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## A SUNNY LITTLE LASS

BY  
EVELYN RAYMOND

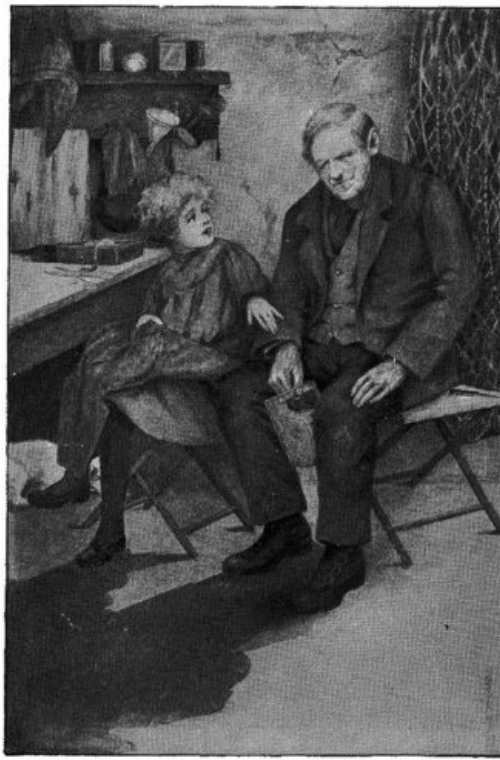
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## CONTENTS

I.	THE ONE ROOM HOUSE	9
II.	AFTER THE COLONEL'S VISIT	25
III.	IN ELBOW LANE	47
IV.	BESIDE OLD TRINITY	59
V.	A DESOLATE AWAKENING	77
VI.	THE BEGINNING OF THE SEARCH	93
VII.	A GUARDIAN ANGEL	111
VIII.	WITH BONNY AS GUIDE	125
IX.	IN THE FERRY-HOUSE	143
X.	ANOTHER STAGE OF THE JOURNEY	155
XI.	A HAVEN OF REFUGE	177
XII.	NEWS FROM THE LANE	201
XIII.	THE WONDERFUL ENDING	217

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## CHAPTER I

### *The One Room House*

It was in "the littlest house in Ne' York" that Glory lived, with grandpa and Bo'sn, the dog, so she, and its owner, often boasted; and whether this were actually true or not, it certainly was so small that no other sort of tenant than the blind captain could have bestowed himself, his grandchild, and their few belongings in it.

A piece-of-pie shaped room, built to utilize a scant, triangular space between two big warehouses, only a few feet wide at the front and no width at all at the rear. Its ceiling was also

its roof and from it dangled whatever could be hung thus, while the remaining bits of furniture swung from hooks in the walls. Whenever out of use, even the little gas-stove was set upon a shelf in the inner angle, thereby giving floor space sufficient for two camp-stools and a three-cornered scrap of a table at which they ate and worked, with Bo'sn curled beneath.

This mite of a house stood at the crook of Elbow Lane, down by the approaches to the big bridge over East River, in a street so narrow that the sun never could shine into it; yet held so strong an odor of salt water and a near-by fish-market, that the old sailor half fancied himself still afloat. He couldn't see the dirt and rubbish of the Lane, nor the pinched faces of the other dwellers in it, for a few tenements were still left standing among the crowding warehouses, and these were filled with people. Glory, who acted as eyes for the old man, never told him of unpleasant things, and, indeed, scarcely saw them herself. To her, everything was beautiful and everybody kind, and in their own tiny home, at least, everything was scrupulously clean and shipshape.

When they had hung their hammocks back upon the wall, for such were the only beds they had room for, and had had their breakfast of porridge, the captain would ask: "Decks scrubbed well, mate?"

"Aye, aye, sir!" came the cheery answer, and Glory's hands, fresh from the suds, would touch the questioner's cheek.

"Brasses polished, hawsers coiled, rations dealt?"

"Aye, aye, cap'n!" again called the child.

"Eight bells! Every man to his post!" ordered the master, and from the ceiling a bell struck out the half-hours in the only way the sailor would permit time to be told aboard his "ship." Then Glory whisked out her needle and thread, found grandpa his knife and bit of wood, and the pair fell to their tasks. His was the carving of picture frames, so delicately and deftly that one could hardly believe him sightless; hers the mending of old garments for her neighbors, and her labor was almost as capable as his. It had earned for her the nickname of "Take-a-Stitch," for, in the Lane, people were better known by their employments than their surnames. Grandpa was "Cap'n Carver" when at his morning work, but after midday, "Captain Singer," since then, led by his dog Bo'sn, he sang upon the streets to earn his livelihood. In the later hours the little girl, also, wore another title—"Goober Glory"—because she was one of the children employed by Antonio Salvatore, the peanut man, to sell his wares on commission.

But grandpa, Glory, and Bo'sn had the long delightful mornings at home and together; and this day, as usual, their talk turned upon the dream of their lives—"Sailors' Snug Harbor."

"Now, grandpa, talk. Tell how 'tis. Do it fast an' picturey-like, 'less I never can guess how to make this piece do. It's such a little patch an' such a awful big hole! Posy Jane gets carelesser an' carelesser all the time. This very last week that ever was she tore this jacket again. An' I told her, I said: 'Jane, if you don't look out you'll never wear this coat all next winter nohow.' An' she up an' laughed, just like she didn't mind a thing like that. An' she paid me ten whole centses, she did. But I love her. Jane's so good to everybody, to every single body. Ain't she, grandpa?"

"Aye, aye, deary. I cal'late she done it a purpose. She makes her money easy, Jane does. Just sets there on the bridge-end and sells second-hand flowers to whoever'll buy. If she had to walk the streets—"

Glory was so surprised by this last sentence that she snapped her thread off in the wrong place and wasted a whole needleful. Until yesterday, she had never heard her grandfather speak in any but the most contented spirit about his lot in life. Then he had twice lamented that he "didn't know whatever was to become o' two poor creatur's like them," and now, again, this gay morning, he was complaining—almost complaining. Glory didn't feel, in the least, like a "poor creatur'." She felt as "chirpy as a sparrow bird," over in City Hall park; and, if the sun didn't shine in the Lane, she knew it was shining in the street beyond, so what mattered?

Vaguely disturbed, the child laid her hand on his arm and asked, "Be you sick, grandpa?"

He answered promptly and testily, "Sick? No, nor never was in my life. Nothin' but blind an' that's a trifle compared to sickness. What you askin' for? Didn't I eat my breakfast clean up?"

"Ye-es, but-but afterward you—you kicked Bo'sn, an' sayin' that about 'walkin' the street' just a singin'; why, I thought you liked it. I know the folks like to hear you. You do roll out that about the 'briny wave' just grand. I wish you'd sing it to Bo'sn an' me right now, grandpa, dear."

Wholly mollified and ashamed of his own ill-temper, the captain tried the familiar tune but it died in his throat. Music was far beyond him just then, yet he stroked the child's head tenderly, and said, "Some other time, mate, some other time. I'm a little hoarse, maybe, or somethin'."

"Well, then, never mind. Let's talk 'Snug Harbor.' You begin. You tell an' I'll put in what I'm mind to; or I'll say what I guess it's like an' you set me straight if I get crooked. 'Cause you've seen it, grandpa, an' I never have. Not once; not yet. Bime-by— Oh, shall I begin, shall I, grandpa?"

The sailor sighed fit to shake the whole small tenement and nodded in consent; so, observing nothing of his reluctance to their once favorite subject, Glory launched forth:

"'Sailors' Snug Harbor' is the most beautifulest spot in the whole world! It's all flowery an' grassy an' treesy. It's got fountains an' birds an' orchestra-music forever an' ever. 'Tain't never cloudy there, nor rainy, nor freezy, nor snowy, nor nothin' mean. Eh, grandpa? Am I straight or crooked?"

The captain, roused as from a reverie, replied absently, "It's a beautiful place, mate; I know that. Nobody wants for nothin' there, an' once a man casts anchor there he's in safe haven for the rest of his days. Oh, I ain't denyin' none of its comforts, but I wish the whole concern'd burn to the ground or sink in the bay. I wish the man first thought of it had died before he did."

In his anger, the blind man clasped his knife till its blade cut his hand and Glory cried out in dismay. But he would not have her bathe the wound and resumed his carving in silence. The little girl waited awhile, once more fitting the small patch into the big hole of Posy Jane's jacket; then

she went on as if nothing had occurred:

"When we go there to live, me an' you, we'll have a room as big an' nice as this an' you won't have to do a hand's turn for yourself. You an' Bo'sn'll just set round in rockin'-chairs—I've seen 'em in the stores—with welwet cushionings on your laps—I mean you two a settin' on the cushionings, a dressed up to beat. Maybe, they'll let you order the whole crew, yourself, into white ducks for muster at six bells, or somethin'.

"An'," Glory continued, "there'll be me a wearin' a white frock, all new an' never mended, an' my hair growed long an' lovely, an' me just as purty as I wish I was, an' as everybody has to be that lives to the 'Harbor.' An' bime-by, of a Sunday, maybe, when they can spare the time, Posy Jane an' Billy Buttons, an' Nick, the Parson, 'll come walkin' up to the beautiful gate, an' the captain what keeps it'll write their names in a book an' say, 'Walk right in, ladies an' gentlemens, walk right in. You'll find Captain Simon Beck an' Miss Glorietta Beck'—'cause I'm goin' to put that long tail to my plain 'Glory' when I go to live there, grandpa.

"Lemme see. Where was I?" the little girl went on. "Oh, yes. The Elbow folks had just come, an' was showed in. They was told, 'Walk right in. You'll find your friends settin' in the front parlor on them welwet cushionings readin' stories out o' books an' chewin' candy all day long.' An' then they'll scurce know us, Billy an' them, an' not till I laugh an' show my teeth an' you get up an' salute will they suspicion us. An' you'll have on gold specs an' dress-uniform an' that'll make you look just like you could see same's other folks. Why, grandpa, darlin', I've just thought, just this very minute that ever was, maybe, to the 'Harbor' you won't be blind any more; for true, maybe not. In such a splendid place, with doctors settin' round doin' nothin', an' hospitals an' all, likely they'll put somethin' in your eyes will make you see again. O grandpa— If!"

The old man listened silently.

"An' when—when do you think would be the soonest we might go? 'Twon't cost much to take me an' you an' Bo'sn on the boat to Staten Island. I know the way. Onct I went clear down to the ferry where they start from just a purpose to see, an' we could 'most any time. Will we go 'fore next winter, grandpa? An' yet I hate, I do hate, to leave this dear Lane. We live so lovely in our hull house an' the folks'd miss us so an' we'd miss the folks. Anyway, I should. You wouldn't, course, havin' so many other old sailors all around you. An'— Why, here's that same man again!"

Even in Elbow Lane, where the shadows lie all day long, other and darker shadows may fall; and such a shade now touched Glory's shoulder as she pictured in words the charm of that blessed asylum to which the captain and she would one day repair. He had always fixed the time to be "when he got too old and worthless to earn his living." But that morning she had swiftly reasoned that since he had grown cross—a new thing in her experience—he must also have suddenly become aged and that the day of their departure might be near at hand.

The shadow of the stranger pausing at their door cut short her rhapsody and sent her, the table, and Bo'sn, promptly out of doors, because when any of the sailor's old cronies called to see him, there wasn't room in "the littlest house" for all. So, from the narrow sidewalk beyond the door, the child listened to the talk within, not much of it being loud enough for her to hear, and fancied, from grandpa's short, sharp replies to his guest's questions, that he was crosser, therefore, more ill, than ever.

Bo'sn, too, sat on his haunches beside her, closely attentive and, at times, uttering a low, protesting growl. Both child and dog had taken a dislike to this unknown, who was so unlike the usual visitors to the Lane.

Glory sometimes wandered as far as Fifth Avenue, with her peanut basket, and now confided to Bo'sn:

"He's just like them dressed-up folks on th' avenue, what goes by with their noses in th' air, same's if they couldn't abide the smell o' goobers, whilst all the time they're just longing to eat 'em. Big shiny hat, clothes 'most as shiny, canes an' fixin's, an' gloves, doggie; gloves this hot day, when a body just wants to keep their hands under the spigot, to cool 'em.

"An'," continued Glory, "he ain't like the rest, Cap'n Gray, an' Cap'n Wiggins, what makes grandpa laugh till he cries, swoppin' yarns. This one 'most makes him cry without the laughin' an'— Why, Bo'sn, Bo'sn!"

In the midst of her own chatter to the terrier, Glory had overheard a sentence of the "shiny gentleman" which sent her to her feet, and the table, work, and stool into the gutter, while her rosy face paled and her wide mouth opened still more widely. The stranger was saying:

"*Of course, they'll never take in the child.* You can go to the 'Harbor' to-day, if you will, and you ought. She—oh, there are plenty of Homes and Orphanages where they will give her shelter. She'd be far better off than she is here, in this slum, with only a blind old man to look after her. You come of good stock, Beck, and, with a proper chance, the little girl might make a nice woman. Here—whew, I really can't endure the stench of this alley any longer. We'll make it this afternoon, captain. At three o'clock I'll send a man to take you over, and I'll get my sister, who knows about such things, to find a place for your grandchild. Eh? I didn't quite catch your words."

Grandpa was murmuring something under his breath about: "Slum! I knew it was small but 'slum'—my little Glory—why, why—"

Colonel Bonnicastle interrupted without ceremony. He had put himself out to do an old employee a service and was vexed that his efforts were so ungratefully received. However, he was a man who always had his way and intended to do so now; so he remarked, as if the captain had not objected to so sudden a removal, "The man will be here at three precisely. Have whatever traps you value put together ready. You'll not know yourself in your new quarters. Good-morning."

With that the visitor turned to depart but Bo'sn darted between his feet, causing him either to step about in a peculiar fashion or crush the dog; and, with equal want of courtesy, Glory pushed him aside to fling herself on grandpa's neck, and to shriek to the guest, "Go 'way! Go 'way! Don't you come back to Elbow Lane! I hate you—oh, I do hate you!"

The great man was glad to go, nor did he notice her rudeness. His carriage was waiting in the street outside the alley, and even his sister Laura, who spent her days working to help the poor and who had sent him here, could expect no more of him than he had done. Neither his visit of yesterday nor to-day seemed appreciated by that old captain who had once so faithfully commanded the colonel's own ship.

Miss Laura had chanced to hear of the seaman's blindness and poverty, and promptly tried to help him by having him placed in "Sailors' Snug Harbor," of which her brother was a trustee. Nobody had told her about Glory, nor that the "Harbor" was the subject oftenest discussed within the "littlest house."

But other old sailors had told the captain of it, and pictured its delights, and once a crony had even taken him to visit it. After that, to him and his grandchild, the asylum had seemed like a wonderful fairyland where life was one happy holiday. When at their work, they talked of this safe "Harbor" and the little girl's imagination endowed the place with marvelous beauties. In all their dreaming they had still been together, without thought of possible separation, till Colonel Bonnicastle's sentence fell with a shock upon their ears, "*They will never take in the child.*"



## CHAPTER II

### *After the Colonel's Visit*

"Don't you go an' leave me, grandpa. Grandpa, don't you dast to go!" wailed Glory, her arms clasped so tightly about the captain's neck that they choked him. When he loosened them, he drew her to his knee and laid her curly head against his cheek, answering, in a broken voice, "Leave you, deary? Not while I live. Not while you will stay with the old blind man, who can't even see to what sort of a home he has brought his pet."

"Why, to the nicest home ever was. Can't be a nicer nowhere, not any single where. Not even on that big avenue where such shiny people as him live. Why, we've got a hull house to ourselves, haven't we?"

"Child, stop. Tell me exact, as you never told before. Is Elbow Lane a 'slum'?"

"'Deed I don't know, 'cause I never heard tell of a 'slum' 'fore. It's the cutest little street ever was. Why, you can 'most reach acrost from one side to the other. Me an' Billy has often tried. It's got the loveliest crook in it, right here where we be; an' one side runs out one way an' t'other toward the river. Why, grandpa, Posy Jane says onct-onct, 'fore anybody here was livin', the Lane was a cow-path an' the cows was drove down it to the river to drink. Maybe she's lyin'. 'Seems if she must be, 'cause now there ain't no cows nor nothin' but milk-carts an' cans in corner stores, an' buildin's where onct she says was grass-grass, grandpa, do you hear?"

"Yes, I hear, mate. But the folks, the neighbors. A slum, deary, I guess a slum is only where wicked people live. I don't know, really, for we had no such places on the broad high sea. Are our folks in the Lane wicked, daughter?"

"Grandpa!" she cried, indignantly. "When there's such a good, good woman, Jane's sister Meg-Laundress, what washes for us just 'cause I mend her things. An' tailor-Jake who showed me to do a buttonhole an' him all doubled up with coughin'; an' Billy Buttons who gives us a paper sometimes, only neither of us can read it; an' Nick, the parson, who helps me sort my goobers; an' Posy Jane, that's a kind o' mother to everybody goin'. Don't the hull kerboodle of 'em treat you like you was a prince in a storybook, as I've heard Billy tell about? Huh! Nice folks? I should think they was. Couldn't be any nicer in the hull city. Couldn't, for sure, an' I say so, I, Glory Beck."

"And all very poor, mate, terrible, desperate poor; an' ragged an' dirty an' swearers, an' not fit for my pet to mix with. Never go to church nor Sunday-school, nor—Eh, little mate?" persisted the old man, determined to get at the facts of the case at last.

Glory was troubled. In what words could she best defend her friends and convince her strangely anxious guardian that Elbow folks were wholly what they should be? Since she could remember she had known no other people, and if all were not good as she had fancied them, at least all were good to her. With all her honest loyal heart she loved them, and saw virtues in them which others, maybe, would not have seen. With a gesture of perplexity, she tossed her head and clasped her hands, demanding:

"An' what's poor? Why, I've heard you say that we're poor, too, lots o' times. But is any of us beggars? No, siree. Is any of us thieves? No, Grandpa Beck, not a one. An' if some is ragged or

dirty, that's 'cause they don't have clothes an' spigots handy, an' some's afraid o' takin' cold, like the tailor man. Some of us lives two er three families in a room, but-but that's them. Me an' you don't. We have a hull house. Why, me an' you is sort of rich, seems if, and—It's that big shiny-hatted man makes you talk so queer, grandpa darlin', an' I hate him. I wish he'd stayed to his house an' not come near the Lane."

"No, no, mate, hate nobody, nobody. He meant it kind. He didn't know how kindness might hurt us, deary. He is Colonel Bonnicastle, who owned the ship I mastered, an' many another that sails the sea this day. He's got a lot to do with the 'Harbor' an' never dreamed how't we'd known about it long ago. A good ship it was an' many a voyage she made, with me layin' dollars away out of my wage, till the sudden blindness struck me an' I crept down here where nobody knew me to get over it. That's a long while since, deary, and the dollars have gone, I always hopin' to get sight again and believin' I'd done a fine thing for my orphan grandchild, keepin' so snug a place over her head. So far, I've paid the rent reg'lar, and we've had our rations, too. Now, mate, fetch me the bag and count what's in it."

The little canvas bag which Glory took from the tiny wall-cupboard seemed very light and empty, and when she had untied the string and held it upside down not a coin fell from it. The old man listened for the clink of silver but there was none to hear and he sighed deeply as he asked, "Empty, Glory?"

"Empty, grandpa. Never mind, we'll soon put somethin' back in it. You must get your throat cleared and go out early an' sing your loudest. I'll get Toni to let me have a fifty-bagger, an' I'll sell every single one. You might make as much as a hull quarter, you might, an' me—I'll have a nickel. A nickel buys lots o' meal, an' we can do without milk on our porridge quite a spell. That way we can put by somethin' toward the rent, an' we'll be all right.

"Maybe," little Glory went on, "that old colonel don't have all to say 'bout the 'Harbor.' Maybe he don't like little girls an' that's why. I'll get Cap'n Gray to find out an' tell. He likes 'em. He always gives me a cent to put in the bag—if he has one. He's poor, too, though, but he's got a daughter growed up 'at keeps him. When I get growed I'll earn. Why, darlin' grandpa, I'll earn such a lot we can have everything we want. I will so and I'll give you all I get. If-if so be, we don't go to the 'Harbor' after all."

The captain stroked his darling's head and felt himself cheered by her hopefulness. Though they were penniless just now, they would not be for long if both set their minds to money getting; and, as for going to "Snug Harbor" without Glory, he would never do that, never.

"Well, well, mate, we're our own masters still; and, when the colonel sends his man for me, I'll tell him 'no,' so plain he'll understand. 'Less I may be off on my rounds, singin' to beat a premer donner. Hark! mess-time already. There goes eight bells. What's for us, cook?"

As he spoke, the little bell, which hung from the ceiling, struck eight tinkling notes and Glory's face clouded. There was nothing in the tiny cupboard on the wall save a remnant of porridge from breakfast, that had cooled and stiffened, and the empty money-bag.

"O grandpa! So soon? Why, I ought to have finished Jane's jacket and took it to her. She'd have paid me an' I'd ha' got the loveliest chop from the store 'round the corner. But now, you dear, you'll just have to eat what is an' make the best of it. Next time it'll be better an' here's your plate."

Humming a tune and making a great flourish of plate and spoon, she placed the porridge before the captain and watched his face anxiously, her heart sinking as she saw the distaste apparent at his first mouthful. He was such a hungry old dear always, and so was she hungry, though she didn't find it convenient to eat upon all such occasions. When there happened to be enough food for but one, she was almost glad of the sailor's blindness. If he smelled one chop cooking on the little stove, how should he guess there weren't two? And if she made a great clatter with knife and plate, how could he imagine she was not eating?

Up till now, Glory could always console herself with dreams of the "Snug Harbor" and the feasts some day to be enjoyed there. Alas! The colonel's words had changed all that. For her there would be no "Harbor," ever; but for him, her beloved grandpa, it was still possible. A great fear suddenly possessed her. What if the captain should get so very, very hungry, that he would be tempted beyond resistance, and forsake her after all! She felt the suspicion unworthy, yet it had come, and as the blind man pushed his plate aside, unable to swallow the unpalatable porridge, she resolved upon her first debt. Laying her hand on his she begged, "Wait a minute, grandpa! I forgot—I mean I didn't get the milk. I'll run round an' be back with it in a jiffy!"

"Got the pay, mate?" he called after her, but, if she heard him, she, for once, withheld an answer.

"O Mister Grocer!" she cried, darting into the dairy shop, like a stray blue and golden butterfly, "could you possibly lend me a cent's worth o' milk for grandpa's dinner? I'll pay you to-night, when I get home from peddlin', if I can. If I can't then, why the next time—"

"Say no more, Take-a-Stitch, I've a whole can turnin' sour on me an' you're welcome to a pint on't if you'll take it. My respects to the captain, and here's good luck to the Queen of Elbow Lane!"

Glory swept him a curtsy, flashed a radiant smile upon him and was tempted to hug him; but she refrained from this, not knowing how such a caress might be received. Then she thanked and thanked him till he bade her stop, and with her tin cup in her hand sped homeward again, crying:

"Here am I, grandpa! More milk 'an you can shake a stick at, with the store-man's respeckses an' all. A hull pint! Think o' that! An' only just a teeny, tiny mite sour. Isn't he the nicest one to give it to us just for nothin'? An' he's another sort of Elbow folks, though he's off a bit around the block. Oh, this is just the loveliest world there is! An' who'd want to go to that old 'Snug Harbor' an' leave such dear, dear people, I sh'd like to know? Not me nor you, Cap'n Simon Beck, an' you know it!"

Glory sat down and watched her grandsire make the best dinner he could upon cold porridge

and sour milk, her face radiant with pleasure that she had been able so well to supply him, and almost forgetting that horrid, all-gone feeling in her own small stomach. Never mind, a peanut or so might come her way, if Toni Salvatore, the little Italian with the long name, should happen to be in a good humor and fling them to her, for well he knew that of the stock he trusted to her, not a single goober would be extracted for her personal enjoyment; and this was why he oftener bestowed upon her a tiny bag of the dainties than upon any other of his small sales people.

The captain finished his meal and did not distress his darling by admitting that it was still distasteful, then rose, slung his basket of frames over his shoulder, took Bo'sn's leading-string, and passed out to his afternoon's peddling and singing. But, though he had kissed her good-bye, Glory dashed after him, begging still another and another caress, and feeling the greatest reluctance to letting him go, yet equally unwilling to have him stay.

"If he stays here that man will come and maybe get him, whether or no; an' if he goes, the shiny colonel may meet him outside and take him anyhow. If only he'd sing alongside o' my peddlin' route! But he won't. He never will. He hates to hear me holler. He says 'little maids shouldn't do it'; only I have to, to buy my sewin' things with; an'—My, I clean forgot Posy Jane's jacket! I must hurry an' finish it, then off to peanuttin'," pondered the child, and watched the blind man making his way, so surely and safely, around the corner into the next street, with Bo'sn walking proudly ahead, what tail he had pointing skyward and his one good ear pricked forward, intent and listening.

The old captain in the faded uniform he still wore, and the faithful little terrier, who guided his sightless master through the dangers of the city streets with almost a human intelligence were to Goober Glory the two dearest objects in the world, and for them she would do anything and everything.

"Funny how just them few words that shiny man said has changed our hull feelin's 'bout the 'Harbor.' Only this mornin', 'fore he come, we was a-plannin' how lovely 'twas; an' now-now I just hate it! I'm glad they's water 'twixt us an' that old Staten Island, an' I'm glad we haven't ferry money nor nothin'," cried the little girl, aloud, shaking a small fist defiantly southward toward the land of her lost dreams. Then, singing to make herself forget how hungry she was, she hurried into the littlest house and—shall it be told?—caught up her grandpa's plate and licked the crumbs from it, then inverted the tin cup and let the few drops still left in it trickle slowly down her throat; and such was Glory's dinner.

Afterward she took out needle and thread and heigho! How the neat stitches fairly flew into place, although to make the small patch fill the big hole, there had to be a little pucker here and there. Never mind, a pucker more or less wouldn't trouble happy-go-lucky Jane, who believed little Glory to be the very cleverest child in the whole world and a perfect marvel of neatness; for, in that particular, she had been well trained. The old sea captain would allow no dirt anywhere, being as well able to discover its presence by his touch as he had once been by sight; and, oddly enough, he was as deft with his needle as with his knife.

So, the jacket finished, Glory hurried away up the steep stairs to the great bridge-end, received from the friendly flower-seller unstinted praise and a ripe banana and felt her last anxiety vanish.

"A hull banana just for myself an' not for pay, dear, dear Jane? Oh, how good you are! But you listen to me, 'cause I want to tell you somethin'. Me an' grandpa ain't never goin' to that old 'Snug Harbor,' never, nohow. We wouldn't be hired to. So there."

"Why-why, Take-a-Stitch! Why, be I hearin' or dreamin', I should like to know. Not go there, when I thought you could scarce wait for the time to come? What's up?"

"A shiny rich man from the avenue where such as him lives and what owns the ship grandpa used to master, an' a lot more like it has so much to do with the 'Harbor' 'at he can get anybody in it or out of it just as he pleases. He's been twice to see grandpa an' made him all solemn an' poor-feelin', like he ain't used to bein'. Why, he's even been cross, truly cross, if you'll believe it!"

"Can't, hardly. Old cap'n's the jolliest soul ashore, I believe," said Jane.

"An' if grandpa maybe goes alone, 'cause they don't take little girls, nohow, then that colonel'd have me sent off to one o' them Homeses or 'Sylums for childern that hasn't got no real pas nor mas. Huh, needn't tell me. I've seen 'em, time an' again, walkin' in processions, with Sisters of Charity in wide white flappin' caps all the time scoldin' them poor little girls for laughin' too loud or gettin' off the line or somethin' like that. An' them with long-tailed frocks an' choky kind of aperns an' big sunbonnets, lookin' right at my basket o' peanuts an' never tastin' a single one. Oh, jest catch me! I'll be a newspaper boy, first, but-but, Jane dear, do you s'pose anything—any single thing, such as bein' terrible hungry, or not gettin' paid for frames or singin'—could that make my grandpa go and leave me?"

For at her own breathless vivid picture of the orphanage children, as she had seen them, the doubt concerning the captain's future actions returned to torment her afresh.

"He might be sick, honey, or somethin' like that, but not o' free will. Old Simon Beck'll never forsake the 'light o' his eyes,' as I've heard him call you, time an' again."

"Don't you fret, child," continued Posy Jane. "Ain't you the 'Queen of Elbow Lane'? Ain't all of us, round about, fond of you an' proud of you, same's if you was a real queen, indeed? Who'd look after Mis' McGinty's seven babies, when she goes a scrubbin' the station floors, if you wasn't here? Who'd help the tailor with his job when the fits of coughin' get so bad? 'Twas only a spell ago he was showin' me how't you'd sewed in the linin' to a coat he was too sick to finish an' a praisin' the stitches beautiful. What'd the boys do without you to sew their rags up decent an' tend to their hurt fingers an' share your dinner with 'em when—when you have one an' they don't?"

"An' you so masterful like," went on the flower-seller, "a makin' everybody do as you say, whether or no. If it's a scrap in a tenement, is my Glory afraid? not a mite. In she walks, walks she, as bold as bold, an' lays her hand on this one's shoulder an' that one's arm an' makes 'em quit fightin'. Many's the job you've saved the police, Glory Beck, an' that very officer yonder was sayin' only yesterday how't he'd rather have you on his beat than another cop, no matter how

smart he might be. He says, says he, 'That little girl can do more to keep the peace in the Lane 'an the best man on the force,' says he. 'It's prime wonderful how she manages it.' An' I up an' tells him nothin' wonderful 'bout it at all.' It's 'cause everybody loves you, little Glory, an' is ashamed not to be just as good as they know you think they be.

"Don't you fret, child," Jane went on, "Elbow folks won't let you go, nor'll the cap'n leave you, and if bad come to worst them asylums are fine. The Sisters is all good an' sweet, givin' their lives to them 'at needs. Don't you get notions, Glory Beck, an' judge folks 'fore you know 'em. If them orphans gets scolded now an' then it does 'em good. They ought to be. So'd you ought, if you don't get off to your peddlin'. It's long past your time. Here's a nickel for the jacket an' you put it safe by 'fore you start out. May as well let me pin one o' these carnations on you, too. They ain't sellin' so fast an' 'twould look purty on your blue frock. Blue an' white an' yellor-frock an' flower an' curly head-they compare right good."

Ere Jane's long gossip was ended, her favorite's fears were wholly banished. With a hug for thanks and farewell, Glory was off and away, and the tired eyes of the toilers in the Lane brightened as she flitted past their dingy windows, waving a hand to this one and that and smiling upon all. To put her earnings away in the canvas bag and catch up her flat, well-mended basket, took but a minute, and, singing as she went, the busy child sped around to that block where Antonio had his stand.

That day the trade in goobers had been slack and other of his small employees had found the peanut-man a trifle cross; but, when Glory's shining head and merry face came into view, his own face cleared and he gave her a friendly welcome.

"A fifty-bagger this time, dear Toni! I've got to get a heap of money after this for grandpa!"

"Alla-right, I fill him," returned the vender; and, having carefully packed the fifty small packets in the shallow basket, he helped her to poise it on her head, as he had long since taught her his own countrywomen did. This was a fine thing for the growing child and gave her a firm erectness not common to young wage-earners. She was very proud of this accomplishment, as was her teacher, Antonio, and had more than once outstripped Billy Buttons in a race, still supporting her burden.

"Sell every bag, little one, and come back to me. I, Antonio Salvatore have secret, mystery. That will I tell when basket empty. Secret bring us both to riches, indeed!"

Crafty Antonio! Well he knew that the little girl's curiosity was great, and had led her into more than one scrape, and that his promise to impart a secret would make her more eager to sell her stock than the small money payment she would earn by doing so.

Glory clasped her hands and opened her brown eyes more widely, entreating, "Now, Toni, dear Tonio, tell first and sell afterward. Please, please."

"No, not so, little one. Sell first, then I tell. If you sell not—" Antonio shrugged his shoulders in a way that meant no sale, no secret. So, already much belated, Goober Glory—as she had now become—was forced to depart to her task, though she turned about once or twice to wave farewell to her employer and to smile upon him, but she meant to make the greatest haste, for, of all delightful things, a secret was best.



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## CHAPTER III

### *In Elbow Lane*

"Pea-nuts! Cent-a-b-a-a-g!"

This cry shrilled, almost yelled from the sidewalk upon which she was descending from her carriage so startled Miss Bonnicastle that she tripped and fell. In falling, she landed plump in a basket of the nuts and scattered them broadcast.

"Look out there! What you doin'?" indignantly demanded Glory, while a crowd of street urchins gathered to enjoy a feast.

"Help me up, little girl; never mind the nuts," begged the lady, extending her gloved hand.

"You don't mind 'em, 'course. They ain't yours!" retorted the dismayed child, yet seizing the hand with such vigor that she split the glove and brought its owner to an upright position with more precision than grace. Then, paying no further heed to the stranger, she began a boy-to-boy assault upon the purloiners of her wares; and this, in turn, started such an uproar of shrieks and gibes and laughter that poor Miss Laura's nerves gave way entirely. Clutching Glory's shoulder, she commanded, "Stop it, little girl, stop it, right away! You deafen me."



The effect was instant. In astonished silence, the lads ceased struggling and stared at this unknown lady who had dared lay hands on the little "Queen of Elbow Lane." Wild and rough though they were, they rarely interfered with the child, and there was more amazement than anger in Glory's own gaze as it swept Miss Bonnicastle from head to foot. The keen scrutiny made the lady a trifle uncomfortable and, realizing that she had done an unusual thing, she hastened to apologize, saying, "Beg pardon, little girl, I should not have done that, only the noise was so frightful and—"

"Ho, that?" interrupted the peanut vender, with fine scorn. "Guess you ain't used to Elbow boys. That was nothin'. They was only funnin', they was. If they'd been fightin' reg'lar-my, s'pose you'd a fell down again, s'pose."

Wasting no further time upon the stranger, Glory picked up the basket and examined it, her expression becoming very downcast; and, seeing this, the boy who had been fiercest in the scramble stepped closer and asked, "Is it clean smashed, Glory?"

"Clean," she answered, sadly.

"How much'll he dock yer?" asked another lad, taking the damaged article into his own hands. "Pshaw, hadn't no handle, nohow. Half the bottom was tore an' patched with a rag. One side's all lopped over, too. Say, if he docks yer a cent, he's a mean old Dago!"

"Well, ain't he a Dago, Billy Buttons? An' I put in that patch myself. I sewed it a hour, with strings out the garbage boxes, a hull hour. Hi, there! you leave them goobers be!" cried the girl, swooping down upon the few youngsters who had returned to pilfer the scattered nuts and, at once, the two larger boys came to her aid.

"We'll help yer, Glory. An' me an' Nick'll give ye a nickel a-piece, fer new bags, won't we, Nick?" comforted Billy. But, receiving no reply from his partner in the news trade, he looked up to learn the reason. Nick was busily picking up nuts and replacing them in such bags as remained unbroken but he wasn't eager to part with his money. Nickels were not plentiful after one's food was paid for, and though lodgings cost nothing, being any odd corner of floor or pavement adjoining the press-rooms whence he obtained his papers, there were other things he craved. It would have been easy to promise but there was a code in Elbow Lane which enforced the keeping of promises. If one broke one's word one's head was, also, promptly broken. There was danger of this even now and there, because Billy's foot came swiftly up to encourage his mate's generosity.

However, the kick was dexterously intercepted by Glory; Master Buttons was thrown upon his back, and Nick escaped both hurt and promise. With a burst of laughter all three fell to work gathering up the nuts and the small peddler's face was as gay as ever, as she cried:

"Say, boys, 'tain't nigh so bad. Ain't more'n half of 'em busted. I guess the grocer-man'll trust me to that many—he's real good-natured to-day. His jumper's tore, too, so maybe he'll let me work it out." Then, perceiving a peculiar action on the part of the too helpful Billy, she sternly demanded, "What you doin' there, puttin' in them shells that's been all chewed?"

"Huh! That's all right. I jams 'em down in the bottom. They don't show an' fills up faster'n th' others. Gotter make yer losin's good, hain't yer?"

"Yes, Billy Buttons, I have, but I ain't goin' to make 'em cheatin' anybody. What'd grandpa think or say to that? Now you can just empty out every single goober shell you've put in an' fill up square. I'll save them shells by theirselves, so's to have 'em ready next time you yourself want to buy off me."

The beautiful justice of this promise so impressed the newsboy that he turned a somersault, whereby more peanuts were crushed and he earned a fresh reproof.

Miss Bonnicastle had remained an amused observer of the whole scene, though the actors in it had apparently forgotten her presence. To remind them of this, she inquired, "Children, will you please tell me how much your peanuts were worth?"

"Cent a bag!" promptly returned Glory, selecting the best looking packet and holding it toward this possible customer.

"All of them, I mean. I wish to pay you for all of them," explained the lady, opening her purse.

Too surprised to speak for herself, Nick answered for the vender, "They was fifty bags, that's fifty cents, an' five fer commish. If it'd been a hunderd, 'twould ha' been a dime. Glory, she's the best seller Toni Salvatore's got, an' he often chucks her in a bag fer herself, besides. Fifty-five'd be fair, eh, Take-a-Stitch?"

Glancing at Glory's sunny face, Miss Laura did not wonder at the child's success. Almost anybody would buy from her for the sake of bringing forth one of those flashing smiles, but the girl had now found her own voice and indignantly cried:

"Oh, parson, if you ain't the cheat, I never! Chargin' money for goobers what's smashed! Think you'll get a lot for yourself, don't you? Well, you won't an' you needn't look to, so there."

Thus having rebuked her too zealous champion Glory explained to Miss Bonnicastle that "they couldn't be more'n twenty-five good bags left. They belongs to Antonio Salvatore, the peanut man. I was goin' to buy needles an' thread with part, needin' needles most, but no matter. Better luck next time. Do you really want a bag, lady?"

Again the tiny packet was extended persuasively, the small peddler being most anxious to make a sale although her honesty forbade her accepting payment for goods unsold.

But Miss Laura scarcely saw the paper bag, for she was looking with so much interest upon the child's own face. Such a gay, helpful, hopeful small face it was! Beneath a tangle of yellow curls, the brown eyes looked forth so trustfully, and the wide mouth parted in almost continual laughter over white and well-kept teeth. Then the white carnation pinned to the faded, but clean, blue frock, gave a touch of daintiness. Altogether, this seemed a charming little person to be found in such a locality, where, commonly, the people were poor and ill-fed, and looked sad rather than glad. The lady's surprise was expressed in her question, "Little girl, where do you live? How came you in this neighborhood?"

"Why—I belong here, 'course. Me an' grandpa live in the littlest house in Ne' York. Me an' him

we live together, all by our two selves, an' we have the nicest times there is. But-but, did you want a bag?" she finished, pleadingly. Time was passing and she was too busy to waste more. She wondered, too, why anybody so rich as to ride in a carriage should tarry thus long in Elbow Lane, though, sometimes, people did get astray and turn into the Lane on their way to cross the big bridge.

"Yes, little Glory, as I heard them call you, I meant just what I said. I wish to buy all your stock as well as pay for a new basket. Will you please invite your friends to share the feast with you? I'm sorry I caused you so much trouble and here, the little boy suggested fifty-five cents, suppose we make it a dollar? Will that be wholly satisfactory?"

The face of Take-a-Stitch was again a study in its perplexity. The temptation to take the proffered money was great, but a sense of justice was even greater. After a pause, she said with complete decision, "It must be this way; you give me the fifty cents for Toni Salvatore-that'll be hisn. You take the goobers an' give 'em to who you want. I won't take no pay for the basket, 'cause I can mend it again; nor for myself, 'cause I hain't earned it. I hain't hollered scarce any to sell such a lot. That's fair. Will I put 'em in your carriage, lady?"

"No, no! Oh, dear! No, indeed. Call your mates and divide among them as you choose. Then-I wonder why my man doesn't come back. The coachman can't leave the horses, and the footman seems to have lost himself looking for a number it should be easy to find."

The children had gathered about Glory who was now beaming with delight at the chance to bestow a treat upon her mates as well as enjoy one herself. Indeed, her hunger made her begin to crack the goobers with her strong white teeth and to swallow the kernels, skins and all. But again Miss Bonnicastle touched her shoulder, though this time most gently, asking:

"If this is Elbow Lane, and you live in or near it, can you show me the way to the house of Captain Simon Beck, an old blind man?"

Glory gasped and dropped her basket. All the rosy color forsook her face and fear usurped its gaiety. For a time, she stared at the handsome old lady in terror, then demanded, brokenly, "Be-you-from-'Snug Harbor'?"

It was now the stranger's turn to stare. Wondering why the child had asked such a question and seemed so startled, she answered, "In a way, both yes and no. I am interested in 'Snug Harbor,' and have come to find an old, blind sea captain whom my brother employed, in order to take him, myself, to that comfortable home. Why do you ask?"

Then Glory fled, but she turned once to shake a warning fist toward Nick and Billy, who instantly understood her silent message and glared defiantly upon the lady who had just given them an unexpected feast.



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## CHAPTER IV

### *Beside Old Trinity*

"Why, what is the matter? Why did she run away?" asked the astonished stranger.

Billy giggled and punched Nick who was now apportioning the peanuts among the children he had whistled to his side, but neither lad replied.

This vexed Miss Bonnicastle who had come to the Lane in small hope of influencing the old captain to do as her brother had wished him to do and to remove, at once, to the comfortable "Harbor" across the bay. She had undertaken the task at her brother's request; and also at his desire, had driven thither in the carriage, in order to carry the blind man away with her, without the difficulty of getting him in and out of street cars and ferry boat. It would greatly simplify matters if he would just step into the vehicle at his own humble door and step out of it again at the entrance to his new home.

But the Lane had proved even narrower and dirtier than she had expected. She was afraid that having once driven into it the coachman would not be able to drive out again, and the odors of river and market, which the blind seaman found so delightful, made her ill. She had deprived herself of her accustomed afternoon nap; she had sprained her ankle in falling; her footman had been gone much longer than she expected, searching for the captain's house; and though she had been amused by the little scene among the alley children which had been abruptly ended by Glory's flight, she was now extremely anxious to finish her errand and be gone.

In order to rest her aching ankle, she stepped back into the carriage and from thence called to Billy, at the same time holding up to view a quarter dollar.

Master Buttons did not hesitate. He was glad that Nick happened to be looking another way and did not see the shining coin which he meant to have for himself, if he could get it without disloyalty to Glory. Hurrying forward, he pulled off his ragged cap and inquired, "Did you want me, ma'am?"

"Yes, little boy. What is your name?"

"Billy."

"What else? Your surname?" continued the questioner.

"Eh? What? Oh—I guess 'Buttons,' 'cause onct I was a messenger boy. That's what gimme these clo'es, but I quit."

He began to fear there was no money in this job, after all, for the hand which had displayed the silver piece now rested in the lady's lap; and, watching the peanut feasters, he felt himself defrauded of his own rightful share. He stood first upon one bare foot then upon the other, and, with affectation of great haste, pulled a damaged little watch from his blouse and examined it critically. The watch had been found in a refuse heap, and even in its best days had been incapable of keeping time, yet its possession by Billy Buttons made him the envy of his mates.

He did not see the amused smile with which the lady regarded him, and though disappointed by her next question it was, after all, the very one he had anticipated.

"Billy Buttons, will you earn a quarter by showing me the way to where Captain Beck lives? that is, if you know it."

"Oh, I knows it all right, but I can't show it."

"Can't? Why not? Is it too far?"

Billy thought he had never heard anybody ask so many questions in so short a time and was on the point of saying so, impertinently, yet found it not worth while. Instead, he remarked, "I ain't sayin' if it's fur er near, but I guess I better be goin' down to th' office now an' see if they's a extry out. Might be a fire, er murder, er somethin' doin'."

With that courtesy which even the gamins of the streets unconsciously acquire from their betters, Billy pulled off his cap again and moved away. But he was not to escape so easily. Miss Laura's hand clasped his soiled sleeve and forth came another question, "Billy, is that little girl your sister?"

"Hey? No such luck fer Buttons. She ain't nobody's sister, she ain't. She just belongs to the hull Lane, Glory does. Huh! Take-a-Stitch my sister? Wished she was. She's only cap'n— Shucks!" Having so nearly betrayed himself, Billy broke from the restraining hand and disappeared.

Miss Bonnicastle sighed and leaned back upon her cushions, feeling that something evil must have befallen her faithful footman to keep him so long away, and almost deciding to give up this apparently hopeless quest. Then she discovered that Nick had drawn near. Possibly, he would act as her guide, even if his mate had refused. She again held up the quarter and beckoned the lad.

He responded promptly, his eyes glittering with greed as they fixed upon the coin—not to be removed from it till it was in his own possession, no matter how many questions were asked. These began at once, in a crisp, imperative tone.

"Little boy, tell me your name."

"Nick, the parson."

"Indeed? Nick Parsons, I suppose. Is it?"

"No'm. I'm Nicky Dodd. I got a father. He's Dodd. So be I, 'course. But the fellers stuck it onto me 'cause-'cause onct I went to a Sunday-school."

"Don't you go now, Nick Dodd?"

"No, indeedy! Ketch me!" laughed the boy, watching the gleam of the money his questioner held so lightly between her gloved fingers. What if she should drop it! If some other child should see it fall and seize it before he could! "Was-was you a-wantin' somethin' of me, lady?"

"Yes, I was. Will you show me the way to Captain Beck's house?"

Now Nick loved Glory as well as Billy did and he had as fully understood from her warning gesture that he was to give this stranger no information concerning her or her grandfather, but, alas! he also loved money, and he so rarely had it. Just then, too, the "Biggest Show On Earth" was up at Madison Square Garden and, if Nick had not remembered that enticing circus, he might not have betrayed his friend. Yet those wonderful trained animals—Ah!

"Fer that quarter? Ye-es, ma'am, I-I-will," stammered the lad.

So Miss Laura again left her carriage and walked the narrow, dirty length of the Lane, past the sharp bend which gave it its name of "Elbow," far down among the warehouses and wharves crowding the approach to the bridge. As she walked, she still asked questions and found that all the dwellers in the Lane were better known by their employments than their real names, how that Glory's deftness with a needle had made her "Take-a-Stitch," and anybody might guess why Jane was called "Posy" or Captain Beck had become the "Singer." Besides, she discovered that this ragged newsboy was as fond and proud of his "Lane" as she was of her avenue, and that if she had any pity to bestow, she needn't waste it on him or his mates and that—

"There 'tis! The littlest house in Ne' York," concluded Nick, proudly pointing forward, seizing the coin she held so carelessly, and vanishing.

"Well! have I become a scarecrow that all these children desert me so suddenly!" exclaimed Miss Laura, looking helplessly about and lifting her skirts the higher to avoid the dirty suds which somebody was emptying into the gutter.

"Ma'am?" asked the woman with the tub, dropping it and with arms akimbo staring amazedly at the stranger. How had such a fine madam come there? "Was you a-lookin' for somebody, ma'am?"

Miss Laura turned her sweet old face toward the other, Meg-Laundress, and answered, "Yes, for one, Captain Simon Beck. A boy told me this tiny place was where he lives—though it doesn't seem possible any one could really live in so small a room—and it's empty now, anyway. Do you know where he is?"

"Off a-singin' likely. He mostly is, this time o' day."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I have come—" Miss Bonnicastle checked herself, unwilling to disclose to this rough stranger affairs in which she had no concern. "I was told he had a grandchild living with him. Is she anywhere about?"

"Glory? She's off peddlin' her goobers, I s'pose. I can give 'em any word that's left," said Meg, with friendly interest.

"Glory? Is her name Glory? Is it she I saw with a basket of peanuts, a yellow haired, bright-faced little girl, in a blue frock?" cried the lady, eagerly, and recalling the child's inquiry about "Snug Harbor" felt that she should have guessed as much even then.

"Sure. The purtiest little creatur' goin'; or, if not so purty, so good-natured an' lovin'. Why, she's all the sunlight we gets in the Lane, Glory is, an', havin' her, some on us don't 'pear to need no more. Makes all on us do her say-so but always fer our own betterment. In an' out, up an' down, lendin' a hand or settin' a stitch or tendin' a baby, all in the day's work, an' queenin' it over the hull lot, that's our 'Goober Glory,' bless her! And evil to anybody would harm the child, say I! Though who'd do ill to her? Is't a bit of word you'd be after leavin', ma'am?" said Meg, with both kindness and curiosity.

"Thank you. If you see either of them, will you say that Miss Bonnicastle, Colonel Bonnicastle's sister, will be here again in the morning, unless it storms, upon important business? Ask them to wait here for me, please. I should not like to make a second useless trip. Good-afternoon."

As the gentlewoman turned and made her way back along the alley toward her distant carriage, which could come no nearer to her because the Lane was so narrow, Meg watched and admired her, reflecting with some pride:

"She's the real stuff, that old lady is. Treated me polite 's if I was the same sort she is. I wonder what's doin' 'twixt her an' the Becks? Well, I'll find out afore I sleep, or my name ain't Meg-Laundress, an' I say it. Guess Jane'll open her eyes when I up an' tells her how one them grand folks she sees crossin' the bridge so constant has got astray in the Lane an' come a visitin', actilly a visitin', one our own folks. But then, I always knowed, we Elbowers was a touch above some, an' now she'll know it, too.

"I do wish the cap'n would come in," continued Meg. "But 'twill be a long spell yet afore he does. An', my land! I must sure remind him to put on his other shirt in the mornin'. He don't never get no sile on him, the cap'n don't, yet when grand carriage folks comes a callin', it's a time for the best or nothin'."

By a roundabout way, Glory had hurried, breathlessly, to her tiny home, fearing that by some mischance grandpa might have returned to it, and that this fresh advocate of the "Harbor" would find him there. She was such a pretty old lady, she had such a different manner from that of the Lane women, she might persuade the gallant old captain to accompany her to the asylum, whether or no. If he were at home, Glory meant to coax him elsewhere; or, if he would not go, then she would remain and use her own influence against that of this dangerous stranger.

One glance showed her that all was yet safe. The tiny room was empty and neither "Grandpa!" nor "Bo'sn!" answered to her call.

"I hain't got no goobers to sell now an' them boys won't show her a step of the way an' she couldn't get here so quick all herself without bein' showed so I may as well rest a minute," said Glory to herself, and sat down on the narrow threshold to get cool and to decide upon what she should do.

But she could not sit still. A terrible feeling that these strangers were determined to separate her from her grandfather made her too restless. It was natural, she thought, that they should wish to do him a kindness, such as providing him with a fine home for life. He was a grown-up man and a very clever one, while she was only a little girl, of no account whatever. They didn't care about her, 'course, but him—

"I must go find him! I must keep him away, clear, clear away from the Lane till it gets as dark as dark. Then we can come home an' sleep. Such as them don't come here o' nights," cried Glory, springing up. "An' I'm glad grandpa is blind. If he went right close by them two he couldn't see 'em, an' she, she, anyway, don't know him. I wonder where best to look first. I s'pose Broadway, 'cause that's where he gets the most money. They's such a heap of folks on that wide street an' it's so nice to look at."

Having decided her route, Glory was off and away. She dared not think about Toni Salvatore and his anger. She did not see how she would ever be able to repay him for his loss and she could remember nothing at all about the money Miss Bonnicastle had offered her. If Billy or Nick had taken it, they would give it to her, of course; but if not-well, that was a small matter compared to the spiriting away of her grandfather and she must find him and hold him fast.

"Grandpa don't go above the City Hall, 'cause Bo'sn don't know the way so well. Up fur's there an' down to Trinity; that's the 'tack he sails' an' there I'll seek him. I wish one them boys was here to help me look, though if he was a-singin' I shouldn't need nobody."

So thinking and peering anxiously into the midst of every crowd and listening with keen intentness, the little girl threaded her way to the northern limit of the captain's accustomed "beat." But there was no sign nor sound of him upon the eastern side of the thoroughfare, and, crossing to the more crowded western side, she crept southward, step by step, scanning every face she passed and looking into every doorway, for in such places the blind singer sometimes took his station, to avoid the jostling of the passers-by.

"Maybe I'll have to go 'way down to the Battery, 'cause he does, often. Though 'seems he couldn't hardly get there yet."

Now Glory was but a little girl, and, in watching the shifting scenes of the busy street, she soon forgot her first anxiety and became absorbed in what was around her. And when she had walked as far southward as old Trinity, there were the lovely chimes ringing and, as always, a mighty crowd had paused to listen to them. Glory loved the chimes, and so did grandpa; and it was their

habit on every festival when they were to be rung to come and hear them. Always the child was so moved by these exquisite peals that when they ceased she felt as if she had been in another world, and it was so now. To hear every tone better, she had clasped her hands and closed her eyes and uplifted her rapt face; and so standing upon the very curb, she was rudely roused by a commotion in the crowd about her.

There was the tramping of horses' feet, the shouts of the police, the "Ahs!" and "Ohs!" of pity which betokened some accident.

"Out the way, child! You'll be crushed in this jam! Keep back there, people! Keep back!"

Glory made herself as small as she could and shrank aside. Then curiosity sent her forward again to see and listen.

"An old man!"

"Looks as if he were blind!"

"Back those horses! Make way—the ambulance—make way!"

"All over with that poor fellow! A pity, a pity!"

These exclamations of the onlookers and the orders of the policemen mingled in one harsh clamor, yet leaving distinct upon Glory's hearing the words, "An old blind man."

"Oh, how sorry grandpa will be to know that!" thought the child, and, with eagerness to learn every detail of the sad affair, stooped and wormed her way beneath elbows and between legs till she had come to the very roadbed down which an ambulance was dashing at highest speed, its clanging bell warning everything from its path. Right before the curb where she stood it paused, uniformed men sprang to the pavement and, with haste that was still reverent and tender, laid the injured man upon the stretcher; then off and away again, and the little girl had caught but the faintest glimpse of a gray head and faded blue garments, yet thought:

"Might be another old captain, it might. Won't grandpa be sorry—if I tell him. Maybe I shan't, though I must hurry up an' find him, 'cause seein' that makes me feel dreadful lonesome, 'seems if. Oh! I do wish nobody ever need get hurted or terrible poor, or anything not nice! And—oh, oh, there's that very lady I run away from, what come to the Lane! Drivin' down in her very carriage and if—She mustn't see me! She must not—less she's got him in there with her a'ready! What if!"

Miss Bonnicastle's laudau was, indeed, being carefully driven through the jam of wagons which had stopped to give the ambulance room and she was anxiously watching the inch-by-inch progress of her own conveyance. Yet with an expression of far keener anxiety, Goober Glory recklessly darted into the very tangle of wheels and animals, crying aloud:

"She's goin' straight down toward that 'Harbor' ferry! Like's not she's heard him singin' somewhere an' coaxed him to get in there with her. He might be th' other side—where I can't see—an' I must find out—I must! For—*What if!*"

She reached the carriage steps, sprang upon them, by one glance satisfying herself that the lady was alone, turned to retreat, but felt herself falling.



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## CHAPTER V

### *A Desolate Awakening*

"You little dunce! Don't you know better than do that?"

An indignant shake accompanied these words, with which the big policeman set Glory down upon the sidewalk after having rescued her from imminent death.

In the instant of her slipping from the carriage step, the child had realized her own peril and would most certainly have been trampled under the crowding, iron-shod hoofs, had not the officer been on the very spot, trying to prevent accidents, and to keep clear from each other the two lines of vehicles, one moving north, the other south.

Glory was so rejoiced to find herself free and unhurt that she minded neither the shaking nor the term "dunce," but instantly caught the rescuer's hand and kissed it rapturously, crying, "Oh, thank you, thank you! Grandpa would have felt so bad if I'd been hurt like that poor blind man. Oh, I wish I could do somethin' for you, you dear, splendid p'liceman!"

"Well, you can. You can remember that a young one's place is at home, not in the middle of the street. There, that will do. Be off with you and never cut up such a caper again, long's you live. It would have been 'all day' with you, if I hadn't been just where I was, and two accidents within five minutes is more'n I bargain for. Be off!"

Releasing his hand, he returned to his task among the wagons but carried with him a pleasant

memory of a smile that was so grateful and so gay; while Glory, subdued by what she had gone through, slowly resumed her search for her missing grandfather. Away down to the South ferry she paced, looking and listening everywhere. Then back again on the other side of the long street till she had reached the point nearest to Elbow Lane and still no sign of a blue-coated old man or a little dog with a stub of a tail and but one good ear.

"Well, it's nigh night now, an' he'll be comin' home. Most the folks what gives him pennies or buys his frames has left Broadway so I might as well go myself. Come to think, I guess I better not tell grandpa 'bout that poor hurted man. Might make him 'fraid to go round himself with nobody 'cept Bo'sn to take care of him an' him a dog. An' oh, dear! Whatever shall I do for sewin' things, now I didn't get no goober money? Well, anyway, there's that nickel o' Jane's will buy a chop for his supper an' I best hurry get it ready. He's always so terrible hungry when he comes off his 'beat.' An' me-why, I b'lieve I hain't eat a thing to-day, save my breakfast porridge an' Jane's banana, an' two er three goobers. Never mind, likely grandpa'll bring in somethin' an' I can eat to-morrow."

Back to the littlest house she ran, singing to forget her appetite, and whisked out the key of the tiny door from its hiding-place beneath the worn threshold, yet wondering a little that grandpa should not already have arrived.

"Never mind, I'll have everything done 'fore. Then when he does get here all he'll have to do'll be to eat an' go to bed," she said to herself. Glory was such a little chatterbox that when she had no other listener she made one of herself.

The corner-grocer was just taking his own supper of bread and herrings on the rear end of his small counter when she entered, demanding, "The very best an' biggest chop you've got for a nickel, Mister Grocer; or if you could make it a four-center an' leave me a cent's worth o' bread to go along it, 't would be tastier for grandpa."

"Sure enough, queeny, sure enough. 'Pears like I brought myself fortune when I give you that pint o' milk. I've had a reg'lar string o' customers sence, I have. An' here, what you lookin' so sharp at that one chop for? Didn't you know I was goin' to make it two, an' loaf accordin'?"

Glory swallowed fast. This was almost too tempting for resistance, but she had been trained to a horror of debt and had resolved upon that slight one, earlier in the day, only because she could not see her grandfather distressed. Her own distress—Huh! That was an indifferent matter.

The corner groceries of the poor are also their meat markets, bakeries, and dairies, and there was so much in the crowded little shop that was alluring that the child forced herself to look diligently out of the door into the alley lest she should be untrue to her training. In a brief time the shopman called, "All ready, Take-a-Stitch! Here's your parcel."

Glory faced about and gasped. That was such a very big parcel toward which he pointed that she felt he had made a mistake and so reminded him, "Guess that ain't mine, that ain't. One chop an' a small roll 'twas. That must be Mis' Dodd's, 'cause she's got nine mouths to feed, savin' Nick's 'at he feeds himself."

"Not so, neighbor. It's yourn. The hull o' it. They's only a loaf, a trifle stale—one them three-centers, kind of mouldy on the corners where't can be cut off—an' two the finest chops you ever set your little white teeth into. They're all yourn."

The grocer enjoyed doing this kindness as heartily as she enjoyed receiving it, although he was so thrifty that he made his own meal from equally stale bread and some unsalable dried fish. But, after a momentary rapture at the prospect of such delicious food, Glory's too active conscience interfered, making her say, with a regret almost beyond expression, "I mustn't, I mustn't. Grandpa wouldn't like it, 'cause he says 'always pay's you go or else don't go,' an' that nickel's all I've got."

"No, 't isn't. Not by a reckonin'. You've got the nimblest pair o' hands I know an' I've got the shabbiest coat. I'm fair ashamed to wear it to market, yet I ain't a man 'shamed of trifles. If you'll put them hands of yourn and that coat o' mine together, I'd be like to credit you a quarter, an' you find the patches."

"A quarter! A hull, endurin' quarter of a dollar! You darlin' old grocer-man. 'Course I will, only I-I'm nigh out o' thread, but I've got a power o' patches. I've picked 'em out the ash-boxes an' washed 'em beautiful. An' they're hung right on our own ceiling in the cutest little bundle ever was—an'-I love you, I love you; Give me the coat, quick, right now, so's I can run an' patch it, an' you see if I don't do the best job ever!"

"Out of thread, be you? Well, here, take this fine spool o' black linen an' a needle to fit. A workman has to have his tools, don't he? I couldn't keep store if I didn't have things to sell, could I? Now, be off with you, an' my good word to the cap'n."

There wasn't a happier child in all the great city than little Take-a-Stitch as she fairly flew homeward to prepare the most delicious supper there had been in the littlest house for many a day. Down came the tiny gas stove from its shelf, out popped a small frying pan from some hidden cubby and into it went a dash of salt and the two big chops. Oh, how delightful was their odor, and how Glory's mouth did water at thought of tasting! But that was not to be till grandpa came. She hoped that would be at once, before they cooled; for the burning of gas, their only fuel, was managed with strictest economy. It would seem a wasteful sin to light the stove again to reheat the chops, as she would have to do if the captain was not on hand soon.

Alas! they were cooked to the utmost limit of that brown crispness which the seaman liked, and poor Glory had turned faint at the delayed enjoyment of her own supper, when she felt she must turn out the blaze or ruin all. Covering the pan to keep its contents hot as long as might be, she sat down on the threshold to wait; and, presently, was asleep.

It had grown quite dark before the touch of a cold wet nose upon the palm of her hand aroused her, and there was Bo'sn, rubbing his side against her knee and uttering a dismal sort of sound that was neither bark nor howl, but a cross between both and full of painful meaning.

"Bo'sn! You? Then grandpa—oh, grandpa, darlin', darlin', why didn't you wake me? I've got the

nicest supper—Smell?”

With that she sprang up and darted within, over the few feet of space there was, but nobody was in sight; then out again, to call the captain from some spot where he had doubtless paused to exchange a bit of neighborly gossip. To him the night was the same as the day, the child remembered, and though it wasn't often he overstayed his regular hour, or forgot his meal-time, he might have done so now. Oh, yes, he might easily have done so, she assured herself. But why should Bo'sn forsake his master and come home alone? He had never done that before, never. And why, oh, why, did he make that strange wailing noise? He frightened her and must stop it.

“Quiet, boy, quiet!” she ordered, clasping the animal's head so that he was forced to look up into her face. “Quiet, and tell me—where is grandpa? Where did you leave grandpa?”

Of course, he could not answer, save by ceasing to whine and by gazing at her with his loving brown eyes as if they must tell for him that which he had seen.

Then, seized by an overwhelming anxiety, which she would not permit herself to put into a definite fear, she shook the dog impatiently and started down the Lane. It was full of shadows now, which the one gas street lamp deepened rather than dispersed, and she did not see a woman approaching until she had run against her. Then she looked up and exclaimed, “Oh, Posy Jane! You just gettin' home? Have you seen my grandpa?”

“The cap'n? Bless you, child, how should I, seein' he don't sing on the bridge. Ain't he come in yet?”

“No, and oh, Jane, dear Jane, I'm afraid somethin' 's happened to him. He never, never stayed away so late before an' Bo'sn came alone. What s'pose?”

The flower-seller had slipped an arm about the child's shoulders and felt them trembling, and though an instant alarm had filled her own heart, she made light of the matter to give her favorite comfort.

“What do I s'pose? Well, then, I s'pose he's stayin' away lest them rich folks what runs the 'Harbor' comes again an' catches him unbeknownst. Don't you go fret, honey. Had your supper?”

“No, Jane, an' it's such a splendid one. That lovely grocer man—”

“Ugh!” interrupted the woman, with a derisive shrug of her shoulders. “You're the beatin'est child for seein' handsomeness where 'tain't.”

“Oh, I 'member you don't like him much, 'cause onct he give short measure o' flour, or somethin', but he is good an' I didn't mean purty, an' just listen!”

Jane did listen intently to the story of the grocer's unusual generosity, and she hearkened, also, for the sound of a familiar, hesitating footstep and the thump of a heavy cane, such as would reveal the captain's approach long before he might be seen, but the Lane was very silent. It was later than Glory suspected and almost all the toilers were in their beds. It was late, even for the flower-seller, who had been up-town to visit an ailing friend and had tarried there for supper.

Jane had always felt it dangerous for a blind man, like the old seaman, to go about the city, attended only by a dog, but she knew, too, that necessity has no choice. The Becks must live and only by their united industry had they been able to keep even their tiny roof over their heads thus far. If harm had come to him—what would become of Glory? Well, time enough to think of that when the harm had really happened. The present fact was that the little girl was famishing with hunger yet had a fine supper awaiting her. She must be made to eat it without further delay.

“Come, deary, we'll step along an' you eat your own chop, savin' hisn till he sees fit to come get it. A man 'at has sailed the ocean hitherty-yender, like Cap'n Simon Beck has, ain't likely to get lost in the town where he was born an' raised. Reckon some them other old crony cap'ns o' hisn has met an' invited him to eat along o' them. That Cap'n Gray, maybe, or somebody. First you know, we'll hear him stumpin' down the Lane, singin' 'A life on the ocean wa-a-ave,' fit to rouse the entire neighborhood. You eat your supper an' go to bed, where children ought to be long 'fore this time.”

Posy Jane's tone was so confident and cheerful that Glory forgot her anxiety and remembered only that chop which was awaiting her. The pair hurried back to the littlest house which the flower-seller seemed entirely to fill with her big person, but she managed to get about sufficiently to relight the little stove, place Glory in her own farthest corner, and afterward watch the child enjoy her greatly needed food.

When Glory had finished, she grew still more happy, for physical comfort was added to that of her friend's words; nor did Jane's kindness stop there. She herself carefully covered the pan with the captain's portion in it, and bade Glory undress and climb into her little hammock that swung from the side of the room opposite the seaman's. This she also let down and put into it the pillow and blanket.

“So he can go right straight to sleep himself without botherin' you, honey. Come, Bo'sn, you've polished that bone till it shines an' you quit. Lie right down on the door-sill, doggie, an' watch 'at nobody takes a thing out the place, though I don't know who would, that belongs to the Lane, sure enough. But a stranger might happen by an' see somethin' temptin' 'mongst the cap'n's belongings. An' so good-night to you, little Take-a-Stitch, an' pleasant dreams.”

Then Posy Jane, having done all she could for the child she loved betook herself to her room in Meg-Laundress's small tenement, though she would gladly have watched in the littlest house for the return of its master, a return which she continually felt was more and more doubtful. And Glory slept peacefully the whole night through. Nor did Bo'sn's own uneasy slumbers disturb her once. Not till it was broad daylight and much later than her accustomed hour for waking, did she open her eyes and glance across to that other hammock where should have rested a dear gray head.

It was still empty, and the fact banished all her drowsiness. With a bound she was on her feet and at the door, looking out, all up and down the Lane. Alas! He was nowhere in sight and, turning back into the tiny room, she saw his supper still untasted in the pan where Jane had left it. Then with a terrible conviction, which turned her faint, she dropped down on the floor beside

Bo'sn, who was dolefully whining again, and hugged him to her breast, crying bitterly, "They have got him! They have got him! He'll never come again!"

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## CHAPTER VI

### *The Beginning of the Search*

"O Bo'sn, Bo'sn! Where did you leave him? You never left him before—never, not once! Oh, if you could only talk!" cried poor Glory, at last lifting her head and releasing the dog whom she had hugged till he choked.

His brown eyes looked back into her own pleading ones as if he, too, longed for the gift of speech and he licked her cheek as if he would comfort her. Then he threw back his own head, howled dismally, and dejectedly curled himself down beneath the captain's hammock.

Little Take-a-Stitch pondered a moment what she had best do in order to find her grandfather and, having decided, made haste to dress. The cold water from the spigot in the corner refreshed her and seemed to clear her thoughts, but she did not stop to eat anything, though she offered a crust of the dry loaf to the dog. He, also, refused the food and the little girl understood why. Patting him on the head she exclaimed:

"We both of us can't eat till he comes, can we, Bo'sn dear? Well, smart doggie, put on your sharpest smeller an' help to track him whichever way he went. You smell an' I'll look, an' 'twixt us we'll hunt him quick's-a-wink. Goin' to find grandpa, Bo'sn Beck! Come along an' find grandpa!"

Up sprang the terrier, all his dejection gone, and leaped and barked as joyfully as if he fully understood what she had said. Then, waiting just long enough to lock the tiny door and hide the key in its accustomed place, so that if the captain came home before she did he could let himself in, she started down the Lane, running at highest speed with Bo'sn keeping pace. So running, she passed the basement window where Meg-Laundress was rubbing away at her tub full of clothes and tossed that good woman a merry kiss.

"Guess the old cap'n's back, 'less Glory never 'd look that gay," thought Meg, and promptly reported her thought to Posy Jane who was just setting out for her day's business. She was already over-late and was glad to accept Meg's statement as fact and thus save the time it would have taken to visit the littlest house and learn there how matters really stood. It thus happened that neither of Glory's best friends knew the truth of the case nor that the child had set off on a hopeless quest, without food or money or anything save her own strong love and will to help her.

"But we're goin' to find grandpa, Bo'sn, an' we don't mind a thing else. Don't take so very long to get to that old 'Harbor,' an' maybe he might have a bite o' somethin' saved up 'at he could give us, though we don't neither of us want to eat 'fore we get him back, do we, doggie?" cried the child as they sped along and trying not to notice that empty feeling in her stomach.

But they had gone no further than the end of the Lane before they collided with Nick, the parson, just entering it. He had finished his morning's sale of papers and was feeling hungry for his own breakfast and, as Take-a-Stitch ran against him, demanded rather angrily, "What you mean, Goober Glory, knockin' a feller down that way?"

"O Nick! Have you seen grandpa?"

"Seen the cap'n? How should I? Ain't this his time o' workin' on his frames?"

Glory swiftly told her trouble and Nick's face clouded in sympathy. Finally he suggested, "They was a old blind feller got run over on Broadway yest'day. Likely 'twas him an' that's why. 'Twas in the paper all right, 'cause I heard a man say how't somethin' must be done to stop such accidentses. Didn't hear no name but, 'course, 'twas the cap'n. Posy Jane always thought he'd get killed, runnin' round loose, like he did, without nobody but a dog takin' care."

Glory had clutched Nick's shoulder and was now shaking him with what little strength seemed left to her after hearing his dreadful words. As soon as she could recover from that queer feeling in her throat, and was able to speak, she indignantly denied the possibility of this terrible thing being true.

"'Tis no such thing, Nick Dodd, an' you know it! Wasn't I there, right alongside, when't happened? Wasn't I a-listenin' to them very chimes a-ringin' what he listens to every time he gets a chanst? Don't you s'pose I'd know my own grandpa when I saw him? Huh!"

"Did-you see him, Glory Beck? How'd come them amberlance fellers let a kid like you get nigh enough to see a thing? Hey?"



Glory gasped as the remembrance came that she had not really seen the injured man but that the slight glimpse of his clothing and his white hair had been, indeed, very like her grandfather's. Still, this awful thing could not, should not be true! Better far that dreaded place, Snug Harbor, where, at least, he would be alive and well cared for.

"Oh, I got nigh. I got nigh enough to get knocked down my own self, an' be picked up by one them 'finest' p'licemens, what marches on Broadway. He shook me fit to beat an' set me on the sidewalk an' scolded me hard, but I didn't care, 'cause I was so glad to keep alive an' not be taken off to a hospital, like that old man was. Huh! You needn't go thinkin' nor sayin' that was Grandpa Simon Beck, 'cause I know better. I shan't have it that 'twas, so there."

Glory's argument but half-convinced herself and only strengthened Nick's opinion. However, his own mind was troubled. He felt very guilty for having guided Miss Bonnicastle to the littlest house, and the quarter-dollar earned by that treacherous deed seemed to burn through his pocket into his very flesh. Besides that coin, he had others in store, having had a successful morning, and the feeling of his affluence added to another feeling slowly awakening within him. This struggling emotion may have been generosity and it may have been remorse. Whatever it was, it prompted him to say, "Look-a-here, Glory, I'll help ye. I've got to go get somethin' t'eat, first off. Then, listen, you hain't got no money, have ye?"

"What o' that? I've got eyes, an' I've got Bo'sn. I'm goin' to the ferry an' I'm goin' tell the ferry man just how 'tis. That I must-I must be let go over to that Staten Island on that boat, whether or no. Me an' a dog won't take up much room, an', if he won't let me, I'll wait round till I get some sort o' job an' earn the money to pay. You needn't think, Nick Parson, that a teeny thing like a few centses will keep me from grandpa. I'd go to Toni an' ask him only-only-I don't know a thing what come o' that fifty-five cents the lady paid for the goobers, an' so I s'pose he'd be mad an' wouldn't trust me. Besides, grandpa always said to 'Pay as you go,' an' now I seem-I seem-to want to do what he told more'n ever. O Nick Dodd! What if-what if-he shouldn't never-never come-no-more!"

Poor Glory's courage gave way at last and, without ado, she flung herself upon Nick as she had done upon Bo'sn and clung to him as chokingly.

"Now, this is a purty fix, now ain't it?" thought the victim of her embrace, casting a wary eye up and down the Lane, lest any mate should see and gibe at him, and call him a "softy." Besides, for Glory to become sentimental-if this was sentiment-was as novel as for him to be generous. So, to relieve the situation, the newsboy put these two new things together and wrenched himself free, saying, "Quit it, Glory Beck! I got to breathe same's another, ain't I? You look a-here. See that cash? Well, I'll tell ye, I'll go fetch my grub—Had any yerself, Glory Beck?"

The question was spoken like an accusation and Glory resented it, answering quickly, "I don't know as that's anythin' to you, Nick Parson!"

"'Course. But I'll fetch enough fer two an' I'll tell ye, I'll go to that 'Snug Harbor' my own self, a payin' my own way, I will. I can afford it an' you can't. If so be the cap'n 's there, I'll fetch him out lickety-cut. If he ain't, why then, 'twas him was killed. See?"

"No, I don't see. Maybe they wouldn't let a boy in, anyhow."

"Pooh! They're sure to. Ain't I on the papers? Don't newsboys go anywhere they want, same's other press folks? Hey?"

Glory admitted that they did. She had often seen them jumping on and off of street cars at the risk of their lives and without hindrance from the officials. Also, the lad's offer to share his breakfast with her was too tempting to be declined. As he hurried away toward his poor home, she sat down on the threshold of the warehouse before which they had talked to wait, calling after him, "Don't forget a bite for Bo'sn, Nick!"

"All right!" he returned, and disappeared within his own cellar doorway.

Already Glory's heart was happier. She would not allow herself to think it possible that her grandfather was hurt, and Nick's willingness to help was a comfort. Maybe he would even take her with him, though she doubted it. However, she put the question to him as he reappeared with some old scraps in a torn newspaper, but while they were enjoying these as best they could and sharing the food with Bo'sn, Nick unfolded a better plan.

"Ye see, Take-a-Stitch, it's this way-no use wastin' eight cents on a old ferry when four'll do. You look all over Broadway again. Then, if he ain't anywheres 'round there, go straight to them other crony captains o' hisn an' see. Bein's he can't tell difference 'twixt night an' day, how'd he know when to come back to the Lane, anyway?"

"He always come 'fore," answered Glory, sorrowfully.

It was a new thing for Nick to take the lead in anything which concerned the little girl, who was the recognized leader of all the Lane children, and it made him both proud and more generous. Yielding to a wild impulse that now seized him, with a gesture of patronage, he drew from his pocket Miss Bonnicastle's quarter and dropped it in Glory's lap.

She stared at it, then almost gasped the question, "What-what's it for, Nick Dodd?"

"Fer-you!" cried the boy. He might have added that it was "conscience money," and that the unpleasant burning in his pocket had entirely ceased the instant he had rid himself of the ill-gotten coin, because at the time he had guided Miss Laura to the littlest house he had not tarried to learn how fruitless her visit was; else he might have felt less like a traitor. As it was, he tossed his head and answered loftily, "Don't do fer girls to go trav'lin' round 'ithout cash. You ain't workin' to-day an'-an' ye may need it. Newspaper men-well, we can scrape along 'most anyhow. Hello, here's Buttons!"

A cheery whistle announced the arrival of the third member of this intimate trio, and presently Billy came in sight around the Elbow, his freckled face as gay as the morning despite the facts that he still carried some unsold papers under his arm and that he had just emerged from a street fight, rather the worse for that event.

Glory's fastidiousness was shocked, and, forgetting her own trouble in disgust at his

carelessness, she exclaimed, "You bad Billy Buttons! There you've gone lost two more your buttons what I sewed with my strongest thread this very last day ever was! An' your jacket—What you been doin' with yourself, Billy Buttons?"

The newcomer seated himself between his friends, though in so doing he crowded Nick from the door-sill to the sidewalk, and composedly helped himself to what was left of their scanty breakfast. Better than nothing he found it and answered, as he ate, Glory's repeated inquiry, "What doin'? Why, scrappin', 'course. Say, parson, you hear me? They's a new feller come on our beat an' you chuck him, soon's ye see him. I jest punched him to beat, but owe him 'nother, 'long o' this tear. Sew it, Take-a-Stitch?"

"Can't, Billy. I've got to hunt grandpa. Oh, Billy, Billy, he hain't never come home!"

The newsboy paused in the munching of a crust and whistled, but this time in dismay rather than good cheer. Then he demanded, "What ye givin' us?"

The others explained, both talking at once, though Master Buttons soon silenced his partner in trade that he might better hear the girl's own story. When she had finished, and now with a fresh burst of tears, he whistled again; then ordered:

"Quit snivelin', Glory Beck! A man ain't dead till he dies, is he? More'n likely 'twas the old cap'n got hurt but that ain't nothin'. Why, them hospitals is all chuck full o' smash-up folks, an' it's jest meat fer them doctor-fellers to mend 'em again. He ain't dead, an' don't you believe it; but dead or alive we'll find him 'fore dark.

"Fer onct," continued Billy, "the parson's showed some sense. He might's well do the 'Harbor,' 'cause that's only one place an' he can't blunder much—seems if. You take the streets, same's he said; and I—if you'll put a needle an' thread through me, bime-by, after he's found, I'll go find him an' call it square. I'll begin to the lowest down end the city hospitals they is an' I'll interview 'em, one by one, clean up to the Bronx. If Cap'n Beck is in any one, I'll fetch him out, judge, an' don't you forget it."

This division of the search pleased Glory and, springing up, the trio separated at once, nor did they meet again till nightfall. Alas! when reassembled then in the littlest house none had good news to tell.

"They ain't been no new old cap'ns tooken in to that 'Harbor' this hull week. Th' sailor what keeps the gate said so an' was real decent. Said he'd heard o' Cap'n Beck, he had, an' if he'd a-come he'd a-knowed. Told me better call ag'in, might get there yet, an' I'll go," reported Nick, putting a cheerful tone into his words for pity of Glory's downcast face.

"Didn't do a quarter th' hospitals they is, but he ain't in none them I have," said Billy. "But I'll tell ye. They's a man on our force reports all the accidenteses an' I'll see him to-night, when I go for my papers, an' get him to hunt, too. He's worth while an' me an' him's sort o' pardners. I give him p'intes an' he 'lows I'll be a reporter myself, when I'm bigger. An' say, I sold a pape' to a man couldn't stop fer change an' I've got three cream-puffs in this bag. That's fer our suppers, an' me an' Nick's goin' to stay right here all night an' take care of ye, Take-a-Stitch, an' leave the door open, so cap'n can come straight in if he happens 'long 'fore mornin'."

"An' I've been to every single place he ever sung at, every single. An' to all the captains, an'-an'-every, everywhere! An' he ain't! But I will find him. I WILL!" cried Glory, resolutely. "An' you're dear, dear darlin' boys to help me so, an' I love you, I love you!"

"All right, but needn't bother to hug me!" protested Buttons.

"Ner me!" cried Nick, retreating as far from the grateful child as the limited space would permit. "An' now choose corners. This is mine."

Down he dropped in the inner point of the triangular floor and almost before his head had made itself a pillow of his arm he was sound asleep. Billy flung himself beside his mate and, also, slept; and though Glory intended to keep her eyes wide open "till grandpa comes," she placed herself near them and rested her own tired head on Billy's shoulder, and, presently, followed their example.

Half an hour later, the Lane policeman sauntered by, glanced into the dim interior, and saw the group of indistinct forms huddled together in dreamless slumber on their bed of bare boards. Then he softly closed the door upon them, murmuring in pity, "Poor little chummies! Life's goin' to be as hard for 'em as the floor they lie on. But the Lane'd seem darker 'n 'tis if they wasn't in it."



## CHAPTER VII

### *A Guardian Angel*

City newsboys are early astir, and the shadows had but begun to lift themselves from Elbow Lane when Billy punched Nick in the ribs to rouse him and, with finger on lip, pointed to Glory still asleep.

The very poor pity the poor, and with a chivalric kindness which would have done credit to better reared lads, these two waifs of the streets stole softly from the littlest house without waking its small mistress.

When they were out upon the sidewalk, Billy shook his head and whispered, as if even there he might disturb her, "Poor little kid! He ain't never comin' back, sure! An' me an' you 's got the job o' lookin' after her, same 's he'd a liked. He was good to me, the cap'n was. An' I'm thinkin' Meg-Laundress's 'll be the best place to stow her. Hey?"

"Meg can't. She's chuck full. They ain't a corner o' her room but what's slep' in, an' you know it," responded Nick, hitching his buttonless knickers a trifle higher beneath the string-waistband which kept them in place.

"Where then, pard?"

Nick hesitated. On the day before he had developed a generosity which had surprised himself quite as much as it had Glory; but, if allowed room, generosity is a plant of rapid growth, so that now the once niggardly boy was ready with a plan that was even more astonishing. His thin face flushed and he pretended to pick a sliver from his foot as he answered:

"Let's me an' you hire the littles' house an' pay the rent ourselves an' Goober Glory do our cookin' an' sewin' an'-an'-quit yer foolin', Billy Buttons! This ain't no make-b'lieve, this ain't. I plumb mean it."

For, the instant of its suggestion, this wild scheme had sent the partner of Nick Dodd's fortunes to turning somersaults which would have befitted an acrobat. To put his head where his feet should be was Billy's only way of relieving his emotion and he brought his gymnastics to an end, some distance down the Lane, by assuming a military uprightness and bowing profoundly to Nick, who joined him.

"That's the ticket, pard! We'll do it! We'll do it! Wish to goodness I'd been the one to hatch it out, but does ye proud, parson. An' how 'bout it? S'pose we two could sleep in his hammick?" asked Billy, his eagerness already outstripping Nick's, as his liberality had always been greater.

Nick shook his head. Launched upon a course of reckless extravagance, he now hesitated at nothing.

"Nope. Nothin'. What's the matter buyin' 'nother? An', say, we can sling 'em one top th' other, like them berths in a sleepin' car, an' take turns which 'd be upper, which lower. 'Fore winter we'd get in a blanket an' piller, though wouldn't care much for 'em, in such a snug place, an'—"

"An'," interrupted Billy, "we'd go snooks on the grub. Glory'd do her part chuckin' in, 'sides the housekeep. My! 'Twould be a home, a reg'lar home, 'at I hain't never had! Cracky! I-I 'most hope he never does come now, though fer Take-a-Stitch-maybe—"

"He won't never. Don't ye scare on it, never. Say! Let's hurry through our sellin' an' get it fixed. An' we're late, a'ready."

"All right!" and with visions of a delightful importance, that made them feel as if they were grown men, the little fellows scampered away through the morning twilight to obtain their day's supply of newspapers, still damp from the press, for they had long ago learned that 'tis the early newsboy who catches the nickels and of these they must now have many. Neither realized that a property owner, even of a "littlest house," would not be apt to trust it to a pair of youngsters like themselves, though to their credit it was that had their dream become reality, they would have done their utmost to follow the example of the former tenant to "pay as you go."

They had long been shrilling themselves hoarse with their cries of "Sun' 'Eral'Jour'Wor-rul'! Pape's!" before Glory woke and found herself alone. By the light in the room and the hunger she felt, she knew that it must again be very late; and a feeling that her grandfather would be displeased with her indolence sent her to her feet with such speed that she awoke Bo'sn, till then slumbering soundly.

Bo'sn was no longer young and, stiff from an all day's tramp—for he had faithfully followed the little girl's tireless search of yesterday—he rose slowly and stretched himself painfully, with a growl at his own aching joints. Then he sniffed suspiciously at the floor where the newsboys had slept and, nosing his master's hammock, howled dismally.

Having slept without undressing, Glory's toilet was soon made and though a dash of cold water banished drowsiness from her eyes it made them see more clearly how empty and desolate the "littlest house" had now become, so desolate that she could not stay in it and running to Meg-Laundress's crowded apartment, she burst in, demanding, "Has he come? Has anybody in the Lane seen my grandpa?"

Meg desisted from spanking the "baddest o' them twins" and set the small miscreant upon the sudsy floor before she answered, cheerfully, "Not yet, honey. 'Tain't scurce time to be lookin' fer him, I reckon. When them old sailors gets swappin' yarns needn't—"

"But, Meg dear, he ain't at any one of their houses. I've been to the hull lot-two er three times to each one, a-yest'day-an' he wasn't. An' they think-I dastn't think what they think! An' I thought maybe-he always liked you, Meg-Laundress, an' said you done his shirts to beat. Oh, Meg, Meg, what shall I do? Whatever shall I do?"

The warm-hearted washerwoman thrilled with pity for the forsaken child yet she put on her most brilliant surface-smile and answered promptly:

"Do? Why, do jest what Jane an' me laid out to have ye do. An' that is, eat a grand breakfast.

We ain't such old friends o' the cap'n's an' yet go let his folks starve. Me an' Jane, we done it together, an' the grocer-man threw in the rolls. There's a cunnin' little piece o' porterhouse's ever ye see, an' 'taties-biled to the queen's taste with their brown jackets on. Two of 'em, an' no scantin', nuther. No, you small rascallions, ye clear out! 'Tain't none your breakfasts, ye hear? It's Goober Glory's an'-you all, the half-dozen on ye, best clear out way beyant th' Elbow an' watch out fer the banan' man! If he comes to the Lane, ma's got a good wash on hand, an'-*who knows?*'

Away scampered Meg's brood of children, assorted sizes, yet one and all with a longing for "banan' cheap!" and sure that no amount of coaxing would give them a share in the savory breakfast which the two toiling women had provided for Glory.

Left comfortably free from crowding, Meg bustled about, removing from the small oven the belated "steak an' 'taties" which had long been drying there. In this removal, she clumsily tilted the boiler in which her "wash" was bubbling and flavored the meal with a dash of soapsuds, but Glory was more hungry than critical, and far more grateful than either. Smiles and tears both came as she caught Meg's wet hand and kissed it ecstatically, which action brought a suspicious moisture to Meg's own eyes and caused her to exclaim, with playful reproof:

"If you ain't the beatin'est one fer huggin' an' kissin'! Well, then, set to; an' hear me tell: this is what me an' Jane has settled, how the very minute the cap'n heaves in sight down the Lane, on I claps the very pattron o' that same stuff ye're eatin' for him, an' calls it breakfast, dinner, er supper, as the case is. When folks have been off visitin', like he has, they can't 'spect to find things ready to hand to their own houses, same's if they'd been round all the time. Now, eat, an' 'let your victuals stop yer mouth!'"

This was luxurious food for one accustomed to an oatmeal diet and Glory heartily enjoyed it, although she wished she could have given it to her grandfather instead, but she wasn't one to borrow trouble and relied upon Meg's word that a similar repast should be forthcoming when the seaman required it. She did not know that the very odor of the food set the washerwoman's own mouth to watering and that she had to swallow fast and often, to convince herself that her own breakfast of warmed-over coffee and second-hand rolls was wholly sufficient. In any case, both she and Posy Jane had delighted in their self-sacrifice for the little "Queen of the Lane," in their hearts believing that the child was now orphaned, indeed.

It is amazing how, when one is extremely hungry, even two whole potatoes will disappear, and very speedily Glory found that the cracked plate from which she had eaten was entirely empty, but, also, that the uncomfortable hunger had disappeared with its vanished contents. She sprang up, ran to the spigot, washed and wiped the plate, and restored it to its place on Meg's scanty cupboard, then announced:

"I shall tell my grandpa how good all you dear, dear folks has been to me while he-he was off a-visitin'. An' he'll do somethin' nice for you, too, he will. My grandfather says 'giff-gaff makes good friends,' an' 'one kind turn 'serves another.' He knows a lot, grandpa does; an' me an' him both thanks you, Meg-Laundress-you darlin'!"

Away around the big neck of the woman at the tub went Glory's slender arms, and when the patient toiler released herself from this inconvenient embrace, there was something besides soapsuds glistening on her hot cheek.

"Bless ye an' save ye, honey sweetness, an' may yer guardian angel keep ye in close sight, the hull endurin' time!" cried the laundress, wiping her eyes with a wet towel to disguise that other moisture which had gathered in them. "An' now, be off with ye to the little Eytalian with the high-soundin' name. Sure, 'twas Nick, the parson, hissself, what seen them fifty-five centses was in the right hands, an' not scattered by that power o' young ones as was hangin' round when the lady give 'em."

"Did he take them? Oh, I'm so glad an' it's queer he should ha' forgot to tell me last night. Never mind, though. I ain't goin' to peddle to-day. I shan't peddle no more till I find grandpa. I couldn't. I couldn't holler even, worth listenin'. An' who'd buy off a girl what can't holler?"

"Hmm. I don' know. Hollerin's the life o' your trade, same's rub-a-dub-dubbin' 's the life o' mine, er puttin' the freshest flower to the front the bunch is o' Jane's. But, land, 'Queenie,' you best not wait fer the cap'n. Best keep a doin', an' onct you're at it again, the holler'll come all right. Like myself-just let me stan' up afore this here tub an' the wash begins to do itself, unbeknownst like. Don't you idle. Keep peddlin' er patchin', though peddlin's the least lonesome, an' the time'll fly like lightnin'. It's them 'at don't do nothin' 'at don't know what to do. Ain't many them sort in the Lane, though, thank the dear Lord. Hey? What?"

For Glory still lingered in the doorway and her face showed that she had no intention of following the laundress's most sensible advice. So when that loquacious woman paused so long that the little girl "could get a word in edgewise," she firmly stated:

"No Meg, dear Meg, I shan't peddle a single goober till I've found my grandpa. Every minute of every hour I'm awake I shall keep a-lookin'. He hain't got nobody but me left an' I hain't got nobody but him. What belongs, I mean. 'Course, they's all you dear Lane folks an' I love you, every one. But me an' him-I-I must, *must* find him. I'm goin' to start right away now, an'-thank you, thank you an' dear Posy Jane-an'-good-bye!"

This time it was Meg who caught the other in her arms and under pretense of smoothing tumbled curls, hugged the child in motherly yearning over her; then she gave her a very clean-smelling, sudsy kiss and pushed her toward the door, crying rather huskily:

"Well, run away now, any gate. If to peddlin' 'twould be best; if to s'archin' fer one old blind man in this big Ne' York what's full of 'em as haymows o' needles, so be it, an' good luck to ye. But what am I to be preachin' work an' practicin' play? Off with ye an' hender me no more!"

So to the tune of a vigorous rub-a-dub-dub, Glory vanished from her good friend's sight, though the hearts of both would have ached could they have foreseen how long delayed would be their next meeting.

Comforted and now wholly hopeful that her determined search would have a speedy, happy ending, Take-a-Stitch hurried back to the littlest house whose narrow door stood open to its widest, yet she paused on the threshold, amazed, incredulous, not daring to enter and scarcely daring to breathe, lest she disturb the wonderful vision which confronted her.

For the desolate home was no longer desolate. There was one within who seemed to fill its dim interior with a radiance and beauty beyond anything the child of the Lane had ever dreamed. Meg's words and wish returned to her and, clasping her hands, she cried in rapture, "Oh! it's come! My Guardian Angel!"



## CHAPTER VIII

*With Bonny as Guide*

Glory was truthful and loving, and her grandfather had taught her to be clean, honest, and industrious, but, beyond this, she had had little training. She knew that Meg-Laundress and Posy Jane both firmly believed in "Guardian Angels" who hovered about human beings to protect and prosper them. She had inferred that these "Angels" were very beautiful but had never asked if they were ever visible or, if so, what form they took.

Glory felt now that she would never need to ask about the "Angels" for the small creature before her answered all these unspoken inquiries; a mite of a thing, in silken white, with glistening golden curls and the roundest, loveliest of big blue eyes, who sat on the floor smiling and gurgling in an unknown language, yet gravely regarding Bo'sn who, firm upon his haunches, as gravely regarded this astonishing intruder. The tiny visitor was so unlike any cmony captain or ragged newsboy that the dog was perplexed, yet as evidently pleased, for his eyes were shining, his mouth "laughing" and his stump of a tail doing its utmost to wag. As Glory appeared in the doorway, he cast one welcoming glance over his shoulder, then with the same intensity, returned to his contemplation of the child.

After all, it was not an "Angel" from a spiritual world, but a wonderfully fair and winning little human being. From whence she had come and why, she was too young to explain and Glory was too delighted to care. Here she was, gay, shining, and wholly undisturbed, and, as the little goober girl appeared, the baby lifted her face, laughing, and lisping: "Bonny come!"

"Angels" could use human speech then; and now her awe of the visitant vanished and down went Take-a-Stitch beside Bo'sn and clasped the little one close and kissed and caressed it to her heart's content, which meant much to Glory, because even grandpa had objected to overmuch caressing, though this newcomer appeared to take kissing as a matter of course and to like it.

"Oh! you darlin', darlin', sweetest 'Angel'! Have you truly come to live with me?"

"Bonny come!" answered the other, thrusting her tiny hands into Glory's own curls and pressing her dewy lips to Glory's cheek.

"Oh, you precious, precious, sweetest, darlin'est one. Oh, won't grandpa be pleased! An' you'll help-that's what you come for, ain't it?-you'll help to find him. Why, if you're a truly 'Angel,' you know this minute 't ever is just where to search, an' so 'twon't be more'n a bit of a while 'fore me an' you an' him is all back here together in this splendid littlest house, a 'livin' in peace an' dyin' in grease an' bein' buried under a pot o' taller,' like Nick's stories end; only I guess we'll do without the grease an' taller, 'cause I hate dirt an' 'Angels' do, 'course. Oh, let's start right away! Why-why-we might be home again, lickety-cut, if we did. Shall we go to find grandpa, 'Angel'?"

The stranger toddled to her feet, Bo'sn watching the operation with keenest interest, but once upon them, there ensued delay, for, whoever this unknown might be, Glory herself was a very human little girl. She could not keep her fingers from feeling and examining the exquisite garments which clothed her visitor's form, and at each fresh discovery of daintiness, from the silken coat to the snowy shoes, her exclamations of wonder and admiration grew more intense. Before she had finished, she felt a reflex grandeur from her richly attired guest and unconsciously gave her own scanty skirt an airy flirt, as if it had suddenly become of proper length and color.

Giving the "Angel" a fresh embrace, she clasped its pink fingers and started to follow wherever it might lead, with Bo'sn close behind.

So intent was she upon her small "Guardian," that she did not observe a man entering the lane from the further end, else she would have recognized him for the owner of the littlest house,

come in person to inspect his property and to learn if his rent would be forthcoming when due; also, to prepare the captain for possible removal, in case a certain deal, then in progress, should transfer the three-cornered building to other hands and purposes.

But the gentleman saw Glory and wondered how she had come to have in charge, in such a neighborhood, a little child so unsuited to it. By just the one minute's time which would have brought him to the littlest house ere Glory left it, she missed some further enlightenment on the subject of "Guardian Angels," and the sad news that she had not only lost grandparent but home as well; for, seeing the place open, at the mercy of any Elbow tramp who might enter and despoil it, the landlord at once decided that, sale or no sale, he would get rid of so careless a tenant. Crossing to the basement of Meg-Laundress, he made some inquiries concerning the Becks and was told all which that talkative woman knew or suspected.

"An' none of us in the Lane ever looks to see him back, sir, an' that's the fact. But whatever's to become o' his little girl, when she finds out, land knows," she concluded.

"Oh, plenty of institutions to take in just such as she and she'd be a deal better off than living from hand to mouth as she has always done. The captain must have been a fine man once and so far-so far-has had his rent money ready when it was due; but I made it too small, a great deal too small. I was a fool for sympathy and let my heart run away with my head.

"Know anybody would take in the old man's few traws and take care of them till something develops?" continued the landlord. "He is dead, of course. Must have been him was run over that time; but they might sell for a trifle for the child's benefit. I wouldn't mind having that time-keeping arrangement of bells myself. Was really quite ingenious. I might as well take it, I reckon, on account of loss of occupancy. Yes, I *will* take it. And if he should return-but he won't-you tell him, my good woman, how it was and he can look to me to settle. Know anybody has room for his things?"

"No, I don't. An' if I did, I wouldn't tell ye," answered Meg, testily, and as a relief to her indignation cuffed her youngest born in lieu of him upon whom she wished she dared bestow the correction.

But the corner grocery-man was more obliging and better supplied with accommodations for Captain Beck's belongings. In truth, seeing that the landlord was determined, whether or no, to remove them from the littlest house, he felt that he must take them in and preserve them from harm against their owner's claiming them. He thought, with Meg, that harm had certainly befallen the blind seaman and that they would see him no more, but he also felt that Glory's rights should be protected to the utmost. With this idea in mind, he stoutly objected to parting with the bell-timepiece, and even offered to make up any arrears of rent which the other could rightly claim.

"Oh! that's all right," said the landlord, huffishly. "That can rest, but I wish you'd call a cart and get the traps out now, while I'm here to superintend."

"I'm with you!" cried the grocer, with equal spirit; and so fully fell in with the other's wishes that, before Glory had been an hour absent from the only home she could remember, it had been emptied of its few, but well loved, furnishings and the key had been turned upon its solitude. Thus ended, too, Nick's brief brilliant dream of household proprietorship.

However, all this fresh trouble was unknown. Whither her "Angel" led, she was to follow; and this proved to be in wholly a different direction from that dark end of the Lane toward the bridge.

For a time the small, unconscious guide toddled along, making slow progress toward the sound of a hand-organ which her ear had caught yet which was still out of sight. Arrived, they joined the group of children gathered about the grinder and his monkey, and created a profound sensation among the gutter audience.

"Where'd you get her? Whose she belongs?" demanded one big girl who knew Glory and found this white-clad stranger more interesting than even a monkey.

"Belongs to me. She's mine; she was sent," returned Take-a-Stitch, with an inimitable gesture of pride.

"Huh! Talk's cheap. Nobody sent silk-dressed young ones to the Lane to be took care of, Glory Beck. I don't care, though. Keep her, if ye want to," returned the offended questioner.

"Sure I shall," laughed Glory, gaily. "But needn't get mad, Nancy Smith. Maybe you can get one, too. She's my 'Guardian Angel' an' her name's 'Bonny'; she said so. She don't talk much, only that 'Bonny come.' Did you know 'Angels' was so perfectly lovely, Nancy?"

Clasping her hands, this proud proprietor of an "Angel" smiled beatifically on all around. Even the organ-grinder came in for a portion of that smile, though hitherto, Glory had rather disliked him because she fancied him unkind to Jocko.

This organ-grinder was Luigi Salvatore, brother to Tonio, and as well known in that locality. His amazement at seeing the child in the goober seller's care caused him to stop grinding; whereupon the music also stopped and the monkey left off holding his cap to the children, begging their pennies, to hop upon his master's shoulder. From thence he grinned so maliciously that the "Angel" was frightened and hid her face in Glory's skirt, whereupon that proud girl realized that "Angels," if young, were exactly like human young things and needed comforting. Many an Elbow baby had learned to flee for help to Glory's arms, and now this stranger was lifted in them and clasped closer than any other had ever been.

"Oh, you sweetest, dearest Bonny Angel! Don't you be afraid. Glory'll take care of ye. Don't they have monkeys where you lived, honey? S'pose not, less you'd ha' knowed they wouldn't hurt. Well, now, on we go. Which way is to grandpa, Bonny Angel?"

The tiny face burrowing under Glory's chin was partially turned and the babyish hand pointed outward in a very imperative way. Glory construed that she must travel in the direction indicated and, also, that even "Angels" liked their commands to be immediately obeyed. For when she lingered a moment to exchange compliments with Nancy, on the subject of "stuck-up-ness" and general "top-loftiness," Miss Bonny brought these amenities to a sudden close by a smart slap on

Glory's lips and a lusty kick in the direction she wished to be carried.

Fortunately, Take-a-Stitch had never thought how "Angels" should behave, else she might have been disappointed. As it was, the child at once became dearer and more her girlish proprietor's "very own" because in just this manner might Meg's youngest have kicked and slapped.

"Huh! Call that a 'Angel' do ye, Glory Beck? 'Tis no such thing. It's only somebody's baby what's got lost. Angels are folks what live in heaven, an' they never kick ner scratch ner ask to be carried. They don't need. All they have to do is to set still an' sing an' flap their wings. Huh! I know."

Nancy spoke with the conviction of an eyewitness, and for a time her playmate was silenced. Then, as Bonny had now grown quiet and gave her an opportunity, Glory demanded:

"How *can* you know? You hain't never been there. Nobody hasn't. An' you go ask Meg-Laundress. Good-bye. Don't be mad. I'll be home bime-by, an' Bonny Angel with me. She's come to stay. She belongs, same's all of us. She's a reg'lar Elbower, 'now an' forevermore,' like we say in the ring-game; an' some time, maybe, if she wants, I'll let her 'Guardian' you somewhere. Now we're off to grandpa, but we'll be back after a while. Good-bye. Maybe Toni'll let you peddle goobers in my place the rest the day. Good-bye."

Bonny Angel, as she was from that time to be called by her new friend, was again gurgling and smiling and gaily radiant; and for some distance Glory sped along, equally radiant and wholly engrossed in watching the little face so near her own. It was, indeed, perfect in its infantile beauty and more than one passer-by paused to take a second glance at this odd pair, so unlike, and yet so well content.

After a short while, the aching of her arms made Glory realize that even infant "Angels" may become intolerably heavy, when clothed in healthy human form and carried indefinitely, so she set the little one down on its own small feet, though they seemed too dainty to rest upon the smirched stones of the pavement which just there was even more begrimed than that of the Lane itself.

Then she saw that they had halted beside a coal-yard in an unfamiliar part of the city, but there were throngs of people hurrying past them toward some point beyond, and though many observed, none paused to address the children. Bonny was now rested and active and merrily started in the same direction, across the gangplank to the floor of a crowded ferry-boat. The ferry-men supposed them to belong to some older passengers and let them pass unchallenged; nor did Bonny Angel cease her resolute urging forward till they had come to the very edge of the further deck and stood looking down into the river.

Almost at once, the boat began to move and Glory was as delighted as Bonny by the rush of the wind on her face and by the novel sights of the water. After all, this search for grandpa was proving the pleasantest of outings, for, though the goober-seller had often peddled her nuts at the landings of other ferries, she had never before crossed any. She gave the baby a fresh deluge of kisses, exclaiming, "Oh, you dear knowin' darlin'! He has gone this way an' you're leadin' me!"

"Bonny come!" cried the "Angel," with a seraphic smile.

Glory smiled back, all anxiety at rest. She was going to grandpa, with this tiny "Guardian" an unerring guide. Why should one fear aught while the sun shone so brightly, and over on the further shore she could see trees waving and green terraces rising one above the other? Surely, grandpa had done well to leave the dingy Lane for such a beautiful place, and she was glad, yes, certainly she was glad that she had come.

But the boat trip came to an end all too soon, and, because they were so near the landing side, they were crowded off the broad deck before Glory was quite ready and, in the onrush of hurrying passengers, Bonny Angel's hand was wrested from her grasp.

"Oh, take care there, my Angel! I mustn't lose her!" cried Take-a-Stitch, distraught at seeing her treasure swept off her tiny feet in the crush.

"In course you mustn't, sissy!" cried a hearty, kindly voice, as a timely deck-hand caught up the child and restored her to Glory's arms. "'Course not; though there's many a one would snap at such a beauty, if you give 'em a chance. Tight-hold her, sissy, for such posies as her don't grow on every bush!"

With that, the man in blue shirt and overalls not only gave Bonny a besmirching pat on her snowy shoulder, but safely handed Glory herself across the swaying plank to the quay beyond.

There Bonny Angel composedly seated herself upon a pile of dirty ropes and, rather than cross her desires, Glory also sat down. Both were much interested in the scene about them, though "Angel" soon forgot all else save Bo'sn who had followed, and who lay at her feet to rest his nose on his tired paws while he steadfastly gazed at this new charge. Already he seemed to have decided in his canine mind that she was to be guided and guarded as he had guided and guarded his lost master, and with an equal faithfulness.

Soon the rush and bustle of the boat's return trip gave way to a corresponding quiet, and Goober Glory dreamily watched the wide deck, where she had stood, slip back and back between the water-worn piles out upon the murky river. The space between them widened and widened, continually, till the boat lessened in size to a mere point and, finally, became lost in the crowding craft of the Hudson's mouth. As she saw it disappear, a sudden homesickness seized her and, springing to her feet, she stretched her arms longingly toward that further side which held all that she had ever known and loved, and cried aloud:

"Oh, I want to go back! It's there I belong, and he isn't here-I know he isn't here!"

Then she felt a small hand clutch her skirt and turned about to see Bonny Angel's face clouding with grief and her dainty under lip beginning to quiver piteously. A world of reproach seemed to dwell in her pleading, "Bonny come!" and Glory's own cheerfulness instantly returned. Lifting the child again, she poised her on her own shoulder and started valiantly forward across the ferry-slip and past the various stands of the small merchants which lined the waiting-room walls. Thus elevated, Bonny Angel was just upon a level with one tempting display of cakes and candies, and

the sight of them reminded her that it was time to eat. She took her arm from Glory's neck, to which she had clung, made an unexpected dash for a heap of red confections, lost her balance, and fell head long in the midst.

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## CHAPTER IX

### *In the Ferry-House*

Then up rose the old woman behind the stand, ready with tongue and fist to punish this destroyer of her stock; for the truth was that Miss Bonny was not an "Angel" at all, but what Nancy Smith had so common-sensibly judged her to be—a lost child. Such a plump and substantial child, as well, that her downfall crushed to a crimson flood the red "drops" she would have seized and utterly demolished another pile of perishable cakes.

"Save us and help us! You clumsy girl! What you mean, hurlin' that young one onto my stand, that way? Well, you've spoiled a power of stuff an' I only hope you can pay for it on the spot!"

With that, the irate vendor snatched Bonny from the stand and dropped her upon the floor beyond it; where, terrified both by her fall and this rough treatment, she set up such a wail that further scolding was prevented. More than that, instead of being properly abashed by her own carelessness, Glory was far more concerned that Bonny's beautiful coat was stained and ruined and its owner's heart so grieved. Down she dropped beside her "Guardian," showering kisses upon her, and comforting her so tenderly that the baby forgot her fear and began to lick the sticky fluid, which had filled the "drops," from her sleeve that it had smeared.

This restored quiet so that the vender could demand payment for the damage she had swiftly estimated, and she thrust her hand toward the pair on the floor, saying, "Hand me over a dollar, and be quick about it! Ought to be more, seein's it'll take me half a day to straighten up and—"

"A dollar! Why-why, I never had so much in my hull life! an' not a single cent now. Yes—they's a quarter to home, 't I forgot an' left in the bag, that Nick Dodd give me—but-a dollar!" gasped poor Glory, as frightened as surprised. Just then, too, a wharf policeman drew near and stopped to learn what was amiss. He did not look like the jolly officer of Elbow Lane and the stand-woman seemed sure of his sympathy as she rapidly related her side of the story.

He listened in silence, and visions of patrol wagons, and the police stations where arrested persons were confined, rose before poor Glory's fancy, while with frantic tenderness she hugged Bonny Angel so close that the little one protested and wriggled herself free. But no sooner was she upon her feet than the child became her own best plea for pardon. Reaching her arms upward to be lifted, she began a delighted examination of the brass buttons on the man's blue coat; and, because he had babies of his own, it seemed the natural thing for him to do to take her up as she desired.

"Oh, but you mustn't, you dastn't carry her away! She hain't done a thing, only tumbled off my shoulder! 'Twas *me* done it, not holdin' her tight enough! An' she can't be 'rested, she can't! How can she, when she's a 'Guardian Angel'? Give her back—give her back!"

In her distress, Take-a-Stitch herself laid violent hands upon the blue sleeves which so strongly enfolded her darling and would have wrested them apart had strength sufficed. As it was, the helmeted officer looked calmly down upon her anguished face and quietly whistled.

"Keep cool, sissy, keep cool. Wait till I hear your side the business before you talk of arrests. Besides, this baby! Why, she's the prettiest little innocent I've seen in a week's beat," said the rough voice, and now regarding the lips through which it issued, the young "Elbower" perceived that they were no longer stern but actually smiling.

Then she did talk; not only of this last adventure but, encouraged by his close attention, of all the events of her past life. Out it came, the whole story; Glory's love of the Lane and its people, her grandfather's disappearance, the coming of Bonny Angel, "sent to take his place an' help to find him," her present search and her honest regret for the injury to this old woman's wares.

"'Cause I know how 'tis myself. Onct a lady fell into my goober basket an' smashed 'em so 't I was heart-broke. An' if ever-ever in this world I can earn a hull dollar I'll come right straight back here an' pay it. Sure, sure, sure."

Now, during all this relation, though the policeman's face seemed to soften and grow more like that of his brother-officer of Elbow Lane, it did not grow less grave. Indeed, a great perplexity



came into his eyes and he appeared to be far more interested in the fate of Bonny Angel than in the voluble interruptions of Apple Kate. When Glory paused, out of breath and with no more to tell, he set the little one down and took out his note-book. Having made some entries there, he exchanged a few low-spoken words with the vender and these appeared to quiet her wrath and silence her demands. Indeed, their influence was so powerful that she selected a pile of the broken cakes, put them into a paper bag, and offered them to Take-a-Stitch, saying:

"There, girl, it's all right, or will be, soon's officer finds that young one's folks. It's past noon, nigh on toward night, an' likely she was hungry, too little to know any better, and you can have part yourself. You just do what he tells ye, an' you'll soon see that baby back in its mother's arms. Laws, how heart-broke she must be a-losin' it so."

Goober Glory heard and felt that her own heart was surely breaking. Bonny Angel's "folks"! She had some, then, since this policeman said so-policemen knew everything-and she wasn't a heaven-sent "Guardian," at all. And, furthermore, if this was a "lost child," she knew exactly what would be done.

It would be the station house, after all, though not by way of arrest. Meg-Laundress's assorted children had been "lost" on the city streets more than once and Meg hadn't fretted a bit. She knew well, that when her day's toil was over, she had but to visit the nearest station to reclaim her missing offspring; or if not at the nearest, why then at some other similar place in the great town, whence a telephone message would promptly summon the child. But Bonny Angel? Station house matrons were kind enough, and their temporary care of her brood had been a relief to overworked Meg-Laundress; but for this beautiful "Guardian," they were all unfit. Only tenderest love should ever come near so angelic a little creature and of such love Glory's own heart was full.

She reasoned swiftly. The baby was hers, by right, till that sad day of which she had not dreamed when she must restore it to its "folks," whoever and wherever they were. She would so restore it, though it break her heart; yet better her own heart breaking than that mother-heart of which the vender spoke. To her search for grandpa, in which Bonny Angel was guide, was now added a search for these unknown "folks" to whom she must give the little one up. That was all. It was very simple and very hard to do, till one thought came to cheer her courage. By the time she found these unknown people she would, also, have found Captain Simon Beck! She had been supremely happy with him, always, and she would be happy again; yet how dear, how dear this little comrade of a day had become!

Glory's decisions never wavered. Once made, she acted upon them without hesitation. She now turned to the policeman, who had written some further items in his book and was now putting it into his pocket, and said, "You needn't bother, Mister P'liceman, to find 'em. I'll take Bonny Angel home my own self."

"Hey? What? Do know where she belongs, after all? You been fooling me with your talk?" he asked quickly, and now with face becoming very stern indeed. He was sadly used to dealing with deceit but hated to find it in one so young as Goober Glory.

"No, sir. I never. But I will. I'd rather an' I must-I must! Oh, I can't let her go to that terr'ble station house where thieves an' bad folks go, an' she so white an' pure an' little an' sweet! I can't. She mustn't. She shan't! So there."

At her own enumeration of Bonny Angel's charms, the girl's heart thrilled afresh with love and admiration, and, catching her again into her close embrace, she fell to rapturously kissing the small face that was now "sweet" in truth, from the sticky drops the child had licked.

"Nonsense! If you don't know where she belongs, nor have any money to spend in finding out, the station's the only place. It's the first place, too, she'll be looked for, and she'll be well cared for till claimed. You can go along with her, maybe, since you appear to be lost, too," remarked the officer. "But I'm wasting time. You stop right here by Apple Kate's stand, while I step yonder and telephone headquarters. A man'll come over next boat and take you both back."

The chance of going "back" to the city whose very paving stones now seemed dear to her did, for an instant, stagger Glory's decision. But only for an instant. Bonny Angel was still the guide. It was Bonny Angel who had brought them to this further shore where, beyond this great, noisy ferry-house were those green terraces and waving trees. It was here, separated by the wide river from all familiar scenes, that her search must go on.

A customer came to the stand and occupied Apple Kate's attention, at the same time the wharf policeman walked away to send his message concerning little Bonny. That moment was Glory's opportunity, and she improved it, thinking with good reason:

"If onct he gets a-hold on us he won't leave us go. He'd think it wouldn't be right, for a p'liceman. Well, then, he shan't get a-hold!"

A few minutes later, when her patron had passed on, Apple Kate looked around and missed the children, but supposed they had followed the officer. Yet when he came back to the stand, he denied that they had done so and angrily inquired "why she couldn't keep an eye on them and oblige a man, while he just rung up headquarters?"

To which she as crisply replied, "Huh! My eyes has had all sight o' them they want, and they'll trouble you nor me no more. They've skipped, so you might 's well trot back and ring down whatever you've rung up. They've skipped."

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## CHAPTER X

### *Another Stage of the Journey*

The ferry-house where the policeman had found Glory and her "Angel" was also the terminus of a great railway. Beyond the waiting-room were iron gates, always swinging to and fro, for the passage of countless travelers; and from the gates stretched rows of shining tracks. Puffing engines moved in and out upon these, drawing mighty carriages that rumbled after with a deafening noise. Gatemen shouted the names of the outgoing trains, whistles blew, trunk-vans rattled, and on every side excited people called to one another some confusing direction.

Glory, with Bonny Angel in her arms, had hurried up to one of these iron gates, feeling that if she could but dash through and place that barrier between herself and the too-faithful policeman, she would be free at last. But the chance of so doing was long delayed. That particular gateman appeared to prevent anybody passing him who did not show a bit of printed cardboard, as he called, "Tickets! have your tickets ready!"

And, oh, in what a glorious voice he so directed them!

"My heart! If I could holler goobers like he does them car-trains, folks'd jest have to buy, whether er no!" thought the little peddler, so rapt in listening that she forgot everything else; till, at one louder yell than all, the child in her arms shrieked in terror. At which the gateman whirled round, leaving a space behind him, and Glory darted through.

Neither the official nor she knew that she was doing a prohibited thing; for he supposed she was hurrying to overtake some older party of travelers and she knew nothing of station rules. Once past this gate, she found herself in dangerous nearness to the many trains and could walk neither this way nor that without some guard shouting after her, "Take care, there!"

She dared not put Bonny Angel down even if the child would have consented, and, continually, the rumblings and whistlings grew more confusing. In comparison with this great shed, Elbow Lane, that Miss Bonnicastle had found so noisy, seemed a haven of quietude and Glory heartily wished herself back in it.

There must be a way out of this dreadful place, and the bewildered little girl tried to find it. Yet there behind her rose a high brick wall in which there was no doorway, on the left were the waiting or moving trains and their shouting guards, and on the right that iron fence with its rolling gates and opposing gatemen, and, also, that policeman who would have taken Bonny Angel from her. Before her rose the north-side wall of the building, that, at first glance, seemed as unbroken a barrier as its counterpart on the south; but closer inspection discovered a low, open archway through which men occasionally passed.

"Whatever's beyond here can't be no worse," thought Take-a-Stitch, and hurried through the opening. But once beyond it, she could only exclaim, "Why, Bonny Angel, it's just the same, all tracks an' cars, though 'tain't got no roof over! My, I don't know how to go-an' I wish they would keep still a minute an' let a body think!"

Even older people would have been confused in such a place, with detached engines here and there, snorting and puffing back and forth in a seemingly senseless way, its many tracks, and its wider outdoor resemblance to the great shed she had left.

"Guess this is what Popsy Jane 'd call 'hoppin' out the fryin'-pan inter the fire,' Bonny Angel. It's worse an' more of it, an' I want to get quit of it soon's I can. 'Tain't no ways likely grandpa's hereabouts, an'—My, but you're a hefty little darlin'! If I wasn't afraid to let you, I'd have ye walk a spell. But you might get runned over by some them ingines what won't stay still no place an' I dastn't, you dear, precious sweetness, you! I shan't put you down till I drop, 'less we get out o' this sudden."

But even as she clasped her beloved burden the closer, Bonny Angel set this decision at naught by kicking herself free from the girl too small and weary to prevent; and once upon the ground, off she set along a particularly shining track, cooing and shrieking her delight at her own mischievousness.

"Oh! oh! oh!" screamed Glory, and started in pursuit. Of course, she could run much faster than her "Guardian," but that tiny person had a way of darting sidewise, here and there, and thus eluding capture just as it seemed certain.

Fortunately, the direction she had chosen led outward and away from the maze of steel lines, and, finding no harm come of it and the child so happy, Glory gave up trying to catch and simply followed her. Just then, too, there came into view the sight of green tree-tops and a glimpse of

the river, and these encouraged her to proceed. Indeed, she was now more afraid to go back than to go forward, and Bonny Angel's strange contentment in the care of a stranger, like herself, renewed a belief that she was other than mere mortal, and so above the common needs of babies.

Reasoned this "Little Mother" of Elbow Lane, "If she was just plain baby an' not no 'Angel,' she'd a-cried fer her ma, an' she hain't never, not onct. She hain't cried fer crusts, neither, like Meg-Laundress's twins is always doin'. 'Course, them cakes what th' Apple Kate give her was sweet an' a lot of 'em. The crumbs I et when Bonny Angel fired the bag away was jest like sugar. My, prime! Some day, when I get rich, an' they ain't nobody else a-wantin' 'em, I'll buy myself some cakes ezactly like them was. I will so—if they ain't nobody else. But, there, Glory Beck, you quit thinkin' 'bout eatin' 'less first you know, you'll be hungry an' your stummick'll get that horrid feel again. Hi, I b'lieve it's comin' a'ready an' yet I had that splendid breakfast!"

Somehow, the idea of food occurred to this trio of travelers at one and the same time. Bo'sn crept up to his mistress and rubbed his sides against her legs, dumbly pleading for rest and refreshment. He was very tired, for a dog, and as confused as Take-a-Stitch by these strange surroundings, and acted as if unwilling to go further afield. At every possible chance now, he would lie down on the ground and remain there until his companions were so far in advance that he feared to be lost himself. Surely he felt that this long road was the wrong road, where he would listen in vain for the tap-tap of his master's cane and the scent of his master's footsteps.

As for Bonny Angel, she suddenly paused in the midst of her mischievous gaiety, put up her lip and began to howl as loudly and dismally as any common Lane baby could have done. Then when her new nurse hurried to her, distressed and self-reproachful for not having carried her all the way, down the little one flung herself prone in the dirt and rolled and kicked most lustily.

Glory did her utmost, but she could neither quiet nor lift the struggling "Angel," and finally she ceased her efforts and, with arms akimbo and the wisdom of experience coolly addressed her charge:

"See here, Bonny Angel! You're the sweetest thing in the world, but that's jest spunk, that is. You're homesick, I s'pose, an' tired an' hungry, an' want your ma, an' all them bad things together makes you feel ye don't know how! I feel that-a-way myself, a-times, but I don't go rollin' in mud puddles an' sp'ilin' my nice silk coats, I don't. I wouldn't besmutch myself so not fer nothin'. My, but you be a sight! An' only this mornin' 't ever was you was that lovely!"

When Take-a-Stitch treated Bonny Angel as she would have treated any other infant, the result proved her wisdom. As soon as comforting ceased, the child's rebellion to it also ceased; and when, shocked by its condition, the girl stooped to examine the once dainty coat, its small wearer scrambled to her feet, lifted her tear-stained face to be kissed, smiled dazzlingly, and cried merrily, "Bonny come!"

"Oh, you surely are an 'Angel,' you beautifullest thing!" said Glory, again raising the child in her arms and starting onward once more. She had no idea whither they were going and Bonny Angel had ceased to point the way with her tiny forefinger, but she cuddled her curly head on her nurse's shoulder and presently fell asleep.

The tracks diminished in number as they proceeded till they came to a point where but few remained. Some ran straight on along the river bank, though this was hidden by outlying small buildings; and some branched westward around the bluff whereon grew those green trees and sloped the terraces seen from the boat. Here, after a halt of admiration, Glory found it growing exceedingly dark, and wondered if it had already become nightfall.

"It seems forever an' ever since we started, but I didn't think 'twas nigh bedtime. An', oh, my! Where will we sleep, an' shall I ever, ever find my grandpa!"

It was, indeed, nearing the end of the day but it was a mass of heavy clouds which had so suddenly darkened the world, clouds so black and threatening that the workmen scattered along the tracks, busy with pick and shovel, began to throw down their tools and make for the nearest shelter. One man, with a coat over his head to protect him from the already falling drops hurried past Glory, where she stood holding Bonny Angel, and advised:

"Best not tarry, children, but scud for home. There's a terrible storm coming." But he did not stop to see that they followed his advice nor inquire if any home they had.

Poor Glory's heart sank. She was not afraid of any storm for herself though she had never heard wind roar and wail as this did now, but how could she bear to have her "Guardian" suffer. Even Meg's healthy youngsters sometimes had croup and frightened their mother "outen her seventy senses," and the croup usually followed a prolonged playing in flooded gutters during a rain storm.

"I must find a place! Oh, there must be a place somewhere! She mustn't get the croup an' die on me—she mustn't. Ain't I got to take her to her ma, an' how could I tell her I let the baby die? Oh, where?"

With an agonized glance in every direction and a closer enfolding of the sleeping child—over whose head she promptly threw her own abbreviated skirt—she discovered, at last, a haven of refuge.

"My heart! That's littler 'an the littlest house, but it's big enough fer us, you sweetest honey darlin', an' it must ha' growed a-purpose, all in a minute, just fer us, like them fairy-lamp-an'-Aladdin yarns what grandpa used to tell me! An' now I know fer true she is a surely 'Guardian Angel,' an' is taken care of every time, 'cause a minute ago that littler than the littlest wasn't there at all, for I never saw it an' I should. An' now 'tis, an' we're in it an'—Oh, how glad I am!"

While these thoughts were passing through her mind Glory had been staggering forward as swiftly as the wind and the burden she carried would allow and she reached the shelter none too soon. The very instant she passed within, the rain came down in torrents and the tiny structure swayed dizzily in the gale.

"Littler than the littlest" it was, indeed; only a railway switchman's "box," erected to shelter him in just such emergencies and from the cold of winter nights. It had tiny windows and a

narrow door; and, placing Bonny Angel on the corner bench—its only furnishing—Take-a-Stitch hastened to make all secure. The lightning flashed and the thunder rolled, but still and happily the worn-out "Guardian" slept; so that, herself overcome by fatigue and the closeness of the atmosphere the now vagrant "Queen of Elbow Lane" dropped in a heap on the floor and also slept.

This switch-box was one but seldom used and nobody came near it till morning. Then a passing road-hand, on his way to work, fancied it a good place wherein to eat his breakfast and opened the door. His cry of surprise at sight of its strange occupants roused them both, and sent Glory to her feet with an answering cry; while Bonny Angel merely opened her eyes, stared sleepily around, and smilingly announced: "Bonny come!"

"Bless us, me honey, so you did! But it's meself'd like to be knowin' where from an' how long sence the pair of ye got your job on the railroad?"

There was nothing to fear about this man, as Goober Glory saw at once. His homely face was gay with good health and good nature and the sunshiny morning after the storm seemed not more sunshiny than he. But his curiosity was great and he did not rest till it was satisfied by a full recital of all that had happened to the straying children and their plans for the future were explained.

The man's face grew grave and he shook his head with misgiving: "Lookin' for a lot of lost people, is it, then? Hmm. An', that may be more'n of a job than straightenin' crooked rails what the storm washed away, as I must be doin' to onct. Too big a job to be tacklin' on empty stummicks, betoken; so here, the two of yez, fall in an' taste this bread an' meat an' couple o' cold spuds, an' let me get on to me own affairs."

Opening his tin pail, he made a cup of its inverted top, into which he poured a lot of cold tea and offered it to Glory, who in turn, promptly presented it to the now clamorous Bonny, and had the pleasure of seeing the little one drink deeply before she discovered for herself that it was not her accustomed milk, and rejected the remainder. Both the workman and Take-a-Stitch laughed at the little one's wry face, while having divided the bread and meat into three fair portions, all fell to with a will, so that soon not a crumb was left.

"Ah, that was prime!" cried Glory, smacking her lips; "and you're the primest sort of man to give it to us. I hope I'll have something to give you some time," she finished a little wistfully, and keenly regarding various rents in his clothes. "If I had my needle an' thread I might work it out, maybe. You need mendin' dreadful."

"Betoken! So I do. An' be ye a colleen 'at's handy with them sort o' tools?"

"Indeed, I can sew!" cried Glory, triumphantly. "It's 'cause of that the Elbowers call me 'Mend-a-Hole,' or 'Take-a-Stitch,' whichever happens. Why—why—I earn money—real money—sewin' the Lane folks up!"

"An' yet bein' that mite of a thing ye are!" returned this new friend, admiringly. "Well then, 'tis out to me sister's husband's cousin's house I'm wishin' ye was this instant. For of all the folks needs the mendin' an' patchin', 'tis she, with her seven own childer, an' her ten boardin' 'hands,' an' her own man, that was gardener to some great folks beyant, laid up with the chills an' not able to do a hand's turn for himself, barrin' eatin' an' drinkin' fair, when the victuals is ready. He can play a good knife an' fork, still, thanks be, an' it's hopin' he'll soon be playin' his shovel an' spade just as lively, but that's no more here nor yet there. There's miles betwixt this an' yon, an'—Hello! Aye, hello-a-oo!"

The sudden break in Timothy Dowd's chatter was caused by the hailing of some fellow workmen who had rumbled up to them a hand-car over a near-by track and had signaled him to join them.

"For it's not down track but up you're to go, Tim, the washouts bein' worst beyond. Step aboard, we've to hustle."

Timothy picked up his tools and started to comply, when his glance fell once more upon the eager face of Goober Glory and pity for her made him hesitate. Then a bright idea flashed through his brain and he demanded of the man who had accosted him, "How fur be ye goin'?"

"To the trestle beyond Simpson's. Hurry up. Step on."

For only answer, Timothy immediately swung Glory up to the little platform car, depositing Bonny Angel beside her with equal speed, then made room for himself among the surprised trackmen already grouped there. Yet beyond another astonished "Hello!" no comment was made and the hand-car bumped forward again toward its destination.

However, it wasn't Timothy Dowd's habit to be silent when he could find anything to say, so he was presently explaining in his loud-voiced, jolly way that here was a "pair o' angels that he'd found floating round in the mud and was goin' to bestow 'em where they'd do the most good. An' that's to Mary Fogarty's, indeed. Her of the sharp tongue an' warm heart an' houseful of creatures, every blessed one of that same rippin' off buttons that constant, an' her livin' the very pattern of handiness to Simpson's trestle an' couldn't have been planned no better not if—Hi, baby, how goes it?"

This to Bonny Angel, whose eyes had shone with delight when first the car had rolled forward, but who now grew frightened and began to whimper dismally, which set Glory's own heart beating sorrowfully and spoiled her pleasure in this novel ride. Springing up she would have taken Bonny Angel from Timothy's arms into her own had he not rudely pushed her down again, commanding sternly:

"Try that no more, colleen, lest ye'd be after murderin' the pair of us! Sit flat, sit flat, girl, an' cut no monkey-shines with nobody, a-ridin' on a hand-car."

Glory had not thought of danger, though her new friend had not over-rated it. In obedience to this unexpected sternness, she crouched motionless beside him, though she firmly clutched at Bonny's skirts and began to think this her hardest experience yet, till after a time, at sight of a gamboling squirrel, the little one forgot her fear and laughed out gleefully. Then Glory laughed,

too, for already her tiny "Guardian" could influence every mood, so dearly had she grown to love the child thus thrown upon her care.

How the fences and the fields raced by! How the birds sang and the flowers bloomed! And how very, very soon the queer little car stopped short at a skeleton bridge over a noisy creek! There all the workmen leaped to the ground and hastily prepared for labor. Even Timothy had no further time to talk but coolly setting the children upon a bank pointed to a house across the fields and ordered Glory, "Go there an' tell your story, an' tell Mary Fogarty I sent ye."

Then he fell to his own tasks and Take-a-Stitch had no choice save obedience.

For a little distance, there was fascination in the meadow for both small wanderers; but soon Bonny Angel's feet lagged and she put up her arms with that mute pleading to be carried which Glory could not resist, yet the little creature soon grew intolerably heavy, and her face buried beneath her nurse's chin seemed to burn into the flesh, the blue eyes closed, the whole plump little body settled limp and inert, and a swift alarm shot through the other's heart.

"Oh, oh, I believe she's sick! Do 'Angels' ever get sick? But she isn't a truly 'Angel,' I know now. She's just somebody's lost baby. Queer! Grandpa so old an' she so young should both of 'em get lost to onct, an' only me to look out for 'em! Yet, maybe, that Mary Fogarty woman'll help us out. I hope she'll be like Meg-Laundress, or darlin' Posy Jane. Strange, how long these fields are. Longer'n the longest avenue there is an' not one single house the hull length. Why ain't there houses, I wonder. Wake up, Bonny precious! We're almost there."

But when they reached the door of the Queen Anne cottage, which was intended to be picturesque and had succeeded in being merely extremely dirty, and out of which swarmed a horde of youngsters each more soiled than the other, Glory's heart sank. For the big woman who followed the horde was not in the least like either old friend of Elbow Lane. Her voice was harsh and forbidding as she demanded, "Well, an' who are you; an' what are you wantin' here?"

"Timothy sent us," answered Glory, meekly.

"Huh! He did, did he? Well, he never had sense. Now, into the house with ye, every born child of ye!" she rejoined, indifferently, and "shooed" her own brood, like a flock of chickens, back into the cottage, then slammed its door in the visitor's face.



## CHAPTER XI

### *A Haven of Refuge*

Glory's walk and heavy burden had exhausted her and, almost unconsciously, she let Bonny Angel slip from her arms to the door-step where she stood. There the child lay, flushed and motionless, in a sleep which nothing disturbed, though hitherto she had wakened at any call. Now, though in remorse at her own carelessness, Take-a-Stitch bent over the little one and begged her pardon most earnestly, the baby gave no sign of hearing and slumbered on with her face growing a deeper red and her breath beginning to come in a way that recalled the old captain's snores.

"What shall I do now?" cried poor Glory, aloud, looking around over the wide country, so unlike the crowded Lane, and seeing no shelter anywhere at which she dared again apply. Some buildings there were, behind and removed from the cottage; but they were so like that inhospitable structure in color and design that she felt their indwellers would also be the same.

"Oh, I wish I hadn't come all that way over the grass," said poor Glory. "If we'd stayed by them car-rails, likely we'd have come somewhere that there was houses-different. And, Bonny Angel, sweetest, precious, darlinest one, do please, please, wake up and walk yourself just a little, teeny, tiny bit. Then, when I get rested a mite, I'll carry you again, 'cause we've got to go, you see. That Timothy was mistook an' his sister's husband's cousin won't let us in."

Yet even while her back was toward it, as she contemplated the landscape pondering which way lay her road, the door again suddenly opened and Mary Fogarty announced, shrilly, but not unkindly:

"There's the wagon-house. You can rest there a spell, seein' you was simple enough to lug that hefty young one clear across the meadder. It's that third one, where the big door stands open an' the stone-boat is."

Glory faced about, her face at once radiant with gratitude, and its effect upon the cottage mistress was to further soften her asperity, so that though she again ejaculated that

contemptuous "Huh!" it was in a milder tone; and, with something like interest she demanded, "How long 's that baby been that feverish she is now? She looks 's if she was comin' down with somethin' catchin'. Best get her home, soon 's you can, sissy. She ain't fit to be runnin' round loose."

Poor little Bonny Angel didn't look much like "running loose" at present, and as for "home," the word brought an intolerable feeling to Glory's heart, making the sunny fields before her to seem like prison walls that yet had a curious sort of wobble to them, as if they were dancing up and down in a wild way. But that was because she regarded them now through a mist of tears she could not repress, while visions of a shadowy Lane, whose very gloom would have been precious to her on that hot day, obtruded themselves upon the scene.

With a desperate desire for guidance, Glory burst out her whole story and Mary Fogarty was forced to listen, whether or no. To that good woman's credit it was that as she listened her really warm heart, upon which Timothy Dowd had counted, got the better of her impatience and, once more closing the door upon her peeping children, she said,

"Why, you poor, brave little creatur'! Come this way. I'll show you where, though you must carry the baby yourself, if so be she won't carry herself. I've got seven o' my own an' I wouldn't have nothin' catchin' get amongst them, not for a fortune. I wouldn't dare. I've had 'em down, four er five to a time, with whooping-cough an' measles an' scarletina an' what not; an' now sence the twinses come, I don't want no more of it I can tell you. Don't lag."

Mary strode along, "like a horse," as her husband frequently complimented her, walking as fast as she was talking and, with Bonny Angel in her arms, Goober Glory did her best to keep a similar pace. But this was impossible. Not only were her feet heavy beneath the burden she bore, but her heart ached with foreboding. With Bonny Angel ill, how was the search for grandpa to go on? How to look for the little one's own people? Yet how terrible that they must be left in their grief while she could do nothing to comfort them.

"Oh, if they only knew! She's so safe with me, I love her so. If I could only tell them! I wonder-I wonder who they are and where they are and shall I ever, ever find them!" she exclaimed in her anxiety as, coming to the wagon-house door, she found Mistress Fogarty awaiting her.

That lady answered with her own cheerful exclamation, "'Course you will. Everything comes right, everywhere, give it time enough. Now step right up into this loft. There's a bed here that the extry man sleeps on when there is an extry. None now. Real gardenin' comes to a standstill when Dennis has the chills. You can put the baby down there an' let her sleep her sleep out. You might 's well lie down yourself and take a snooze, bein' you're that petered out a luggin'."

"I must get back an' start up dinner," continued Mary. "It's a big job, even with Dennis round to peel and watch the fryin'. Seven youngsters of my own, with him an' me, and ten boarders—My, it takes a pile of bread to keep all them mouths full, let alone pies an' fixin's. It's vegetable soup to-day, and as the gang's working right nigh, they'll all be in prompt. I won't forget ye, an' I'll send something out to ye by somebody—but don't you pay me back by giving one of my children anything catchin'!"

Before Glory could assure the anxious mother that she would do her utmost for their safety, Mary had run down the rude stairs, shaking the shed-like building as she ran, and was within the red cottage ere the visitor realized it.

Glory exclaimed, as she gazed about, "Here we are, at last, in a regular house! And my, isn't it big? Why, ever an' ever so much bigger than the 'littlest house in Ne' York!' That bed's wide enough for all Meg's children to onct, and—my, how Bonny Angel does sleep. I'm sleepy, too, now I see such a prime place. The woman told me to sleep and I guess I'd better mind."

So, presently, having removed Bonny's draggled coat from the still drowsy child, Glory placed her charge at the extreme back of the bed and lay down herself.

"Wake up, sissy! Come down an' get your basin of soup. Enough in it for the pair of ye, with strawberry shortcake to match!"

It was this summons which aroused Glory from a delightful slumber and she sprang to her feet, not comprehending, at first, what she heard or where she was. Then she returned, laughing as she spoke, "'Course I'll come, you splendid Mary Fogarty! And I'm more obliged 'an I can say, but I'll work it out, I truly will try to work it out, if you'll hunt up your jobs. That dear Timothy said you needed mendin', dreadful!"

But she was unaware that this same Timothy was also close at hand.

"Oh! he did, did he? Well, he said the true word for once, but bad manners in him all the same," answered Mrs. Fogarty; and, as Glory joined them at the foot of the stairs, there were the two engaged in a sort of scuffle which had more mirth than malice in it.

When Take-a-Stitch appeared, they regarded her with a look of compassion which she did not understand; because at the dinner, now comfortably over, the child and her hopeless search had been discussed and the ten boarders, the seven children, with their parents, had all reached one and the same conclusion, namely, that the only safe place for such innocent and ignorant vagrants was in some "Asylum." Who was to announce this decision and convey the little ones to their place of refuge had not, as yet, been settled. Nobody was inclined to take up that piece of work and the ten boarders sauntered back to their more congenial labor on the railroad, leaving the matter in Mary Fogarty's hands.

However, it was a matter destined for nobody to settle, because when Glory had carefully conveyed the basin of soup, the pitcher of milk and the generous slices of shortcake back to the loft, she was frightened out of all hunger by the appearance of Bonny Angel. It was almost the first time in her life that the little "Queen of Elbow Lane" had had a dinner set before her of such proper quantity and quality, yet she was not to taste it.

Bonny was tossing to and fro, sometimes moaning with pain, sometimes shrieking in terror, but always in such a state as to banish every thought save of herself from Glory's mind. And then began a week of the greatest anxiety and distress which even the little caretaker of Elbow Lane,

with her self-imposed charge of its many children, had ever known.

"If she should die before I find her folks! If it's 'cause I haven't done the best I could for her—Oh, what shall I do!" wailed Take-a-Stitch, herself grown haggard with watching and grief, so that she looked like any other than the winsome child who had flashed upon Miss Bonnicastle's vision at that memorable visit of hers to that crooked little alley where they had met.

And Timothy Dowd, the only one of the big household near, whom Mary Fogarty permitted to enter the wagon-house-hospital, sighed as he answered with an affected cheerfulness: "Sure, it's nobody dies around these parts; not a body since I was put to work on this section the road. So, why more her nor another an' she the youngest o' the lot? Younger, betoken, nor the twinses theirselves.

"An' it's naught but that crotchety woman, yon," continued Tim, "that's cousin to me own sister's husband, 'd have took such fool notions into her head. Forbiddin' me, even me, her own relation by marriage, to set foot inside her door till she says the word, an' somebody tellin' her we should be smoked out with sulphur an' brimstone, like rats in a hole, ere ever we can mix with decent folks again. An' some of the boys, even, takin' that nonsense from herself, an' not likin' to dig in the same ditch along with the contagious Tim. Sure, it's contagious an' cantankerous and all them other big things we'll be, when we get out o' this an' find the old captain, your grandpa, an' the biggest kind of a celebration 'twill be, or never saw I the blue skies of old Ireland! Bless the sod!"

But in his heart, faithful Timothy did not look for Bonny Angel's recovery. Nobody knew what ailed her, since physician had not been called. Against such professional advice, Mary Fogarty had set her big foot with an unmovable firmness. Doctors had never interfered in her household save once, when Dennis, misguided man, had consulted one. And witness, everybody, hadn't he been sick and useless ever since?

So, from a safe distance, she assumed charge of the case; sending Glory a pair of shears with which to shave Bonny's sunny head, directing that all windows should be closed, lest the little patient "take cold," and preparing food suitable for the hardest working "boarder," rather than the delicate stomach of a sick child.

However, had they known it, there was nothing whatever infectious about little Bonny's illness, which was simply the result of unaccustomed exposure and unwholesome food; nor did good Mary's unwise directions cause any great harm, because, though a delicate child, the baby was a healthy one. She had no desire for the coarse food that was offered her but drank frequently of the milk that accompanied it; and as for the matter of fresh air, although Glory had to keep the windows closed, there was plenty of ventilation from the wide apertures under the eaves of the shed.

At the end of the week, the devoted young nurse had the delight of hearing her "Angel" laugh outright, for the first time in so many days, and to feel her darling's arms about her own neck while the pale little lips cried out once more the familiar, "Bonny come! Bonny come!"

To catch her tiny "Guardian" up and run with her to the cottage-door took but a minute, but there Glory's enthusiasm was promptly dashed by Mary's appearance. Shaking her arms vigorously, she "shooed" the pair away, as she "shooed" everything objectionable out of her path.

"Stand back! Stand back, the two of ye! Don't dast to come anigh, sence the time of gettin' over things is the very worst time to give 'em. Hurry back to the wagon-house, quick, quick! And once you're safe inside, I'll fetch you some other clothes that you must both put on. Every stitch you've wore, ary one, and the bedclothes, has got to be burnt. Tim's to burn 'em this noonin'. I've got no girl your size, but that don't matter. I've cut off an old skirt o' my own, for your outside, an' little Joe's your very pattern for shape, so his shirt an' blouse 'll do amazin' well. As for the baby, she can put on a suit of the twinses' till so be we can do better. Now hurry up!"

Glory could not help lingering for a moment to ask, "Must it be burned? Do you really, truly, mean to burn Bonny Angel's lovely white silk coat, an' her pretty dress all lace an' trimmin'? An' my blue frock—why, I haven't wore it but two years, that an' the other one to home. It's as good as good, only lettin' out tucks now and then an'—"

"Huh! S'pose you, a little girl, know more about what's right than I do, a big growed up woman? I've took you in an' done for ye all this time an' the least you can do is to do as you're told," replied Mrs. Fogarty, in her sharpest manner.

Thus reprimanded, Glory retreated to the wagon-house, whence, after a time, she reappeared so altered by her new attire that she scarcely knew herself. Much less, did she think, that any old friend of Elbow Lane would recognize her. She was next directed to carry all the discarded clothing and bedding to a certain spot in the barnyard, where Timothy would make a bonfire of it as soon as he appeared; and her heart ached to part with the silken coat which had enwrapped her precious "Guardian," even though it were now soiled and most disreputable.

However, these were minor troubles. The joyful fact remained that Bonny Angel had not died but was already recovered and seemed more like her own gay little self with every passing moment. Clothes didn't matter, even if they were those of a boy. They needed considerable hitching up and pinning, for they were as minus of buttons as all the garments seemed to be which had to pass through Mary Fogarty's hands and washtub; but a few strings would help and maybe Timothy Dowd could supply those; and if once Take-a-Stitch could get her fingers upon a needle and thread—my, how she would alter everything!

Summoned back to the cottage, after she had fulfilled her hostess's last demand, Glory's spirits rose to the highest. It was the first time she had entered the ranks of the seven other children which filled it to overflowing, and who were "shooed" into or out of it, according to their mother's whim.

It happened to be out, just then, and with the throng Glory, fast holding Bonny in her arms, chanced to pass close beside the shivering Dennis in his seat by the stove. He looked at her

curiously but kindly, and his gaze moved from her now happy face to that of the child in her clasp, where it rested with such a fixed yet startled expression that Glory exclaimed, "Oh, sir, what is it? Do you see anything wrong with my precious?"

Now it was the fact that Dennis Fogarty spoke as seldom as his wife did often; and that when he was most profoundly moved he spoke not at all. So then, though his eyes kept their astonished, perplexed expression, his lips closed firmly and to Glory's anxious inquiry, he made no reply.

Therefore, waiting but a moment longer, she hurried after the other children and in five minutes was leading them at their games just as she had always led the Elbow children in theirs. But Bonny was still too weak and too small to keep up very long with the boisterous play of these new mates, and seeing this, Take-a-Stitch presently made the seven group themselves around her on the grass while she told them tales.

Glory thought of all the fairy stories with which the old blind captain had beguiled their darkened evenings in that "littlest house" where gas or lamplight could not be afforded; then she went on to real stories of the Elbow children themselves; of Meg-Laundress and Posy Jane; and most of all of Nick and Billy, her chosen comrades and almost brothers. One and all the young Fogartys listened open-mouthed and delighted; but, when pressed to talk more about that "grandpa you're lookin' for," poor Glory grew silent.

It was one of the loveliest spots in the world where Glory sat that morning, with its view of field and mountain and the wonderful river winding placidly between; but the outcast child would have exchanged it all for just one glimpse of a squalid alley, and a tiny familiar doorway, wherein an old seaman should be sitting carving a bit of wood.

Thinking of him, though not talking, she became less interesting company to the Fogartys, who withdrew one by one, attracted by the odor of dinner preparing, and hungry for the scraps which would be tossed among them by their indulgent mother.

Bonny Angel went to sleep; and, holding her snugly, Glory herself leaned back against the tree trunk where she was sitting and closed her own eyes. She did this the better to mature her plans for the search she meant to resume that very day, if possible, and certainly by the morrow at the latest. Now that Bonny was so nearly well, she must go on; and as her head whirled with the thoughts which swarmed it, it seemed to her that she had "grown as old as old since grandpa went away."

Glory at last decided that she had best stop thinking and planning altogether, just for a moment, and go to sleep as Bonny Angel had done. She remembered that grandpa had often said that a nap of "forty winks" would clear his own head and set him up lively for the rest of the day. Whatever Captain Simon Beck, in his great wisdom said was right, must be so; and though it seemed very lazy for a big girl such as she to take "forty winks" on her own account and in the daytime, she did take them and with so many repetitions of the "forty" that the boarders had all come home across the fields before she roused again to know what was going on about her.

There was a hum of voices on the other side of the tree; and though they were low, as if not intended for her ear, they were also very earnest and in evident dispute over some subject which she gradually learned was none other than herself.

She had been going to call out to them, cheerily, but what she heard made her sit up and listen closely. Not very honorable, it may be, yet wholly natural, since Mistress Mary was insisting:

"There's no use talkin', Timothy Dowd, them two must pack to the first 'Asylum' will take 'em in. The sooner the better and this very day the best of all. 'Twas yourself brought 'em or sent 'em, and 'tis yourself must do the job. You can knock off work this half-day and get it settled."

"Oh, but Mary, me cousin, by marriage that is. I hate it. I hate it worse nor ever was. Sure, it was bad enough touchin' a match to them neat little clothes o' theirs but forcin' themselves away—Ah! Mary, mother o' seven, think! What if 'twas one o' your own, now?" wheedled Tim.

But Mary was not to be moved. Indeed, she dared not be. As Glory had already learned, Dennis Fogarty was the now useless gardener of the rich family which lived in the great house on the hill beyond, and to whom the abused Queen Anne cottage and all the other red outbuildings visible belonged.

The rich people were very particular to have all things on their estate kept in perfect order; and though they had no fault to find with Dennis himself, whenever he was well enough to work, they did find much fault with his shiftless or careless wife, while the brood of noisy children was a constant annoyance to them, whenever they occupied Broadacres.

It was for this reason that during the family's stay at the great house, Mary so seldom allowed her children out of the house; nor had Dennis ever permitted her to visit the place in person when there was any chance of her being seen by his employers. He felt that he held his own position merely by their generosity; nor did he approve of her boarding the workmen of the nearby railway. Still, he knew that his children must be fed, and, without the money she earned, how could they be?

Mary's argument, then, against taking into her home two more children, to make bad matters worse, was a good one, and Timothy could find no real word to say against it. Yet he was all in sympathy with Glory's search for the missing seaman, and how could he be the instrument of shutting her up in any institution, no matter how good, where she could not continue that search?

Having heard thus much, and recalling even then Posy Jane's saying about "listeners hearin' no good o' theirselves," Take-a-Stitch quietly rose and went around the tree till she stood before her troubled friends.

"Why, I thought you was asleep!" cried poor Timothy, rather awkwardly and very red in the face.

"So I was, part of the time. Part I wasn't and I listened. I shouldn't ought, I know, an' grandpa would say so, but I'm glad I did, 'cause you needn't worry no more 'bout Bonny Angel an' me. I will start right off. I was going to, to-morrow, anyway, if she didn't get sick again; an' Mis'



Fogarty will have to leave us these clothes till-till-I can some time-some day-maybe earn some for myself. Then I'll get 'em sent back, somehow, an'—"

By this time, Mary was also upon her feet, tearful and compassionate and fain to turn her eyes away from the sad, brave little face that confronted her. Yet not even her pity could fathom the longing of this vagrant "Queen" for her dirty Lane and her loyal subjects; nor how she shrank in terror from the lonely search she knew she must yet continue, thinking, "'Cause grandpa would never have give me up if I was lost and I never will him, never, never, never! But if only Billy, er Nick, er—"

Mrs. Fogarty interrupted the little girl's thoughts with the remark, "Now them 'Asylums' is just beautiful, honey darlin'-an' you'll be as happy as the day is long. You'll—"

It was Glory's turn to interrupt the cooing voice, which, indeed, she had scarcely heard, because of another sound which had come to her ear; and it was now a countenance glorified in truth by unlooked-for happiness that they saw, as with uplifted hand and parted lips, she strove to catch the distant strains of music which seemed sent to check her grief.

"Hark! Hark! Listen! Sh-h-h!" cried the girl.

"Bless us, colleen! Have ye lost your seventy senses, laughin' an' cryin' to onct, like a daft creatur'?" demanded Timothy, amazed.

She did not stop to answer him but gently placing Bonny Angel in his arms, sped away down the road, crying ecstatically, "Luigi! Luigi!"



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## CHAPTER XII

### *News From The Lane*

"Hmm, hmm, indeed! An' what is 'Loo-ee-gy' anyhow? An' what is the noise I hear save one them wore-out hurdy-gurdies, that do be roamin' the country over, soon's ever the town gets too hot to hold 'em? Wouldn't 'pear that a nice spoken little girl as yon would be takin' up with no Eyetalian organ-grinder," grumbled Timothy, a trifle jealously. Already he felt a sort of proprietorship in Glory and the "Angel" and had revolved in his mind for several nights—that is when he could keep awake—what he could do to help her. He was as reluctant to place her in any institution against her will as she was to have him, but he had not known what else to propose to Mary's common sense suggestion.

Both Timothy and Mrs. Fogarty watched the open gateway, through which Take-a-Stitch had vanished, for her to reappear, since the brick wall at the foot of the slope fully hid the road beyond.

The music had soon ceased, but not until all the seven had swarmed out of the house, excited over even so trifling a "show" to break the monotony of their lives. All seven now began to exercise themselves in the wildest antics, leaping over one another's shoulders, turning somersaults, each fisticuffing his neighbor, and finally emitting a series of deafening whoops as Glory actually turned back into the grounds, her hands clinging to the arm of a swarthy little man, who carried a hand-organ on his back and a monkey on his shoulder. The hand-organ was of the poorest type and the monkey looked as though he had been "upon the road" for many, many years—so ancient and wrinkled was his visage. His jaunty red coat had faded from its original tint to a dirty brown; and the funny little cap which he pulled from his head was full of holes, so that it was a wonder he did not lose from it the few cents he was able to collect in it for his master.

But the vagrant pair might have been some wonderful grandees, so proudly did Goober Glory convey them up the slope to the very tree where Mary and her brood awaited them, crying joyfully:

"'Tis Luigi! Luigi Salvatore, Antonio's brother! He knows me, he knows us all and he's come straight from Elbow Lane. I mean, quite straight, 'cause he was there after I was. Wasn't you, Luigi?"

Luigi stood bareheaded now, resting his organ-pole upon the ground and glancing from Glory's eager face to the curious faces of these others. He understood but little of "United States language," having come to that country but a short time before, and having hitherto relied upon his brother Toni to interpret for him when necessary. He was waiting permission to grind out his next tune, and not as surprised as Timothy was that the little girl should have recognized his

organ from a multitude of others, which to the railroader sounded exactly the same.

Take-a-Stitch nodded her head, also freshly cropped like Bonny's, and he began. For a time all went well. The seven young Fogartys were in ecstasies, and even their elders beamed with delight, forgetting that the one would be "docked" for his wasted time and the other that the cat and her kittens were at that moment helping to "clear the table" she had left standing. Even Bonny Angel gravely nodded approval from her perch in Timothy's arms, save when the too solicitous monkey held his cap to her. Then she frowned and buried her pretty face on Timothy's shoulder and raised it only when Jocko had hopped another way.

But suddenly out of his selections, Luigi began that ancient tune, "A Life on the Ocean Wave, A Home on the Rolling Deep"—and then disaster!

Almost as distinctly as if he stood there before her in the flesh, forsaken Glory saw her grandfather's beloved form; clad in his well-kept old uniform, buttons shining, head thrown back, gilt-trimmed cap held easily in his wrinkled hand, with Bos'n sitting gravely upright beside him. There he stood, in her fancy; and the vision well-nigh broke her heart. Then down upon the grass she flung herself and all her brave self-repression gave way before the flood of homesick longing which besieged her.

Nobody quite understood what ailed her, though from having heard the captain sing that melody he had just ground out, Luigi dimly guessed. But the effect upon all was that there had been quite music enough for the time being, and Mary showed her wisdom by drawing the company away, counseling:

"Let her have her cry out. She's kep' in brave an' 'twill do her good. More good'n a lickin'!" she finished, with a lunge at her eldest son, who was fast changing his playful cuffs of a twin into blows which were not playful; and all because between Jocko and that twin was already developing considerable interest, which the bigger boy wished to fix upon himself.

"Well now, ma! What for? 'Tain't every day a monkey comes a visitin' here an' he's had him long enough. My turn next, an' that's fair," protested Dennis, junior, namesake of the gardener.

"No more it isn't, an' me forgettin' my manners after the fine music he's give us. Look up, Glory, an' ask the gentleman, Looeegy yon, would he like a bite to eat."

The girl raised her face, already ashamed of crying before other people, and instantly eager to do something for this visitor from "home"; and when she had repeated Mary's invitation to Luigi the smiles came back to her own face at the smiles which lightened his.

Alas! It wasn't very much of the good dinner was left, after the cat and her kittens had done with it, but such as remained was most welcome to the poor Italian. Accustomed to a dry loaf of bread washed down with water from the roadside, even the remnants of Mary Fogarty's food seemed a feast to him; and he enjoyed it upon the door-step with Glory at his feet and Jocko coming in for whatever portion his master thought best to spare.

Afterward, comforted and rested, he would have repaid his hostess by another round of his melodies; but this, much to the disgust of seven small lads, Take-a-Stitch prevented.

Leading the organ-grinder from the threshold of the cottage to the tree beyond it, Glory made Luigi sit down again and answer every question she put to him; and though he did not always comprehend her words, he did her gestures, so that, soon, she had learned all he knew of the Lane since she had left it until the previous day when he had done so.

First, because to him it seemed of the greater importance, Luigi dwelt upon Toni's disappointment, and divulged the great "secret" which had matured in the peanut-merchant's brain, and was to have been made known to Goober Glory, had she not "runned the way." The secret was a scheme for the betterment of everybody concerned and of Antonio Salvatore in especial; and to the effect that the blind captain and Goober Glory should form a partnership. She was to be given charge of Antonio's own big stand; while comfortable upon a high stool, beside it, the captain was to sit and sing. This would have attracted many customers, Toni thought, by its novelty; and, incidentally, the seaman might sell some of his own frames. As for the proprietor himself, he was to have taken and greatly enlarged the "outside business"; Luigi assisting him whenever the organ failed to pay.

"Money, little one! Oh, mucha money for all! But you stole the baby and runned away," ended this part of the stroller's tale, as she interpreted it.

"I never! Never, never, never! She was sent! She belongs. Hear me!" cried Glory, indignantly, and forthwith poured into Luigi's puzzled ear all her own story. Then she demanded that he should answer over again her first question when she had met him; hoping a different reply.

"Has my grandpa come back?"

But Luigi only shook his head. Even through his dim understanding, there had filtered the knowledge that the fine old captain never would so come. He had been killed, crushed, put out of this sunny world by a cruel accident. So Antonio had told him; but so, in pity, for her he would not repeat. Rather he would make light of the matter, and did so, shrugging his shoulders in his foreign fashion and elevating his eyebrows indifferently; then conveyed to her in his broken English that the seaman must have "moved," because the landlord had come and sent all the furnishings of the "littlest house" to the grocer's for safe keeping; and there she would find them when she wished.

As for Billy Buttons and Nick, his chum, they were as bad as ever; and Posy Jane had never a penny for his music, never; though Meg-Laundress would sometimes toss him one if he would play for a long, long time and so keep her children amused and out of mischief. She, too, had even gone so far as to bid him look out all along the road he should travel for Goober Glory herself; and if he found her and brought her back, why she would make him a fine present. Goober Glory had been the most inexpensive and faithful of nurses to Meg's children and she could afford to do the handsome thing by any one who would restore her services.

"And here I find you, already," said Luigi, accepting the wonderful fact as if it were the simplest thing in the world, whereas, out of the many roads by which he might have journeyed

from the city, this was the one least likely to attract his wandering footsteps. And this strange thing was, afterward, to confirm good Meg-Laundress in her faith in "Guardian Angels."

But when he proposed that they return at once to the Lane lest Meg's promise should be forgotten and he defrauded of his present, Glory firmly objected:

"No, no, Luigi. I must find grandpa. I must find this baby's folks. Then we will go back, you and me and all of us but her; 'cause then I'll have to give her up, I reckon-the darlin', preciousesest thing!"

Luigi glanced at the sun, at the landscape, at the group of watchful Fogartys, and reflected that there was no money to be made there. The hand-organ belonged to Tonio, his brother, and the monkey likewise. Tonio loved money better than anything; and Luigi, the organ, and the monkey had been sent forth to collect it, not to loiter by the way; and if he was not to return at once and secure Meg's present, that would have been appropriated by Antonio, as a matter of course, he must be about his business. When he had slowly arrived at this decision, he rose, shouldered the hurdy-gurdy, signaled Jocko to his wrist, pulled his cap in respect to his hostess, and set off.

"Wait, wait, Luigi! just one little minute! I must bid them good-bye, 'cause they've been so good to me, and I'm going with you! Just one little bit or minute!" cried Glory, clasping his arm, imploringly.

The organ-grinder would be glad of her company, of any company, in fact; so he waited unquestioningly, while Glory explained, insisted, and finally overcame the expostulations of Timothy and Mary.

"Yes, she must go. Not until she had looked forever and ever could she be shut up in a "sylum" where she could look no further. When she found him, they would come back, he and she, and show them how right she was to keep on and how splendid he was. She thanked them-my, how she did thank them for their kindness, and, besides, there was Bonny Angel. If she'd dared to give up lookin' for grandpa, as he wouldn't have give up lookin' for her, she must, she must, find the Angel's folks. She couldn't rest-nohow, never. Think o' all them broken hearts, who'd lost such a beau-tiful darlin' as her!"

Then she added, with many a loving look over the whole group, "But I mustn't keep poor Luigi. He belongs to Toni, seems if, an' Toni Salvatore can make it lively for them 'at don't please him. So, good-bye, good-bye-everybody. Every single dear good body!"

Turning, with Bonny Angel once more in her own arms, walking backward to have the very last glimpse possible of these new friends, with eyes fast filling again, and stumbling over her long skirt that had lost its last hook, Glory Beck resumed her seemingly hopeless search.

However, she was not to depart just yet nor thus. To the surprise of all, Dennis himself now appeared in the doorway and held up his hand to detain her. Until then, he had showed but slight interest in her, and his strange staring at Bonny had been unnoticed by his wife. Now his face wore a puzzled expression and he passed his hand across his eyes as if he wished to clear his sight. He gazed with intensity upon Glory's "Guardian" once more, and at last remarked:

"Pease in a pod. 'Tother had yellow curls. Awful trouble for them, plenty as kids are the country over. Pease in a pod. Might try it;" and turning sidewise he pointed toward the distant great house on the hill. Then he retreated to his fireside again, and Mary was left to interpret. She did so, saying:

"He's sayin' the 'family' 's in some sort o' trouble, though I hadn't heard it. Though, 'course, they've been home only a few days an' whatever any the other hands what's been down to see him sence has told him he hain't told me. But I make out 't he thinks Looeegy's playin' up there on the terrace might do noh arm an'll likely cheer 'em up a mite. That's what I make out Dennis means. You an' the organ-man'd best make your first stop along the road up to the big house. If they won't pay anything to hear him play, likely they will to have him go away, bein's they're dreadful scared of tramps an' such. Good-bye. Come an' see us when you can!"



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## CHAPTER XIII

### *The Wonderful Ending*

"Sure, and it's not meself can tackle the road, the day. As well be 'docked' for the end as the beginnin', an' I'm minded to keep that lot company a piece," remarked Timothy Dowd, to his

sister's husband's cousin. "That monkey is most interestin', most interestin' an' improvin'; an' 'tisn't often a lad from old Ireland has the chance to get acquaintance of the sort, leave alone that Glory girl, what's took up quarters in me heart an' won't be boosted thence, whatever. The poor little colleen! A-lookin' for one lost old man out of a world full! Bless her innocent soul! Yes. I've a mind to company them a bit. What say, Mary, woman?"

"What need to say a word, sence when a man's bent to do a thing he does it? But keep an open ear, Timothy, boy. I'm curious to know what sort o' trouble 'tis, Dennis hints at, as comin' to them old people yon. And he'd never say, considerin' as he does, that what goes on in the big house is no consarn o' the cottage, an' fearin' to remind 'em even't we're alive, lest they pack us off an' fetch in folks with no childer to bless an' bother 'em. Yes, go, Timothy; and wait; here's one them handy catch-pins, that Glory might tighten her skirt a bit."

Timothy's usually merry face had been sadly overclouded as he watched the departure of Glory and her companions, but it lightened instantly when Mary favored his suggestion to follow and learn their fortune. With his hat on the back of his head, his stick over his shoulder, and his unlighted pipe in his mouth—which still managed to whistle a gay tune despite this impediment—he sauntered along the road in the direction the others had taken, though at some distance behind them. But when they passed boldly through the great iron gates and followed the driveway winding over the beautiful lawn, his bashfulness overcame him, and he sat down on the bank-wall to await their return, which must be, he fancied, by that same route; soliloquizing thus:

"Sure, Tim, me boy, if it's tramps they object to, what for 's the use o' turnin' your honest self into such? Them on ahead has business to tend to; the business o' makin' sweet music where music there is none; an' may the pennies roll out thick an' plenteous an' may the Eyetalian have the good sense in him to share them same with my sweet colleen. It's thinkin' I am that all is spent on such as her is money well invested. So I'll enjoy the soft side this well-cut top-stone, till so be me friends comes along all in a surprise to see me here."

His own whistling had ceased, and though he listened closely he could not hear Luigi's organ or any sound whatever. The truth was that the way seemed endless from the entrance to the house upon the terrace; and that having reached it at last, both Luigi and Glory were dismayed by the magnitude of the mansion and confused by its apparently countless doorways. Before which they should take their stand, required time to decide; but unobserved, they finally settled this point. Luigi rested his instrument upon its pole, loosed Jocko to his gambols, and tuned up.

The strains which most ears would have found harsh and discordant sounded pleasantly enough to the listening Timothy, who nodded his head complacently, wishing and thinking:

"Now he's off! May he keep at it till he wheedles not only the pence but the dollars out the pockets o' them that hears! 'Twill take dollars more'n one to keep Glory on her long road, safe and fed, and—Bless us! What's that?"

What, indeed, but the wildest sort of uproar, in which angry voices, the barking of dogs, the screams of frightened women drowning the feeble tones of "Oft in the Stilly Night," sent Timothy to his feet and his feet to speeding, not over the graveled driveway, but straight across the shaven lawn, where passage was forbidden. But no "Keep off the grass" signs deterred him, as he remembered now, too late, all that he had heard of the ferocity of the Broadacre dogs which its master kept for just such occasions as this.

"Bloodhounds! And they've loosed them! Oh, me darlin' colleen! Ill to me that I let ye go wanderin' thus with that miserable Eyetalian! But I'm comin'! Tim's comin'!" he yelled, adding his own part to the wild chorus above.

He reached the broad paved space before the great door none too soon, and though, ordinarily, he would have given the yelping hounds a very wide berth, he did not hesitate now. Huddled together in a group, with the frantic animals bounding and barking all around them, though as yet not touching them, stood the terrified Luigi and his friends; realizing what vagrancy means in this "land of the free," and how even to earn an honest living one should never dare to "trespass."

But even as Timothy forced his stalwart frame between the children and the dogs, the great door opened and a white-haired gentleman came hurrying out. Thrusting a silver whistle to his lips he blew upon it shrilly, and almost instantly the uproar ceased, and the three hounds sprang to his side, fawning upon him, eager for his commendation. Instead of praise, however, they were given the word of command and crouched beside him, licking their jaws and expectant, seemingly, of a further order to pounce upon the intruders.

"Who loosed the dogs?" demanded the gentleman, in a clear-ringing, indignant tone.

Now that he seemed displeased by their too solicitous obedience, none of the gathering servants laid claim to it; and while all stood waiting, arrested in their attitudes of fear or defense, a curious thing happened. Glory Beck threw off the protecting arms of Timothy Dowd and, with Bonny Angel clasped close in her own, swiftly advanced to the granite step where the white-haired gentleman stood. Her face that had paled in fear now flushed in excitement as with a voice unlike her own she cried:

"You, sir! You, sir! What have you done with my grandfather?"

The gentleman stared at her, thinking her fright had turned her brain; but saying kindly, as soon as he could command his voice:

"There, child. It's all right. The dogs won't touch you now."

"The dogs!" retorted the child, in infinite scorn. "What do I care for the dogs? It's you I want. You, that 'Snug-Harbor'-Bonnicastle-man who coaxed my grandpa Simon Beck away from his own home an' never let him come back any more!"

Then her anger subsiding into an intensity of longing, she threw herself at his feet, clasping his knees and imploring, piteously:

"Oh! take me to him. Tell me, tell me where he is. I've looked so long and I don't know where and—please, please, please."

For a moment nobody spoke; not even Colonel Bonnicastle, for it was he, indeed, though he

silently motioned to a trustworthy man who had drawn near to take the dogs away; and who, in obedience, whistling imperatively, gathered their chains in his hands and led them back to their kennel.

When the dogs had disappeared, the master of Broadacres sank into a near-by chair, wiping his brow and pityingly regarded the little girl who still knelt, imploringly. He was trying to comprehend what had happened, what she meant, and if he had ever seen her before. Captain Simon Beck! That was a familiar name, surely, but of that ungrateful seaman, who wouldn't be given a "Snug Harbor" whether or no, of him he had never heard nor even thought since his one memorable uncomfortable visit to Elbow Lane.

"Simon Beck-Simon Beck," he began, musingly. "Yes, I know a Simon Beck, worthy seaman, and would befriend him if I could. Is he your grandfather, child, and what has happened to him that you speak to me so-so-well, let us say-rudely?"

Then he added, in that commanding tone which few who knew him ever disobeyed:

"Get up at once, child. Your kneeling to me is absurd, nor do I know in what way I can help you, though you think I can do so-apparently. Why! How strange-how like--"

He had stooped and raised Glory, gently forcing her to her feet, and as he did so, Bonny Angel turned her own face around from the girl's breast where she had buried it in her terror of the dogs.

Wasted and shorn of her beautiful hair, clothed in the discarded rags of a Fogarty twin, it would have taken keen eyes indeed to recognize in the little outcast the radiant "Guardian Angel" who had flashed upon Glory's amazed sight that day in Elbow Lane; yet something about it there was which made the near-sighted colonel grope hastily for his eyeglasses and in his haste overlook them, so that he muttered angrily at his own awkwardness.

Into the blue eyes of the little one herself crept a puzzled wondering look, that fixed itself upon the perplexed gentleman with a slowly growing comprehension.

Just then, too, when forgetting her own anxiety, Glory looked from the baby to the man and back again, startled and wondering, a lady came to the doorway and exclaimed:

"Why, brother, whatever is the matter! Such an uproar--"

But her sentence was never finished. Bonny's gaze, distracted from the colonel to his sister, glued itself to the lady's face, while the perplexity in the blue eyes changed to delight. With a seraphic smile upon her dainty lips, a smile that would have made her recognizable anywhere, under any disguise, the little creature propelled herself from Glory's arms to the outstretched arms of Miss Laura, shrilling her familiar announcement:

"Bonny come! Bonny come!"

How can the scene be best explained, how best described? Maybe in words of honest Timothy Dowd himself; who, somewhat later, returning to the Queen Anne cottage, called the entire Fogarty family about him and announced to the assembled household:

"Well, sirs! Ye could knock me down with a feather!" after which he sank into profound silence.

"Huh! And is that what ye're wantin' of us, is it? Well, you never had sense," remarked Mary, turning away indignantly.

Thus roused, the railroader repeated:

"Sure, an' ye could. A feather'd do it, an' easy. But sit down, woman. Sit down as I bid ye, an' hear the most wonderful, marvelous tale a body ever heard this side old Ireland. Faith, I wish my tongue was twicet as long, an' I knew better how to choose the beginnin' from the end of me story, or the middle from any one. But sit down, sit down, lass, an' bid your seven onruly gossoons to keep the peace for onct, while I tell ye a story beats all the fairy ones ever dreamed. But-where to begin!"

"Huh! I'll give you a start," answered Mrs. Fogarty, impatiently. "You went from here: now go on with your tale."

"I went from here," began Timothy, obediently, and glad of even this small aid in his task. "I went from here an' I follyed the three of 'em, monkey an' man an' girl--"

"And the baby. That's four," corrected Dennis, junior, winking at a brother.

"Hist, boy! Childer should speak when they're spoke to," returned Timothy, severely, then continued, at length: "I went from here. And I follyed--"

Here he became so lost in retrospection that Mary tapped him on the shoulder, when he resumed as if no break had occurred:

"Them four to the gate. But havin' no business of me own on the place, I stayed behind, a listenin'. An', purty soon up pipes the beautiful music; an' right atop o' that comes-bedlam! All the dogs a barkin', the women servants screeching, the old gentleman commandin', and me colleen huggin' the Angel tight an' saying never a say, though the poor Dago Eyetalian was trembling himself into his grave, till all a sudden like, up flies Glory, heedin' dogs nor no dogs, an' flings herself at Broadacres' feet, demanding her grandpa! Fact, 'twas the same old gentleman she'd been blamin' for spiritin' away the blind man; and now comes true he knows no more the sailor's whereabouts than them two twinses yon. But I've me cart afore me horse, as usual. For all along o' this, out comes from that elegant mansion another old person, the lady, Miss Laura Bonnicastle, by your leave. An' she looks at the Angel in me colleen's arms an' the Angel looks at her; an', whisht! afore you could wink, out flies the knowin' baby from the one to the other! An' then, bless us! The time there was! An' you could hear a pin drop, an' in a minute you couldn't, along of them questions an' answers, firing around, from one person to another, hit-or-miss-like, an' all talkin' to onct, or sayin' never a word, any one. An' so this is the trouble, Mary Fogarty, that Dennis wouldn't mention. The Angel is their own child, and Dennis Fogarty's the clever chap suspicioned it himself."

"Huh! Now you're fairy-talein', indeed. 'Tis old bachelor and old maid the pair of them is. I know that much if I don't know more," returned the house-mistress, reprovingly.

Timothy was undisturbed and ignored her reproof, as he went on with his story:

"Their child was left for them to care for. The only child of their neevy an' niece, who's over seas at the minute, a takin' a vacation, with hearts broke because of word comin' the baby was lost. Lost she was the very day them Bonnicastles set for leaving the city house an' comin' to Broadacres; an' intrustin' the little creatur' by the care of a nursemaid—bad luck to her—to be took across the big bridge, over to that Brooklyn where did reside a friend of the whole family with whom the baby would be safe till called for; meanin' such time as them Bonnicastles had done with the movin' business an' could take care of it theirselves, proper. Little dreamin' they, poor souls, how that that same nursemaid would stop to chatter with a friend of her own, right at the bridge-end and leave the child out of her arms just for the minute, who, set on the ground by herself, runs off in high glee an' no more to that story, till she finds herself in the 'littlest house,' where me colleen lived; an' what come after ye know. But ye don't know how the nursemaid went near daft with the fear, and wasted good days a searchin' an' searchin' on her own account; the Bonnicastles' friend-lady over in Brooklyn not expecting no such visit an' not knowin' aught; 'cause the maid carried the note sayin' so in her own pocket. All them rich folks bein' so intimate-like, preparin' 'em wasn't needful. And then, when the truth out, all the police in the city set to the hunt, and word sent across the ocean to the ravin'-distracted young parents, an'-now, all's right! Such joy, such thanksgivin', such cryin' an' laughin'-bless us! I couldn't mention it."

"But that poor little Glory! Hard on her to find the Angel's folks an' not her own!" said Mary, gently.

"Not hard a bit! She's that onselfish like, 'twould have done you proud to see her clappin' her hands an' smilin', though the tears yet in her eyes, 'cause she an' Bonny must part. And 'How's that?' asks Miss Laura, catching the girl to her heart and kissin' her ill-cropped head, 'do you think we will not stand by you in your search and help you with money and time and every service, you who have been so faithful to our darlin'?' And then the pair o' them huggin' each other, like they'd loved each other sence the day they was born."

Here, for sheer want of breath, Timothy's narrative ended, but Mary having a vivid imagination, allowed it full play then and prophesied, sagely and happily:

"Well, then, all of ye listen, till I tell ye how 'twill be. That old man was run over in the street was Captain Simon Beck; and though he was hurted bad, he wasn't killed; and though them clever little newsboys couldn't find him, the folks Colonel Bonnicastle sets searchin' will. An' when he's found, he'll be nigh well; an' he'll be brought out here an' kep' in a little cottage somewhere on Broadacres property, with Glory to tend him an' to live happy ever afterward. An' that'll be the only 'Snug Harbor' any one'll ever need. An' we shan't have lost our Glory but got her for good."

"But them Billy Button and Nick Parson boys, what of them?" demanded Dennis, junior, his own sympathy running toward the clever gamins.

"They'll come too, if they want to. They'll come, all the same, now and again, just for vari'ty like," comfortably assented his mother. "An' your father'll get well, an' we'll move into that other house down yon, further from the big one; an' them Bonnicastles'll fix this up prime an' Glory'll live here."

"So it ought to be, an' that we all should live happy forever an' a day!" cried Timothy, enjoying her finish of his tale more than he had his own part in it.

And so, in truth it all happened, and Mary's cheerful prophecy was fulfilled in due time.

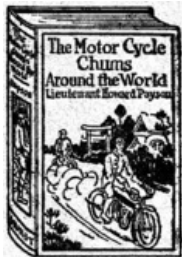
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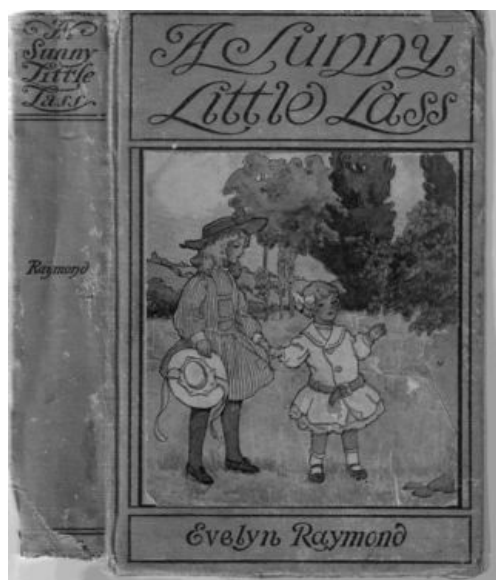
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