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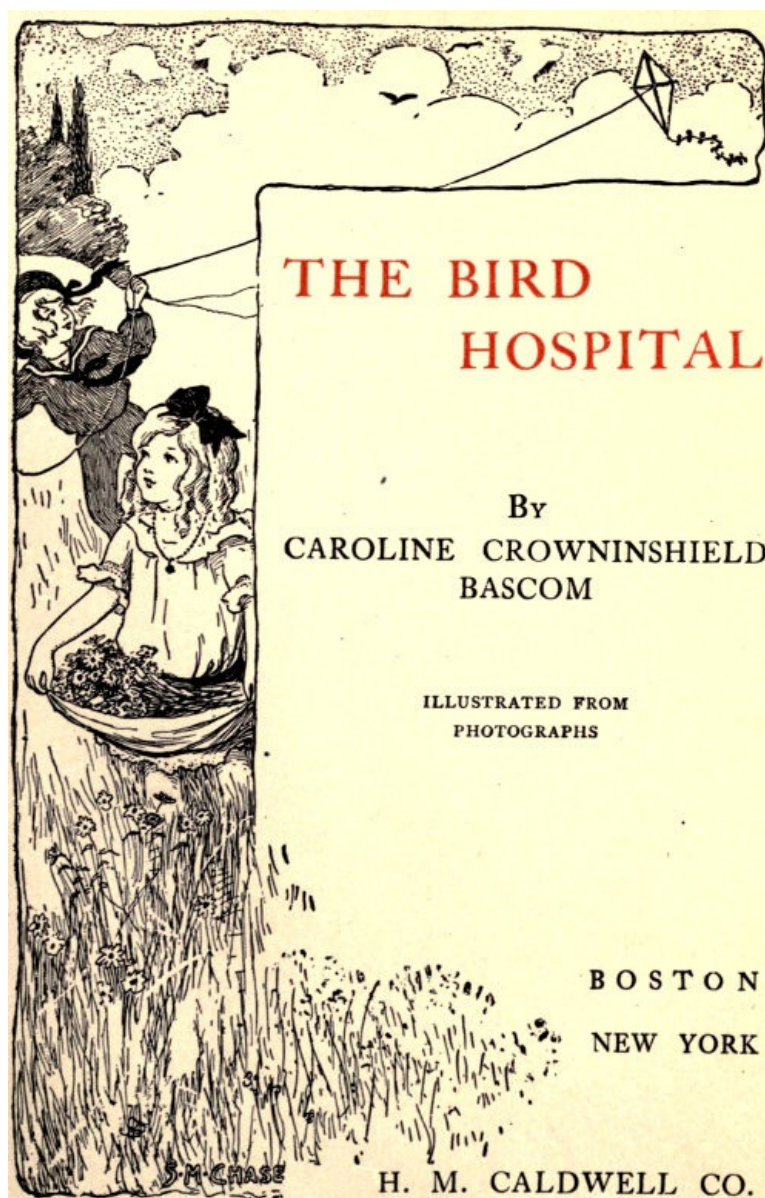
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE BIRD HOSPITAL ***





BOBBINETTE DICK DONA MARINA
BOBBY BLONDELL



THE BIRD HOSPITAL

By
CAROLINE CROWNINSHIELD
BASCOM

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

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DEDICATED TO
MY LIFELONG FRIEND
Hannah Gould Mynverse
WITH THE LOVE OF
Caroline Crowninshield Bascom

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PREFACE

The study of birds (and a most delightful study too) is steadily on the increase, and a great deal of good is being done. A great deal more might be done if older people would take more pains in impressing upon all children never to harm in any way our feathered friends.

I have prepared this little book of simple true tales, not for the literary critic to pull to pieces, but simply to give pleasure to all lovers of pets, hoping it may be of some help to those who wish to tame and train their birds or cats.

I especially want it to teach children to love and be kind to all living creatures God has put upon the earth. He has never put anything here that has not some use, no matter how some may fear and hate the lower animals.

VI

Never hurt anything, and only kill when it is necessary, and then do it in the quickest and most humane way.

I shall be glad to hear from any children who have pets, and will aid them all I can in taming and training them.

CAROLINE CROWNINSHIELD BASCOM.

19 GREEN ST., SENECA FALLS, N. Y.

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THE BIRD HOSPITAL

CHAPTER I. LITTLE BILLEE

I have always been passionately fond of animals, and would like to make pets of them all. During the winter I keep a free-lunch counter on my bedroom window-sill for my little friends, the English sparrows. Often there will be two dozen partaking of the crumbs at the same time, no two looking alike, and making one think of a bootblack spread in New York. Their table manners are not always the best, I am sorry to say, and there is often a great deal of cuffing, scratching, and angry words.

When the first warm days of spring come, they all say "*bon jour*," but the cold days of autumn bring them back in full force, and it is like welcoming old friends. 12

During the summer I keep a hospital, and I have had some very curious cases. The children bring in to me all of the stray birds they find or take away from cats. Often I have had ten at a time. Some die from want of food when I cannot make them eat, but more often from wounds received from cats or boys.

It is heartrending to have brought to me a handsome pair of robins all torn to pieces, and feel there is nothing I can do to save their lives, when I know their babies in the nests are crying for food, and will soon die from starvation.

My hospital really opened one June by my mother picking up off the front sidewalk a little brown bird which could not have been more than two weeks old. I had been ill many months, and my mother and friends had done all they could to make the days pass as quickly as possible for me. So when my mother saw the little orphan, she put him in her handkerchief and brought him to my room, thinking it might amuse me, and I took him inside the bed. After an hour he seemed very happy and not at all afraid. 13

I looked him over carefully, but found him uninjured. I took him to an open window, expecting to see him try to fly away, but he did not seem to have the slightest intention of doing so.

The first day I could not get him to eat anything until night, when he drank milk from an after-dinner coffee-spoon. After that he took little pieces of bread soaked in milk from my tongue or lips. I fed him in that way for several days, then he would take it out of my fingers. He lived on bread and milk for two weeks; after that he ate anything I did,—all kinds of vegetables, mushrooms, and ice-cream. He liked to sit on my shoulder and take his food off my fork. 14

I had some kind of nourishment every two hours, and Little Billee knew very well when my maid came to my room with a salver that there was something on it to eat or drink, and he was wild until he could get on my hand or shoulder. He drank milk from my tumbler, and would not drink water out of anything but my medicine glass. When Little Billee would see me sit down in the morning with an orange on a plate, he'd fly upon his cage, then over into my lap, and sit on the first finger of my left hand, and eat the orange from my spoon. At first he could not crack his own seeds, and, as he was very fond of them, I used to do it for him. Later he could crack them himself, but preferred eating them outside his cage, and his hemp seed he would always bring over and eat on the rug in front of my bed.

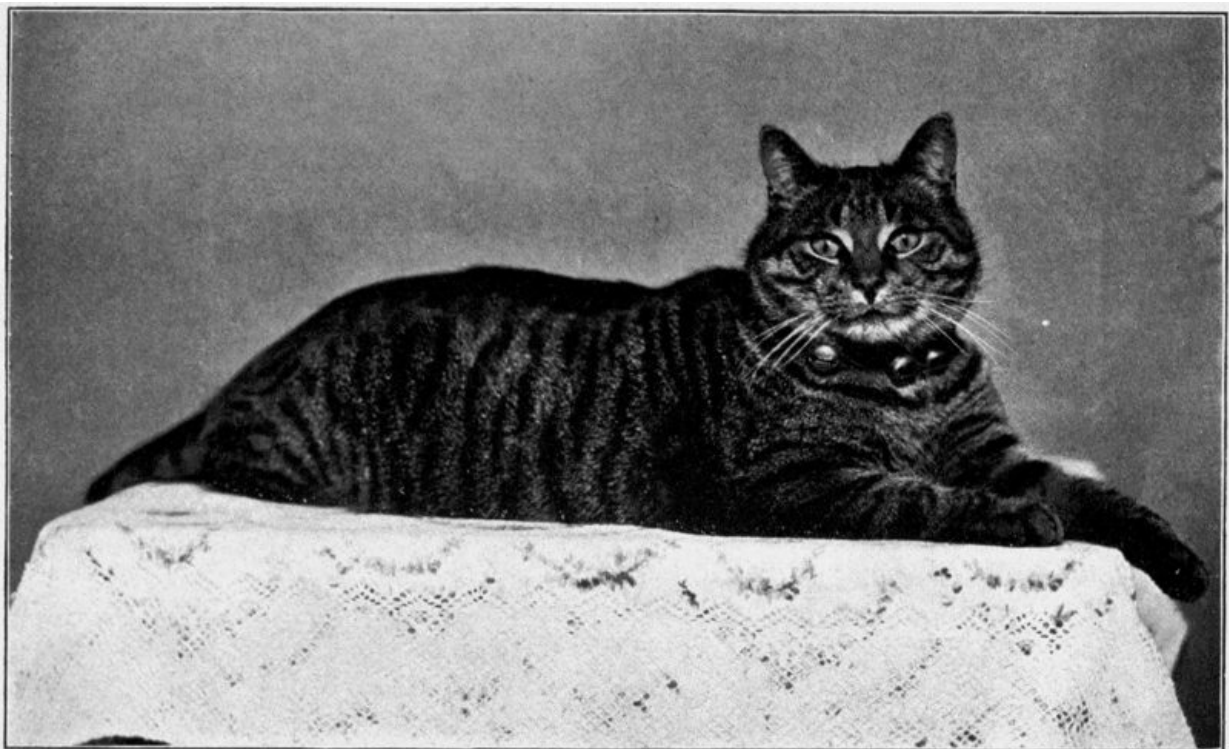
He was very fond of little orange-blossom biscuit. I kept some in a tin box under a table by the side of my bed. For several days, every time I would reach out of bed and tap on the box, Little Billee would come running for a piece. One day I was visiting with a friend, and we forgot all about the bird. Soon we heard rap, tap, tap, peep, peep, peep, and there was Little Billee standing by the box waiting for a piece. After that he would come many times a day. If I sent him away with a small piece, he would return directly for a large one. 15

I had quite a time teaching him to stay in his cage. The first day I put him in, I was afraid he would die of fright, and I left the cage on the floor for two days before he ventured in. After he had been going in and out for some time, I closed the door, but he was frightened quite as much as at first, and he would not go near the cage the rest of the day. Finally I tried taking the cage on my lap and shutting him in; he did not seem afraid then, and soon he did not mind being shut up in the morning when I was in my dressing-room, but he much preferred going in and out at his own sweet will. If I left him shut up in his cage and went back to bed, he was frantic until he was let out, and would then get in bed with me. For the first two weeks he was not happy if he was not on me somewhere. He would stay in bed with me for hours at a time, but when he became more accustomed to the 16

house he would play on the floor with a little piece of paper, cotton, or a ribbon, and eat his seeds and biscuit.

I dress my hair high, and it was Little Billee's special delight to sit on the top of my twist while I walked about my room. During the first few weeks, if I put him on the floor when he had been in bed with me, he would hop back and forth on the rug in front of my bed, and beg to be taken, as he could not fly straight up. I would put down my hand, he would hop upon my finger, and in a second be back inside the bed. If I was sitting in a chair, and put him down on the floor, he would climb right up from my feet to my neck, put his little bill in my mouth, and chirp with glee. One day he was on the floor, and did not see me go back to bed, but saw my wrapper over a chair which stood about a yard from my bed. He supposed I was inside of it, but, when he reached the top and found no mouth to put his bill into, he gave several very mournful peeps, but, as soon as I spoke to him, he chirped, and it did not take him long to fly over to me. The next day when I put him down on the floor, I was anxious to see what he would do. After teasing for some time for me to take him, he went to the chair, climbed up on the wrapper until he reached the top, then flew over to me. Ever after he came that way when I refused to take him. 17

One day I left Little Billee on the rug in front of the bed, and went into my dressing-room. While I was gone, my mother came in and sat down. He was much frightened. Every time she spoke to him, he ran under the bed, stuck his little head out from under the valance and peeped for me to come to him. When I spoke, he answered, but he was too much afraid to pass mother to come to me. When I came out, he ran quickly to me and flew on to the back of a very low chair. I bent down and he flew up on my shoulder, chirping as loud as he could. No little child could have shown more joy in getting back to its mother. I do not suppose he remembered any other mother, and thought all little birds have just such good mothers as I. 18



TAFFY

I have a magnificent big tiger cat named Taffy, so I thought Little Billee would be a very good name for my wee bird. It seemed a very appropriate name, too, as he spent a great deal of his time dressing himself and manicuring his nails. When he would strut about with his head held high, you could plainly see the long coat, high collar, high hat, and umbrella, and could easily imagine the original Little Billee was before you. But I am sorry to say Taffy and my Little Billee would never go walking arm in arm together. Twice Taffy caught Little Billee, but I rescued him from the jaws of death before any harm was done, and I tried my best to get them to live contentedly together. I would not allow Little Billee to go out into the hall, for fear he would fly down-stairs and be caught by Taffy before any one could reach him. Before the door into the hall is a small rug, and he thought flying over that a great feat, but when I would say: "Little Billee, come right home," he would return instantly. 19

He went to bed at eight o'clock in a little basket, which I put on the top of some hanging shelves, so there would be no danger from Taffy in the dark. Taffy slept on my bed every night, and very often on the outside when Little Billee was inside, and it seemed like the lion and the lamb lying down together. Little Billee would usually be contented in his basket until seven o'clock in the morning; then I'd take him into the bed with me, where he would lie quietly on my arm, neck, or palm until I got up at nine. He never peeped unless I spoke to him, then he would chirp away like a happy child. On fine evenings I'd sit before an open window from seven until eight o'clock with Little Billee on my finger listening to the birds. When he became sleepy, he would tuck his little head under his wing, and in a few minutes crawl into the palm of my hand and go sound asleep; then he would be ready for his basket. 20

When the hot wave came, I went down-stairs at seven o'clock, shutting him up in his cage. The second night I had hard work to catch him. He ran into the hall, and would not come when I called to him. The third night, when he saw me making preparations to dress, he acted like mad. He hopped all around me, put out his tiny wings, and tried to fly on to me; opened his bill, but not a sound came out. As I stood in front of my dressing-table, 21

he flew to the top of his cage, which stood on the floor, to the back of a chair which was near me, then up to my shoulder, chirping away so merrily that I knew he was saying: "Please take me with you."

Of course, after that, it is needless to say that I took him down-stairs, and he went down every night after, where he remained until eight o'clock, then was put into his basket, and I heard no more from him until morning.

On pleasant mornings I sat on the piazza, and Little Billee sat on my hand or played in my lap. When I walked on the sidewalk Little Billee went, too, and never offered to fly away, and when the wind blew he held on tight. Sometimes he sang, and always seemed interested in all that was going on about him. 22

Twice Little Billee flew out of my window from fright. Once he was on my shoulder when a very small girl with a very large hat came up to him, and away he flew. The next time a large bunch of ferns was brought to me. I thought he would like it and think it a nice little tree, but I was all the tree he seemed to care for. He was so frightened he flew on to a chair, and, as I held up a fern, out of the window he went. Both times when my maid went to look for him, she could not find him until she peeped, then he answered, and she found him sitting in the grass waiting to be picked up, and he was delighted to get back to me.

Little Billee never went to any one except my physician, and that was when I had had him about a week. He went to him, hopped all over his shoulder, picked at his collar and tie, and was very friendly. Later he would not even go to him, and I felt sure I was Trilby, and his only love. Perhaps the children who read this will think Little Billee was an angel bird and too good to live, but I will say right here he was too bad to die. Like all bright children, sometimes he was very naughty. For instance, when I wanted to lie quietly on my bed in the daytime and Little Billee did not, he would play for some time running up on the top of my pillow, then down again, hop on my arm, then under the sheet until he found my hand; back he would go and do the same thing over again. When he became tired of that, he would sit on my chin and be very loving, kiss me in the mouth, and chirp away. When he found I was not going to open my eyes or speak to him, he would peck and bite my eyes, nose, ears, cheeks, and lips, and I assure you they were not love bites, either. Then again, when he wanted to sit on my shoulder and I preferred he should sit on my hand, he would fly up every time I took him down, and bite hard at my hand, and, for such a little bird, he had a very big bite and a very fierce look. 24

He loved to visit my mother in her room, and was very happy walking all over her and on her head, but she was never able to touch him. He seemed to have eyes all over his head, for, no matter how careful she was, he always saw the finger. He thoroughly enjoyed my squeezing him in my hand, and kissing him over and over again.

No doubt, long ere this, my readers have been wondering what kind of a bird Little Billee was, but that is a question which has not yet been answered. But I loved Little Billee so dearly that it made little difference to me what his nationality was, or whether his ancestors came over in the Mayflower, fought in the American Revolution, or whether, like Topsy, he "just growed." It was amusing to see Little Billee the first time he heard the piano. One morning two friends came to see me, and, while one of them played, I lay on the sofa with Little Billee cuddled up on my neck. At first he was very much afraid, and did not know what to make of the music. Soon he became charmed, and craned his little neck way out, opened his bill, as if he were drinking in the sound, then reached around, kissed me in the mouth, snuggled down again for a few minutes, and repeated it as long as she played. 25

One morning I saw Little Billee lying on the floor before an open window with his neck stretched out and bill wide open. I thought he was dying, picked him up, but found him as lively as ever. When he did the same thing over again, I understood he was taking a sun bath, and from then on he took one every morning. One morning it was quite cold when we came in from our walk, and I sat down in front of the fire with Little Billee on my knee. It was amusing to see him put his head on one side, open his bill, and drink in the warm air. For six weeks he strongly objected to taking a water bath, and I really suppose he was too young and knew best. I left a little dish for several days on the floor by the side of his cage, but he was very careful not to go near it. One morning everything was very quiet, I on my bed and Little Billee playing about the room. Soon he went to the dish, looked in all four corners, came back to the first one, put his bill in just a little way, then went the rounds; did it all over again, putting his bill in a little farther, and shaking off the water. After debating a long time, he got on the edge of the dish, put his head in until it was all wet, then screwed up all his courage and in he went. Such a droll little figure as he cut, standing there with his body and head held as high as he could get them, his wings out just a little, not knowing what to do next. All I could think of was a very timid child going in wading for the first time, with long, thin legs, very short frock, and arms akimbo. His fear soon left him, and he was bathing like an old stager. When he finished, he got out, gave himself two or three good shakes, then came over to the bed, and asked me to take him. I did him up in my handkerchief, but that did not suit him at all. I could not do anything with him until I let him get on my bare neck, and covered him with the trimming of my dress. He was soaking wet, and shivering like a person having a hard chill. He kept very still until his feathers were dry enough to be dressed. Such shaking, dressing of feathers, and prinking I never saw. When his toilet was made to suit him, he nestled down under my chin, and we both slept for an hour. Every day we went through the same performance after the bath. One day I wanted to do something in my dressing-room, so thought Little Billee could take his bath and dry himself. 27

Soon I began to hear very mournful peeps, and I came out to find Little Billee, soaking wet, standing in front of my bed, thinking I was there, and teasing for me to take him. Of course I could not resist such pleading, so to bed we went. I know I completely spoiled him, but he was such a dear no one could help it. 28

Little Billee always took a great interest in my writing, and when I would sit down to my desk he was always on my shoulder, arm, or hand. His favourite place to sit was on my left hand between my first finger and thumb, as they held my portfolio on my lap, and peck at my paper and pen. One day he took the pen full of ink into his bill, then threw the ink all over my paper. He had great fun, too, in taking the paper off from the bottom of his cage, and carrying it all about the room, and would take it out as fast as I put it in. One day he went into his 29

cage, took the farthest corner of the paper in his bill, backed out, bringing the paper over his head until it was all on the floor, then went over to the opposite corner, took that in his bill, backed off the paper until he came to the end, then went around in a circle like the wind for perhaps a dozen times, with the paper perfectly straight out just like a sail. After a few moments I put the paper back; he took it right out in the same way, and did it all over again.

Another day he would not come to me when I put down my hand, but ran across the room. After trying for some time to make him mind, I got up and said: "Billee, I am going away and leave you," and started out into the hall. He came chasing after me, and after that would always do it when I told him I was going to leave him. If I went out of my room and told him he *must not* go, he would sit on a chair by an open window, or play about on the floor for an hour, and never think of flying out of the window or going out of the door. 30

I succeeded far beyond my expectations with Taffy and Little Billee. It hurt me very much to be obliged to punish Taffy when he would spring at Little Billee, as Taffy and I had been devoted to each other for two years; still I did not want him to kill my baby bird. One day Little Billee was sitting on my knee dressing his feathers and going through all sorts of antics, while Taffy sat a few feet away, gazing at him with longing eyes. I called to my maid to bring Taffy and hold him on her lap, and then let Little Billee peck and bite his paws, ears, and nose, and a more astonished cat I never saw. After we let Taffy go, he was found sitting on the cellar stairs in a most dejected way, rubbing his nose with his paw. For several days we did the same thing, until Taffy was afraid at the sight of Little Billee. One morning Taffy came to bed with me, and lay on my arm, while Little Billee sat on my shoulder. Soon Taffy put his chin on my chin, and Little Billee came and sat close to my cheek. Finally Taffy became so sleepy, he turned over, went fast asleep, and Little Billee hopped down on his back, and we lay that way for some time. Almost every day after that Taffy would lie on my lap, and Little Billee would sit on his head, back, or on my knee, and dress his feathers. One day Little Billee had the impertinence, while I had them both on my lap, to reach out and peck Taffy in the eye. That was a little more than Taffy could endure, and he reached out his paw and struck at him. I could not get Little Billee to go near him for over a week, when they became very good friends again. 31

Little Billee enjoyed going down into the parlours to see visitors, but he gave them to understand, the first thing, they might look but not touch. He would entertain them by hopping all over me, kissing me in the mouth, and chirping at the top of his voice. 32

When it began to get dark, Little Billee did not want to be off from me a minute. If I had him down-stairs, and put him on the floor, he would hop and fly after me from room to room. Once I left him in the front parlour on a plant-jar, and went into the dining-room and was gone some little time. When I came back there was no Little Billee to be found. I called him by name and peeped to him, but I could not get an answer. As I went up-stairs, I called: "Where is my Little Billee?" And he said: "Chirp, chirp, chirp," and I found him in my room eating his seeds and as happy as possible. 33

From then on, whenever he became tired of the parlours, he would go up-stairs, for he seemed to think my room his home. One day I watched him to see how he went. He hopped from step to step. When he reached the top, he flew into my room and lighted on the top of his cage.

Sometimes he waited for me at the top of the stairs, lying flat down, putting his head out just as a dog does his between his paws.

Little Billee certainly was not colour-blind, for he noticed every little change in my dress, no matter how slight it was. He had seen me for weeks in only my *robe de nuit* and wrapper. It was pitiable to see him the first time he saw me gowned in a white skirt and blue waist. I had to lie down when I had finished dressing, and Little Billee came over to the bed as usual and asked me to take him. I put down my hand, he hopped on my finger, but, when he looked up and saw the blue sleeve, away he went as if he had been shot out of a cannon. He tried several times, but his courage always failed. At last he gave up and went and sat in a chair across the room, and it was two days before he really liked the change. 34

Next I tried a pink waist with the white skirt, but that seemed even worse to him, which seemed very strange, as he had seen me for days in a pink and white wrapper.

One morning in November, I was trying my strength by doing a little dusting, after getting Little Billee's cage ready for the day. He was unusually happy and lively, but thought it was high time we went back to bed, so kept flying from the top of his cage, which was near me, to the bed and back again, teasing me to go with him.

He was always afraid of anything white, and, not thinking, as he flew back to me, I picked up my large cheese-cloth duster by one end and spread the rest out like a flag. The window and blinds were wide open, and to get out of the way of the cloth, he flew out the window, probably not having the least idea where he was going. I called to our maid to run across the street and look for him, thinking he had gone that way. 35

After she had looked an hour, we were told of a little brown bird that had been seen in the next yard sitting in the dry leaves. They said he seemed very tame, and looked as if he expected some one to come and pick him up. We were positive that it was our lost pet, but we could not find any further trace of him.

That night it grew very cold and rained hard until morning, and we have not a doubt that he perished, as he had always been used to his nice warm basket.

For days we were a very sad household, and many tears were shed.

CHAPTER II.

TAFFY AND TRICKSEY

I can hardly call Taffy a patient, as he is so well and strong. Perhaps an attendant would be more suitable, as he is always in the hospital, looking after the patients, and nothing goes on that he does not see, but Tricksey is suffering from the asthma.

Taffy is the largest tiger cat I have ever seen, and, as he has the crook in his tail, he belongs to the tabby breed. Taffy is very large, usually weighing fourteen pounds, but he has a very small head and very small, finely shaped paws. The under parts of them look like black velvet. In colour he is mostly jet-black, and the other fur, very much like a raccoon's, light tan at the ends, shading into yellow, then into drab. As the sun strikes him, every hair seems full of light, and he is one mass of iridescent colours. His marking is most beautiful. The top of his head is black, branching out into five narrow black stripes down his neck, a black stripe three inches wide (without one light hair) going all the way down the back and to the end of the tail and under; of course, on the tail the stripe is much narrower. Then narrow black stripes go down each side of his back and tail. His tail is not long, but very bushy, like a nice boa. I never saw more exquisite colouring and marking than Taffy has underneath, from his throat to his tail. His coat is beautifully soft and thick, and shines like satin, and his eyes are very green. He is particular about his toilet, but insists upon my helping him to keep it glossy. His own comb is kept on my dressing-table, and he asks me to comb him twice a day, and sometimes oftener. 37

I can tell you nothing of Taffy's antecedents, as I found him one morning in our back yard almost starved to death, and about as thick through the body as a shingle. At first I thought he had dropped from heaven, but I soon learned from his sayings and doings that he must have been quite intimate with the inmates of the lower region. I tempted him with chicken, but it was some little time before I could put my hand on him; and, to tame any animal, you must be able to touch it with your hand. After two or three pats, he seemed to realize that I was a good friend. Soon I had him in the house, and for three years we have been devoted to each other. I have had a great many cats, but never one who had so much of the wild animal in him. All of my friends said I never could tame Taffy, and it was many weeks before I had much influence over him, and I never feel quite sure now whether I am to be loved or scratched, as he still has the temper and the actions of a tiger when anything goes the wrong way. 38

He usually lies down like a tiger, with legs straight out in front, tail straight out behind, and when I speak to him he will always blink his eyes and speak to me. If you touch him in passing, he will grab at your feet and spit and growl. He never mews when he wants anything to eat, but will chase me or my maid, and grab at our feet. If he does not like what is given him to eat, he will walk all about his plate, and scratch, as if he were covering it up.

I am the only one Taffy ever shows much affection for, but to me he is very loving. He will lie as long as I will let him with his paws about my neck and head on my shoulder. If he is sound asleep anywhere, and I begin to read aloud, sing, or whistle, he will get up directly, jump on my lap, put his paws about my neck, his face close to mine, and begin to purr. As he always looks very pleasant, I flatter myself he likes the tone of my voice. 39

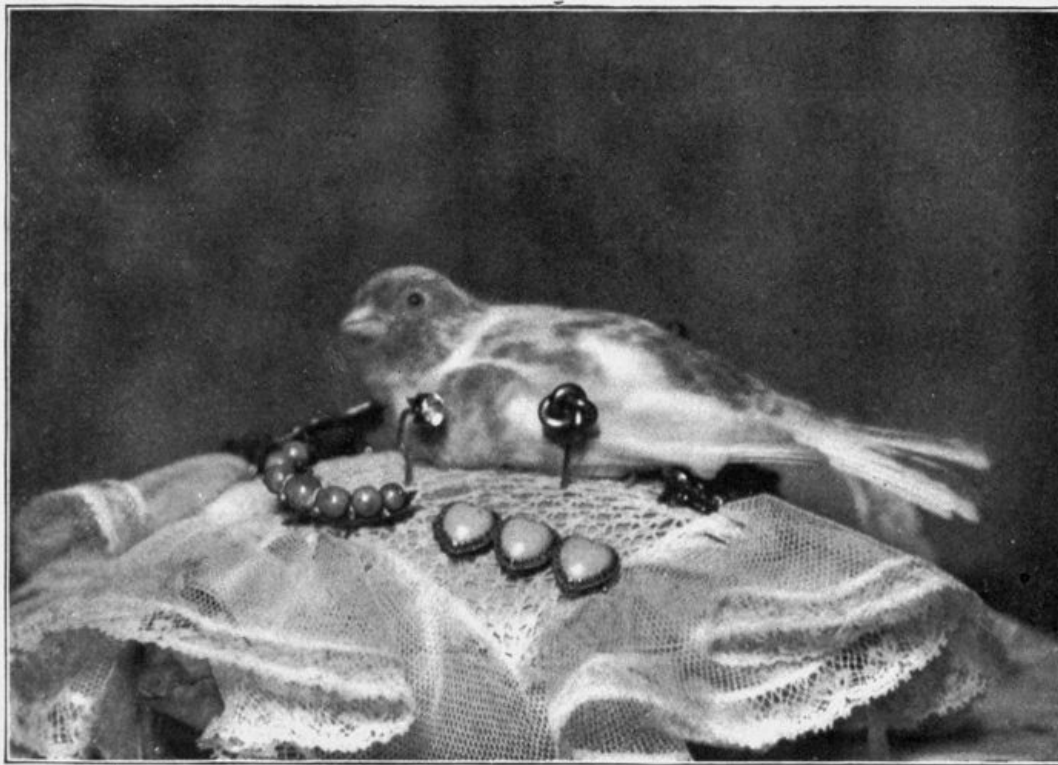
When I had my bird, Little Billee, it would make Taffy simply furious if I put him out of my room and closed the door. One morning he was so ugly, my maid did not dare open the door to come in.

After that, when I wanted him to go down-stairs, I had my maid come to the bottom of the stairs and call, "Taffy!" then there was never any trouble. When he is in a tearing rage, I can always quiet him by taking tight hold of his paws, and kissing his eyes. I have told all of these things about Taffy so my readers will appreciate what I have been able to do with him. It is needless to say that when Little Billee went away, Taffy was the happiest cat in town. His devotion increased daily to me, and he lived in my room, only going down to get something to eat. 40

I think by this time you are very well acquainted with Mr. Taffy, and I will present Tricksey to you. Of all the canary birds I have ever seen, Tricksey is the prettiest, daintiest little bird you can possibly imagine. His colour is light yellow, with a much deeper shade between his wings, shading into almost an orange. His wings and tail are white, with just a line of yellow on some of the feathers. His eyes are unusually large and bright, and his little legs and claws are very pink, and so slender that they do not look strong enough to support his finely shaped body. He is really a very superior bird, and sings like an angel. 41

Tricksey had never been out of his cage when he came to me, but, before I had had him a week, he came out, perched on my finger, took things from my finger or mouth, would kiss me, and go all about my room on my finger, and very soon went all about the house with me. He was very fond of sweet apple, but I never let him have it inside his cage, but made him come to me for it. I kept a piece in a little dish on my table, and he soon found out where it was, and would help himself on the sly. I also kept on my table, in a little china cup, some hemp seed, which I gave to Tricksey as a great treat. Every time I would tap on the cup and make it ring, Tricksey would come out of his cage, down from a picture-frame, or wherever he was, for a seed. 42

One day he had had his one hemp seed, and teased for more, but I said, "No," and he went flying about the room, having a fine time. Soon he flew back on the table, hopped over to the cup, gave it two or three taps to make it ring, then hopped on to the top, reached down and helped himself to two seeds.



TRICKSEY

Tricksey is a very vain little bird, and likes nothing better than to go over on my dressing-table, walk back and forth in front of the mirror, or sit on my pin-cushion and admire himself. 43

Tricksey came to me one afternoon, and Taffy knew nothing of his arrival until the next morning. When he came up-stairs and saw a little yellow bird in a house of gold, he was like the little girl's Bunnie, who "was not a bit afraid, but awfully much surprised," when she heard firecrackers for the first time. His eyes were like balls of fire, while his mouth opened and shut, making a hissing sound, and his tail going at the rate of a mile a minute. He walked into my room like a wild tiger, with an air as much as to say, "If this is Little Billee come back dressed in yellow, die he must," and sprang at the cage. I took him firmly by the paws, looked straight into his big, angry eyes, and said in a soft, firm voice: "Taffy, this is Tricksey, and he is not to be eaten or hurt any more than 44 my Little Billee who went away." I let go of his paws; he walked out of my room and down-stairs without looking back. In about an hour I looked out into the hall, and there sat my dear old Taffy on the top step, looking very meek and wishful. I spoke kindly to him, and asked him to come in and see his new brother, Tricksey. After a few moments, he came in very slowly and went behind my bed. Soon he came from under the valance (the cage sat on a chair and I in front of it), never looked at the cage, jumped into my lap, put his paws about my neck, and began loving me. I took him to bed with me, and he never moved until Tricksey began to sing in a most delightful way, then he looked at him and listened very intently. I talked to him, and "softed his feathers," and soon he snuggled down in my arm and went to sleep. When he got out of bed, he never glanced at the cage, but went directly down-stairs, and I felt I had made a good beginning. Every one said I could never teach Taffy not to 45 catch Tricksey, and the reason his cat-ship did not kill Little Billee was because he was afraid of him and so carefully watched. I knew there was not a place in the house I could hang the cage where Taffy could not get at it if he made up his mind to do so. Of course, for days and weeks I felt anxious, and did not mean to leave them alone together. I never turned Taffy out of my room. If he went up to the cage and put up his paw, I would say: "Taffy, you must *not* put your paw on the cage," and, as he always minds, he would take it right down, sit by the cage, and I would talk to him kindly. Fortunately, Tricksey was not at all afraid of Taffy.

Taffy always wears a yellow satin collar with bells all around. Often I would hear him coming up-stairs when I was lying down, and I would keep very quiet to see what he would do. Sometimes he would come over to the 46 cage, look at Tricksey pleasantly, then lie down by the fire and go to sleep; more often he would lie down without even looking at him. But the moment he heard me talking to Tricksey, he would get up and come to me to be petted, and I always gave him a great deal. One day when Taffy was in another room, I let Tricksey out, and tried to be very quiet. I was sitting on the floor with Tricksey hopping about me. Before I hardly knew it, Taffy was in my lap, and soon I had Tricksey on my knee eating seeds. If I took the cage on my lap with Tricksey inside, Taffy would immediately jump up and crowd in between the cage and me.

Taffy was very much afraid the first time he saw Tricksey take his bath, and ran under the bed and peeped out from under the valance.

One morning the cage sat on the floor, and Tricksey was ready for his bath, when Taffy came in and sat 47 close to the cage. Tricksey took a big drop of water in his bill and threw it into Taffy's face. Taffy moved back a little, and looked all about to see where it came from. While he was looking, Tricksey went into his bath, and splashed the water all over Taffy's face in a very roguish way. To say Taffy was surprised is speaking mildly. He turned to me with an angry cry and went out of the room. The next morning the same thing happened; but, instead of going out of the room, he went on the other side, out of reach of the water, but where he could see all that went on.

After that, he became so interested he did not mind if the water was splashed all over his face, and would sit as

close to the cage as he could get. While Tricksey was eating his breakfast, he would lie down close to the cage and go to sleep. As I previously said, I never meant to leave Taffy in the room with Tricksey, but he was often there hours before I knew it. When I found him, he was always asleep in front of the cage or by the fire. 48

One morning, after the bath, I put the cage up in the window. Taffy did not seem to like it at all. He looked at me most wishfully, and began talking cat language, and I knew he was saying: "Please put Tricksey back on the floor." I did so, and Taffy began to purr, lay down with his back close to the cage, stretched out, and went to sleep.

He had been lying that way for an hour when some visitors came. It seemed too bad to disturb Taffy, so I left him, and thought I would risk it.

Two hours passed before I went back, and you may imagine my delight when I found my two boys (so different in colour, size, and disposition) as happy as two kittens. Tricksey was singing merrily. Taffy had wakened, changed his position, and looked as if he felt very proud, being left to take care of his small brother. His eyes were as soft as velvet, and he spoke to me in a soft, cooing tone. Since then I have never felt there was any danger in leaving them together. I regret to say Tricksey has a strong will of his own, and almost as bad a temper as Taffy. 49

At different times I had three wee baby birds brought in to me, but they all died. Tricksey was very jealous of them, and when he saw me feeding them, he would become very angry, beat his wings against his cage, and beg for me to let him out. One day I put one of the little strangers on the floor and let Tricksey out. He flew at the waif and tore feathers out of the top of his head. I took the poor little frightened thing in my hand. Tricksey flew on my finger and pecked him. I put him in my other hand, and Tricksey flew at him more angry than ever. Then I put him on the floor, and Tricksey was so happy he flew on my head, hopped about my shoulders, and kissed me in the mouth. In the middle of the performance I walked dignified Mr. Taffy, with a look which plainly said: 50 "What more are you going to bring into this room?" He sat by my side looking at the newcomer, and, before I knew what he was going to do, reached out his paw, and gave him a good slap, which sent him off my lap on to the floor.

Early in the fall, before I had any fire in my room, I would bring Tricksey down in the morning and keep him until evening, and for two weeks Taffy never went near my room during the day, but stayed down there with Tricksey. The first day I had a fire in my room, I did not bring Tricksey down as usual. After I gave Taffy his luncheon, I missed him, but did not go to my room until five o'clock, and there was faithful Taffy sound asleep close to Tricksey's cage, and now he stays in my room all day. He has plainly shown that, if Tricksey stays there, he stays, too. 51

I find that animals want to be treated very much like children. The more intelligent they are, the easier it is to influence them, and the quicker they are to read you. First give them a great deal of love and kindness, always be firm, very patient, and above all *never* deceive them in the most trivial thing.

52

CHAPTER III. DEWEY

One morning my mother called to me, saying: "Here comes Charlotte with a bird." I wondered at first whether my little friend was bringing me another sparrow, but, when I saw him, I could not help exclaiming: "What a perfect beauty!" And the way he cuddled down in my hand immediately won my heart.

He was straightway named Dewey, but what kind of bird he was, I never found out. Some people said he was an oriole, others a meadow-lark, while others not a meadow-lark, but some kind of a lark. Again he seemed a little like a blue jay, and, in fact, had points like a dozen different kinds of birds. When he was first brought to me, he was evidently about six weeks old, quite large and fluffy, but very much of a baby, for he knew nothing about feeding himself. 53

His tail was long, olive on top, yellow underneath; wings black, with cream colour on the edges: on the lower feathers just a line, on the upper ones quite a little wider, at the top short yellow feathers, making lovely little scallops; head and back olive-brown; rump more on the yellow, with a tinge of blue under the wings, and belly only tinted. As he grew older, he kept changing, and when nine months old his breast was light orange, belly light yellow, head and back deeper olive, rump deeper yellow. At one time he broke his tail off, and when it came in, the upper feathers were black, with yellow a quarter of an inch at the rump, while the under feathers were yellow and black. On his head were almost invisible stripes of black, and on his neck pretty broken, wavy ones. His eyes were large and bright, and his bill, so every one said, was the handsomest they had ever seen, it was so very long, and pointed as a needle. Underneath it was ivory-white, and on top black, with a white star at the head. But the admiration of all were his legs and claws, as he kept them so clean, and they were a beautiful blue, just the shade of malachite. He was seven inches long, and when nearly a year old began getting black spots over his eyes and on his throat. Now, what kind of a bird was he? Do you know? At any rate, I know he was a little rogue, and an imp for getting in mischief. 54

When he was given me, I installed him right away as an inmate of my hospital, where I then had two birds, Tricksey, a beautiful canary, and Cervera, a dirt-coloured sort of bird, with big, staring eyes and a bill almost as large as his head, which was perfectly flat. He was about the size of the canary, but only had his baby feathers and one tail feather. Surely, he was not a handsome bird, and I could not blame Dewey for never liking him. 55

When night came, I tried putting Dewey in the cage with Tricksey and Cervera, but Cervera pecked at him so much, and made poor Dewey's life so miserable, I had to take Cervera out, and make him sleep in a basket by himself. Tricksey and Dewey, however, became great friends, and immediately put their wings close together and went to sleep.

In the morning, when the birds were let out on the floor, it was amusing to see Cervera mimic everything Tricksey did. If Tricksey took a drink, Cervera would, and would follow everywhere he went. When Dewey saw Taffy coming into the room for the first time, every nerve quivered with fright, as he did not know what that huge striped thing with shining green eyes was. Tricksey stood near Dewey, and I feel sure he whispered in his ear: "You need not be at all afraid; that is only Taffy, the cat, and we are the best of friends," for after that he never had the least fear of Taffy. Taffy jumped into my lap, the three birds stood on the table, and I fed them by turns their bread and milk. 56

I soon found Dewey was a great mischief. One morning I left him loose in my room, and, on my return, what a sight greeted my eyes! He had taken all the pins and anything he could pick up, and thrown them on the floor. He had overturned a basket filled with ribbons and lace; some of the ribbons he had left on the floor, while with others he had decorated his cage, and in the cage I found a pair of heavy sleeve links, which he had thrown in his drinking-cup, while on the floor of the cage were two large coral hairpins, two shell pins, some studs, and another pair of cuff-buttons.

For a moment I stood speechless, then said: "You rogue of a bird, how shall I punish you?" But I did not have the heart to punish him, and, taking him in my hand, kissed him again and again. 57

When Tricksey had the asthma very badly, sometimes a little whiskey on some sugar would relieve him. It was funny to see Cervera manoeuvre to get Tricksey off the perch, so he could eat the sugar and whiskey himself. Tricksey, however, I am sorry to say, grew worse instead of better, and one morning I was awakened early by his hard breathing. I took him off his perch, and found his claws ice-cold. He lay in my hand a few moments, pitifully gasping for breath, then threw back his pretty head, and all was over. We were heart-broken, and shed many tears, for we were powerless to bring back to life that little bird we loved so dearly.

I really felt sorry for Cervera. I believe he missed Tricksey, and for days seemed to be looking for him. One evening, like a flash, he flew out of the window, and I was never able to find him again. From then on, I could give more time to Dewey, as he was my only visitor left in the hospital. 58

One day, when I had him in the dining-room, I gave him a piece of sweet apple, which he seemed to enjoy immensely. The next morning Dewey was missing, and I looked for him everywhere up-stairs, as he had never gone down-stairs by himself, but he was nowhere to be found. At last I happened to go down in the dining-room, and there, quiet as a mouse, he sat on the sideboard, eating his fill of apple. After that, when he wanted anything down-stairs, he went for it himself.

He loved grapes better than any other fruit, and, no matter where he was, if I only said, "Dewey, would you like a grape?" he would fly to me, light on my finger, and go with me into the closet for one. One morning I again thought he was lost, but he was found safely in the dark closet eating a grape. When he wanted one, he would hop back and forth on the back parlour table, then on top of a high-back chair, and tease until one was given him. He liked best to have me hold a grape in my right hand, while he perched on my left, when he would suck all the rich, sweet juice next the skin first, then he would take the pulp over on a table and knock it until all the seeds came out before he ate it. 59

He liked flies, too, but spiders were his especial treat, and when he saw me with my handkerchief done up in my hand, he seemed to know what was inside, and would light on my finger, open the handkerchief, and take Mr. Spider out. He liked bananas, too, and would go to the fruit-dish and open one by himself.

Often in the morning at breakfast, he would perch on the plate or finger-bowl beside me, and eat his bit of orange. Usually I had my orange in my room, and sometimes Dewey would get so impatient he would fly over to the bed, back to the orange, and beg me to get up. He always took a drink out of the finger-bowl, and in the autumn, although he was put to bed by five o'clock, at seven he would be awakened and taken down to the dining-room for dessert. 60

One night he evidently became tired of waiting, and by himself went into the dining-room very quietly. We heard a great splashing, and the first thing we knew he had plunged into a finger-bowl and was having a bath to his heart's content, soaking everything as well as himself. Of course, it was very cunning, but, after he had done it for three nights, we decided two baths a day were too much for him. Dewey, however, had made up his mind that if he could not take a bath in the finger-bowl at night, he would in the morning, and, as he refused to go near his old bath-tub, I had to give in to him, and the bowl was given him for his own.



DEWEY READY FOR HIS BATH

It is surprising how few children have seen a bird take a bath, so I often had little visitors come in to see Dewey at his ablutions. One afternoon he wanted a second bath so badly that he went into the dining-room, got into a finger-bowl without any water, and positively would not get out until water had been put in and he had his bath. Just to try him once, I put the bowl on the floor in front of Taffy, but it did not bother Dewey in the least; in he went just the same. There was a bowl of Wandering Jew on the dining-table, and several times he took a bath in the centre of it. It was indeed a beautiful picture, but when I found he was tearing the vine to pieces, I decided it was not so pretty, and I gave Dewey many lectures for it; but he heeded them not, and, if taken away, would walk (for he could walk as well as hop) all over the table on the ends of his toes, and look everywhere but toward the bowl. Then, when no one was looking, he would grab a piece of the Wandering Jew and fly with it to the top of a picture. One day he trimmed all the pictures, and there was none left in the bowl, so after that he had to look for new mischief.

The next day he could not be found for a long while, and where do you suppose I at last found him? Sitting in the midst of some huge white chrysanthemums. If he had been sitting there quietly, no harm would have been done, but the imp had been busy every minute, looking for delicious black bugs, and to get them he was obliged to tear out all the petals.

Once he tasted some wine, and liked it so well that whenever any one came in and had some cake and wine, he would fly down on their plate, take a bite of cake, hop up on the wine-glass and take a sip of wine. In the autumn we had some very fine cider, and whenever any one came in, we would offer them some. One day Dewey saw some on the luncheon-table, and, hopping on the edge of the glass, took a taste. One taste did not seem enough for him, however, and he liked it so well that after that I gave him some each day in a whiskey glass. He was a regular little gourmand, and liked all kinds of fresh fruit and preserves, but wine jelly and whipped cream was the best of all.

Sometimes I used to take him down to dinner with me, when I would give him his own little table-cloth, and have a plate for him by my side. He would usually take a little of everything, and chicken and cranberry jelly seemed especially to tickle his palate. Sometimes he did not behave very well, and he would go tiptoeing across the table to my mother's plate, hop on the edge, and see if she had anything he liked. When dinner was ready to be served, he would often fly over to the sideboard, make holes in all the butter balls, then he would take some mashed potato and boiled onions and put them to cool in a big hole he had made in an apple.

Few people know that birds are ever sick to their stomachs. Dewey had been in the habit of eating a little shaved hickory-nut, that was put in a half-shell and kept in a dish on the back parlour table. When he came down-stairs, he would usually take a taste, and it seemed to agree with him. For a change one day, I gave him some chestnut, and when I came in the room a little later, I found him huddled up in a corner, trying to go to sleep. As soon as I saw him, I knew he was not well, for he never acted that way in the daytime. I put him back in his cage, and sat

down beside him. He would close his eyes and open his bill, and I thought he was dying until all of a sudden he opened his bill very wide, and out came the chestnut in a lump half an inch long and one-quarter wide.

My writing-desk was a favourite place of his. He would get into the drawers, pigeonholes, and ink, and pictures and all sorts of small things he would throw on the floor. Once he stole several dimes and pennies, and he could lift a silver dollar, and often would carry a coffee-spoon all about the room, so you see he had a very strong bill. 65

If anything was lost, I always blamed it on Dewey. One day I looked high and low for my thimble. I asked Dewey where it was; he pretended not to hear me, but, as I was going into my dressing-room, he dropped it down on my head from the top of the portière. He would often perch on a basket on top of the bookcase in the writing-room. One day I left a new white veil there, and when I went to look for it, I found Dewey had improved it greatly in his own estimation. There were about ten little holes right in the front of it, some round and some star shaped.

As he grew older, he would not sleep in his cage. For a few nights he insisted on sleeping on the brass rod at the head of the bed, then changed to the top of the curtain, where I put a piece of soft flannel over some cotton on the ledge and on the wall, so he would not take cold. If it was very cold, he would go behind the frill of the curtain out of every one's sight, but, if it was warm, he would turn around so his tail would hang over the outside. When I would come in in the evening, he would open his eyes and nod to me, and, if not too sleepy, would come down and sit on my hand. He would never chirp or peep, and when he hid and heard me call, "Dewey, Dewey," he would not answer, but would fly down on my head, shoulder, or hand. 66

Taffy often would get very angry with him, and sometimes I know he felt like killing him. Dewey would wake up early in the morning, and take his exercise by flying back and forth from a picture on one side of the room to the head of the bed. When Taffy was on the foot of it, he would fly very low, almost touching him with his wings, as much as to say: "You lazy cat, why don't you wake up and hear the little birds sing to God Almighty? Why don't you wake up?" Taffy would reply in words of his own that are not used in polite society, and the next thing I would see his tail disappearing around the corner of the door. 67

Before Dewey went to sleep at night, he would exercise again. One afternoon Taffy was trying to take a nap in a chair in the back parlour. Dewey kept flying over him, making a whizzing sound with his wings. When Taffy could endure it no longer, he went into the writing-room and sat down by me. Dewey came in and perched on the table to have a little luncheon. Taffy stood up on his hind legs, reached out a velvet paw, and gave Dewey such a slap he fell on to the floor. The bird was not hurt in the least, but flew up on the picture, and seemed to laugh at the punishment and scolding Mr. Taffy got. Taffy did not take his punishment with the best of grace, and there were many naughty words he said, while he scratched and bit, but at last he was conquered, and after that always behaved like a little gentleman toward Dewey. 68

The first time he saw the snow, Dewey seemed wild with delight, and flew to the window, trying to catch the pretty white flakes, but when he heard sleigh-bells, they seemed to strike terror to his heart, as I suppose he thought a whole army of cats was coming, as all he knew about bells were those on Taffy's collar.

At one time I was ill, and had to send for a physician whom Dewey had never seen. When the doctor came upstairs, Dewey hid behind the curtain, watching him intently as he fixed the white powder in a paper. When the doctor laid it on the table, down swooped Dewey, grabbed it, and flew with it to his cage. My mother at this time was ill for many weeks, and it kept Dewey busy, as he would carry off all her sleeping powders. One day he put them behind her bed, evidently thinking that there they would not taste so badly and do her just as much good. He would always watch the doctor intently, as he mixed the medicine, and Dewey seemed to think it great fun peering into the tiny little bottles in the medicine-case. He would stand on the ends of his toes and crane his neck to watch him drop the medicine into the tumblers. 69

Dewey's end came at last, however, in a tragic manner. Some Christmas roses were brought in to me one day, and they looked so tempting to Dewey that he took several bites from them, and the next day took some more. He acted queer after that, and kept opening his bill. I thought he had something in his throat, and gave him some water, which seemed to help him for the time being. The next afternoon I found him panting on the floor. I took him to an open window, gave him some wine, and the attack seemed to pass, and apparently he was as well as ever when I went down to dinner that night. When I returned to my room late in the evening, there was no bird to greet me from the curtain. I looked on the floor, and there lay my darling Dewey stiff and cold. 70

71

CHAPTER IV. TRINATA

One Sunday in June a small bird a good deal like a sparrow flew into Trinity Church. He flew down the centre aisle, and, evidently drawn to it by the light, perched on the brass cross underneath the exquisite chancel window. When the choir began to sing, he joined in at the top of his voice, then flew over to the bishop's chair, peeping and chattering away, making himself as conspicuous as possible. Of course, like anything new in church, he took all the attention of the congregation from the minister. From the bishop's chair, he quickly flew on a girl's shoulder, who caught him in her hand, and put him on the stone steps outside the door. Here the little traveller was picked up by another little girl, taken to Sunday school with her, and finally was brought to me. 72

The poor bird was almost famished, and I hurried him up to my hospital, which at that time had but one patient, Theodore Roosevelt, a wild pigeon who had been badly burned by an electric wire. I gave him crackers and milk (it is better for little birds than bread and milk, and easier to swallow), and, when he had had his fill, he tried to

tuck his head under his wing and go to sleep. This he had to give up, as he had a large head, but few feathers, and small wings, but he nestled up in my hand and was soon fast asleep.

He was not a handsome little fellow, in fact, he was very homely. Some thought him an English sparrow, but I doubt whether he was, as they are all so timid, and he was far from that, always wilful, and did just about as he pleased. 73

All day he stayed on my finger or dress, and when it began to grow dark, he discovered the negligée I had on was open at the throat, and a fine place to crawl into. I rocked him to sleep that night, and always after that he would not stay in his basket at night one minute unless I first rocked him to sleep on my bare neck.

Don't you think Trinata a pretty name? I gave that to him as he went to service at Trinity Church. Every one said he did not know his name, but I thought he did. After he had been in the hospital for a couple of weeks, he ran, or rather, flew, away. I had been trying to sew, and could not keep him off me. He would crawl into the palm of my right hand, and did not seem to care how hard I squeezed him, then into the left, and did not mind a prick or two from the needle. I saw the sewing did not make much headway, so finally I gave up and started to take my work down-stairs. I closed the door, or else he would have flown right after me, but I forgot the blinds were wide open in my dressing-room. He evidently went in there, and the temptation to fly out was too much for him. 74

On my return to my room, I looked everywhere, and had given up all hopes of ever seeing him again, when I spied three birds down the street, two large ones and a small one, which looked suspiciously like Trinata. When I got near enough, I began to peep, and the large ones flew away, but the little one went hopping along, and when within a few feet I called out "Trinata, Trinata." He turned in an instant and stopped. I put out my finger and he hopped on. It was noontime, and the street was full of people, who looked with wondering eyes to see a wee bird in the middle of the street hop on my fingers. It proved he knew his name, at any rate, and I was so glad to get him back that, instead of scolding, I was only too glad to give him something to eat and rock him to sleep. He was a forlorn-looking mite, all mud and grass stain, and so tired and faint that he could hardly perch. I think he, too, was glad to get back, for he never ran away again. 75

One evening a little boy and girl came rushing to me with two filthy baby sparrows. Their legs and claws were so encrusted with "smelly" mud they could not hop. So the first thing was to get as much off as possible before they could be put to bed, and in the morning I gave them a bath in violet water, after which Jack and Jill, for so I named them, looked far better, and Jack turned out to be a perfect beauty.

Trinata became rather jealous of them, and one day, when Jack and Jill were close together on my chest, he hopped down upon my shoulder, wedged himself in between them, and pecked at them until they flew way. Teddy Roosevelt, the pigeon, as was right, lived in the executive mansion, but Trinata did not stand at all in awe of him. He went in to see him quite often, and made his presence known by nipping his toes or pulling his tail feathers. Teddy, however, did not like it, and often he would drive Trinata out. 76

Jill was very much in love with Jack, and usually would do anything he told her, but one day she thought she would coquette a little and not mind. Jack tried his best to get her to come inside the cage, but she paid not the slightest attention to him. At last he went to the open door, took her by the wing, and pulled her inside just as a mother would take a child. We all thought it very cunning; but the next day, when Trinata seized Jill by the leg, and dragged her way across the floor, I thought it a bit too much, and gave Trinata the good scolding he deserved. 77

Jack and Jill, however, were really most annoying to Trinata, chasing after him, screeching, and opening their bills very wide, just as if he was their mother and would drop some goodies in. One day he was perched on the window-sill of the executive mansion, when up came Jack and Jill with gaping mouths. In turning to go away, Trinata saw on Teddy's floor a piece of court-plaster that had come off from his wing. Trinata picked it up and dropped it in Jack's mouth. He spit it out, and then the tender morsel was thrust down Jill's throat by Trinata. After that they never begged him to feed them.

Most birds get used to certain dresses that a person wears, and usually are frightened when they see them in anything else, but Trinata was never afraid. Once I put on a large hat covered with pink roses, thinking surely that would frighten him, but he only tucked his head under his wing and went to sleep on my shoulder. Another time I put a rustly silk skirt over my head when he was on top, but not an inch did he budge. When dressing, he would often get inside my waist, and I would fasten it up, leaving just enough room for him to stick out his head. He did not mind soap and water in the least, and very often would perch on me while I was taking my morning bath, keeping up an incessant chatter through it all. He delighted in visitors, and would light on their hands without the least sign of fear, and one day he tried to perch on a gentleman's bald head, but found it too slippery. Children all loved him, for he was not at all exclusive, and would let them handle him all they wished. 78

The rougher I played with him the better he liked it, and I would throw him here, there, and everywhere, but he would be back on me quicker than a flash. I do not believe many birds help make the bed in the morning, but Trinata used to try to, and seemed to think it great fun. He would fairly run from bottom to top and back again, never minding if sheets and blankets were thrown over him. When the day spread was put on, he was told to keep off, but he seldom obeyed, and would play a long time trying to pick up the embroidered pink flowers. 79

At that time two or three birds were brought into the hospital nearly every day. Some died from wounds, and some from starvation when I was unable to make them eat. One day I had a forlorn baby sparrow, a dainty yellowbird (not much larger than a bumblebee), and two baby Baltimore orioles. When night came, I felt like the old woman who lived in her shoe, for I had so many birds I didn't know what to do.

I could not supply them all with separate baskets, so I took a large round one, all gilded, and filled it with 80

cotton, then made little indentations so it looked like many little cots. First the strangers were put in, next Jack and Jill, and they all lay quietly, but, when it came to Trinata, there was a row. He evidently had no intention of sleeping with that motley crowd, and would not stay in one second. He knew his own basket, and would never sleep in any other, or have any bird sleep with him. In the morning one of the orioles was dead, but another a year old came to take its place. He was a beauty, but had been shot by some cruel, wicked boy. One wing was broken, so he could never fly again, and he had a bad sore, so for days I thought he could not live, but careful attention brought him out all right. I named him the Prince of Wales, and the other oriole the Princess, who turned out to be the biggest mischief you can imagine.

About that time a dear little chipmunk (whom I named McKinley) came to the hospital, and his life was made miserable by the Princess. She would steal his food, examine his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth with her long bill, and, when he would not be looking, would give his tail a good pull. 81

The morning of the Fourth of July was intensely warm, so I moved all the birds into the hall, where it was cooler. Trinata was put by himself, because if he was shut up in a cage with Jack and Jill, he would amuse himself by pecking them and not letting them get on any of the perches. If they would try, he would lift them up by the feathers of their heads, then throw them down on the bottom of the cage. Jack and Jill, then, were put in a cage with the Prince and Princess, and they all looked very sleepy when I darkened the hall and went out. Few people who keep birds, and especially wild ones, know that they like to be in the dark during the middle of the day, and it simply ruins a canary to be left in the sun all day long. 82

You may imagine my surprise when I returned to the hall an hour later to find the Prince in the cage alone. One of the birds had pried open the place where a food-dish had been, and Jack, Jill, and the Princess had gone through the shutter. The Prince probably realized he could not fly, so stayed at home. I never found any trace of Jack and Jill, but, after looking an hour, located the Princess. I had only had her about a week, and did not think she knew her name. As soon as she heard my voice, she answered, but was afraid to come down, as there were so many boys with firecrackers in the street. Finally she was frightened to the top of a very tall tree, where some robins chased her, and she flew blocks away. A hard thunderstorm came, and the rain fell in such torrents that I was sure I had seen the last of my pretty Princess. After having her liberty for hours, I thought I heard her voice in the next street. I went to the open window and called, "Princess." She answered, and every time I called, the answer came nearer. Soon I saw her fly across the street and light on the roof of a house. I hurried over and held my hand as high as I could, when down she flew and lighted on my finger. I think it marvellous, her coming back, especially as she had been gone over four hours. 83

Taffy grew more and more jealous of Trinata every day, probably not liking it that I kept him with me so much of the time. He insisted upon staying in the hospital all day, and often there would be nine or ten birds loose in the room. Frequently he would be there hours before I knew it, and then I would not know if I did not happen to hear the bells on his collar. Then I would lift up the valance of the bed and find him stretched out full length, looking as happy and lamblike as though there was not a bird anywhere near. One day a lady saw him trying to catch a bird in the street, and she called out: "You silly cat, why don't you go up-stairs where there is a room full of them?" He would never pay the slightest attention to the birds until I would come in the room, and Trinata would light on me. Then he would come up to me, wave his tail, and seem consumed with jealousy. 84

One evening when he saw Trinata on me, it seemed as if he could not contain himself any longer. He was like a wild tiger fresh from the jungle. I could not pacify him, so sent him down-stairs. At dusk I stood in my dressing-room door and saw Taffy sneak under my bed. I was called down suddenly and forgot him. When I went back a few moments later, I missed Trinata at once. When I could not find him, I remembered Taffy, and rushed down to look for him. He came up from the cellarway looking pleasant and happy. I took him directly up to my room and asked him about his little brother, Trinata. He rubbed against me, purred, and the fierce tiger had all left him. I took him down and said: "Taffy has not taken Trinata, for he never looks or acts like this when he is guilty." In a few moments I was called out on the back stoop, and there sat Taffy with Trinata's mangled remains before him. When he saw me, he began to cringe and crouch, and there was not the slightest doubt of his guilt. I never knew him to eat a bird before, and I feel sure, when he heard me calling him, he swallowed Trinata almost whole, thinking I would never find out where he went, and of course it made him deathly sick. Late that evening he came into my mother's room. First he stood in the door. I did not notice him. He kept coming nearer and nearer, and finally jumped into my lap, putting both paws about my neck, and began loving me. For days he was in disgrace, and for two months he never entered my room. 86

He hated Trinata out of pure jealousy of me, so killed him. He has never noticed the other birds since, and sleeps quietly for hours, with any number flying about him.

87

CHAPTER V. CADY

One day when my hospital was so full of birds I did not know which way to turn, a little girl came in with a nice fat baby robin. I said: "I cannot take another patient, for my hospital is full to overflowing." She begged so hard, and said: "I have taken it away from a cat three times. The father and mother bird have gone and left it, and I cannot make it eat." I could not resist such pleading, and said: "I will feed it for a few days, then let it go." But my few days lasted for a year and a half.

Just at that time I was having a very pleasant correspondence with Mrs. Stanton, so I said: "I am going to name the bird Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and call it Cady for short, so, if it turns out to be a boy, as she always 88

wanted to be, the name will be all right.”

I had no trouble in making Cady eat, and of all the birds I ever had, he was the most interesting. He seemed to understand anything I said to him, and would talk to me by the hour. We had no difficulty in understanding each other's language, but I expected every day to hear him say real words.

For many weeks he lived on crackers and milk, then Mocking Bird Food, with only two meal worms a week, for they are very rich. He loved them dearly, and it was very hard sometimes not to give in to him when he asked for more. He knew where they were kept, and often turned over the bottle and tried his best to get them out. He always played with a worm a long time before eating it. Then all at once he would give his head a good toss, and down the worm would go. 99

One day he treated a large rubber band in the same way he did his worm, and, before I realized there might be danger, it had disappeared. I was dreadfully frightened, and watched him carefully all day, but he seemed none the worse for a change in his diet.

I had him for a year and a half, and his food always consisted of the Mocking Bird Food, meal worm, and cracker and milk for his supper at five o'clock. He was so fond of the latter, I could not take it away from him entirely, and when five o'clock came, he always knew and made me understand it was time for his supper, and would not touch his other food, no matter how much he had in his dish. He grew to be very large and strong and the handsomest robin I have ever seen. He was very playful, and had many playthings and played with them like a dog. Corks were his special delight, and he had many sizes. A piece of embroidery he could put his bill through would amuse him many hours. He knew his name in a very short time, and, when a baby, if he heard my voice, or even saw me out in the yard, he would call just as birds do for their mother. He was full of mischief and very foxy. He never was caged, and lived on the floor and his perches. 90

I would often see him on the top perch, looking very intently over into one corner; then I knew he was like the little girl, “when I be's still, I be's thinking mischief.” In an instant he would turn and make a dive for one of the canaries. I had three canaries at that time, and one day I went into my room to find feathers all over the floor and many spots of blood, and Cady on the highest perch looking as innocent as a baby. After looking about, I found the dear little things in a most dilapidated condition. I was afraid Judy would die, for her wing was put out of joint, but she finally recovered. 91

Every morning when I took my bath, Cady would come into my dressing-room and have a visit, perched on the wash-stand or towel-rack, and tell me many stories. He was a great lover of water, but he would not take his bath alone, and I always had to play with him. He would wait for me until noon, or, in fact, all day. I gave him a large square willow-ware vegetable dish for his tub, which my friends thought much too good for him, but nothing was too good for Cady. He always insisted upon having fresh water for his bath, and never would take it in water that had stood in the pitcher overnight. Many times I tried to fool him, but he was too smart for me. When he was ready for his bath, he would go into my dressing-room and chirp, then come back to me, go back again, and keep it up until I got the water. Then the fun commenced. I began by taking water in my hand and throwing it at him. He would hop all over the room, come back to me for more, dance around first on one foot, then on the other, turn his back to me, then face me. After we had played enough in that way, he would hop into the water, and I would take a whole handful of water and throw over him, then he would begin work in good earnest, and such splashing you never saw. 92

He certainly was a sight when he had finished and hopped about the room with streams of water running off him. It took him a long time to make his toilet, for every feather had to be preened just so.

At that time I had a dear little boy sparrow named “Mack,” who was a beauty and very bright. When Cady took his bath, he always came down and took a shower bath. In the fall I began Cady's music lessons, and every one laughed at the idea of my thinking I could teach him to sing with me. Every day after luncheon I spent an hour with him. I would put him on the back of a chair by the piano and play and sing a very catchy little waltz song, and I kept it up for weeks before he would sing at all, but I knew by his looks and actions he was taking it all in, so I was determined I would not give up. Finally one day he began to follow me with the sweet notes of a canary, and I hardly dared breathe, but went right on singing as if I did not hear him, and from that day on he improved with every lesson. Next I took the waltz song “First Love” from “Olivette,” and he showed great delight with the change, and entered right into the spirit of the song. We sung that for many weeks, always beginning our lessons with the first waltz song. Then for a change I thought I would try him with a waltz song, “May Blossoms,” which was entirely different in style and tone. He liked that best of all, and it was simply marvellous the way he sang it. He was always in such a hurry to sing it, he would often begin before the music. I began with the idea of giving him a prize when we had finished our lessons, but that did not suit him at all, and he gave me to understand that he must have one to begin on. He soon learned to take his position on the chair when I brought him into the parlour. I would begin to play, and sometimes, before he thought, he would sing a few notes, then he would remember his treat, and down he would hop into a chair, then over to another chair which stood in the back parlour, as he was afraid of a fur rug that lay between the doors, and would never put his claws in it. He would perch on the arm of the chair until I went to my tea-table and got a crumb of biscuit or cake and gave to him, then he would hop back the way he came, take his position, and begin to sing. After his lesson he always had a taste of honey and a drink of water out of a whiskey glass. He seemed very proud of his accomplishments, and was always more than willing to show off for visitors,—take a bath as well as sing for them. 93
94



CADY TAKING HIS SINGING LESSON

One day he was in the back parlour and wanted to go into the front parlour. A gentleman was sitting with his legs crossed in the chair that was his stepping-stone, and what to do he did not know. Several times he hopped on to the first arm, then on to the floor, would look at the fur rug, but could not get up enough courage to go over it. Again, as he hopped on to the arm, his eye caught the toe of the gentleman's shoe. In an instant he was on it and over into the front parlour, singing with great glee over his cunning feat. 95

One day in the spring, when I was giving him his lesson, a friend came in with a very large dog. Cady had never seen a dog before, and I was afraid he would die of fright and that his voice was ruined for ever. I could not get him to sing a note for many weeks. He showed the same fear every time I brought him down to the parlours. After he had finished moulting in the fall, he was more beautiful than ever. Every feather was perfect and shone like satin. I brought him down-stairs to show to a friend, and the first thing he did was to take his position on the chair by the piano and begin to chirp, and I knew he was asking me to play for him. For six months he had not sung a note, so you may imagine my delight when he poured the sweetest trills of the best bred canary. Like all robins, Cady was a very early riser, and during the summer he would wake me at five o'clock in the morning, and I would have no peace until I opened my blinds. Of course, it was very nice for Cady, but, oh, poor me! Never before or since have I ever gotten up so early, for sleep was out of the question. He would come down on my bed, perch on my shoulder, and send the sweetest trills right down into my ear, but I could not fully appreciate them at that early hour. If that did not take effect, he would peck my hands; if I put them under the cover, then my eyes, cheeks, nose, and mouth. 97

I regret very much that Cady's photograph was not taken when he was taking a sun bath. He would toss back his head, spread out his wings, lean against anything that was most convenient, and a lady with a train posing for her portrait could not have been more graceful. Every one said: "When winter comes, Cady will feel the cold," but Cady had no intention of being cold, and a warm room was all the Florida he cared for.

Instead of a sun bath, he took a fire bath, and often before he went to sleep for the night he would perch on the back of a low chair by the fire, and drink in all the warm air he could hold.

The first autumn I had Cady, I was told I must clip his wings, for he was never caged. A friend came one day, and we clipped several of the birds' wings, but my heart was broken when it was done, for they all felt so ashamed, especially Cady. At that time I had the Princess of Wales, and she was a most inquisitive little lady. She would follow Cady about, look him all over, get him into a corner, examine his wings, and lift up with her bill the one that had been clipped. The next autumn, when Cady's new feathers came in, they were so beautiful I did not have the heart to clip his wings again. But he was getting so unruly, chasing my other small birds, flying through the air and picking them up as if they were flies, that I did not know what to do with him. I knew I must clip his wing or cage him, and I knew the latter would simply kill the poor bird. Each day I would get ready to cut it my courage would fail, and I would put it off until the next, and, like all things we keep putting off, there came a day when I would have given all I possessed if I had clipped his wing in the beginning. 98

Cady was afraid out-of-doors. One day he fell out of my bedroom window, and waited for me to come and get him. He often stood in my bedroom window, but never seemed to care to go out. If I took him into the yard, he would fly back into the house if the door was open.

One day I took him quite a walk to see a friend. He perched on my wrist (as my finger was too small), did not offer to get off, and seemed very much at home in the friend's house, so I never thought of his going away. When he began his lessons in the autumn, his wing was all feathered out, and he could fly everywhere. Instead of hopping from chair to chair for his treat, he would fly out into the dining-room, light on the dining-room table and 99

wait for me to come.

One Sunday morning I had been giving him a longer lesson than usual, for he was singing better than I had ever heard him. All at once he stopped short, flew as usual into the dining-room, where the door was opened on to the piazza, and out of it he went, soaring way up in the air. It was a glorious day, and when he lighted in a tall tree up the street, I could hear him singing with delight. If I could have had the street to myself, I am sure I could have gotten him, but it was just the hour when the children were returning from Sunday school, and I could not keep them away. Twice he came within a few feet of me, then the boys or the rustle of the leaves frightened him away. For weeks he was about, and I spent many hours trying to get him to come to me. He always answered my call, but seemed afraid to fly down to me.

I would not have taken hundreds of dollars for him, and whatever became of him I know not, but I fear he perished when winter came, as he knew nothing about migrating.

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CHAPTER VI. SOME TRANSIENT PATIENTS

A young meadow-lark was brought to me one morning by a small boy, whose dog had chased it and broken its leg. I had never had any experience in setting bones, but, as there is always a first time, I thought I could at least try, even if I did not succeed. I found it was not a very easy thing to do alone, but, after trying a number of times, I managed to get my toothpick splint on securely. For several days the leg seemed to be doing nicely, and I felt quite proud of my work and sure the leg was knitting. All at once the bird began to smell very badly, and in a few days it died, so I think it must have been hurt internally.

Another morning I had an orchard oriole brought to me. He, like the Prince of Wales, had been shot. One wing was broken and there was a deep flesh wound underneath. I did not expect to save him, but, after a few days, the wound healed and he was perfectly well, except the broken wing, which did not bother him. He seemed very happy, even if he could only fly a very little, and spent most of his time hopping about on the floor. His favourite perching-place was on the top of a candle on my dressing-table.

103

One morning he came over to my bed and woke me by pecking my hands. As it was too early for me to wake, I put him on the floor and went to sleep. When I got up, I could not find my pretty Duke. He had never been in my dressing-room, but that morning the light must have attracted him, as my room was dark, and in trying to hop on the edge of the water-jar he fell in.

You can imagine my horror when I saw him in the water dead, with his lovely feathers all spoiled, and I felt I had been a careless nurse.

104

A cousin brought to the hospital from the country a young snipe. She was so afraid it would get away, she put it into a shoe box which was too small, then tied the cover down tight, without making one hole to let the air in. Consequently, when she arrived, the bird was just gasping and almost dead.

I had never seen a young snipe before, and I was so anxious to save it. It was a beauty. Of course, it was all legs and feet, but they were really beautiful in shape, and the colour like the soft shade of green in young twigs. I worked over it four hours, hoping I might bring it back to life, but it was beyond me. It was a most pitiful sight to see it take so long to die.

I was very glad one day to have the pleasure of looking over a chimney swift, but, as it was an old bird and not hurt in the least, I felt it would be cruel to keep it in the hospital. It was so frightened it did not fly off from my hand for five minutes after I took it out-of-doors.

105

One day a very tender-hearted little boy, with big tears in his eyes, came and asked me to take in a tiny baby bird not three inches long from end of bill to tip of tail. It was gray with white breast, long pointed white bill, and very large eyes. Its pretty little head was drawn back like a person having spinal meningitis, and it was making a mournful peep. When I took it into my hand, I did not think it could live but a few moments, but it did four hours, suffering all the time, and it seemed as if its pitiful peep would drive me wild. I managed to get a little milk down its throat, but I could not find the cause of the head being drawn back, as there was no sign of any bruise. Finally I saw a black speck sticking out of its bill. I began to pull, and kept on until I had pulled out a quarter of a yard of coarse horsehair. I knew then there was something on the other end, and that the bird could not live with whatever it was in its throat. I gave a quick pull, and you can imagine my surprise when out came a piece of hard white shell, triangular shape, all wound around with the hair. No wonder the little thing peeped, and that its head was drawn back, with that sharp point sticking into its throat. The mother must have rammed it down her baby's throat, thinking it was some goody.

106

After I had removed the shell, the little sufferer seemed so relieved; the peeping stopped, and it would try to flop its wee wings when it saw me with the milk. I was in hopes I was going to save it, but it did not have the strength to rally, and it went where all good birdies go.

For a week I had a dear baby robin, who came down-stairs every night to look me up when it was time for him to go to bed in his basket. I had a wild pigeon at the time who delighted in pecking any small bird who came to the hospital. He gave the robin a hard peck on the back of the neck, I suppose striking a nerve, for soon the head began to draw back, and in a few hours he died. Theodore Roosevelt, the wild pigeon, was in the hospital two long years, receiving constant treatment, from burns which he had received by being caught in electric wires.

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Then I had a large white domestic pigeon that was taken away from a dog who was tearing him to pieces. Such a sight as he was, covered with blood and mud, when I took him in. The feathers were all torn out of one wing, and he could not stand on his feet. The first thing I gave him a bath in warm water and soap, then found several flesh wounds, which I powdered with talcum powder (never put anything greasy on a bird), and put him in a cot, where I kept him as quiet as possible for several days. He was not at all timid, ate from my hand, drank water from a whiskey glass, as if he had always been fed in that way, never even trying to stand up or get out of his cot. I felt quite encouraged when, after a week, he could perch on my wrist for a few minutes, so I knew that there were no bones broken, but I was afraid that he was never going to have the use of one of his claws, for the toes all turned under when he tried to put it down, but patience and care were my reward, for it got entirely well. You could fairly see the new feathers grow in his wing, and he was delighted when he could flop his wings and exercise. It was very interesting to watch him when he first began trying to walk. I would put him down on the floor. He would lift the lame foot very high, and throw the claws out before putting it down, to prevent the toes turning under. I expected he would want to fly away when he found he was made whole again, but he did not seem to have the slightest desire. He became quite a pet, and when I spoke to him, he would bow his head and say, "Coo-wee, coo-wee, coo-wee," but he was too large a bird for the house, and he now lives with many of his kind, where he has the best of care. 110

One morning I saw a baby sparrow on a piazza, and a cat just ready to spring at it. I got in ahead of the cat, and brought her home with me. I wish all of the people who say they hate the English sparrow could have known this one, whom I named "Monie." She was a perfect little beauty, and full of all sorts of antics. Every feather shone like satin, and her colouring was the soft shade of brown you see in otter fur. She loved to tease the other birds, especially the canaries. She would go inside the cage when they were on top and bite their claws and try to pull them through the bars. Then she would hang with one claw caught on the top of the cage and go through all sorts of performances. I had a box which rested on a low table, divided off into two compartments, one filled with gravel and the other with food. In the centre of one side was part of a broomstick, with any number of perches all sizes on it, and a platform over the other side where a brass cage stood. The box and perches, being painted light green, made a pretty sight when the perches were filled with many birds of different size and colour. There was a platform that rested on the window-sill, where Teddy, the pigeon, liked best to stay. He would walk back and forth or sit there most of the day, looking out of the windows. When, he wanted to walk in the gravel or get something to eat, he would walk down the little steps into the box with a great deal of dignity. 111

Monie always insisted upon perching on one of the largest perches, and very often she would fall on to the floor, and, as her wing was clipped, she could not get back in the box until I picked her up. At that time there were some mice who came and ate with the birds. Taffy did not seem to think they had any right there, and often tried to catch them. Twice he picked Monie up off from the floor, thinking she was a mouse, and brought her down-stairs. When he saw me, he came right up to me and let me take her out of his mouth, as if he was glad to get rid of her. The next time I missed her, I looked ten minutes, then I heard Taffy ring his bells, and he kept it up until I found him behind a heavy curtain, lying down with his paws under him, and holding Monie very carefully in his mouth. I put out my hand and he laid her in it, and she was not hurt in the least. After that I tried my best to make Monie sleep on a smaller perch, but she was as wilful as she was pretty, and no other perch seemed to suit her. Her wilfulness caused her death, for she fell off in the middle of the night when the room was dark. Taffy picked her up and she squealed like a mouse. As he held her tighter, she squealed louder, and Taffy thought he had a mouse sure. I jumped out of bed, but, by the time I got a light, he had choked her to death. When he saw that he had Monie instead of a mouse, he put her into my hand, and no person could have shown more grief. 112

Late one evening a small boy came to the door and asked if I did not want to buy a white rat. To get rid of the boy, I bought the rat, thinking I would give it to our boy the next morning, but he was so bright and cunning, I named him Billy Watt, and kept him many months. He was a most interesting pet and very much like a squirrel in all of his ways. Taffy thought it was "adding insult to injury" to ask him to be polite to Billy Watt, but he soon understood he was to treat him as politely as the birds. 113

One day Billy Watt bit Monie so the blood came. I took him in one hand, Monie in the other, and let her bite his nose, ears, and paws, and it frightened him almost to death when he found a bird could bite as well as a rat, and he never touched her again.

It was hard to make people believe, who did not see it, that Taffy would sleep for hours in my room, with birds flying around and Billy Watt asleep in a basket near by.

The largest patient I ever had was a turkey-buzzard, and the smallest full-grown bird a Parola warbler.

When Taffy beheld Mr. Buzzard perched on the back of a chair, his wrath knew no bounds. He did not spring at him, simply sat down in front of him, and by the growling and spitting you would have thought there were a dozen of cats instead of one. 114

One day our neighbour's crow came to visit us, and insisted upon sitting in Taffy's chair, which did not suit his Royal Highness at all. He stood upon his hind legs with his front paws on the chair, and smelled Mr. Crow all over, but Mr. Crow did not mind in the least and would not move, so Mr. Taffy jumped into the chair and curled himself up by the side of the crow, and they spent the day together.

Once I read with the greatest interest an article about a Parola warbler, and felt I would like very much to know the authoress, and tell her there was another person who had come in as close contact with one as she did. One can read dozens of beautiful descriptions of these daintiest of fairies, but no one can have the slightest conception of their beauty, or half appreciate them, until they have held one in their hand. Mine was caught by a cat, but it lived all day, so I had plenty of time to study every exquisite feather. 115

I hope the day may come when I shall be fortunate enough to see another, but they are very rare, especially in Central New York.

The Parola warbler was the first bird that opened John Burroughs's eyes to the beauty of birddom.

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CHAPTER VII. JUDY AND NED

Those who have not tried mating and raising birds have lost a great deal of pleasure. Besides being intensely interesting, one learns many things worth knowing.

Once I heard a lady say that she thought all women ought to raise birds before trying to bring up a family, for there was so much to be learned from the birds.

I had a friend who was very anxious for me to try my luck at bird-raising, so one day she brought over her handsome green and gold canary. At that time I had a number of birds, among them three which I thought were females, but I was only sure of one, a little girl sparrow. Blondell—a canary—was given to me for a female, but several said they were sure it was a male. She was an exquisite yellow of different shades, with a topknot of yellow tipped with white, then black, with a catching little bang. 117

Judy—a canary—was bought for a singer, but the person who gave her to me said she had never sung, but she thought the reason was because she had the asthma. I think she was a goldfinch, for she was very small, with black wing feathers, and a pretty black topknot parted in the middle. I had named her after one of my dearest friends, so I immediately called the green canary Ned after her better half. Ned knew more than any of us, for, as soon as he was let out of his cage, he flew over in front of Judy and sat down before her, never noticing the other birds, and poured the most entrancing song right into her ears.

It certainly was love at first sight, and for a year their devotion was something rare to see. Then Blondell made trouble in the family. Ned and Judy's courtship was of short duration, and soon they began housekeeping in good earnest. I gave them a cage, and hung it on the wall, so they would not be bothered with the other birds. During the day they went where they pleased, but, when night came, they always went back to their cage and perched as close as they could to each other. 118

After the eggs were laid, and Judy had to sleep on the nest, Ned perched as close to the nest as he could get.

Judy's nest was most beautifully made, a perfect symphony of colour, and a delight to the eye. I gave to her bits of pink, blue, yellow, green, and white cotton, little pieces of dainty coloured baby ribbon and pink string. She wove the ribbons all in with the cotton, then festooned the outside with the pink string, and on the top she laid chickweed with its tiny white blossoms. When she was making her nest, I noticed she had the cotton very high above the basket and none in the bottom, so I thought I would lend a helping hand and fix the bottom for her. A more angry bird I never saw when she discovered I had been meddling with something I knew nothing about. She stood on the top of the nest and scolded for some time, then reached down and took out all of the cotton I had put in and threw it on the bottom of the cage. When she was ready, she put the cotton in to suit herself. 119

She laid four eggs, but none hatched out, so she and Ned took the nest apart, and a new one was made of all new material, more beautiful than the first.

She laid four eggs again, but the long strain of setting was telling upon her, for Ned was not a good nurse, and did not like staying at home and feeding her. If it had not been for me, I am afraid she would have gone hungry many times. Finally one egg hatched out, and it was not as large as a bumblebee. Unfortunately, the chick only lived one day. By that time it was so warm I took the nest away, but Ned's devotion seemed to increase instead of diminish. Every morning they would kiss each other, and every night before going to sleep, and they always slept side by side. This went on for a year, and they were such a happy pair. In the spring they went to housekeeping again, and everything was going on in the most blissful way when Monie and Blondell thought they would like a beau and go to housekeeping, too. So they began to flirt and coquette in a most shocking way with Mr. Ned, a married man. I used to say: "You naughty, wicked girls, you better stop your nonsense, for Ned will never leave that dear little wife of his, for he loves her too dearly to waste any time on either of you." 120

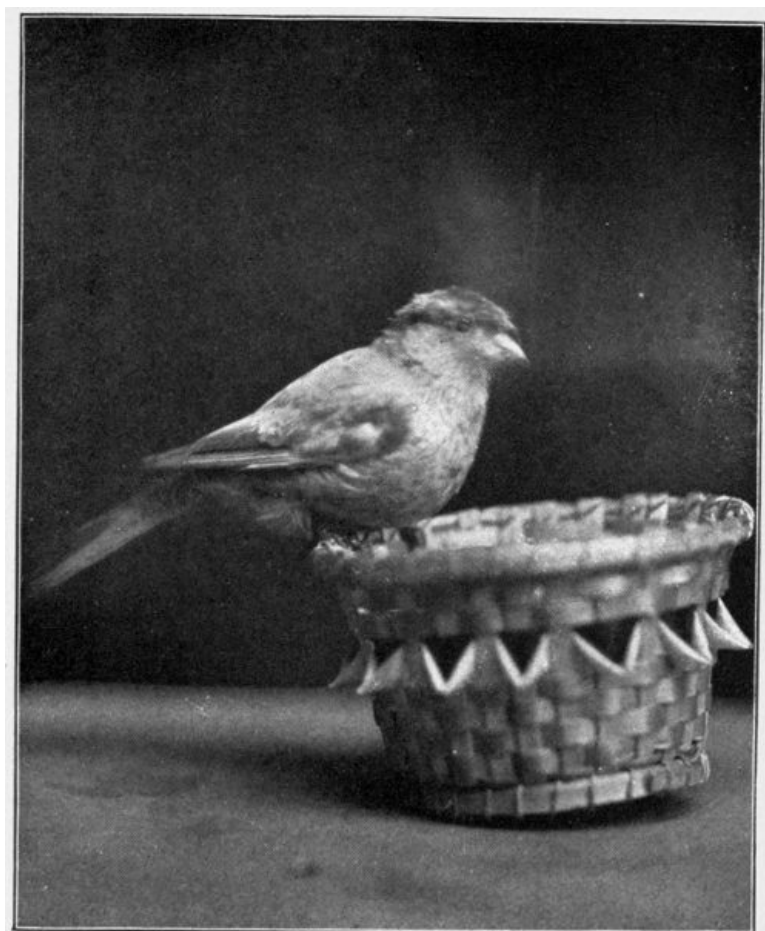
But, alas, a little flattery was all that was needed to make him false to the loving wife, who simply adored him and was his slave. 121

Judy and Ned had been in the habit of making love to each other on the top of the large mirror over my dressing-table. They would promenade back and forth and toss their pretty heads, and you could easily imagine all the charming little tales of love Ned was confiding to Judy, and every little while they would kiss each other.

Sweet little Monie, with her dainty, quiet dress, did not seem to have any charm for Ned, so she took up with Mack, who was English like herself.

One day when Judy was sitting on her nest, and Ned was getting uneasy and very tired of staying at home and waiting upon her, Miss Blondell sallied forth with every feather preened, until she was a mass of shimmering gold. She went up on top of the mirror and promenaded, well knowing admiring eyes were gazing at her, for how could any one help looking at such grace and beauty? She soon began making eyes at Ned, and calling to him in a sweet, cooing voice to come to her. He simply could not resist her and was soon by her side. Judy scolded 122

and scolded, and called to him many times to come home, but not the slightest attention did he pay to her, and really, I do not suppose he heard one word she said, for he was so completely fascinated with that exquisite blonde. Judy stood it as long as she could, but when Ned kissed Blondell before her very eyes, that was more than any one could expect her to endure. She flew out of her cage, over on to the mirror, and if she did not tell the little blonde lady just what she thought of her, I am much mistaken. She then turned to Ned, in her old affectionate, bewitching way, with her pretty little head cocked on one side, and asked him to kiss her, but he refused for the first time. She went back to her nest broken-hearted, and never interfered with them again. Soon Ned and Blondell had the face to go to housekeeping right next door, Ned going from one house to the other, but Judy never allowed Blondell to enter her door.



BLONDELL

I feel sure that Ned really loved Judy the best, for he spent more time with her than he did with Blondell, but there was something about Blondell that he could not resist, for she simply hypnotized him. 123

I was ill at the time, so I had plenty of leisure lying in bed to watch them. My nurse often said she was so interested in the birds she could hardly take care of her patient.

Blondell was punished for making so much trouble for Judy, for none of her eggs hatched out. Then Ned's mistress took Blondell to her house and mated her with her bird, Dick. Blondell was only too delighted to have a new lover, and she soon forgot all about faithless Ned. She raised one lovely green and gold bird like his father. I brought them both home, and named her son "Mike" after one of the most wonderful boy singers the world has ever known or ever will. Mike was always very uneasy, and acted more like a wild bird, and it was almost impossible to keep him in his cage. He was full of all sorts of antics and loved to torment his mother. 124

I looked forward to having a fine singer, but he was not contented in this small town, so one warm, bright morning in the fall he went abroad to cultivate his voice, and we have never seen him since.

I still have Blondell, and some day I hope she may have another son.

125

CHAPTER VIII.

DONA MARINA

Dona Marina came to the hospital, not as a patient, but as a destroyer of patients. Since that time she has been a great deal of care with her numerous kittens and a very bad burn on her side and head. I accidentally turned a tea-kettle of boiling water over her. I dried her as quickly as possible, then covered her with talcum powder, and kept her shut up in the hospital all day.

She was a great sufferer, and for hours was in perfect agony. Still, I did not realize for days how badly she was

burned until the hair began to come out. For three months she had a scab as large as my hand.

She bore her sufferings very bravely. When the scab began to loosen, she would come to me every day and ask me to cut off the loose edges. She would stand very quietly while I trimmed them with my manicure scissors. 126

Every one said the sore would not heal, and, if it did, the hair would never come in, but the scab is all gone, and the hair has come in and almost covered the bare spots.

I so often hear people say: "I would like so much to keep a cat, but I cannot on account of my bird," or "I would enjoy having a bird, but of course I cannot, because my cat would kill it in less than a wink." I used to think the very same way. When a child, I had a number of canary birds, which went down my neighbours' cats' throats if they did not mind, so I gave up keeping birds, as I liked cats so much better, and I did not have one for years, until "Little Billee" came to me.

I did such wonderful things with Taffy. I think all that is needed is a great deal of patience and to understand cat language and have cats understand you. 127

Two years ago a neighbour's black cat was determined to kill my canary Blondell, and I was just as determined she should not. I fought her for a year and a half, but it was simply impossible to keep her out of the house, as our doors and windows were opened nearly as much in winter as in summer, and she would be in the house hours before I knew it. I was not allowed by her owner to put bells on her, so as to warn Blondell and me of her approach, and the first thing I would hear was a crash and the cage fall on the floor. Often when lying down I would hear Blondell screech, and open my eyes to see the cat on top of the cage. As the cage always stood on a low table, it was very easy to reach.

We did everything we could to frighten the cat to keep her away, but I would not hurt her or let any one else. One day the woman who was cleaning for me gave her a dreadful beating with a wet floor-cloth, and said: "Now, I guess you will go home and stay there." I came out just as the cat was going and said: "Poor kitty." She turned and fairly flew to my side, and from that day to this she has been devoted to me. 128

When I found she had fully made up her mind to come here and live, and nothing would keep her away, I said: "I will teach her not to kill my bird." My friends all laughed in my face and said: "The idea of your thinking you can teach an ill-bred cat, who has never had any bringing up, the same as you taught an intelligent cat like Taffy."

I soon found the cat was very affectionate, and that she loved me, and that is the best beginning you can have. I named her Dona Marina, as she was black enough for a Spanish lady. Her coat was black and shiny and her head and paws very small. In a few days she knew her name, so I felt she was quick to learn. From the day I gave the name to her, she has never been called anything else, and always answers me and will carry on long conversations with me. If she is up in my room and I go to the foot of the stairs and say: "Dona Marina," she answers me. If I say, "Dona Marina, are you up-stairs?" she answers twice. I always invited her to come into my room when she came up-stairs, and, if she went after Blondell, I closed my door, then punished her by slapping her paws and talking to her, but never sent her out of my room. She soon understood she could stay there as long as she behaved herself, and spent many hours without me there. Still I was not quite sure of her, and every one said: "She will kill Blondell some day." When I went out of the house, I sent her down-stairs and closed the door. That went on for many weeks, when one day I went to my room about four o'clock. Dona Marina had been asleep on my bed since luncheon with Blondell and no one else. It seemed a pity to wake her and make her go down, so I thought I would take the risk, and went out and left her. Several friends said they would not feel sorry for me at all if, when I went home, I did not even find a tail feather. I laughed and said I had no fear, as I fully trusted Dona Marina, but I trembled just the same, and, when I reached home at six o'clock, I went to the stairs and called in a shaky voice: "Dona Marina, are you up-stairs?" and when the answer came, "I am here," I fairly flew up the stairs, and there, to my great joy, was Blondell happy in her cage and my little black lady stretched out full length on my bed, greeting me with loving eyes and a sweet song. Since that day I never gave her a thought. She sits on the table by the cage and looks at Blondell, never putting up a paw, and lies down and goes to sleep by the side of her. 130

Dona Marina very seldom walks on the floor; she simply flies through the air. She comes on a run from the kitchen, lands in the middle of the dining-room table, then jumps into a chair by the back parlour door, into a chair in the back parlour, into another chair, then on top of the table. If she is on her way up-stairs, she makes one grand leap, which lands her in the front parlour by the door going into the hall. She never pauses, but on she flies up the stairs into my room, over the top of the bird-cage, on to my work-table, and sits down, as if it were the only way to enter a room.

She is a very intelligent cat, and I often wish she did not know so much. Like all my pets, she is spoiled, and does everything she wishes to. Last spring she had her first kittens, and I, of course, was the trained nurse, and such a time as I had. As four babies were too many for me to have up-stairs, two were taken away at once and put in a pail of water. Then my trouble began. She took on so, and seemed to think I could bring them back, and would not give me any peace until I fished them out of the water, dried them on a towel, and brought them into the parlour. She took them at once up to my dressing-room. She had her bed in a nice basket, with linen sheets, in an old-fashioned chest. After a few minutes, I brought them down and she came for them. After taking them back three times, she found she could not bring them to life, and gave up. When I had gotten into bed, she came to me, talked, then went back to her babies. After keeping at me for a half-hour, and I did not make any move to get up, she came and took right hold of my chin. After she bit me three times, I thought I had better get up and see what she wanted. She soon made me understand she wanted the basket taken out and put on my bed, so no one could get her babies. I did so, putting a kimono on the foot and covering the basket. She got into the basket, and there was no more trouble. I did that for two nights, and then she seemed to think there 131

was no more danger and she stayed in the chest.

One night she insisted upon my getting up at three o'clock. I thought she must be hungry, and went into my dressing-room and saw that there was no milk in her dish. I also felt there was a great change in the weather and saw the ground was covered with snow, so I put down the windows, then went down-stairs after the milk. When I came back, I found Dona Marina in the basket with her kittens, looking very happy. I offered her the milk, and she said: "No, thank you. It was too cold for my darlings, and all I wanted was the window put down." I could have choked her with a good will. 134

When it was time for her children to learn to get out of the basket, she lifted them out and put them on the floor, and asked me to take the basket. One was black as coal, and the other maltese. The black one we named "Ping," and the gray one "Pong," and they were very different in all their ways.

My trials began when their mother thought they needed something more than milk. Every one said: "You want to look out for Blondell, now Dona Marina has her kittens," but she went outdoors for all of her game, and the dear baby birds she used to bring in almost broke my heart. She would bring them to me first, but, if they were not dead, they were wounded so they soon died.

One day she carried a large fish up to them just as the man brought it in the paper. When they were four weeks old, she thought they ought to sleep on the foot of my bed instead of in their basket. I was determined I would not give in to her, but, after keeping me awake until after two o'clock one night, I said: "Go bring your babies, and we will all go to sleep." After that they slept on the foot of my bed until they were given to a very nice little girl when they were two months old. 135

Dona Marina mourned for them for two weeks, and would carry up food in mouthfuls and look all over for them.

Two months ago Dona Marina presented me with four more babies, which was a little more than I had bargained for. Two were taken from her before she hardly had time to count, so she did not make as much fuss as she did the first time.

A little girl came to see them, and said: "Why don't you name them after their mother?" I said: "I do not think it would be nice to call them both Dona Marina." She said: "Oh, no; call one Dona and the other Marina." 136

Dona is twice the size of Marina, is black and white, and looks like a little circus pony. Marina is most beautifully marked. Her head, back, and tail are black, face black, also her legs, white whiskers, and a tiny white line between the eyes. Under her chin white about as wide as your finger, then broadens and goes half down the neck, broadens out again, narrows at the breast bone, broadens again, and goes all the way down. She has four white paws, so you see she has a very swell black and white costume.

Marina is full of mischief, but very affectionate. Dona is much more quiet and dignified, but is also affectionate, and loves to have me take him on my shoulder.

They were born in the same basket, and Dona Marina went through the same performance about taking them out when it was time to have the basket on the floor, also the same performance about sleeping on the foot of my bed, and, of course, I had to give in to her. 137

At the present time Marina is on my lap and Dona on my shoulder. They have full sway of the house, and what they cannot do is not worth doing.

One day when I came in, I thought there must have been an army of children in the parlours, by the sight that met my eyes. All the books from the lower shelf of the bookcase were on the floor. They had gotten up on the magazine table and thrown all the magazines on the floor. Sofa pillows were everywhere but where they ought to be. A large corn-cob in the front parlour, and corn-husks here, there, and everywhere, with scraps of paper in every direction, and Dona and Marina fast asleep in the empty scrap-basket, while their mother lay curled up in an easy-chair.

During the day they go outdoors and all over the house, but when the house is lighted, they seem to think up-stairs is the place for them. 138

We have had great fun catching flies. They come and ask me to help them. I take my handkerchief, and, when I get a fly in it, they come and take it out, and sometimes there is quite a fight to see which gets it.

I was in hopes to have had many interesting things to tell about Dona and Marina, but a friend came for them today, and I could not say "No" again, as I had promised them when they were wee babies, but I shall miss them greatly, and I feel very sad and lonely to-night without my baby pets.

139

CHAPTER IX. BOBBINETTE AND BOBBY—TWO ORPHANS

Those who have been fortunate enough to have read that charming little story of "Bobby and Bobbinette," by Mrs. Talbot, will know where I found these names. Instead of being two New York children, they are two Seneca Falls robins, but the names fit as if made to order, as they are just as different as the original Bobby and Bobbinette. Bobbinette rules Bob with a rod of iron, and he meekly does as he is bid.

One bright morning in May, as I came into the yard, I saw Dona Marina sitting on the front piazza charming a nice, plump baby robin, who was perched on a water-pipe not three feet away. She was opening and shutting her mouth, making that hissing sound, and her large green eyes were fairly glued to the robin's black ones. Just as she was ready to spring, I called out sharply: "Dona Marina, you wicked cat, don't you dare catch that baby bird." She turned around in the most leisurely way, and came to meet me with the air of the innocent. 140

If I had not seen her with my own eyes, I never should have suspected she had the least designs on the bird. The mother bird was calling and screeching with rage in a tree near by. As soon as Dona Marina's back was turned, the frightened bird hopped down, and went around in the back yard as fast as her baby legs could carry her.

After telling Dona Marina just what I thought of her conduct, I went after the baby, and finally caught her. But, when I brought her back to the street, there was no mother bird anywhere to be seen or heard, and she evidently thought her darling had gone down Dona Marina's throat. 141

I then told the little stranger that she was in the hands of the head nurse of "The Bird Hospital," and would receive the best of care. I at once put her into a nice little cot, and covered her, as it is best to keep wild or strange birds in the dark for at least two days, until they get used to you and their environments.

My new patient was very hungry, so I had no trouble in getting her to take the cracker soaked in milk. The third day I put her into a canary cage (but covered), as I thought I better try and teach her to stay in a cage some of the time, and not always have her liberty, as the dear departed Cady did. She behaved unusually well, and I kept her in that for several days, taking her out many times to stretch and flop her wings.

I was then fortunate enough to have a large parrot cage loaned me. She showed great delight when I put her in, as she had plenty of room to go about, and did not show the slightest desire to get out. I knew she could if she wished, as the brass wires were very wide apart. 142

I was detained down-stairs, and it was later than usual when I went up to put her to bed in her cot. As I went into the room, I saw there was no baby bird in the cage.

I called out: "Oh, my baby has gone," and a very mournful peep came back to me, which plainly said: "I am over here in this dark corner." She had evidently tried to find me, but did not know the way down-stairs. That was the first and last time she ever ran away.

Blondell and Dona Marina had been the only occupants in the hospital for three years, with the exception of a few stray patients who only lived a very short time.

At first Dona Marina did not know what to make of the robin. She knew it was entirely different from Blondell, and watched it hopping all over the floor with the greatest interest, as Blondell usually stayed in her cage. For a few days I watched her very carefully when the robin was on the floor, but she soon understood she was not to touch it, and would lie on the rug and go to sleep, while the robin played about her. 143

Two weeks after I rescued the robin from the jaws of death, I saw another baby robin in the back yard. The floodgates of heaven were opened wide, and the rain coming down in perfect torrents. I could not see or hear any father or mother bird, but there was a large white cat who had his eyes upon her. I spent most of my time for an hour with one eye on the bird and the other on the cat. At last I succeeded in frightening the cat away, and, as it grew dark, the bird flew up on to the grape-vine, then into a small tree. It had not stopped raining one minute, and I could not bear to think of that dear baby up in a tree all night alone, with a prospect of the white cat making his breakfast upon it. 144

When it became quite dark, I took a chair out under the tree, stood up on it, reached up and put my hand over the bird. I soon found it had good lungs, and also found it was a beauty, so did not mind being covered with mud and getting almost as wet as the bird. I felt sure it was a male bird, and that the first one was a female, as that was so much lighter in colouring.

I dried orphan number two, and put him to sleep in a cot, just as I did orphan number one. The next morning I told her all that I have told to you, then brought the little stranger and put him inside the cage, expecting she would be more than pleased to have a relative for a companion, but, alas, no. I never was more mistaken in my life. She put up all the feathers in her crest, looking like a wild "Indian," spread her wings, and was not only ready to fight, but pitched right in. The little stranger was more afraid of her than he was of the white cat, and it did not take him many seconds to get out between the bars, and fly to me for protection. But, after a few days, they became good friends, and slept every night in the cage side by side in the swing. 145

Then came a great discussion, "What shall I name the robins?" but it was settled for me by having the little book I spoke of sent me.

When Dona Marina saw robin number two, she acted as if she thought there were getting to be more robins in the hospital than she cared to see, but when number three arrived, her eyes grew larger than ever, and she seemed to say: "Will they never cease coming?"

I was unusually busy when a friend came with a box. I said: "I hope you have not brought anything for me to take care of, as I am almost frantic now." She said: "Only a baby robin." I held up my hands and exclaimed: "But I already have two." She said: "I did not know what else to do with it. It fell out of the nest, and I could not take care of it, and I knew you would." 146

The poor little thing could not even stand up, and all it knew was to open its big bill and cry for food. Of course I

was simply obliged to keep it.

Few people have the slightest idea of the care and trouble of a wild baby bird. I did not want it to starve to death, so every few moments I put cracker and milk down that yawning cavity. The last thing before I got into bed at twelve o'clock I fed it, and I got up and fed it every two hours during the night. I was almost in hopes it might die, but, when morning came, it was as lively as a cricket. I at once named the third orphan Bèbè, and for two weeks it gave to me the greatest pleasure, as well as constant care. 147

Bobbinette and Bobby simply hated the little stranger, and would not have the slightest thing to do with her. If I put her into their cage, they would immediately chase her out. She would fall on to the floor, as she could not fly, and get out of their way as quickly as her weak little legs could carry her. Every little while during the day, I would put her into her little white cot for a nap, and she would go to sleep at once.

Every day she grew stronger, and before many days could run about as fast as Bobbinette and Bobby, but she could not fly.

At that time Dona Marina gave birth to two beautiful kittens, consequently she was in the hospital most of the day as well as the night. At first I was afraid Dona Marina might hurt Bèbè, as Bèbè could not fly, and was usually on the floor when she was not taking her nap. 148

All there was to do was to make Dona Marina fully understand she was not to hurt or even frighten Bèbè.

I put Dona Marina on a chair, then put Bèbè beside her. By the way Bobbinette and Bobby cocked their pretty heads and puffed out their breasts, I knew they were thoroughly enjoying hearing me tell Dona Marina how very naughty they had been to Bèbè, and that she must be very kind to the little stranger, help take good care of her, and make her happy. Dona Marina nodded her wise little head, and blinked her intelligent eyes at me, smelled Bèbè all over, but never offered to bite her. In cat language she said she would always be kind, and try to take the place of her lost mother, and she kept her promise. From that day they were together almost constantly, Dona Marina lying on a chair or on the floor (when she was not giving her babies their dinner, as it was too warm weather to stay with them all the time), with Bèbè playing all about her. 149

When Bobbinette and Bobby felt very good-natured, they would ask Bèbè to play with them on the floor, but never would let her go inside their cage. If Dona Marina was trying to take a nap, they would hop all about her, chirp as loud as they could, and tell Bèbè to go and pull her tail, which she often did. Dona Marina would open her eyes, smile at her, close them, give a good stretch, and go to sleep again.

When Bèbè would hear Dona Marina and me coming up the stairs, she would run out into the hall to meet us, hop along by Dona Marina's side into the dressing-room, hop on to the edge of her dish, and drink milk with her, and Dona Marina never gave her a cross look.

We feel sure if Bèbè had lived until the cot with the kittens in it was put on the floor, she would have gotten right in and gone to sleep with them. But dear Bèbè's life was far too short for me, but plenty long for Bobbinette and Bobby. 150

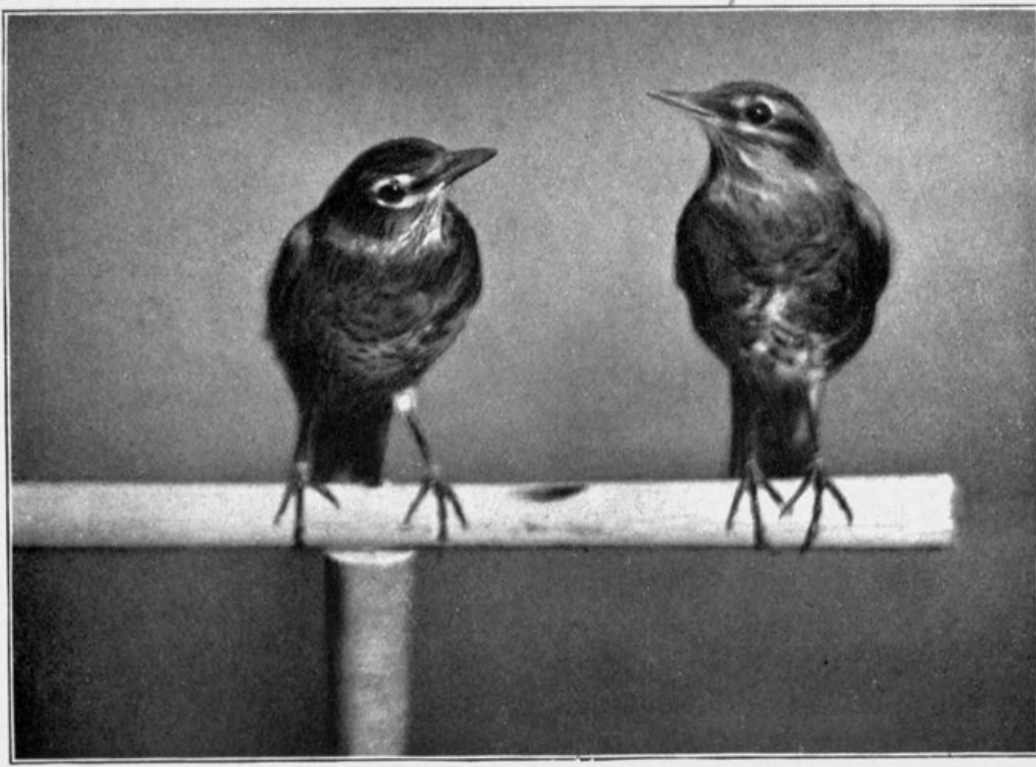
One afternoon while I was out, Bèbè must have felt badly, and went down-stairs to look for me. She found her way into my mother's room and woke her with her peeping. My mother spoke to her, but she knew it was not the voice she was accustomed to, and tried to find her way back. She was dreadfully frightened when she was finally caught, for she also knew it was not the hand that fondled her. When I returned, I saw at once there was something wrong with my baby bird, as a very bad odour was coming from her breath. I did all I could, put her to bed, and she seemed all right. The next morning she grew worse again, and in a few moments was nothing but a ball of pretty lifeless feathers. I felt sure she died of blood poison from the angleworms that were forced down her throat before she was brought to the hospital. The mother birds always kill the worms before feeding to their birdlings. 151

After Bobbinette had been in the hospital a week, as a great honour, I presented Cady's blue and white china bath-dish to her. She acknowledged the compliment by going right in and taking a nice bath. When Bobby arrived, he did not even wait to be asked to make use of the bath-tub, but took possession at once. After that, Bobbinette positively refused to take her bath in it. Every day when I offered it to her, she would hop on to the edge, then fly away, go into the cage, scold, and try to make me understand what she meant. If I held the dish up to her, she would hop on, take a drink, and away she would go.

This went on for two weeks, then all at once it flashed through my stupid brain that she had no intention of taking a bath in the same dish Bobby did. 152

I immediately went down-stairs, and came back with an oval white vegetable dish, and said: "Bobbinette, how would you like this for your very own?" She was wild with delight, and could hardly wait until it was filled; in fact, got in before the water was put in. I assure you she took a good long bath to make up for the two weeks she had been without.

The next morning, when I put the blue dish down for Bob and the white one for Bobbinette, that impertinent and presuming fellow had the face to go over to Bobbinette's dish and say: "I think I will try the white one for a change," and hopped on with a very grand air; but he hopped off much quicker than he hopped on, for Bobbinette flew at him and took feathers out of the top of his head. When she sees him, she will never let him go near her dish, but often she does not see him, and, if I am not there, he will take part of his bath in hers, then the rest in his own.



BOBBINETTE

BOBBY

Lately I have made it a point to be there until he finishes, for I cannot supply a new dish for Bobbinette every few days. 153

They like to have me play with them by throwing the water at them, just as Cady did, and, if I sing and keep time by rapping the dish, Bob will sing with me.

Bob would take a bath twice a day if I would let him, but Bobbinette sometimes does not take one for two or three days. You see she got into bad habits the weeks she went without.

It had rained most of the time before Bobbinette and Bobby came to the hospital to live, and no doubt they had been soaked to the skin many times. When it was too late, I found I ought not to have let them bathe, for they both had bad colds. I did not know what the matter was until they began to cough, sneeze, and make all sorts of disagreeable noises. They would have driven any one who was nervous about wild, and they really annoyed me, who am not, and kept me awake many nights. I had never had birds act as they did, for they were different from a bird with the asthma. Some of my friends who knew about chickens said they had the "pip," others the "gapes," and told me to do this, that, and the other thing, but they kept growing worse instead of better. Finally I wrote to my old standby, George Holden, and asked what to do, as I felt it was high time to have a good counsel. They had already been eating his bird food. He wrote to me: "Do not pay any attention to the noise the robins make, add more carrot to their food, give them plenty of green food, and let them have all they want to eat; keep them warm, and they will come out all right." I followed his advice, and, after many trying weeks, they entirely recovered. This case was the longest, except Teddy's, the hospital ever had. 154

When Bobby moulted, his feathers came in as fast as they came out, but Bobbinette must have had a high fever, for, when some of hers came out, no new ones came in. From her shoulders to the top of her head she did not have a feather for two months. She would scratch her head and pick her wings most of the time.

One day I looked her over carefully, and found the under part of her wings red and inflamed, while on the top of her head was a crust similar to the milk crust babies have.

I immediately rubbed dry sulphur all over her head and under parts of her wings, and kept it up for two weeks. By the time it was warm weather, and their colds seemed cured, I let them have their bath again, and how much they enjoyed them only they can tell. Then the crust began to leave Bobbinette's head, as well as all of her crest feathers, until only three remained, and for weeks no new ones came in. It was very amusing, when Bobbinette became very angry and began to scold, to see those three feathers stand straight up as proud as if there were three dozen. 155

Bobby is always dignified and rarely loses his temper or ruffles his plumage, while Bobbinette very often gets mad, scolds you, strutting about with breast feathers all puffed out, and the feathers on her head standing up and her tail going like a little wren. If Bobby is taking a drink of water, and Bobbinette wants some, she never says, "By your leave," or waits a second, but coolly takes him by the feathers of his head and puts him away, and takes possession of the water. But Bob is much more destructive than Bobbinette. They eat off of pretty Vantine china, and drank their water out of thin whiskey glasses until Bob broke four by taking them up in his bill and dropping them down on his bath-dish to hear them make a ringing sound. Now I make them use a little earthen jar, that is good and strong, and only favour them with a glass to drink their milk out of when they go down to the parlour for their singing lesson. 156

One day Bob took a lovely china pin-tray off of my dressing-table and threw it on the floor, breaking it in many pieces. Another day I found him out in the hall with my string of gold beads, shaking them as if he thought they

were an angleworm. He had bitten two beads until they were almost flat. Like many small boys, he thinks matches are about the nicest things to play with, and I often find them thrown in all directions.

Dona Marina's kittens had been given away before they were old enough to take much notice of Blondell, but her new kittens, Blonde and Brunette, lived with the birds many weeks. Blonde was white with tortoise-shell markings, and twice as large as Brunette, who was just like her black mother. 158

Blonde was gentle in all of her ways, while Brunette was just the opposite. Blonde would wake me in the morning by gently tapping my cheek with her big, soft white paw. Brunette would come with a rush and land on the top of my head. I did not have the least trouble in teaching Blonde not to spring at the birds, but I had a great deal with Brunette before I could make her understand that she was not to slap them with her tiny black velvet paw.

One day I was really surprised myself when I went into the room to find Blonde sound asleep in front of Blondell's cage on the platform, Brunette asleep in the gravel, and Bobbinette and Bobby on the perches above them. It proved they had learned their lessons well, and I never worried about them after that.

I was very anxious to get a picture of them altogether, so had the old perches brought up that had been put away so long. For a week I posed them every day. Dona Marina on "Teddy's piazza," Blonde in the side with the food, Brunette in the gravel, Bobbinette and Bobby on the perches, and Blondell in her usual place. It made a pretty picture, I assure you. 159

The photographer was very busy, and by the time he could come, it was impossible to have Dona Marina in the group, as she had weaned her babies and hated every hair in their dear little bodies. For two weeks she did nothing but growl and spit every time she saw them, besides slapping them hard if they came within her reach. Brunette would slap back, but lovable little Blonde would look at her in a sad, astonished way.

One day, when Dona Marina came in and could not find her babies, after looking all over the lower part of the house, she fairly beamed, and we never heard another growl, but it was many weeks before she went to the hospital. 160

One day I tried carrying her up, but she fought so hard I had to let her go. I tried again, and got her inside and put her on the bed. She smelled it all over, then simply flew out, and down-stairs she went. The next time when I got her inside, I closed the door. When she found she could not get out, she examined every corner, went under everything, and, when she finally made up her mind there were no kittens hidden away, she jumped into my lap and began to sing. She wants to be all in all to me, and is jealous of everything and everybody.

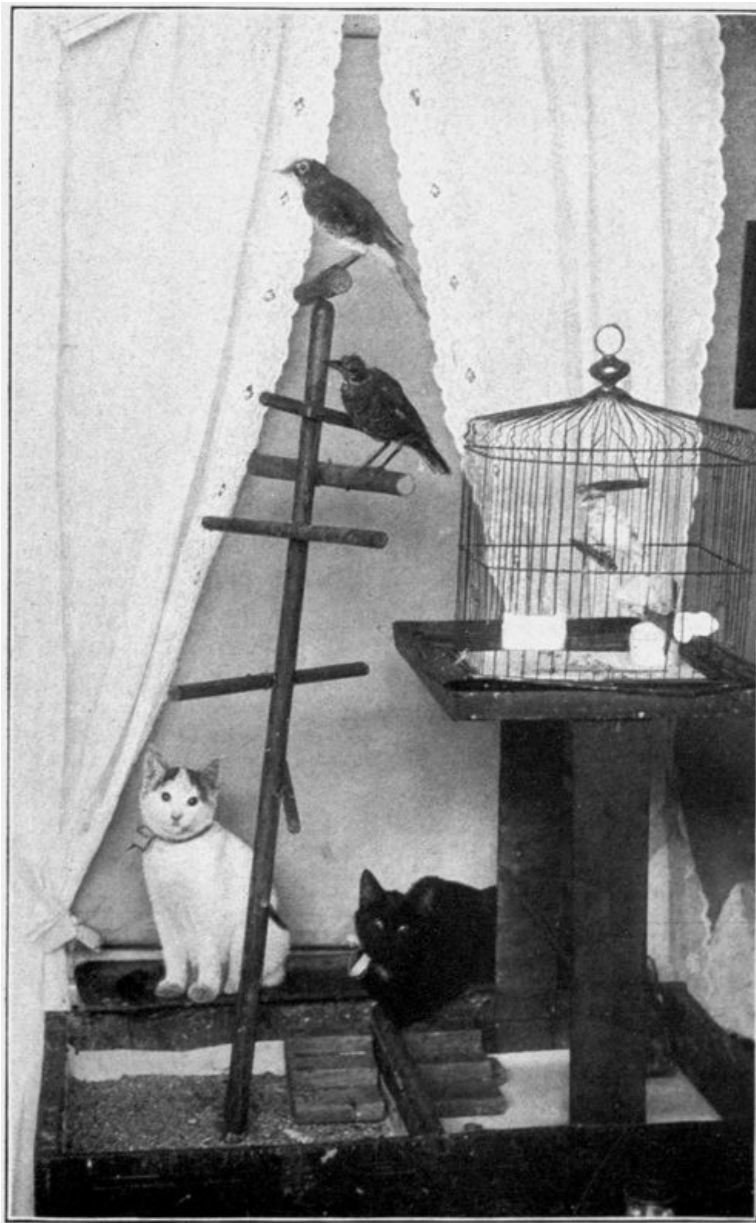
But to go back to the picture, that was a day long to be remembered. When I asked the photographer to take it, he looked at me as if he thought I had just escaped from a lunatic hospital, and said: "I can take a picture of a bird or a cat, but to take one of birds and cats together, I think it would be quite impossible." I was determined if possible to have the picture taken, so said: "But you do not know me, my cats, or my birds." 161

At last he came to please me, not expecting to get any kind of a picture. I told him to come right after luncheon, as Blonde and Brunette were sleepy at that time, but instead, it was between four and five o'clock. Bobbinette and Bob had only been used to our boy coming into the hospital, so, when two men appeared, it was quite enough to frighten the wits out of them, but their bringing all of their machines made it ten times worse. They flew here, there, and everywhere, out into the hall, back again, lighting upon my head and shoulders. It took a long time to get them quiet, but the men made as little noise as possible, and were very patient.

After Bobbinette and Bobby became a little used to them, I looked up Blonde and Brunette. They were just fresh from their nap, and wanted to do anything but mind and sit still. Several times I thought it was going to be even beyond me to get them all quiet at once. 162

At last it was accomplished. Bang! went the machine, vivid light, dense smoke, Bobbinette and Bobby flying in every direction and screeching as only robins can; Blonde and Brunette running all over the floor, growling, spitting, and hissing, but the deed was done. When we saw the picture, we all felt repaid for our trouble, and the birds and kittens for being so frightened. And the photographer, by the way, found after all that he could take a picture of birds and kittens together.

That was the beginning of quite a little work, which took a great deal of time, nervous strength, and patience, but with it all we derived a great deal of pleasure, and the birds seemed to thoroughly enjoy being naughty.



**BLONDE BOBBY BLONDELL
BOBBINETTE
BRUNETTE**

Just at this time a young Italian came to town, fresh from a school of photography, who had plenty of time to give to us. His kindness and patience was fully appreciated and never will be forgotten. The birds liked him, too, as he was always gentle, spoke kindly, and never a cross word did we hear, no matter how provoking they were. The group with Bobbinette and Bobby, Dick, Dona Marina, Blondell and me took two whole evenings to get. 163

Just as the photographer would think they were all in good position, Bobbinette would turn her back; then, when she turned around, Bobby would get down and go out into the back parlour. As no one could manage them but me, I would have to get up, taking Dick and Blondell in my left hand, Dona Marina under my left arm, and go after Bobby. Dona Marina did not care how many birds were on her back if she could lie on my lap, but Blondell was as slippery as an eel, and, when all the others were ready, off from Dona Marina's back she would go, and I would have to get down again and go after her, holding tight to Dick and Dona Marina. 164

One day during summer we had a patient the like of which we had never had before. It was a wee brown puppy, but where she came from we never found out. Her coming was heralded by Dona Marina's jumping on to her back and slapping and biting her. The birds and I rushed to the window when we heard the noise; the puppy was crying lustily, as she was too young to fight. The next thing they came tearing into the hospital, and for a few moments one would have thought the room was filled with wild animals.

For two days there was constant trouble and commotion in the hospital, and I felt if I did not find her a good home (which I did), all of my patients would have nervous prostration.

Another day the robins were very much frightened by an English sparrow coming to the hospital. If it had been a large hawk, they could not have acted worse. A man brought him, who had taken him away from a cruel boy who was just ready to give him to his cat. I looked him all over, and, when I found he was not injured in any way, I knew it would not be right to keep him. I would have liked to, as he reminded me so much of Mack. When I opened the window, he flew out, chirping loudly, and I have not a doubt he told his friends many tales of his narrow escape, about the place where he had been, and the things he had seen. 165

One day a little girl three years old came to visit me. As she stood in the door looking at the birds, she certainly

looked like a fairy direct from Fairyland, all dressed in white, with the whitest skin, cheeks like the pinkest roses, blue eyes like wood-violets, and curls like the brightest of gold. But Bobbinette and Bobby did not appreciate the picture, for they never were more frightened in their lives, and it was hours before they became used to her. 166

Dona Marina always knew when it was five o'clock, and time for Bobbinette and Bobby to have their supper of cracker and milk, and she would bring Blonde and Brunette and sit down in front of me, while Bobbinette and Bobby perched on the edge of the box, and I would give them each a piece as well as the birds. Then I taught them to sit up on their haunches like little bears and eat their crackers.

Blonde would often take her piece in one paw and eat it, and Brunette would take hers in both paws and put it into her mouth, while Dona Marina would sit up very straight with her little paws bent, and look first at one kitten, then at the other in a very proud way.

Now Bobbinette and Bobby have reached the dignity of having a little doll's table and a chair of their own. They will stand up on their chairs and eat whatever I give them off of little butter-plates. If a meal worm is served, it is as good to them as a turkey dinner is to any of us. 167

Bobby was much more precocious with his singing than Cady. I worked many weeks with Cady before he would make a sound, but Bob began at once and has improved every day since.

One day late in the fall I took him down just to see if he would be afraid of the piano, but he was not in the least, and began to sing very softly. I meant to have looked up some new music for him, but he was ready before I was, so I began with the same old things Cady sung, and he seemed to like them just as well as Cady did. I have added to his repertoire that pretty little waltz song, "Love Comes Like a Summer Dream," from the old opera, "Little Tycoon," another waltz song, "I am Going Far Away, Love," two parts from "When the Leaves Begin to Fall," and a sweet lullaby. 168

A friend, who is a professional singer, came to hear him sing. I said to her: "I want you to listen to every note and tell me honestly just what you think of him." He sang for a half-hour, only stopping while I changed the music. When we finished, she said: "I do not know which is the most marvellous, the pupil or the teacher. He is simply wonderful, never makes one discord, keeps perfect time, and carries the air as near as possible, and the little trills he puts in are simply bewitching."

The lullaby he sings as soft and low as I do. What kind of a singer I am going to make of Bobbinette, time alone can tell. She will sing with me a little every morning up-stairs, but only twice have I been able to get her to sing down-stairs. I bring her down every day after Bob has had his singing lesson. Although she is such a fighter, she is very timid and nervous when down-stairs if there is any one there. She usually comes down on my shoulder, and I can feel every nerve in her body quiver as I lay my cheek against her. 169

When Bobbinette appears, Bob knows his lesson is over and that he can do as he pleases. He will go all over both rooms, perch on anything he sees fit, sing a little in a very low voice, come and look at Bobbinette and stand beside her on the perch. I have not given up getting them to sing a duet together. When Bobbinette sings up-stairs, Bob stops short, stands on one leg, and listens to her with a look as much as to say: "What are you trying to sing for? I am the singer."

As Bobbinette is a good listener, I still have hopes of her. She is so pretty and still keeps her baby look, and when she listens she cocks her head on one side and looks so interested, and will puff out her breast and open her bill as wide as she can. For a treat after their lesson, they have some sugar wafers. They prefer the champagne ones, as they have more chocolate in them. They get on my shoulder and take the wafer out of my mouth. Then they have milk (which they love) in a whiskey glass. Some days they have two or three Zante currants, of which they are very fond. 170

My mother has all of her meals served in the back parlour, and it is a great treat for Bobbinette and Bobby to have their singing lesson before luncheon, then they stay down until afterward.

They will not make friends with any one but me, but they will get as near my mother as they dare, and see what she has to eat, but will not take anything from her.

I was very much frightened the other day to see a hair sticking out of Bobbinette's bill. I was more frightened when I pulled out an eighth of a yard and could get no more, as it seemed to be wound around the lower part of her tongue. It was rather a difficult task to hold the bird, take a magnifying glass, and open the bill and look down. After a half-hour's work at the hair, gently pulling it from side to side, it became loose and came out. The next day Bob came to me holding one leg up. As I looked at him, I thought he in some way had gotten a rubber band around his leg. You can imagine my surprise, when I took him in my hand, to find, instead of a rubber band, his hind claw was wound around his leg and caught with the nail. How it ever got that way, I have not the least idea. 171

As I entered my room the other afternoon, I saw a picture that any artist might have been proud to paint. Dona Marina was lying stretched out full length on the foot of my bed, with her new baby kittens, Scozza and Fava, lying beside her; all were in Dreamland. On the brass rod at the foot perched Bobbinette and Bobby, the latter singing at the top of his voice, while Bobbinette listened. 172

I feel sure if John Burroughs knew my birds, he would change his mind about birds not thinking and reasoning.

Many people know birds and their habits in a wild state, but really know nothing of them as pets in the house.

I am told Mr. Burroughs does not advocate domesticating wild birds; neither do I, if they are old, well, and strong, but, on the contrary, if they are injured, and are only easy prey for small boys and cats, I firmly believe in taking them in and making them happy, which I think I have always succeeded in doing.

I have often taken birds in, expecting to let them go when they were large enough, but they simply would not, for they knew they would not know how to take care of themselves or hunt their food. For instance, if I had not brought Bobbinette and Bobby in, they would have been killed, and it would be very cruel to turn them out now after the luxurious lives they have lived for eleven months; besides, they are perfectly well, and happy as the day is long, and know no other life. 173

My pets are a great care, but the pleasure I receive from them more than recompenses me. I only hope you will all be so interested in my little sketches that you will "cry for more," and then I shall be able to stop your crying.

THE END.

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