Poor creature!" said Simon. "I wish I had kept her even if she was getting old; but it is too late now, for, of course, the butcher has her."

Just then, "Moo, moo!" was heard outside, and for the first time since he left her at the stream Jack thought of Brindle Cow.

"Why, there she is now!" he said. "I did not get to the butcher's this morning because Nina called me before I had gone beyond the woods.

"I'll never sell her," said Simon. "Go out, Jack, and give her a good dinner, and to-night see that she has a nice bed of straw in the barn."

That day for dinner Simon told Nina to have a good meat stew and that Nina and Jack were to eat all they wanted.

Jack told Nina what had happened at the stream in the woods and asked her if she thought the Fairy had anything to do with the accident that happened to Simon.

"Of course not," said Nina. "Fairies always do good, not bad things, and, besides, Simon must have been burnt at the very time you saw the Fairy, and I wonder if you really did see a Fairy, after all. Are you sure you did not fall asleep and dream it all?"

Jack was quite sure he did not dream it, but never again did Brindle Cow speak—at least, Jack never heard her if she did.

But when Simon recovered from his burns and was quite well again something did happen, and whether the Field Fairy and Brindle Cow had anything to do with it Jack and Nina never knew.

Simon was a changed man, that was sure. He would not let Nina do the work any more, but sent both of the children to school. He fixed up the house and bought new furniture, and, best of all, he bought nice clothing for Jack and Nina.

"And if you don't mind," said Simon to Jack and Nina one day, "I wish you would call me Uncle Simon."

He even bought a nice horse and pretty willow carriage for the children to drive to school; in fact, everybody thought Simon must have lost his mind, he was so changed.

"It must be the work of the Field Fairy," said Jack when he and Nina were talking over what the neighbors said about Simon. "She said she would change him into a kind and good man."

"Perhaps she came and found him burnt and thought she would wait and see what happened to him," said Nina, "but I think you fell asleep that morning, Jack, while you were waiting for Brindle Cow to drink at the stream."

"Brindle Cow saw the Fairy. Didn't you, Brindle?" asked Jack, as Brindle Cow came up to the stone wall where Jack and Nina stood.

Brindle Cow looked over the wall straight at Jack and answered, "Mo-o-o."

"It does not matter, Jack," said Nina, with a laugh, as she patted Brindle Cow on the nose. "It has all turned out so well and Uncle Simon could not be kinder or nicer to us now if he were our father. Sometimes I think it is all because when he was so sick and helpless that we were kind to him and did all we could even though he had almost starved us and made us work so hard. I think he is sorry for it and is trying to do all he can now to make up for his unkindness and make us forget it."

"Perhaps you are right, Nina," said Jack, "so we will forget it, but I am sure about the Field Fairy, and Brindle Cow knows it is true, for it was the Fairy who saved her from the butcher."

But all the answer Jack could get from Brindle Cow was "M-o-o-o!"

THE FROGS AND THE FAIRIES

The Frogs and the fairies

In a pond in a dell lived a big family of frogs, and one day when the sun was shining all the young bullfrogs came up out of the water and hopped on the bank. "I think it would be good fun to see what is in the dell beside this pond," said Billy Bull, who was a young and inquisitive frog.

"What do you fellows say to a lark to-night by the light of the moon?"

"We'll go, we'll go, Billy Bull," said all the other young frogs in chorus.

"Better stay home, better stay home," croaked old Grandfather Bullfrog from his seat on a stump by the edge of the pond.

"Oh, hear old grandfather croaking!" said Billy Bull; "he never went out of this pond in all his days, and what does he know of the dell?"

"Better stay home, better stay home," croaked Grandfather Frog.

"You can, Grandfather Frog, if you like, but we young frogs are going for a lark tonight, and when we come back we will tell you what is in the dell," said Billy Bull.

That night when the moon was up and shining through the trees, out of the pond leaped all the young froggies.

"Better stay home, better stay home," croaked Grandfather Frog from his seat on the stump, but the young froggies only laughed as grandfather's warning followed them through the dell—"Better stay home, better stay home."

It happened that the Fairies were holding a party that night, and when Billy Bull and all the other young frogs hopped and leaped into the middle of the dell they saw the bright lights of the fireflies' lanterns.

"Looks to me like all the fireflies in the world had gathered for us to feast on," said Billy Bull. "What luck for us."

Away off they could still hear Grandfather Frog croaking his warning: "Better stay home, better stay home." But it was no warning to the young froggies; they only saw the fireflies and the feast in store for them.

The froggies had never seen the Fairies before and they thought they, too, were little insects, so, without stopping to think or look closer into the midst of the Fairy revel, in leaped Billy Bull and all his cousins.

But the Fairies were as quick as the frogs, and no sooner had they leaped than up went all the fairy wands, and there stood each frog still and stiff. They were not able to move; they could only stare and listen.

"What are these creatures that dare to disturb us?" asked the Queen.

"Your Majesty, they are frogs," said a fire-fly, "and I expect they intended to eat us."

"Eat the lantern bearers of the fairies!" said the Queen. "They shall suffer for this."

"Off with a toe on each front foot, and then perhaps these frogs will stay at home and not hop about at night. Where do they live?" asked the Queen.

"In the pond at the end of the dell," said the fireflies.

"Send them home," said the Queen, "and every time they wander far from their pond they shall lose a toe."

Down on the foot of the froggies went the fairy wands, and where the frogs had five toes there remained only four on each of their front feet, and then with their wands on the heads of the froggies the fairies turned them around and drove them back to their pond.

"Better stayed home, better stayed home," croaked their Grandfather Frog as the young froggies leaped sadly into the pond and buried themselves in the mud at the bottom.

And that was the way it is said frogs came to have five toes on each of their hind feet and only four toes on each front foot. If they had listened to their grandfather's warning they would still have their other toes.

JACK THE PREACHER

Jack the Preacher

One morning in very early springtime the big Evergreen Trees began to talk about the part they took in telling all the woodland flowers that it was spring.

"Why, if we were not here," said one Evergreen Tree, "who would awake these sleepy springtime flowers to their duty? I should like you to tell me!"

"You speak truly, brother," said another tree. "We are ever green and need no awakening to our duty; but for us the woods would be a sorry-looking place in the summer. Those lazy crocuses would sleep right on and on!"

"Yes, and the little violets never would dare show their timid little heads," said another Evergreen Tree, "when the soft winds begin to run through the woods. It is then we call forth to all sleeping flowers and shrubs and bushes: 'Awake! It is time to get up!'"

"And who would tell the Bee summer was on its way?" said another Tree. "He would never get his work started at all if it were not for us. How lucky the flowers and all the woodland things are that we are here to tell them when to get up!"

So the Evergreens talked and bragged about how they preached Springtime to the woodland folk, and as they talked all the spring flowers awoke and the insects began lazily to stretch their wings, but it was not because of what the big Evergreen Trees were saying; no, it was because they had heard the voice of the little woodland preacher.

And who was he, do you think? Why, no other than Jack-in-the-pulpit, who gives a talk every spring to all the woodland dwellers on just how to bloom and how to buzz and when to do it.

Every night for ever so long before it is time for the crocus or the violet or any early spring flower to bloom, when it is the magic hour the Fairies come running through the woods and touch Jack on his nodding little head under the dry leaves and up he pops and begins to preach.

So when the flowers and bees and things heard the big Evergreen Trees talking they nodded to each other and laughed. "Isn't it funny to hear them?" said a beautiful yellow crocus. "Those tall trees know nothing about the real truth of things, do they?"

"Fancy thinking they awaken us!" said another flower. "Why, they themselves are asleep. They get so used to winter they stand still all the time, but who is to tell them the truth about our Preacher Jack? The Evergreen Trees never bend or sway to one side or the other far enough to see the beauties of our woodland spring. They only know what the winds tell them."

"Let them think what they like," said a little bush of pretty blossoms. "It does not hurt Jack-in-the-pulpit if the Evergreens think they are the preachers of the woods, for all the spring and summer flowers know that Jack has always been our preacher and the Evergreens haven't any pulpit to preach from. Only they do not know it."

And so the sleepy old Evergreens thought they were the ones who awakened the flowers and preached to them about their duty, and no one ever told them about little Jack-in-the-pulpit, who always has and always will preach about the spring and summer to all the woodland dwellers.

MR. CROW GOES AND TELLS

Mr. Crow

Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum lived near each other in the woods, and one day they decided to give a supper the first bright moonlight night.

"It will be much easier for us to provide the supper together," said Mr. Coon, "because we are bachelors and we can help each other."

But the real reason was that Mr. Coon knew that Mr. Possum had some new tin spoons and all the Coon family love shiny things. He thought he might be able to slip one or two tin spoons into his pocket and never be found out, because there would be so many guests that Mr. Possum would not know which one to suspect when he found it out.

Mr. Possum was delighted to do as Mr. Coon suggested, and they began making out a list of guests to be invited.

Of course there was Mr. Fox and Mr. Squirrel and Jack Rabbit and Mr. Owl, who were all bachelors like themselves; so they decided they would not ask any of the married folks, but call it a bachelor party.

"Old James Crow, who lives in the tree near me, will think he should be invited, too, I suppose," said Mr. Possum; "but he is such a quarrelsome old fellow I hate to ask him."

"No, don't ask him," said Mr. Coon, thinking of Mr. Possum's new tin spoons and remembering that the Crow family were very like his own in the matter of liking bright and glittering things. "He will never know we have a party. He goes to bed at sunset, you know."

So it was decided that old James Crow was not to be invited and that only the bachelors of the wood were to be asked.

A few nights after this the moon shone brightly and over to Mr. Possum's house they all went.

Now it happened that they began to sing, when they all sat down to the table, that they all were jolly good fellows and something about being single was a life of bliss, and another about poor married man, and they made so much noise that they awoke old James Crow, who was sound asleep in his bed.

"What is that noise?" he said, jumping up and listening; but when he heard it again old Mr. Crow got out of bed and put his head out of the window.

"Oh, we are jolly bachelor boys," came from Mr. Possum's house and floated right up to Mr. Crow's window.

"Something is going on that I do not know about," said old Mr. Crow, pulling in his head and taking off his night cap. "I must find out what it is. I should say that the noise came from Mr. Possum's house. I'll go right down there and see."

And he did, arriving just as the supper was being put on the table; and while Mr. Crow did not go to the door, he had no trouble at all in looking in through the shutters, for old Mr. Crow was very clever in the art of spying.

There was a big fat turkey, but Mr. Crow did not care about that—that is, he was not crazy about turkey. He could eat it if there was nothing better, but when the big dish of green corn was brought in Mr. Crow began to think he had been slighted and that he should have been asked to the party.

Jack Rabbit stood up in his chair so he would be tall enough to be seen and held up a crisp radish. "Here is to our hosts, Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum," he said, taking a bite of the radish.

"So," thought old Mr. Crow, "Mr. Possum is giving this supper and he is a neighbor."

Then somebody began to sing, "We are the bachelors of the wood; we wouldn't be married if we could."

And then Mr. Crow was good and mad. "Giving a bachelor party, are they," he thought, "and they

left me out. I am a bachelor just as much as any of those fellows. I'll pay them back for slighting me if it takes me a hundred years."

Just then the ice cream was brought in and Mr. Crow espied the new tin spoons and his eyes shone with longing to have one or two or three or as many as he could get, but how could he get them? If only he could scare them and make them all run he would get them easy enough.

Then an idea came to Mr. Crow and he flew away. "I'll have those spoons before I sleep again to-night, and get my revenge, too, or my name is not James Crow," he said, and out of the woods he went.

Mr. Crow flew straight for Mr. Man's farm, and you know crows can fly very straight, it is said.

When he arrived it was all still; not a sound could he hear but Mr. Dog breathing very hard, but it was Mr. Dog that Mr. Crow wanted, so it was easy to find him by following the noise.

Mr. Crow tapped on the side of Mr. Dog's house, for his door was open and out bounded Mr. Dog with a growl.

"Hush! don't make a noise," said Mr. Crow. "Are you free to run over to the woods? Yes, I see you are," he said, looking at Mr. Dog's collar and seeing there was no chain fastened to it.

"Do you want some fun?" he asked Mr. Dog.

Mr. Dog began to jump about and wag his tail. He was always ready for fun, he told Mr. Crow. "But where is it at this time of night?" he asked.

"You come with me," said Mr. Crow, "and if I do not show you more sport in a minute than you ever had in an hour hunting with Mr. Man, I'll eat all the spoons."

"What spoons?" asked Mr. Dog, standing still and dropping his tail. "I don't want to run after spoons."

"Oh, I did not mean spoons at all," said Mr. Crow. "I should have said I would eat my hat, but I promise you there will be fun and plenty of it. Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum are giving a supper in the woods, and their guests are Mr. Squir"—

"Tell me no more; I do not care about the guests. Hurry! Hurry! Where are they?" said Mr. Dog, dancing about so fast that Mr. Crow could not turn quick enough to keep up with him.

"Come along and I will show you," he said, and off he flew, keeping close to the ground so Mr. Dog could follow him.

The supper was still going on when they arrived; Mr. Crow flew to a tree close by, for he knew Mr. Dog could manage alone now that he had shown him the place.

Mr. Dog did not stop to knock; he bounded in through the window, taking off a shutter as he went.

Out of the back door, out of the front door, and out of the windows went the guests and their hosts, and after them, barking, went Mr. Dog.

"They are jolly fellows, all right, now," croaked Mr. Crow, as he watched them out of sight, "and now my party begins."

Mr. Crow went in and took all the spoons from the deserted supper table and carried them off to his house. He hid them under the bed and then he got in and went to sleep.

He did not even bother to go over to see Mr. Dog the next day, so little did he care how the chase came out. He knew Mr. Dog did not catch Mr. Possum or Mr. Coon, because he saw them both the next day; but that was all he knew and all he cared, for those were the two he had in his plan for revenge.

The next day when Mr. Coon was out—and Mr. Crow made sure he was not only away from home but out of the woods—Mr. Crow took all the spoons but one under his wing and went over to Mr. Coon's house and got in the cellar window.

He went upstairs and put those spoons between Mr. Coon's feather beds. Mr. Coon had two fat feather beds, always having plenty of feathers on hand as he did.

Then Mr. Crow went over to Mr. Possum's house and found him sitting in the doorway, looking very sad.

"What is the matter with you, Friend Possum?" asked Mr. Crow in the most friendly tone he could master. "Don't you feel well?"

"I have lost all my new tin spoons," said Mr. Possum. "Some one stole them, I am afraid." He did not want Mr. Crow to know about the party, so he did not tell him any more.

"That is too bad," said Mr. Crow. "Were they anything like those Mr. Coon has? I saw him cleaning some very handsome ones this morning as I passed his window."

"I did not know he had any spoons," said Mr. Possum. "He has never told me he had any tin spoons. Are you sure you saw them?"

"Just as sure as I am that I see you now, Mr. Possum," said Mr. Crow. "But, of course, they would not have anything to do with your spoons. I was wondering if his were like yours. If they are I could take a look at them, and then if in my travels I saw any like them I would know they were yours and bring them back to you. I am very clever at finding things that are lost."

Mr. Possum did not seem inclined to say anything, and Mr. Crow went on: "Why don't you come along with me to Mr. Coon's house and get him to show us his spoons. I am anxious to help you if I can. I know how I should feel if I lost some handsome tin spoons."

This seemed to make Mr. Possum interested, so he walked along with Mr. Crow, who was so anxious to get to Mr. Coon's he could hardly keep from flying. Mr. Coon had just returned when they arrived and was unlocking his door.

"I lost all my new tin spoons last night," said Mr. Possum. "Mr. Crow said he saw you cleaning some, and if they were like mine he would like to take a look at them and then he might find mine; but I did not know you had any spoons."

Mr. Crow held his head very high and looked sideways while Mr. Possum was talking, but out of the corner of one eye he could see Mr. Coon, and he saw him turn around and look at him very angrily.

"Mr. Crow said I had some tin spoons?" he said. "He has sharper eyes than I thought and I always knew he had sharp eyes, particularly for bright things, but how he could see spoons in my house is more than I can explain, for I have no spoons."

"Well, of course I do not wish to cause any trouble," said Mr. Crow, "but I certainly saw you cleaning tin spoons. Anyway, it will be easy to prove you have no spoons in the house by letting us search, and of course you rather would, Mr. Coon, for that will clear you from suspicion; that is, if we do not find them."

"Go ahead and look," said Mr. Coon, opening the door and standing aside for them to enter. "I am glad I did not take one of those spoons," he thought to himself, for he remembered that he had intended to do so if Mr. Dog had not come in so unexpectedly.

Of course Mr. Crow held back and let Mr. Possum do all the hunting until they came to Mr. Coon's bedroom, and then he said:

"I have always heard that stolen goods are often hidden between beds. We might look there first."

Of course they found the spoons, and when Mr. Coon saw them he almost fell over. "Who put them there? I did not," he said.

"Of course you didn't," said Mr. Crow, with a smile that plainly said: "You are a story-teller."

"There is one spoon missing," said Mr. Possum, who had been counting the spoons. "I had a dozen and there are only eleven here."

"He probably ate his breakfast with that one," said Mr. Crow. "Better give it up, Mr. Coon; we have caught you and there is no use denying it now."

"Go ahead and find it if you can," said Mr. Coon. "I did not take those spoons and I do not know where the other spoon is, even if you do, Mr. Crow."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Mr. Crow, beginning to hop about.

"I mean that you seemed to be pretty sure where those spoons were," said Mr. Coon, "and if I am not mistaken about the history of your family, they are noted for their love of shining things fully as much as ours."

"Come along," said Mr. Crow to Mr. Possum; "we have found your spoons, and that is all I wanted. I cannot bother with this bad fellow, who now wants to make out I took the spoons; but that is always the way with thieves—they blame it on some one else if they can."

The more Mr. Coon thought about those spoons the more certain he was that Mr. Crow had something to do with their being found in his house; so one night about a week after he went to Mr. Crow's house and watched.

By and by he saw the light go out, and he thought, after all, he was not to catch Mr. Crow that night; but just as he was going away he saw a tiny flicker of light at another window. Up went Mr. Coon and peeked in.

And what do you think he saw? Mr. Crow sitting at a table eating bread and milk with Mr. Possum's missing tin spoon.

It did not take Mr. Coon long to run to Mr. Possum's house and bring him back with him and show him his spoon, and then right through the window they jumped and grabbed Mr. Crow by the nape of

his neck. And how they did shake the old thief! They did not stop to talk to him.

"He is not worth the breath we should waste," said Mr. Coon, "and I feel sure this place is not a place that agrees with Mr. Crow's health. He will move away, I am sure, where the climate will better agree with him."

The next day there was a to-let sign on the house where Mr. Crow had once lived, and the bachelors all met that night to discuss the breaking up of the party and to hear about the tin spoons and how they were found.

"And it is my opinion," said Mr. Coon, "that if some one were to ask Mr. Dog he would tell us that Mr. Crow went and told him about our party."

"But who will ask Mr. Dog?" asked Jack Rabbit.

No one seemed to be interested enough to ask Mr. Dog, and they never knew for sure whether he told or not, but Mr. Coon always said he did. At any rate, the wood folk were rid of old Mr. Crow, and they were glad of it.

DISCONTENTED DEWDROP

Discontented Dewdrop

One morning a little Dewdrop was resting on the petal of a wild rose that grew beside a river.

The sun shining on it made it glisten like a diamond and a lady who was passing stopped to admire its beauty.

"It is the most beautiful thing in the world," she remarked. "See the colors in that tiny little drop. Isn't it wonderful?"

"Wonderful," repeated the Dewdrop when the lady had walked away. "If I were like the river I might be wonderful; it is too bad; here I am sitting here while the river can run on and on and see all the sights. It bubbles and babbles as it goes, and that is worth while. I have never a chance to be wonderful. Oh, if I were only in the river water I might be something."

Just then a breeze passing heard the little Dewdrop's wish.

"You shall have your wish, foolish Dewdrop," she said, blowing gently on the rose, which swayed, and off went the little Dewdrop into the rushing river.

"This is like something, being a part of this river," said the Dewdrop as it mingled its tiny drop with the running river. "Now I am worth admiring and can see something of the world."

On and on it ran with the water of the river, but it was no longer a Dewdrop; it was a part of the river.

"I wish I could stop for a minute so some one might admire me," said the silly little drop, for it thought it could still be seen and was making all the babbling it heard as the river ran along.

But no one admired it, nor did it stop. On went the river to a larger river, and by and by it came to the bay and the Dewdrop went rolling into it with the other water.

"Surely I am greater now than ever and worth admiring," thought the drop, but it heard no sweet words such as the lady spoke of the little Dewdrop on the rose by the river.

The bay mingled at last with the ocean and little Dewdrop knew at last that it was no longer a thing to be admired for itself alone, but a part of the great ocean. It was completely lost in the vastness of the mighty waters of which it was only a drop.

The breeze went whispering over it, calling, "Little Dewdrop, little Dewdrop, where are you?"

But the drop answered never a word. It did not even hear the gentle voice of the breeze, so loud was the roar of the ocean.

"Come away," called a loud wind to the gentle breeze; "that is no place for you. I must blow here and make the waves high, and you will never find your little Dewdrop. It has been swallowed long ago by the ocean. Go back to your river and tell the other Dewdrops the fate of their companion."

The gentle breeze went away and the loud wind swept the ocean, making the waves high and the roar louder and louder. The little Dewdrop was there somewhere in the great whole, but it was lost forever in its longing to become great.

The gentle breeze went back to the river, and as she sighed around the rose where the discontented Dewdrop had rested she heard another drop say:

"Look at the river. Isn't it big? Here am I only a Dewdrop, so small no one can see me."

"Ah, that is where you are mistaken, my dainty Dewdrop," said the gentle breeze. "You can be seen now, but if you were to become a part of the river you would never be seen. You would lose your identity as soon as you mingled with the waters of the river. Be your own sweet self and be content with the part you play in this world. You are helping to make it more beautiful by your own dainty beauty. Do not wish to do what only seems a greater thing."

And then she told the fate of the discontented Dewdrop that had wished to become great and how at last it was swallowed by its own greatness, and its dainty beauty which had been so admired no longer remained.

"Be content with the small but beautiful part you play in this world," she told the drop, "and do not long for a greatness which may result in your unhappiness."

INQUISITIVE MR. POSSUM

Inquisitive Mr. Possum

It was Mr. Owl who gave the wood folk the warning by calling out one night, "To whom it may concern!" At least the wood people knew that was what he meant, but anyone else might have thought he just cried "To whoo! To whoo!"

So when all the animals both great and small had gathered around his tree he told them that in his opinion it was to be a very, very hard winter.

That of course meant that they must begin right away to lay up stores for the cold, snowed-in days, and everyone bestirred himself at once to do this.

Even Mrs. Rabbit, who seldom made much preparation for the winter days, began to do up preserves; all the small bunnies were sent out with their baskets to gather corn and beans and beet tops and all sorts of good things. "If we cannot get them green," said Mrs. Rabbit to her neighbor, Mrs. Squirrel, "we can eat them stewed; but of course we much prefer them in their natural state."

Mrs. Squirrel, to encourage her neighbor in laying up winter stores, gave her a big basketful of walnuts which Mrs. Rabbit pickled, and some say those were the first walnuts ever pickled.

But this story is not about pickled walnuts; it is about the nice preserves that Mrs. Rabbit put up and the accident that befell Mr. Possum.

Everybody that passed Mrs. Rabbit's home for many days found it hard to get by her door, for such spicy, nice-smelling odors as came through the open windows made everyone feel hungry.

Mr. Possum was especially interested when he found that Mrs. Rabbit was, among other things, putting up a great deal of canned corn, and he decided that when it was dark he would just take a peek into her pantry window and see how many cans she had.

Right in front of the window was a tree and one limb hung low enough so that Mr. Possum with a little care could easily swing himself from it and reach the pantry window.

Now this might have been safe enough if the limb had been a good one, but it wasn't, and when Mr. Possum ran along it, before he could even get ready to swing, "crackle, snap," went the limb and down went Mr. Possum into a barrel of whitewash Mrs. Rabbit had ready to use on her little house.

And that was not the worst of it. When he ran home, so scared he didn't remember running at all after it was over, Mrs. Possum didn't know him, but thought he was some terrible white creature come to carry on her children, and slammed the door right in his face.

All night Mr. Possum had to sit outside, the whitewash dripping from his coat, and in the morning, bright and early, all the little Bunnies and Mr. and Mrs. Rabbit, as well, were standing in front of the house, looking at him.

Mrs. Rabbit wanted to know what he meant by carrying off some of her whitewash. "I tracked you right to your own door-yard, so you need not deny it," she said.

Mr. Possum did not try to deny it, for what was the use. He was all covered in the white stuff? But he did try to tell Mr. and Mrs. Rabbit that it was all an accident, that he was just running along the limb and off it broke and he happened to fall into the whitewash.

Mrs. Possum had found out it was her husband by this time, of course, and she came out to say that what Mrs. Rabbit could think they wanted of her whitewash was more than she could tell.

Mrs. Rabbit wiggled her nose and looked very wise. "Well," she said, "if that is true, Mr. Possum, that it was all an accident, why, of course, that is all there is to it; but you must admit that it did look suspicious."

Mr. Possum admitted that it did, and off ran the Rabbit family for home; but it was a long time before Mr. Possum could go abroad again, for the white coat he wore was to be plainly seen in the daytime or at night.

WHAT THE FLOWERS TOLD MARTHA

What the Flowers told Martha

Martha was visiting her grandmother, who lived in the country. At the back of the farmhouse was a very large porch, and in the front of that a garden in which grew all kinds of flowers.

One afternoon, when everyone else was taking a nap, Martha sat on the porch. It was warm and a bee was buzzing around the flowers. Every little while he would fly around Martha's head.

"I wish I had someone to play with," thought Martha. "Everybody is asleep and I am lonesome."

"The flowers want you to come into the garden," buzzed the bee.

Martha listened, for she could not believe the bee was really speaking to her, but she heard again, "The flowers want you to come into the garden."

Martha walked down the path to the Rose Bush. "I'll find out if that bee is telling the truth," she said.

"I am so glad you came," said a Rose, and as Martha looked it seemed that she could almost see the face of a little girl in its petals. "I wanted some one to talk to," said the Rose.

"So did I," said a Lily.

"We all are glad to see you," said a Tulip, "for we never have anyone to talk to."

"I never knew before that you could talk," said Martha.

"Of course we can," said the Rose, "but we are tired of telling stories to one another."

"Oh! can you tell stories?" asked Martha as she seated herself on the ground beside the flowers.

"Yes, indeed!" said the Rose. "I'll tell mine first."

"Did you ever hear how the Rose happened to have thorns?" she asked.

Martha said she never did, and the Rose said, "I will tell you."

"Before I bloomed here I lived in the warm climates, and although you may not think it I also lived in the land where Jack Frost dwells. But I love best the land where the nightingale lives and tells me of his love. One night when he was singing and telling me that my perfume was the sweetest in the garden and my damask cheek the softest, a Thorn Bush which grew near and had tried many times to win him from me began to tell how sweet were his notes and how graceful his form."

"'Do come and sing in my bush,' she said, 'and let me show you how strong I am. You will be safer in my bush than on the swaying branches of the Rose.'

"But the nightingale would not leave me, and told the Thorn Bush it was far too bold and its sharp points far too treacherous. 'You are not so fragrant as the Rose,' he said, 'and my love is all for her.'

"'You shall pay for this,' screamed the Thorn Bush, angrily, 'and you will find that your beautiful Rose has thorns as well as I.' But the nightingale only sang lower and more sweetly to me, and we forgot the Thorn Bush in our happiness.

"The cruel Thorn, however, did not forget or forgive, and one day she twined herself around my roots and pressed into my tender stems until she was a part of me. I tried to cry out, but her strength was greater than mine. That night, when the nightingale came to sing his love song, she raised one of her sharp thorns and pierced his foot.

"'You see your beautiful Rose has hidden thorns,' she said, 'and she is no more to be desired than I am.'

"'I should be a poor lover were I not willing to suffer for the one I love,' replied the nightingale as he came closer and sang to me even in his pain.

"'I will always love you,' he said; 'I know you are not to blame for the thorns you wear, and that my love for you brought this upon you. I will never leave you.' And he sang to me all through the night, and in the morning a deep, red Rose bloomed where the nightingale's bleeding foot had rested, and the Thorn Bush was more angry than ever when she beheld its beauty.

"'You shall never be free,' she said to me; 'every Rose shall wear a thorn.'

"The nightingale still sings to me and never fails to tell me of his undying love."

"That is a very pretty story," said Martha as the Rose finished, "and I am glad to know about that Thorn, for I have wondered many times why a flower so beautiful as you had that sharp point under your soft leaves."

"Martha! Martha!" some one called from the doorway, and Martha jumped up.

"Come back to-morrow and hear my story," said the Tiger Lily; "and mine," said the Tulip; "and mine," called out the Jonquil.

Martha promised that she would and ran toward the house.

The next day as soon as Martha found herself alone she ran into the garden, for she was curious to hear the promised stories.

The Jonquil spoke first. "My story," it said, with dignity, "will be historical. I am a descendant from the great Narcissus family, and the Narcissus, as you know, is a very beautiful flower; it grows in wild profusion among the stony places along the great Mediterranean and eastward to China. All that you may have heard, but do you know why Narcissus loves to be near the water?"

Martha said she did not.

"I will tell you," replied the Jonquil. "Ages and ages ago Narcissus was the son of a river god. He was extremely vain of his extraordinary beauty, which he beheld for the first time in the water. He sought out all the pools in the woods and would spend hours gazing at his reflection, and at last he fell in love with his own image.

"Narcissus could neither eat nor sleep, so fascinated did he become with his reflection. He would put his lips near to the water to kiss the lips he saw, and plunge his arms into it to embrace the form he loved, which, of course, fled at his touch, and then returned after a moment to mock him.

"'Why cannot you love me?' he would say to the image; 'the Nymphs have loved me, and I can see love in your eyes'; which, of course, he did, for he did not know he was gazing at his own reflection.

"At last he pined away and died, and in the place of his body was found a beautiful flower, with soft white petals, nodding to its reflection in the water.

"The Daffodils are also my cousins," the Jonquil explained, "and descend from the beautiful Narcissus."

"That is a very pretty story," said Martha, "and the fate of Narcissus should teach all vain people a lesson."

The Tiger Lily told her story next.

"Mine is not a love story," she said; "it is about something I saw in far-off China before I bloomed here.

"In that land little girls are not so happy as they are here because the boys are the pride of the family.

"One day a poor beggar who was faint from hunger and thirst lay down close beside where I bloomed. He groaned aloud in his misery, and a little girl who was passing heard him. She came to him and gave him water from a near-by stream and bathed his face. When he was refreshed he asked, 'Who are you, and how did you happen to be here?'

"'I am only a miserable daughter on her way to the mission,' she replied. 'My father is very poor and can provide only for his sons. If I can reach the mission they will take me in and I shall be taught many things.'

"The beggar only shook his head; he did not believe that a girl was worth even thanking, and that anyone should bother to teach her was past his belief, and so the little girl passed on.

"I am telling you this story," said the Tiger Lily, "that you may know how much good your pennies do that you drop into the missionary box, for you see by the kind act of that little girl the Chinese girls are worth saving, for they are kind and good and grow up to be a blessing to their country."

"What became of the beggar?" asked Martha.

"The little girl reached the mission," the Lily said, "and they sent some one from there to take the beggar away. Very likely the missionaries took care of him."

"I am glad you told me that story," said Martha. "I shall try to save more pennies now to send to the little girls in China."

The Tulip spoke next.

"I am afraid," she said, "that my story will not be very interesting, but I don't suppose that many people know that I bloomed long ago in Constantinople, the city of beautiful hills, where the mosques and the tombs and the fountains make a strange picture in the moonlight.

"There the ladies wear queerly draped gowns and their veiled faces leave only their bright eyes exposed.

"Afterward I bloomed in a country where everybody seems happy, and that is the land I love best. The children in that country look like little stuffed dolls in their many petticoats and close-fitting bonnets around their chubby little faces. Their little shoes clatter over the stones, sounding like many horses in the distance. There I was best loved and grew in profusion and beauty around the quaint homes of these quaint-looking people.

"Ah, me, it is a long way from here," sighed the Tulip, "and I often long to hear the sound of the Zuider Zee as I did once long ago."

"Why, she has gone to sleep," said Martha as the Tulip closed and drooped her head, "and I must go in the house. Grandmother will be looking for me."

"Will you come again?" asked the flowers; "there are many more that have stories to tell."

"I shall be glad to hear them," said Martha, "for I had no idea that flowers could tell such interesting stories."

WHEN JACK FROST WAS YOUNG

When Jack Frost was Young

Not that he is old now, for Jack is a snappy, bright fellow, and will never really grow old—that is, in anything but experience.

And that is exactly what this story is about, the time when Jack Frost was young in experience and would not listen to his mother, old Madam North Wind.

One morning he awoke and hustled about with a will, and Madam North Wind, who had not yet begun to arise early in the morning, was aroused from her slumbers.

"Whatever are you doing, making such a noise at this time in the morning?" she asked her son.

"It is time I was on my round," said Jack Frost, in a snappy, sharp tone. "I mean to begin early and not let all the farmers get ahead of me and get their corn and pumpkins and such things in the barn.

"They will have to look out for me, I tell you, mother. I am a sharp, snappy young fellow, and they must know it."

"You go back to your bed," said old Madam North Wind. "It is not time for frosts yet. You should not begin your rounds for another two weeks at least."

"Oh, mother, you are so old-fashioned," said Jack Frost. "I want to be up and doing. Those farmers think they know everything there is to know about the weather, and I want to show them I am too smart for them. I shall start off to-night."

"You listen to me if you do not wish to spoil all your beautiful colored pictures, Jack," said his mother. "I may be old-fashioned, but I know what the beauty of your work is worth, and if you do not wish to lose your reputation as an artist you go back to your bed and wait until I call you."

But Jack Frost, like many a son, thought his mother was far too old-fashioned; but to keep her from fretting he crept into bed again and kept still until he was sure his mother was asleep.

All day he kept quiet, and when the darkness came he listened to make sure old Madam North Wind was still sleeping before he crept softly out of his bed.

Very quietly he got out his big white coat and cap and then he filled his big white bag with white shiny frost from his mother's chest.

He filled the bag full and then shook it down and put in more. "I'll give them a good one to-night," he said, laughing at the thought of the surprise he would give the farmers.

Then he crept softly past his sleeping mother, and out he went; flying swiftly over hill and dale.

All around he spread the white frost, and when at last he finished his work the old Sun Man, looking over the crest of the hill, was horrified when he looked upon a white world.

"You rascal!" he shouted after Jack Frost's flying shape. "You are far too early! You have spoiled all your pictures for this year!"

"Old silly, what does he know?" said Jack as he hurried along. "He is just like mother—old-fashioned."

Jack got softly into bed, and not until his mother called him did he awake again.

"Come," she said one day, "it is time now for you to be about your work, and your pictures should be gorgeous in their colorings this year. Be careful, my son; scatter your frost to-night lightly, and again to-morrow night. I will go out in the morning and see how things look."

Jack Frost did not tell his mother he had been out before. He did not need to tell her, for the next morning before old Madam North Wind had gone far she knew what had happened. "They are all spoiled," she said as she looked over the landscape; "all black and dead before they had a bit of color."

"Come out and look at your work," she said, going back for her son. "You thought you knew more about it than your old mother."

Jack Frost had no idea what old Madam North Wind meant, but he felt sure something was wrong, so he followed his mother very meekly; but when they reached the forest he knew something was

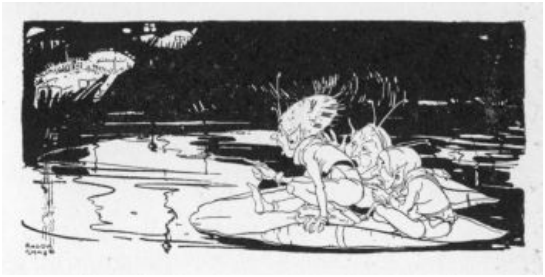
wrong indeed.

No bright and beautifully-colored leaves and bushes met his gaze. All were brown and black. "What is the matter with my pictures?" he asked. "I thought they would be very beautiful this year."

"You stole out before it was time, and you not only surprised the farmers, but you spoiled all your gorgeous pictures and cheated all the people who look for them. There will be none this year because you thought you knew more than I. Go home. There is no work for you, and perhaps you will listen to me next year and not get up until I call you."

Jack Frost went home a sadder but wiser fellow and the next year he slept and did not put his frosty nose out from under his blanket until old Madam North Wind called him.

THE REVENGE OF THE FIREFLIES



Revenge of the Fireflies

The Fireflies and the Goblins had always been good friends, just as they were with the Fairies, until one night when the Goblins held a frolic in the woods and did not invite the Fireflies to come.

It was a bright moonlight night, and the Goblins, who did not think much about anyone or anything if it did not in some way help them, knew they would not need the Fireflies' lanterns, so they did not bother to send them an invitation.

When the moon was high up in the sky so it shone down on all the trees in the woods, making it almost like daylight, the Goblins came tumbling out of their rocks and began their frolic.

They tumbled and they played such antics in the moonlight that anyone who did not know who they were and had seen them would surely have thought them a lot of crazy little creatures.

Of course, the Fireflies came flying along, and when they saw what was going on they began asking one another if anyone had received an invitation.

"It is plain to be seen why they did not invite us," said one old Firefly. "They did not need us because the moon is shining."

"That shows us what their friendship is worth," said another. "If they need our lights, they invite us; if not, we are forgotten."

For a few minutes all the Fireflies flashed with anger and then the old Firefly said. "I think we can have revenge if all of you will do as I tell you, and if I am not much mistaken those Goblin fellows will remember us the next time they have a frolic, even if they do not need us."

All the Fireflies wanted to know what the old Firefly had in his mind, but not a word would he tell them about his plan until they ran about and called together all the Fireflies for miles and miles around.

Of course, it did not take those sprightly little creatures long to fly miles and miles, and pretty soon in one corner of the woods were gathered together thousands of Fireflies.

"My plan is this," said the old Firefly when they were all there, "the Goblins are to go sailing on the lily pads after the frolic and we will go around to all the rocks and alight on all of them, for that is where they live, and when they return from their sail they will think their homes are on fire.

"Shine as brightly as you can, every one of you, and don't wink or blink, so the Goblins will not suspect us. They will have a good fright, if nothing else."

Away went the Fireflies in groups of thousands, and pretty soon all the rocks in the woods were covered; but not until the Goblins returned from their moonlight sail did the Fireflies let their bright lights be seen.

The Goblins stopped every one when they reached the woods, for all the rocks were a blaze of light.

"Oh, our homes!" they all cried; "someone has set them on fire. What shall we do?"

Hither and thither like little bees they flew, but it was no use; they could not enter their homes. They were all on fire.

"Where shall we sleep?" they began to ask one another, for they were all very tired after the frolic.

"We can crawl under the leaves," said one Goblin, "but we dare not sleep, for if the fairies should find us, no knowing what they would do to us with their wands. We will have to stay awake all night, and in the morning if the fire is out we can crawl into our homes, for, of course, the rocks cannot burn."

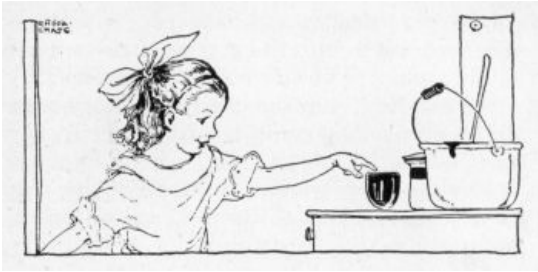
"No, but they can be very hot and burn us," said another. "Oh dear, I wish we had not gone sailing; perhaps we could have saved our homes."

So under the leaves they crawled, but not a wink of sleep did those Goblins dare take, and when it was 'most daylight time the Fireflies put out their lights and silently flew away.

When the Goblins went to their rocks they were surprised to find them all cool and not at all hot as they had expected, and one of the Goblins, putting a pointed little finger on the side of his pointed nose said to the others: "I have a thought, and it is this: The Fireflies were not invited to our frolic and I wonder if they alighted on our rocks for revenge?"

"I wonder," said the others; but they were all so sleepy they could not think, so in they tumbled and were soon fast asleep; but the next time they gave a frolic the very first thing they did was to invite all the Fireflies, and not one did they forget.

SALLIE HICKS'S FOREFINGER



Sallie Hicks's Forefinger

Sallie Hicks was a little girl who was good most of the time, but she had one bad habit, and that was caused by her forefinger on her right hand.

Sallie's right-hand forefinger would get into things it should not, and it caused Sallie's mother a great deal of trouble, and most of Sallie's punishments were on account of that unruly right-hand-forefinger.

One day Sallie's mother set a dish of hot jelly on the kitchen table to cool. She told Sallie it was hot and she must not touch it.

But no sooner was her mother out of the kitchen and the cook's head was turned another way than Sallie Hicks forgot all about her mother's warning, and the naughty right-hand forefinger went right into the hot jelly.

Oh, how Sallie screamed with pain! And she forgot all about putting the forefinger in her mouth to taste the jelly, it burned her so.

The big tears ran right down Sallie's pretty pink cheeks, and her mother and grandmother, and cook, too, came running to see what was the matter.

The little forefinger told the story, and it had to be wrapped in some cooling salve and a soft piece of linen.

"I told you that some day you would get that finger burned," said her mother, "and now because you disobeyed me you must sit in the big chair in the hall until lunch time and not speak to anyone. I want you to think about that naughty finger."

Sallie's grandmother passed her in the hall and leaned over and kissed her. "I am sorry that grandmother's little girl was so naughty," she said. "Good little girls mind their mothers and they don't get burnt fingers."

Sallie watched her grandmother go upstairs and then Sallie looked at the picture hanging on the wall of her great-grandmother.

"I wonder if Grandmother Great ever had to punish grandmother," thought Sallie. "I wonder if grandmothers were always very good little girls?"

Sallie looked at her Grandfather Great, too, and wondered how it was that, though the Greats were the father and mother of her own dear grandmother, they had nice black hair, all smooth and shiny, while her grandmother and grandfather, too, had white hair.

Sallie looked at the forefinger all wrapped about with the white cloth, and she thought how dreadful it would be to have her finger big and long as it looked now. Then she looked at Grandmother Great again and her eyes seemed to be looking right at that little burnt forefinger.

Sallie put her right hand behind her, but the eyes of Grandmother Great looked right at Sallie.

Sallie winked her eyes and looked again, for she thought her Grandmother Great smiled at her. Sallie looked hard at the picture, and Grandmother Great seemed to shake her head at Sallie.

"Didn't your little girl ever do anything naughty with her forefinger?" asked Sallie.

Grandmother Great smiled. "I had several little girls once, but they were all good little girls," said Grandmother Great.

"Always, every bit of the time?" questioned Sallie.

"Yes; I cannot remember now that they ever did anything naughty," said Grandmother Great. "But you know, dear, it was a long time ago. I had my little girls a very long time ago."

"Perhaps you forget when it is a long time ago," said Sallie. "Didn't your little girls ever put their forefinger in anything just to taste it?"

"Oh dear, yes; I remember now that your grandmother did put her forefinger, the right-hand forefinger it was, too, in the wheel of the wringer once to see what would happen," said Grandmother Great.

"Did she cry?" asked Sallie.

"Oh dear, yes, poor little girlie; she cried, and I was so frightened I cried, too. Her poor little finger never grew quite as it should at the end," said Grandmother Great, with a sigh.

"Do mothers cry when little girls get burnt putting their fingers into things they should not?" asked Sallie.

"Of course they do, my dear. Mothers have many a cry over their little girls when they are naughty," said Grandmother Great.

"I don't want mother to cry," said Sallie.

"Of course you don't, my dear," said Grandmother Great. "So you will not put your finger in anything again, will you?"

Before Sallie could promise her Grandmother Great she would be a good little girl she heard some one say, "Sallie, Sallie, come to lunch."

Sallie opened her eyes, for she had been asleep, dreaming all this time, and there stood her mother in the doorway.

"Mother, do mothers forget how naughty their little girls were when they grow up?" asked Sallie.

"I think so," said her mother. "I hope you will be so good before you grow up that I shall forget how naughty you were this morning."

"Grandmother Great told me mothers did forget their little girls were naughty ever, after they grew up," said Sallie.

"You mean your grandmother told you; not Grandmother Great," said Sallie's mother. "You never saw Grandmother Great, dear."

"Well, she told me so just now," said Sallie, "and she said, too, that grandmother put her finger in the wheel of the wringing machine once, and that she cried because grandmother, who was her little girl then, cried, and was hurt."

"What is the child talking about?" said Sallie's mother.

"She has been asleep and dreamed it," said Sallie's grandmother, taking Sallie in her arms. "I showed her my forefinger where it was hurt when I was a little girl and told her she must look out for her forefinger or she might get it terribly hurt just as I did.

"Did you think the picture of Grandmother Great spoke to you?" she asked Sallie, holding her close in her arms.

"She did," said Sallie, "and she said mothers always cried when their little girls are naughty. Oh, mother dear, I don't want to make you cry, and I won't put my finger in anything again, truly I won't!" sobbed Sallie.

"She isn't half awake yet," said her grandmother as Sallie's mother took her in her arms and kissed her.

Sallie kept her promise, even if she did dream about Grandmother Great talking to her, and the right-hand forefinger did not get her into any more trouble.

Sallie Hicks often looks at the portraits in the hall of Grandmother and Grandfather Great, but Grandmother Great never has spoken to her since that day. But Sallie Hicks smiles at her and sometimes the eyes seem to smile back, and Sallie wonders if they really do.

THE RAIN ELVES

The Rain Elves

The Rain Elf children had been shut up in their houses for ever so long, for it had been hot and the Rain Elves do not like very hot weather.

Their mothers, the Rain Clouds, awoke one morning and found the sun was not shining, so they told their children they could drop down and play on the Earth awhile.

"Now, mind you, do not all go. Part of you can go at a time, because there are so many, many millions of you; the poor Earth would be quite overcome if all the Rain Elves went down at once."

So a few from each family of the Rain Cloud's children went out the door as their mothers opened it and down they dropped upon the dry Earth.

Oh, the gardens were so glad to see them! The flowers lifted their drooping heads and smiled a glad welcome. "Where have you been?" they asked. "It is so long since you were here we thought you had forgotten us."

"Oh no, we didn't forget you!" replied the Rain Elves, "but it has been so hot our mothers would not let us come out. We can stay but a little while, because we have many, many millions of brothers that want to come down to the garden, too; so we will have to go back, and the next shower will bring some of the others."

The little flowers were grieved when they heard this, for they were so dusty and thirsty they felt they could never get enough of the shining little Elves.

"What shall we do to keep them here?" they whispered among themselves. "If they go back to the clouds, perhaps the others will not come. Oh, if the old Wind Witch would only come along she might help us."

"She might get us all into trouble also," said a slender lily. "I think we better trust the Rain Cloud mothers to do what they think best."

But poor little lily's words were not noticed and a tall hollyhock was asked to find old Wind Witch and request her to help them keep the Rain Elves all day.

The old Wind Witch laughed with glee when she heard the request, for she saw a chance to work mischief and make it appear she was trying to do good.

"Tell the pretty flowers they shall have the Rain Elves all day, and their brothers, too," she said to the hollyhock, and off she flew up to the Rain Cloud homes.

She went about the clouds very carefully and gently, for she knew if the Rain Cloud mothers heard her they would call their children home; but by and by she saw her chance, and while the Rain Cloud mothers were busy she softly opened the door of each cloud one by one and beckoned to the Rain Elves.

"Run along quickly," she said. "Your brothers are having such a fine time they have quite forgotten you; they will not be back today, so run along and be merry with them."

The little Rain Elves did not stop to think they should wait for their mothers to tell them when to go, they were so eager to get out.

Down they went quite gently at first with a patter, patter, pat, and then they quite lost their heads, thinking of the fun they would have, and down they dropped, splash, splash, splash.

At first the flowers laughed and danced about for joy, for they were getting their leaves and blossoms washed and their thirsty petals satisfied; but in a little while the Rain Elves came so fast and thick the petals dropped off one by one, and then the stems bent under the swift coming of the Elves.

Pretty soon the garden was filled with water so that the grass could not be seen, while old Wind Witch danced about overhead and cackled with delight at the mischief she had done.

"Oh dear! I did not know there were so many of you!" cried a rose as her stem broke and she fell into the water.

"I was afraid of it," sighed the lily as she fell to the ground. "A few Elves at a time is best. The mother Rain Clouds know."

Such a commotion as there was in the Rain Cloud homes when the mothers found the doors of their houses open! They hustled about and called for the Rain Elves to come home; but they were so taken up with the fun they were having, spattering and splashing, they did not hear.

By and by old Sun Man saw them, and it did not take him long to throw his hot rays on old Wind Witch and drive her away, and then the Rain Elves felt the Sun Man's breath and thought of home.

One by one they disappeared. Some hid among the roses and other flowers that were left in the garden, and others were lucky enough to get back to their cloud houses and their mothers, but they left the garden a very sad-looking place.

"Who ever would have thought there were so many of those Rain Elves," said a bedraggled-looking flower. "I shall never wish for them to stay all day again."

"The lily was wiser than we thought," said another. "The Rain Cloud mothers know best what is good for us, and the next time they send a part of their children I think we better be satisfied and not get them all here at once."

"I think you are right," sighed the hollyhock from the ground, where he had fallen. "Shall I ever see over the wall again, I wonder. Such a fall as I took none of you can realize."

MR. FOX'S HOUSEWARMING

Mr. Fox's Housewarming

Mr. Fox had been so much disturbed by Mr. Dog and his master that he decided to try living somewhere besides on the ground floor of the woods.

One night he took a look around in the moonlight, and to his delight he discovered the very place for him to live.

It was a house built in the branches of a big tree that some boys very likely had made the year before. "Now with a very little repairing this will be the finest house in the woods," said Mr. Fox.

So over the hill he ran to Mr. Man's and brought away all that was needed to make his house comfortable.

He even found an old piece of stovepipe to make his stove draw well, and in a few days Mr. Fox told all his friends of his new home and invited them to a housewarming.

Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum and Mr. Squirrel were not at all upset by finding out that Mr. Fox's new home was in the big tree, but Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Badger looked very sad and said it was out of the question for them to accept Mr. Fox's kind invitation, much as they would like to come.

Mr. Fox had borrowed a ladder from Mr. Man, and when Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Badger said they could not come Mr. Fox remembered that he was not much of a climber himself and that if he did not keep that ladder he might have a hard time getting into his home when he was in a hurry.

So he decided that Mr. Man would not need it as much as he would and that it would also make a nice addition to his home.

When he told Mr. Badger and Mr. Rabbit about the ladder they decided to come, and one night when the moon was shining the animals were all to go to Mr. Fox's house to dinner.

Mr. Fox thought it would be the cheapest way to fill his guests with soup, so he took all the bones that he had collected and put them in a pot on the stove to boil.

Up curled the smoke from his chimney and out through the windows went the nice-smelling odor of soup, and Mr. Dog, who happened to be running through the woods, saw and smelled as well.

He wagged his tail and looked up at the house in the tree; then he whined and scratched the tree, and as he danced about it, with his eyes fixed upon the house all the time, he bumped into the ladder.

"Ah, how fortunate!" he said, and up he went and into Mr. Fox's house he went, too, and took the cover off the pot.

It did not take him a second to remove the pot from the stove and pour out the soup in the sink and cool those bones, and then such a feast as he had.

He ate until he became sleepy; then he lay down on the floor and went to sleep.

Mr. Dog did not dream that Mr. Fox lived in that house; not that he was afraid of him, but he would have slept with one eye open so that he could catch him if he had known.

Mr. Fox was out roaming over the hill, looking about for a stray turkey or hen, and he did not come home until it was nearly dark.

He ran up the ladder, and without striking a light he went toward the stove to see how his soup was getting on, and stumbled over Mr. Dog. Up jumped Mr. Dog with a gruff bark, and Mr. Fox, not stopping for the ladder, jumped out of the window and almost broke his neck, while Mr. Dog looked after him, barking and yelping in a terrible manner.

Mr. Fox did not stop. He kept on running, and Mr. Dog, thinking of the bones he did not finish, turned away from the window and began to eat. While he was eating the guests for the housewarming began to arrive. Mr. Coon did not need the ladder to help him, or Mr. Possum, either, nor did Mr. Squirrel, but as it was there they felt it would not be polite to enter any other way.

Mr. Possum started up first, and behind him Mr. Coon. Then came Mr. Badger, and Mr. Rabbit behind him, while Mr. Squirrel ran up the side of the ladder.

When they were about halfway up, Mr. Dog, hearing a noise outside, went to the door, and of all the surprised creatures you ever saw, the guests were the most surprised, unless it was Mr. Dog. He forgot to bark for a second, he was so taken back.

Then he recovered and out of the door he went; but he was not used to going down a ladder, and on the first round he slipped and down he went.

The guests started to jump just as Mr. Dog barked, but they were not out of the way when Mr. Dog fell, and down they all tumbled, Mr. Dog, Mr. Possum, Mr. Coon and Mr. Badger.

Mr. Squirrel jumped, too, but he jumped for a limb of the tree and was not in the mix-up. He said it was the funniest sight he ever saw, and he had a fine view from where he sat.

But Mr. Rabbit said he was sure his view of the affair was the best, for, being nearest the bottom of the ladder when the tumble began, he was up and out of the way when they all came down on the ground.

"You could not tell who was who or which from the other," said Mr. Rabbit, later talking it over with Mr. Squirrel.

It was a long time before Mr. Fox could make the guests believe he had not planned to have Mr. Dog at his house-warming, but when Mr. Squirrel told them that he had seen the bones on the floor and

the kettle in the sink they finally forgave Mr. Fox.

He decided the ground floor was the safest for him, after all, and when he was once again settled he gave a feast, and this time Mr. Dog was not there.

LITTLE PITCHER-MAN

Little Pitcher-man

On a pantry shelf there once lived a funny squatty-looking pitcher-man. His cap was brown and that was the top of the pitcher. His coat was yellow and his vest green.

He was round and fat, as well as squatty, and his legs were short. He wore brown trousers (what there was of them) and white stockings and black shoes.

But the face under the cap was what everyone noticed most; it was always laughing. Oh, I forgot to say that his hands held on to his sides as if he feared he would burst with laughing so hard.

One day there came to the pantry to live a new dish, and when it saw the Pitcher-man it asked another dish standing by why the Pitcher-man was always laughing.

"I do not know," replied the other dish, "but he never does anything but laugh. I have never thought to ask why."

So the new dish waited until it was all quiet in the pantry at night, and then it asked the Pitcher-man why he laughed all the time.

"Oh dear! I have to laugh every time I think of it," answered the Pitcher-man. "No one has ever asked me why I laughed before, and I do not know that I can stop long enough to tell you why."

But all the other dishes gathered about him and begged him to tell his story, and at last he managed to stop laughing and talk.

"It happened ever and ever so long ago," he said, "one moonlight night when the house was very still.

"Mistress Puss came in through the door and looked about; then she sniffed, for you see on a platter on the shelf was a nice fish for the next day's dinner.

"Puss walked along to the window, and just before she jumped up on the sill so she could jump on the shelf I saw a mouse run along the shelf where the fish was and jump into a pie that was cut.

"He ran under the crust and began to nibble and, of course, did not see Puss; but when she reached the fish she gave it a pull and the tail hit the pie.

"Oh dear! when I think of it I just have to laugh," and Pitcher-man again held his sides while he almost burst with laughing.

"Oh, do tell us what happened!" asked the dishes, so interested they could hardly wait to hear the end of the story.

The Pitcher-man wiped his eyes and then went on: "As I said, the tail of the fish hit the pie where the mouse was eating. That, of course, scared him and he jumped out.

"He landed right on Puss's head and that scared her so she tumbled off the shelf, the fish on top of her.

"Puss never knew what happened. She thought the fish was alive and ran for her life, and the mouse hustled about helter-skelter trying to find the hole in the wall, for his wits were just scared out of his head.

"Oh dear! it was so funny, and the next day when the cook gave the fish-head to Puss she ran out of

doors and cook thought she had a fit because no cat was ever known to refuse fish before.

"But I knew what was the matter, and every time I think about it all I just have to laugh. Ha! ha! ha!"

And that is the reason little Pitcher-man is always laughing. He cannot stop, for he always is thinking about what he saw many years ago one moonlight night in the pantry.

THE WINDFLOWER'S STORY

The Windflower's Story

One day a little Windflower growing in a garden heard the Rosebush say to the Pansies, "What a quiet little creature the Windflower is! She seems to be a modest little thing, but she never stays here long enough to get acquainted; so I do not know whether she hides her ignorance by keeping quiet or is a deep thinker."

"I think she is deep, Miss Rose," said the Hollyhock, near by. "You know I can see farther than anyone here, and it is my opinion that the Windflower is deep, and I think, too, she has a story."

"A story!" cried the Pansies, turning up their pretty faces to the Hollyhock. "Oh, how interesting."

"What do you mean by a story?" asked the Rosebush.

"Oh, I mean she is deep and knows things of which we little dream. There is something between her and the Wind, but I cannot learn her secret."

Rosebush held up her head, the Pansies turned their little faces around and looked at the modest little Windflower to see if they could read her secret.

"I have no secret the world cannot know," said the Windflower. "All my family love the Wind; this all the world would know if they knew our history."

Rosebush and the Pansies and Hollyhock began to question the little Windflower, and this is what she told them:

"Oh, a long, long time ago some beautiful goddess grieved very much over the death of some one she dearly loved, and she created in memory of this friend a beautiful flower which she named Anemone. That is our real name."

"Oh, how grand is sounds!" said the Rosebush. "Such a big name, too, for such a little flower."

"Yes, it is big," replied the little Windflower, "but you see we had nothing at all to do with our name; the Wind fell in love with us and opened our blossoms—that is the way we happened to be named, I am told."

"Oh, how interesting!" said the Rosebush, beginning to look with envy upon the little Windflower.

"But you are a small family, I think," said the Rosebush. "I have seen very few of your kind in our garden."

"No, we are a numerous and beautiful family," said the Windflower.

"Oh, how conceited she is!" said the Rosebush in a whisper to the Pansies. "Think of calling herself beautiful. For my part, I think her white and purple quite plain-looking."

But in spite of the low voice of the Rose the little Windflower heard her. "Oh, you are quite mistaken if you think I feel I am beautiful!" she said. "It is of our family I speak; you should see some of my sisters; they are wonderful, purple and so silky they are beautiful.

"And other sisters are a beautiful blue. Oh, I am by far the plainest of our family. But the Wind has

no favorites; he takes us all along with him, though, of course, my sisters that grow in mountain pastures go oftener with the Wind than others."

"Oh, here comes that horrid breeze!" said the Rosebush. "He always spoils everything." And she gathered her petals closer to her and leaned back among the leaves.

When she opened her petals to look around the garden again the little Windflower was not there.

"Why, where has the Windflower gone?" she asked.

"Oh, you missed it!" said the Pansies, nodding very knowingly. "That breeze came to tell the Windflower that the Wind would be along in a minute. We heard him, so we watched, and in a little while the Wind came and took the Windflower away with him. She went up high right over Hollyhock's head."

Hollyhock, who had been gazing about, lowered his head. "She is out of sight," he told the Rosebush and the Pansies. "The Wind came this morning and whispered to her, but I could not hear what he said; but she opened wide her blossom and nodded."

"Now, what do you suppose there is between the Windflower and the Wind?" asked Rosebush.

"Just what she told us," said Hollyhock. "He is in love with the Windflowers."

"I should prefer a more tender lover," said Rosebush. "I think him quite rude at times. The way he blows through our garden is far from gentle."

"Some like strong lovers that can master them," said Hollyhock, lifting his head and standing very straight.

"I suppose so," sighed the Rosebush; "but it is just as I have always said. You never can tell about the quiet, modest ones. Think of the little Windflower having such a story and flying away with the Wind. My, my! What a world!"

PUSSY WILLOW'S FURS

Pussy Willow's Furs

Miss Pussy Willow put on her furs one day in March and stepped out into the sunshine; but, while the sun was warm, March's breath was cold, so she hugged her furs closer about her and sat on a swaying bough.

It was early and Miss Pussy knew it, but what cared she, dressed in her furs; she knew that her silver-gray dress was very much admired, and while she was modest she was not above caring for admiration.

Pussy Willow had no trouble until all the spring and summer flowers arrived in their gayly colored gowns and then, though she did not in the least envy them, she did not like to hear the scornful remarks about her furs, and sometimes she wished that under her fur coat she had a pretty colored gown.

"It is really too bad," said one Red Flower. "Poor Pussy Willow! I do feel so sorry for her; she wears that fur coat all the year round."

"You know why, my dear, do you not?" asked a tall Blue Flower growing near.

"I suppose she has no other," said the Red Flower.

"I think it is because she has on an old dress," answered tall Blue Flower; "she never takes off that fur coat, you notice, and, of course, these hot days she would if she had a new dress. Don't you think I am right?"

"I should not wonder if you were," was the reply, "but let us ask Mr. Poppy what he thinks."

"Oh, what is the use of asking him. He is asleep half the time. I do believe he never sees our pretty frocks at all," replied Blue Flower. "Let us ask Miss Thistle; she sees everything and she may have asked Miss Willow before this why she never takes off her coat; you know Thistle cares nothing for the feelings of others."

Miss Thistle said she did not know, but that she would ask Miss Willow right away, "for why in the world she wears that fur coat all summer I cannot think. She really is the only one around here who does not give attention to her clothes. I think style means more than color," said Miss Thistle, with a toss of her head.

"I can tell you what you wish to know," said Lady Bug, alighting on a bush near the gossips.

"Oh, do, dear Lady Bug!" said Blue Flower. "You travel and know the styles. Now don't you think blue is ever so much better style for summer than any other color?"

"Yes, I do travel," replied Miss Lady Bug, without replying to Blue Flower's question, "and I see the styles, as you said, and that is the reason I can tell you the truth about Pussy Willow. She is the only one among you who really is in style."

"In style with that fur on!" said Thistle, all prickly with anger. "Why, where have you been, Lady Bug? Up to the North Pole?"

"No," calmly replied Miss Lady Bug. "I have been everywhere that fashionable folks go, and everybody is wearing furs, no matter how hot the weather; and so I tell you again that the only one who is in style is Miss Pussy Willow with her silvery fur."

Miss Pussy Willow did not let the flowers around her know that she heard what Lady Bug had said, but she felt very happy and no longer did she wish that under her fur she had a dainty colored gown.

She behaved in a modest manner and put on no airs, for did she not know that she was dressed in the latest fashion?

ORIANNA

Orianna

Bunny White, one night when the Fairies were holding a revel, peeped out of his window to see the frolic, for Bunny and the Fairies were the best of friends because members of Bunny's family had for ages drawn the carriage of the Queen.

But to-night Bunny saw a stranger in the midst of the Fairy group, tiny like the others, but very differently dressed, and the Fairies were all listening to what she had to say, rather than making merry, as was their custom.

"Who can she be?" thought Bunny White, and, being a very inquisitive creature, he ran out of his house and over to the carriage of the Fairy Queen to ask her about the little stranger.

"Oh, that is our dear Orianna, the Indian Fairy," answered the Queen, "and only once in a while does she come to visit us"; and then because Bunny White was so interested the Queen told him all about Orianna.

"You see," said the Queen, "all children are afraid of Indian dreams, so I had to have a Fairy who would make the Indians kind and loving to the 'Pale Face,' as the Indians call the white folk.

"Orianna lives near the Indians in a forest, and when you see a tall tree with an opening at the bottom like the door of a wigwam you may be sure that it is one of Orianna's homes.

"Did you notice her pretty costume?"

Bunny White told the Queen he had not had a very close view of Orianna, so the Queen told him to run over to the Fairies and see the pretty dress she wore.

Orianna wore the dress of an Indian girl, tiny moccasins on her little feet and two tiny black braids, one over each shoulder, but the thing that attracted Bunny White the most was her wings.

They were not at all like those of the other Fairies. Orianna's wings were feathers of an eagle.

Her wand, too, was different, for instead of a wand she carried a tiny silver bow and arrow, the tip of the arrow being of gold.

Bunny ran back to the Queen and told her he thought Orianna the very prettiest of all the Fairies. "But what is it that shines so on the tip of the arrow?" she asked.

"Oh, that is the love she shoots straight into the hearts of all the Indians," replied the Queen.

"Orianna flies up through her tree house to the tallest branch and shoots her love-tipped arrow straight into the heart of all Indians, and so you see the children need never be afraid any more of dreaming of Indians, for all Indians are good and Orianna is always on the lookout from the top of one of her homes, and that is the reason she so seldom comes to visit us."

Just then Orianna came to bid the Queen good night, and Bunny White ran off to his home, but the next morning he was up bright and early to look for the wigwam trees.

But not one did he find, for the Fairies are very clever, and who ever did find the places where they live; but for all that we know, there are Fairies, and now that Orianna is taking care of the Indians no little boy or girl need ever be afraid of Indian dreams, because the Fairy Queen has given them a Fairy.

OLD NORTH WIND

Old North Wind

Old North Wind lived away up in the North Pole Land in the winter, and there her children, the Icebergs, grew.

Old North Wind was very proud of her huge children, and when the long, cold winter was at an end she said: "My big, strong children, come with me. We will float away from this land where there is no one to see your beauty and go to the seas where the ships are sailing.

"Of course, you all cannot go, but I will take the three big brothers because they are the strongest, and show the old South Wind and the Sun we are stronger and mightier than they."

So the three largest of the icebergs broke away from their brothers and sailed away with old North Wind, who blew her chilling breath on them as they went along.

"Ah, my beauties," she said, "I will make you so strong that no breath of harm can come to you, and you shall crush the big ships and make all who see you tremble with fear."

The Icebergs believed old North Wind, for they had never been away from North Pole Land and did not know anything about the warm South Wind, or how warm and melting Mr. Sun could be.

So they sailed and sailed until they came to the big ocean where the ships had to cross as they went from one land to another.

Old North Wind kept close to her big children, but one day old South Wind saw them.

"Oh, ho!" he said, "there is old North Wind with three of her sons. She is up to some mischief, I'll be bound; so I will ask Mr. Sun to keep his eye on them."

"I have been watching them for many days," said Mr. Sun, "and with all of old North Wind's cold breath I have warmed her sons more than she knows."

At last one morning bright and early old North Wind espied a ship sailing right in their path.

"Now, my beauties," she said, with a shrill laugh, "show your strength and crush the ship that dares to sail in your path. We are the rulers of the sea by right of might and we must show our strength."

Blowing and shrieking, old North Wind hastened her sons toward the ship, and she was so intent on working destruction that she did not feel the warm breath of old South Wind or the rays of old Mr. Sun.

Suddenly she saw her huge sons shiver, and before she could blow a chilling blast upon them they swayed, and with a plunge sank from sight, and the water closed over them.

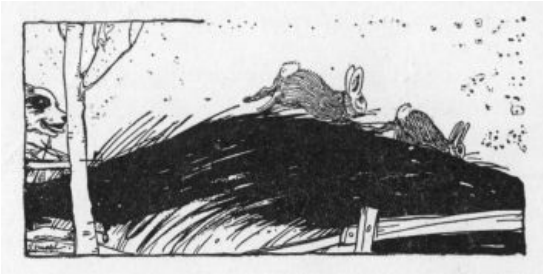
Old North Wind howled and blew, but the Sun and old South Wind drove her back toward her North Pole Land until the ship was safe from her wrath.

"You wait," she shrieked as she ran away from Mr. Sun and old South Wind. "I'll come again next year with bigger and stronger children and you shall learn who rules the seas."

"Remember, North Wind," said old South Wind in soft, gentle tones, "might is not always right, and while you can make much more noise than I can or old man Sun, we can always melt your children; so keep to your North Pole Land if you wish to keep them."

Old North Wind bustled away with angry shrieks, but she knew full well the power of South Wind and Mr. Sun, but, like many people, she wanted to believe in her own strength and power; and so she roared louder and louder as she blew back to her cold homeland in order to convince herself of her might.

MR. FOX CUTS THE COTTONTAILS



Mr. Fox cuts the Cottontails

Mr. Fox decided that the only way to get all the wood animals to have a good opinion of him was to give a big dinner, for he had somehow got rather a bad name among the animals for being so tricky.

So all day long he went about telling all the animals that when it was dark—quite dark—they were to come to his house and dine.

There were the Squirrels and the Coons, the Possums and the Bear family and all the Rabbit family, including Susie Cottontail and her brother Jimmie and many others.

You may be sure that no one ate any dinner that day. They all saved their appetites for Mr. Fox's night-time feast, for, as Mr. Coon expressed it, "we should be very ungrateful to Mr. Fox if we did not take to his dinner our very best appetites; therefore our stomachs should be empty."

As soon as it was dark, so that Mr. Dog could not see them, all the animals began to slowly creep toward Mr. Fox's home.

Mr. Fox let them in one by one and was careful to draw all the shades and stuff the keyhole so the light would not show outside if anything happened that Mr. Dog should be roaming through the woods.

At last all the animals but Jimmie and Susie Cottontail were there, and everyone began to wonder where they could be and what kept them so late.

It happened that Jimmie and Susie Cottontail were not at all sure they would enjoy Mr. Fox's dinner, and they had run over to the farm on the hill to have a dinner of some garden stuff of which they were fond.

They had stayed longer than they had intended, and when they started for Mr. Fox's house were not as cautious as they usually were about throwing Mr. Dog off their track.

Just as they were entering the wood who should come bounding after them but Mr. Dog, who had followed them from the farm, and off ran Jimmie and Susie Cottontail looking for a hole in which to

hide.

Mr. Fox's house was the first refuge they came to, and in the door they burst, with Mr. Dog at their heels.

Of course there was no dinner and the party was spoiled, for everybody ran, and Mr. Dog, not knowing which one to chase when he saw so many, went home without having caught anyone.

The next day Mr. Fox was talking with his friend, Mr. Coon. "No one of the animals would have gotten us into such a fix but those Cottontails," he said.

"In the first place, their ears are so short they never heard quickly like some others of that family, and then those tails—why they can be seen for yards and yards. I should have known better than to ask them.

"And everyone knows they have no sense. The Cottontails run into the first opening they see and never keep on running as their cousins do. I have had my lesson. I shall cut them off my visiting list from now on."

And that is the reason the Cottontail family are never invited to any dinners that the wood folk give—their trails can be too easily followed by Mr. Dog.

LITTLE NEVER-UPSET

Little Never-upset

Little Never-upset was a roly-poly fellow, with weights in his little body so placed that no matter how he was treated or tumbled about he always bobbed up smiling.

His face was a jolly little round one, with a smile that could not be rubbed off, and no matter how the other toys fussed or disputed among themselves, Little Never-upset did not take a part.

One night when the clock struck the midnight hour Miss French Doll and Miss Calico Doll began to fuss.

"You treated me very badly," said Miss Calico Doll. "When we were in the carriage riding in the park one would have thought we did not live in the same playroom."

"Why do you not have something to wear besides that old calico dress?" asked Miss French Doll. "I never was so disgraced as when we met Miss Marie Doll in her beautiful clothes. I am sure she wondered who you were."

"Anyone would think you never had a broken arm and had to go to the hospital," replied Miss Calico Doll. "You were a sorry-looking sight without your hand and part of your arm, but I did not feel ashamed of you when we sat in our chairs on the front porch."

"That is a very different thing," said Miss French Doll, with a toss of her head. "I could not help having an accident."

"I cannot help wearing this calico dress," said Miss Calico Doll. "It is painted on me just like my face."

"My goodness!" exclaimed Jack-in-a-box, jumping up with a spring, "whatever is all the trouble? A body cannot get an extra wink for you two fussing."

"Bow-wow-wow!" barked little Dog-on-wheels, "why don't you scare a body right out of his skin, Jack? I was asleep right beside your box."

Teddy Bear began to growl. "Anyone would think this was a menagerie instead of a playroom," he said.

"Yes, they would," said Calico Cat, with a spiteful twist of her tail. "Your growl helps me to make it real."

Calico Cat humped her back ready to spring at Teddy if he answered, and Little Dog-on-wheels barked, ready to jump at any one who gave him the least cause.

Jack-in-a-box quivered on his spring with anger because French Doll told him he had no legs and he better keep quiet, while Miss Calico Doll tried to think of something spiteful to say to Miss French Doll.

It was this very moment that Little Never-upset, who was listening to all the fussing from the shelf where he was sitting, set a good example to the playroom toys.

"Get off my shelf!" said old Elephant, who always stood there and thought he owned it, and as he spoke he gave Little Never-upset a bang with his trunk and over he went on the floor, right on his head!

All the toys stopped fussing to watch, and quick as a flash up jumped Little Never-upset on his feet and rolled from side to side with laughter.

"You are the best-natured fellow I ever saw," said Teddy Bear. "Don't you feel like paying Elephant back for doing that?"

"Not a bit," answered Little Never-upset; "life is too short to quarrel. Think of all the fun you lose taking time to wrangle."

"You are right," said Teddy Bear. "What was all the fuss about, anyway?"

No one could say just what began it, and in a few minutes everybody was laughing and having a good time, and all because Little Never-upset had bobbed up smiling.

Old Elephant took time, however, to lean over the shelf and call to Little Never-upset. "Say, old fellow, I am sorry I was so rude," he said. "Come up again and stay as long as you like."

And Little Never-upset nodded his head and said he would, smiling as if he never had been tumbled off the shelf.

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