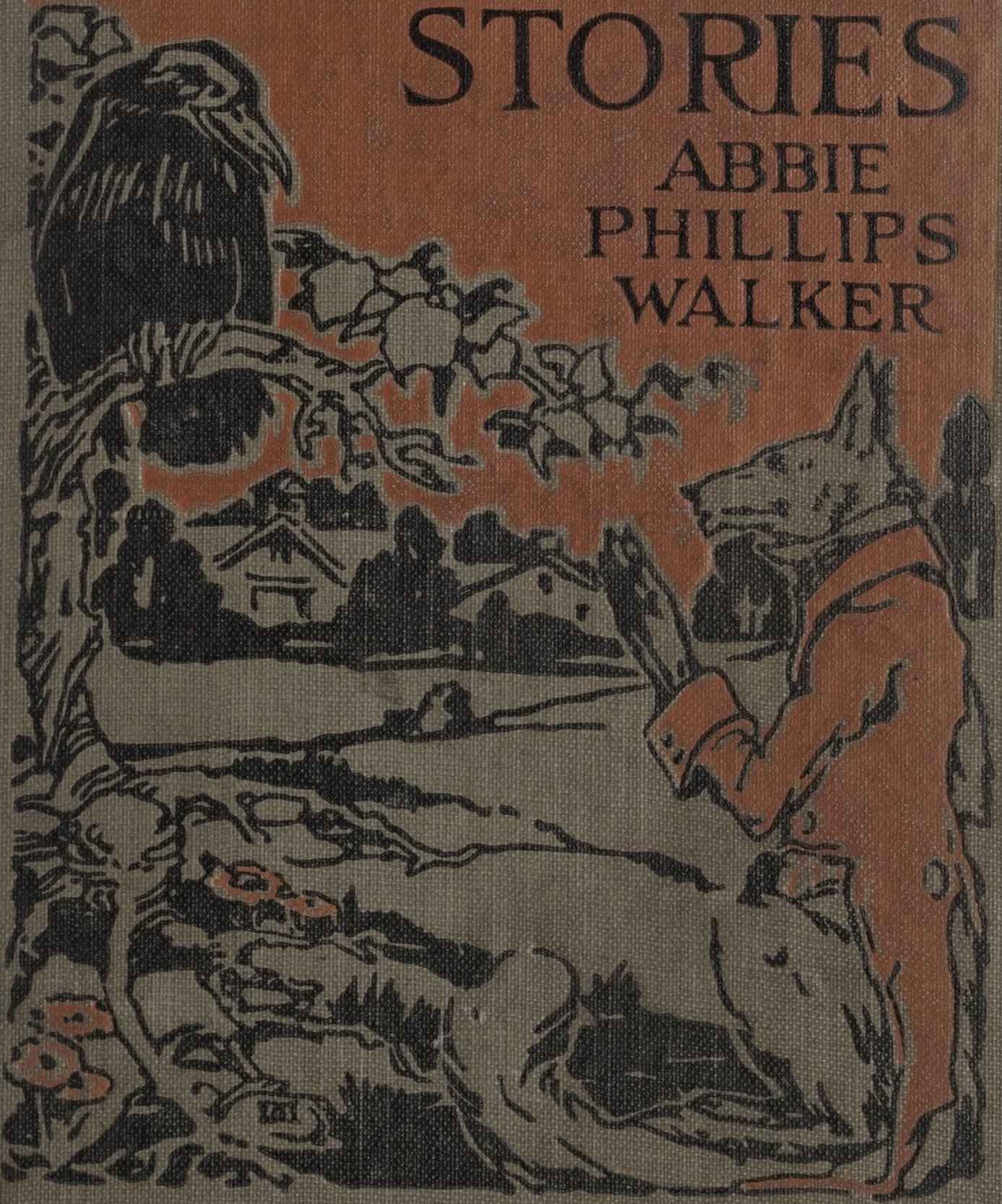
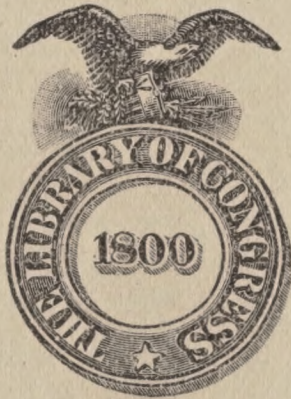


SANDMAN'S MIGHT-BE-SO STORIES

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SANDMAN'S MIGHT-BE-SO STORIES



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"THEN IN I DASHED BETWEEN THE NORTH WIND AND THE EAST"

[See p. 151

Sandman's Might-Be-So Stories



By Abbie Phillips Walker...

Illustrated by Rhoda C. Chase..

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Harper & Brothers, Publishers

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SANDMAN'S MIGHT-BE-SO STORIES

THOSE WHO WATCHED MR. COON

WHEN Mr. Coon came to the woods to live none of the wood dwellers had ever met any of his family, so, of course, they knew nothing about the curious habit the Raccoon has of washing all meat before eating it.

One day as Reddy Fox was trotting through the woods he spied Mr. Coon with a basket on his arm going toward the river that ran through the woods.

He did not see Reddy, and as Reddy dearly loves to watch when he is not seen, he quickly hid himself behind some bushes to see what Mr. Coon was going to do, and, to his astonishment, he saw him take from the basket some meat, and, holding it in his forepaws, souse it about in the water and then eat it.

“That is the funniest thing I ever saw,” thought Reddy Fox. “I must tell all the wood folk about this, and we will all come down here and watch him.”

But before he did this Reddy made sure that Mr. Coon came each day to the river to

do the same thing, for he was rather doubtful that this was a regular thing with Mr. Coon. Reddy could not understand why he did not eat the meat just as he did—just as soon as he got it.

Mr. Coon has sharp eyes, and one day while Reddy was watching he became too curious and poked his head out too far from his hiding place so that Mr. Coon caught sight of him. "Watching me, is he?" thought Mr. Coon. "Well, I will fix him to-morrow."

Reddy had just decided that to-morrow would be the day he would bring along all the wood folks to watch the queer habit Mr. Coon had, and so the next day Mr. Squirrel and Billy Possum and Mr. Rabbit and even Mr. Badger was prevailed upon to break his habit of staying at home in the daytime, and all of them followed Reddy Fox down by the river and hid behind the bushes nearby.

"I really do not like this," said gentle Mr. Badger. "Something tells me I should not have come," and he flattened himself on the ground until he looked like a doormat, Reddy Fox said.

Mr. Coon had been watching from the top of a tree and saw all the wood folk following

Mr. Reddy down to the river. "Going to give me the laugh I suppose when I wash my food? Well, we will see who does the laughing, my friends and neighbors. I rather think it won't be Mr. Fox, any way; and I am sure you all will be surprised."

Mr. Coon was so full of laugh that he could hardly get down the tree thinking of what was going to happen, for he knew that the river bottom was muddy and the water not very deep.

It was deep enough for him to wash his food without stirring it up and to help him to carry out the plan he had in mind to give all the watchers a surprise.

Mr. Coon shuffled off home to get his basket, while all the animals arranged themselves behind the bushes, and, with listening ears, waited to see the fun.

At last they heard him and, peeping through the branches, they saw Mr. Coon dragging a basket along the ground; he was not carrying it on his arm, as usual.

"He has it chock-full this morning; it will be great fun to watch him," whispered Reddy to the others when he caught sight of Mr. Coon tugging the basket along.

When Mr. Coon reached the river he sat down and took the cover off his basket, and all the animals stretched their necks to see what he was going to do, even Mr. Badger got up from his doormat position on the ground and looked too, leaning against the bushes with his forepaws to make himself taller.

Mr. Squirrel ran up one bush that was stronger than the others so he could have all the view there was, and Mr. Rabbit hopped out to the very edge of the bushes close to a stone that was about the color of his coat, for he knew he would see but little of the queer sight from behind the bushes.

Mr. Possum found a tree close by, and hanging by his tail from a low limb where he could not miss anything, he waited for what was to happen next. Reddy Fox could plainly see all that was going on, for he was never backward in coming forward when there was anything worth seeing.

Mr. Coon, of course, knew they were all there and he did not hurry a bit. After he removed the cover he reached slowly into the basket, looking across the river for a minute and then when he felt sure they were all

stretching their necks and watching he suddenly tipped the basket.

But instead of the pieces of meat Reddy Fox had told them he had in the basket, Mr. Coon rolled into the river a rock that struck the bottom with such force that the muddy water splashed all around and covered the watchers from head to toes.

Mr. Coon looked very innocent as he picked up the cover and placed it on the basket and then walked away; he could hear the wood folks scrambling about trying to rub the mud from their coats, and he had hard work to wait until he was out of sound and sight to laugh.

But he did, and after rolling over and over on the ground and laughing as he thought how surprised the watchers must have been, he suddenly stopped and sat up, for he heard some one coming through the woods.

Mr. Coon jumped up and ran to a hiding place and pretty soon he saw all the animals trudging along dripping wet and scolding Mr. Fox roundly for the trick they felt sure he had played on them.

“Now, listen,” Reddy was saying, “he never did that before,” but the wood folks would not

believe him, for they said he was a foxy fellow and this was only another of his tricks.

Mr. Possum said his coat was spoiled, it was now a grayish white and it would not rub off, and Mr. Badger showed a soiled white front where the water had splashed on him when he stood on his hind legs to watch.

“I shall never be able to walk upright again,” he said sadly, “for this mud will not rub off and I could never let anyone see that the front of my coat is not clean.”

Mr. Rabbit did not say anything, but Mr. Squirrel chattered angrily as he ran off to tell everyone he knew about the muddy trick Reddy Fox had played upon his friends, and they all forgot about the queer habit they were told Mr. Coon had of washing his food, they were so busy being angry at Reddy Fox.

As he curled himself up for a sleep in a high tree top, Mr. Coon thought that for one day he could go without eating meat, for he had turned the tables upon Reddy Fox and he had been the one who laughed.

THE WEDDING BREAKFAST

OLD GRANNY QUACK heard it first, and she put on her bonnet at once, for she never let anyone get ahead of her telling news in the barnyard.

“Yes,” she said, looking over her spectacles, “Miss Penny Hen is going to be married down in the grove by the pond to-morrow morning early, before the sun is up, so Parson Owl can see whom he is marrying.”

Miss Penny Hen did not have to send out invitations, for everybody knew about the wedding and everybody expected to be invited, so the next morning early everybody was there. The bridegroom was handsome Mr. Rooster, from the next farm, and Miss Penny Hen was going to leave the barnyard where she had been brought up for a new home right after the wedding.

All the Ducks took a very early swim that morning, and were waddling up the bank just as the other guests came into the grove.

The Hens and Chickens found nice seats on

the rocks, and the Turkeys perched on the limbs of trees, where they could see everything that happened, and old Granny Quack waddled to a very front seat, so near the bridal party that Parson Owl had to ask her to get off his tail feathers.

Mr. Crow was just flying over to the cornfield when he happened to glance down, and he quite forgot his breakfast, for he did not intend to miss anything that went on, no matter whether he was invited or not.

“Now I wonder what all that crowd is up to?” he said, flying down to a limb, where he could see. “Huh, nothing to eat! A fine wedding, I should say, without a breakfast! I sha’n’t stay, even to watch old Parson Owl fly home afterward and bump his head against all the trees, as he is sure to do.”

But just as he was flying over the field Mr. Crow saw Mr. Fox creeping along through the tall grass.

“Going to the wedding?” he asked. “Of course you were invited, Mr. Fox, but you are late. Parson Owl had already married them when I left.”

Mr. Fox was not at all pleased that Mr. Crow had spied him, but he pretended he was

on his way to the pond for a drink of water, and that the wedding did not interest him, which wasn't at all true, for he had gone to the barnyard the day before to get a nice plump chicken for his dinner, and he heard Granny Quack telling the news, so he decided to wait, and when the guests were all there to help himself to the very nicest one he could find.

"Ha, ha!" cawed Mr. Crow loudly. "You're a sleek talker, Mr. Fox, but you can't pull the wool over my eyes."

And then Mr. Crow flew away, or at least Mr. Fox thought he did, for he watched until he was out of sight, flying in the opposite direction from where the wedding was going on. But Mr. Crow turned around and flew back another way, and Mr. Fox did not see him. He got to the grove just as everybody was starting for the barnyard for the wedding breakfast.

"Ah, I am a lucky bird!" thought Mr. Crow, and down he flew, right into the midst of the wedding party. "Mr. Fox is coming on the run," he announced; "he heard there was to be a wedding, and he wants to get here in time for the breakfast."

Everybody ran, excepting Mr. Crow, and

he flew; and by the time Mr. Fox reached the grove there was nothing to be seen but a few feathers. And when he crept around the side of the barn to see if there was a chance of getting one stray hen, there was Mr. Crow eating breakfast with the wedding party right in the center of the group.

"That rascal, he told," said Mr. Fox. But Mr. Dog came along and chased him over the fields, and Mr. Fox went home without his breakfast, wondering how he could pay Mr. Crow for cheating him out of it.

Mr. Crow cawed loudly and long at Mr. Fox when the next day he saw him down by the pond. "Why didn't you come to the wedding breakfast?" he asked. "Everybody was so upset because you were not there."

Mr. Fox looked up at Mr. Crow sitting on a limb of the tree over him and said in smooth tones: "I had a bone in my foot and could not get there, but I am sure you were there, Mr. Crow, and how could they miss anyone when they had the pleasure of your company?"

Mr. Crow could not talk as well as Mr. Fox, so he just cawed and flew away, but if he had seen the look in the eyes of Mr. Fox he would have been on the lookout for a while. He

didn't, however, and in fact he forgot all about the wedding breakfast very soon, for it was his busy season of the year—looking after all the newly planted cornfields.

Mr. Crow was a wise old fellow and it took more than a raggedy-looking man standing in a cornfield to scare him away, and even a man with a gun did not frighten him if he was near the woods.

Mr. Fox knew this and he did not intend to catch Mr. Crow or harm him, but what he did plan to do was to scare him nearly out of his wits, which he did, as you will learn.

One morning before it was light, Mr. Fox was coming home from a hunting trip and crossing a cornfield he happened to see a very good looking scarecrow; in fact, he had jumped when he saw it, it was so well dressed.

When he saw his mistake Mr. Fox smiled, and a smile means from Mr. Fox that he has something on his mind. He walked right over to the scarecrow and for a few minutes he was very busy, and when he finished being busy he was dressed in the clothes of the scarecrow and standing there just as natural as could be.

He knew he would have to wait until day-break and perhaps a little longer, but the fun

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he would have would be worth the trouble, he was sure of that. So he stood quite still, only when the wind blew, and then he waved his raggedy arms and rested his legs by changing his position a little.

By and by, when the sky was gray and streaks of light showed over the hill where Mr. Sun was making ready to get up, along came Mr. Crow and perched on the rail fence by the cornfield. He gave a careless glance at the scarecrow and after casting his bright eyes about he flew right over to the field and perched on one arm of the scarecrow and cawed loudly his scorn:

“Old raggedy scarecrow, you can’t frighten me,
For I’m a brave bird, as all can see.
I can see through you with one sharp eye,
You can’t fool me, so you needn’t try.”

Just as he finished cawing Mr. Crow turned to peck at the coat sleeve on which he was sitting, when Mr. Fox gave a jump and barked.

Mr. Crow was so frightened that his wings just flopped at his sides. He almost fell to the ground, but he was away in another second and Mr. Fox rolled over and over on the ground laughing.

Of course, Mr. Crow did not stop to see who

it was inside the raggedy clothes. He went as far as he could from that cornfield, but when next day Mr. Fox saw him sitting on a branch near the field, he was looking very carefully at the scarecrow waving its arms in the breeze.

“Old raggedy scarecrow, you can’t frighten me,
For I’m a brave bird, as all can see.
I can see through you with one sharp eye,
You can’t fool me, so you needn’t try.”

Mr. Fox sang this loudly as he walked by, hidden by the bushes, but Mr. Crow heard him and away he flew without giving one caw.

“I guess he will keep out of my affairs after this, meddling old fellow,” said Mr. Fox as he trotted off home.

MR. FOX AND THE STOAT FAMILY

IT was winter time in the wood, and the Four-Footed Club sat around the fire talking over their affairs, for they had cooked the last turkey and the last of the wood was now burning.

“In all my long experience,” said Mr. Fox, “I have never known food to be so scarce, and what there is of it is so poor I doubt sometimes if Mr. Man can be feeding his fowl as he should.”

“I think Mr. Dog gets more than his share,” said Mr. Coon, “for he seems strong enough. He can run just as far as ever, as far as I can see.”

“I should not be surprised if he were to blame,” said Mr. Possum, “for our hard luck; maybe he eats up everything that Mr. Man gives to the poultry, he is so strong and big; very likely he takes it away from those poor things.”

“No, it isn't Mr. Dog who is to blame, if I am any guesser,” said Mr. Fox, settling back in his chair, and taking from his mouth his

corncob pipe, "but I think I can tell you who is to blame for our not having anything in our pantry."

Mr. Fox dearly loved to spring a surprise on his four-footed friends, so he did not say any more, but replaced his pipe and took a long, deep draw and let the smoke come out of his mouth in rings, while Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum sat right up straight in their chairs and waited for him to tell who was taking their food from them.

But Mr. Fox wished to be asked and did not stop smoking until Mr. Coon could stand it no longer and asked: "WHO is taking our food? Tell us, if you know!"

"Well, perhaps I should not say he is taking it right away from us, but certainly if he and his family were not around we would have no trouble in getting plenty to eat."

"But WHO is it?" asked Mr. Possum, sitting on the very edge of his chair, with impatience. "Who is it, Mr. Fox? Tell us that!"

Mr. Fox cleared his throat and knocked the ashes from his pipe on the side of the fireplace before he replied, while Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum leaned over from their chairs until they almost tipped out of them.

When Mr. Fox had begun to refill his pipe, he said: "It is Mr. Stoat and family. Yes, that whole stuck-up family are to blame, and when I think of that miserable, sneaking lot I feel I should do something desperate!"

"But I do not see how they take away our supply," said Mr. Coon. "I have never seen them around here."

"No, of course not," said Mr. Fox. "But don't you know that the whole Stoat family has new white coats, and that it can get around in the snow without being seen much easier than I can, or either of you fellows?"

Mr. Coon, who was always falling asleep, began to nod as soon as he heard who it was that Mr. Fox thought was to blame. But Mr. Fox gave him a poke in the side and said: "Wake up, Mr. Coon, wake up! I have an idea, and we may be able to get rid of the Stoats or their white coats, anyway, of which they are so proud."

Mr. Coon opened his eyes and sat up, for when Mr. Fox had an idea it was usually worth hearing.

"I hope it will not take you so long to tell your idea, Mr. Fox, as it did to tell us who is to blame for our lack of food," said Mr. Pos-

sum, wishing to avoid the long wait they had in finding out about the Stoat family.

But Mr. Fox was not to be hurried, now that he had Mr. Coon wide awake and Mr. Possum so interested he could not do a thing but listen. Mr. Fox was in no hurry to tell his idea.

“That Stoat family, when I was a youngster, used to be called the Weasel family, and when they are not dressed in those fine white coats of theirs they wear a very homely brown one, and are a very common-looking family; so they need not put on airs with me.”

“Are you going to catch them?” asked Mr. Coon. “If you are, you need not ask me to help; for I want nothing to do with that family.”

“Nor I,” said Mr. Possum. “If you go chasing those fellows, you go alone!”

“Oh! I am not going to chase them,” said Mr. Fox, “though I should like to take a little of their conceit out of them. They are so proud and they think their tails are as handsome as mine. Think of that!”

“Well, that black tip that some of them wear certainly does show off well on their long white tails,” said Mr. Possum, “though I do not admire any part of one of those fellows!”

"I should hope not!" said Mr. Fox. "They are far from handsome in the summertime, and what is the use of looking fine in the winter, when there are so few running about to see you? That is what I should like to know."

"Yes, you are right," said Mr. Coon. "But what about that idea of yours? You have not told that to us yet."

"I thought of a plan to drive away that Stoat family," said Mr. Fox, "but I must have some help, and there is no chasing in it; so you two need not get uneasy."

"I want you to go with me up to Mr. Man's barn. There are plenty of rats in there, and there is also a big pail of black paint, and that is where we put it over Mr. Stoat and family."

"What! The paint?" asked Mr. Coon. "I shall not touch one of those creatures if you expect to paint them."

"Now wait, and hear all I have to say," replied Mr. Fox. "Yes, I do mean to paint them, but we will let them do the painting. All I want you two to do is to go with me and help spill the paint."

"I'll tip it over, but some one must watch, for Mr. Dog is to be reckoned with and also traps, and such things!"

Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum said they were perfectly willing to help in a case like that. So up to Mr. Man's they went when it was dark and still and made a nice opening under a loose board back of the barn.

Mr. Coon and Mr. Possum watched outside, while in went Mr. Fox and found the paint pots there—two pretty good-sized ones—and he tipped them both over near the hole.

When he came out, instead of coming out where he went in, he climbed to the hay loft and leaped out of a window, landing on the ground so near Mr. Coon that he jumped and ran for a tree, where he stayed, until Mr. Fox, when he could stop laughing, said:

“Got you treed, haven't I, Mr. Coon? But, you know, I could not come out through the hole with all that paint running over the floor.”

Mr. Coon did not feel very pleasant, but he came down and joined Mr. Fox and Mr. Possum, and soon forgot his upset as they hid behind a big rock near a tree to watch for the Stoat family.

“There they are!” whispered Mr. Possum, who was watching in the tree.

They stopped right by the hole in the barn and in went Father Stoat, followed by Mother

and all the little Stoats. Just what happened inside Mr. Fox and his friends never knew. But when the Stoa family came out they could be plainly seen against the white snow, for everyone of that Stoa family was black.

Whether the farmer tracked them by the paint or whether they felt so disgraced by having their fine white coats spoiled, Mr. Fox and his friends never knew; but they disappeared from around those parts and the farmyard was not so carefully guarded after that.

"That certainly was a fine idea you had, Mr. Fox," said Mr. Possum one night soon after, in the Four-Footed Club, as they sat at dinner. "I never ate a finer bird!"

"Your ideas are all right," said Mr. Coon, "but I get all fussed up waiting to hear them."

"A good story with an idea at the end is worth waiting to hear," said the Fox, as he helped himself to another piece of turkey.

THE FOUR-FOOTED CLUB

MR. FOX went over to Billy Possum's one morning and told him a plan he had and then they went to Tim Coon and told him about it. "We think if we could get Mr. Dog to come over here to the woods," said Mr. Fox to Tim Coon, "that we would find it easier hunting up on Mr. Man's farm."

"But who is going to get Mr. Dog to come?" asked Tim. "I do not want to be the one to carry the invitation to him."

"Oh! I am going to send it over by Jim Crow," said Mr. Fox. "That is safe enough and I shall have Jim tell him that we think it time all of us were friends; we all belong to the four-footed race."

So off the three went to find Jim Crow and they found him in good humor, for he had just dined on the corn Mr. Man had planted.

"Yes, I'll take your invitation to him," said Jim. "But what do I get out of it; do I get invited, too?"

"Why, of course," said Mr. Fox, "you are

invited to the party, and you shall have all the corn you can eat. I'll get a bagful from Mr. Man's barn this very night. No one else will like it, so you will have all you can eat."

"Hope he chokes, too," whispered Mr. Fox to Tim Coon. "Did you ever see such a greedy fellow? Wouldn't do a little thing like that for a friend without asking for pay."

"Well, what shall I tell him?" asked Jim Crow, with his head cocked on one side to listen.

"Tell him we want him to come to our party. It is going to be at my house to-night," said Mr. Fox.

"You can't get the corn for me until to-night," said Jim.

"Oh, well, I'll get it as soon as it is dark, before the party begins," said Mr. Fox.

"Did you ever see such a fellow, afraid he won't get his pay?" whispered Mr. Fox to Tim and Billy.

"And tell Mr. Dog that we have decided that we shall not go over to Mr. Man's any more," said Mr. Fox. "We want to be friends with him and have him belong to our Four-Footed Club."

"But I thought you said you were going over there to get my corn, so how can I tell Mr. Dog

that you are not going to Mr. Man's any more? Don't you intend to pay me?" asked Jim Crow, sticking out his head in a very angry manner.

"Of course you will be paid," said Mr. Fox, going closer under the tree and looking up at Jim with a smile, "I just meant that we three were not going to bother Mr. Man's hen coops any more, don't you see?"

"Oh," said Jim Crow, stretching his wings, "well I'll tell Mr. Dog what you say, but don't forget the corn."

"No, I won't forget it," said Mr. Fox, "and I won't get it either," he added to Tim and Billy Possum, "the old greedy bill, let him caw for the corn; he will tell Mr. Dog, and that is all we care."

They watched Jim Crow out of sight and sat down to wait for his return, and then Mr. Fox told Tim and Billy Possum how he intended to keep Mr. Dog away from the farm for one night at least.

"You see they always play games at a party," said Mr. Fox, as they sat waiting for Jim Crow to return, "and we will play blind man's buff; then, after a while, we will blind Mr. Dog, only we will put on the blinder so he can't get it off, and there he will have to stay."

“The rest is easy; we will run over the hill and help ourselves to the fowl without having to think about Mr. Dog barking and waking everybody up.”

Tim Coon and Billy Possum thought Mr. Fox was the very wisest fellow they knew, and they were laughing about the trick they would play Mr. Dog when Jim Crow returned.

“He says he will be glad to come to your party,” said Jim Crow; “he says he is tired of staying awake nights to chase you fellows and will be very glad to be friends and join the Four-Footed Club.”

Mr. Fox thanked Jim and away he flew, but he called back, “Don’t forget my corn; I’ll be there early.”

“We must change the place to have the party,” said Mr. Fox as soon as Jim Crow flew away. “If we don’t he’ll make a great fuss when he finds out there is no corn for him, and there isn’t going to be any.

“And then you see he might help Mr. Dog to get off the bandage after we run off, so we must meet Mr. Dog at the edge of the woods and take him over to your house, Tim.”

That night just as the moon came up and shone very faintly through the trees into the

woods, Tim Coon and Billy Possum and Mr. Fox waited to meet Mr. Dog. He was all dressed up in his red coat and green trousers, so the three waiters felt safe.

Off they all trotted to Tim Coon's house, but if they had looked up they might have seen over their heads a little behind them Jim Crow.

Jim Crow happened to be sitting in the tree right over their heads as the three waited for Mr. Dog and he heard that the party was to be at Tim Coon's instead of at Mr. Fox's.

"That is queer," he thought. "I'll just watch. If they try to play any tricks I'll fool them."

When they reached Tim's house Jim Crow flew to a tree and watched. He could hear them laughing and running, so he flew in the pantry window and looked about.

When he found there was no corn in the pantry Jim Crow was pretty angry. He flew back and waited and pretty soon the door of Tim Coon's house opened and out ran Tim and Billy Possum and Mr. Fox and away they flew through the woods.

"Now, what does that mean, I wonder," said Jim. "I wonder where Mr. Dog can be. I'll look in the window and see."

When he looked in, there was Mr. Dog, with

his eyes bandaged, walking around the room on his hind legs and trying to find the others, and then Jim Crow saw that Mr. Dog's front paws were tied behind him.

"They played it on you, too," said Jim, flying in and picking at the bandage over Mr. Dog's eyes.

"Where are they?" asked Mr. Dog, looking about when the bandage was off. "We were playing blind man's buff."

"But why have you got your paws tied behind you?" asked Jim Crow.

"That is the way they play at the Four-Footed Club," explained Mr. Dog.

"Well, you run over the hill and see what those three rogues are doing, and you will understand more about this game than you do now," said Jim Crow. "I think I understand more than I did this morning, and you tell them I sent you, Mr. Dog."

Very much in a hurry Tim Coon and Mr. Fox and Billy Possum came over the hill soon after, and when he saw them Jim Crow called out:

"Been after my corn?"

But they did not answer. They ran right on, never stopping until they were in their homes and the doors locked behind them.

THE UNINVITED GUESTS

MR. CROW was good and angry when he found out that there was a dinner to be held at the Four-Footed Club, and he was not invited.

“I don’t care if I have only two feet. That ought not to keep me from getting an invitation even if I cannot become a member,” said Mr. Crow, as he hopped about on the ground, picking at worms and bugs with an unusually hard peck.

“What is a leg or two among friends, I should like to know, and if I have not been a friend more than once to most of those four-footed fellows I should like very much to be told what a friend really is.

“More than once I have cawed at Mr. Rabbit when he was in the garden up at Mr. Man’s when I saw, a long way off, Mr. Dog coming, and then there is Mr. Fox. I told him where there was a nice fat hen on the ground all ready for him to eat.

“Of course I was not to blame that the hen

was fixed with something that made Mr. Fox sick and nearly killed him, the kindness was just the same on my part.

"Then there is Mr. Coon. Didn't I tell him where the sugar cane was last year and he said himself he never ate better. Of course, I found out for sure when he went in the field that the man who stood there was only a scarecrow, but I did Mr. Coon a kindness just the same.

"And now they all are having a dinner and have not invited me. There is Woody Chuck; I wonder if he has been invited?"

Woody said he had and that he heard they were to have a fine dinner, which made Mr. Crow more angry than ever.

Up he flew to a limb of a tree, chattering as hard as he could, when he happened to look over in a field and there he saw Mrs. Skunk with her eight children following her one after another.

At first they did not interest Mr. Crow at all and then he suddenly thought of something. "I wonder if I could work that," he said. "That would let me pay off two debts at once. I believe I will try it, anyway."

Off he fled across the road to where Mrs. Skunk was walking with her young children.

"How do you do, Mrs. Skunk? What a fine lot of children you have this year," he said.

Mr. Crow was up so high that he did not mind startling Mrs. Skunk and he did scare her at first, but she soon saw who it was and stopped to speak to him.

"Oh, Mrs. Skunk," said Mr. Crow, "I have been selected to invite all the guests for the dinner to-night at the Four-Footed Club in the woods, and they wished me particularly to invite you and bring all of your children, and of course your husband as well!"

Mrs. Skunk was very much pleased when she heard this, for she and her husband did not often receive a welcome from the other wood folk when they went near their homes.

"Well, now, that is kind of them," she said. "Tell them we will be there early."

"I would not go too early, my dear Mrs. Skunk," said sly Mr. Crow. "You know that most of those animals do not like to get out until it is very dark, so if I were you I would not go until late."

Mrs. Skunk said she would do just as he said, for she did not go about much these days and did not know just how things should be done. Mr. Crow flew away to the woods be-

fore he had a good laugh over what he had done; for well he knew that Mrs. Skunk or any of her family would be far from welcome at the Four-Footed Club dinner that night.

"I guess they will wish they had asked a certain party with only two feet!" he said, as he hopped about with glee at the thought of what might happen.

"Now all I have to do is to watch, and when they are all at the table, and the Skunk family is there, too, I will fly over to the farm and see if I can find Mr. Dog.

"I do not dislike him, as a rule, but this particular Mr. Dog has bothered me a lot this year. Now, why should he go out into the corn-field and bark so when I fly down to pick up a bit of co——; I mean, pick up worms.

"Yes, he must be paid off, and if everything works well I will break up that old club for the four-footed fellows and give Mr. Dog such a punishment he will not be thinking about me or the corn for several days at least."

That night Mr. Crow had to pick himself to keep awake until the guests began to arrive at the dinner at the Four-Footed Club, but he did keep awake, and after awhile the dinner began.

They were all sitting around the table eating when Mr. Skunk and his wife, followed by their children, arrived. "Why, we are late," said Mr. Skunk, as they went in. "We understood that your dinner did not begin until quite late. Mr. Crow told us not to come early."

All the four-footed members stood up and looked in astonishment as the undesirable guests filed in to the club, but not one of them dared show by word or act that the guests were not welcome. "Don't get them angry for the world," whispered Mr. Fox to the ones nearest him.

"Come right in and sit down," said Mr. Fox, in his smoothest tone of voice. "We will have a table fixed for you at the other end of the room. You see that careless Mr. Crow, who invited you, told us you could not come."

But Mr. Skunk said he would not think of making all that trouble, and that they could squeeze in between the other guests just as well as not. They did not at all mind sitting close and the children were so small they could be tucked in anywhere.

All seemed to have lost their appetites after the Skunk family arrived until Mrs. Skunk, looking across, said: "I am afraid we are not

wanted. Everyone seems to have stopped eating and no one has said a word."

"Oh, my dear madam, we are delighted to see you all!" said all the club members and the other guests, and up they all jumped and began to laugh and talk as hard and fast as they could for fear she would be spiteful, for well they all knew she could be.

Mr. Crow heard all this from under the window where he stood. He knew that Mr. Fox suspected him and he was glad of that, for he wanted him to know he was the one who spoiled the dinner for the club.

Then off he flew to Mr. Dog and told him about the animals. "You could have a lot of fun if you went over now. The moon is bright enough for you to see and they will never think of you at this time of night. My, I just bet they will run some!"

This was more than Mr. Dog could think about and stay at home; so over the fields to the woods he ran and right up to the clubhouse door before anyone heard him.

With a bound and a bark he jumped into the midst and everybody ran—that is, everybody but the Skunk family. They went right on eating as if nothing had happened.

Mr. Dog thought that was funny. He could scare every animal he had ever barked at, so he barked louder and then jumped at one of the little Skunks.

Quick as a wink Mr. and Mrs. Skunk used their ever-ready weapon, and straight into the eyes and face of Mr. Dog, and before he could stop laughing Mr. Crow, from the window sill, saw Mr. Dog running as if he thought some dreadful thing was after him.

Mr. Crow did not stay, either; he flew right away from that part of the woods to a tree far away, but before he tucked his head under his wing he said to himself, "I paid off Mr. Dog and the Four-Footed-Club, too. I certainly managed matters well this time.

"I have never understood the saying about killing two birds with one stone. It has always sounded very cruel to me, but to-night I think I understand it. I paid off two debts with one night's work, for that Club won't meet again for many a day; not in that place at any rate, and Mr. Dog will be very busy, and if I am not much mistaken his meals will all be served a long way from the farmhouse. Oh! but I am a clever fellow, I am."

MR. BEAR'S FAREWELL PARTY

IT was about time for Mr. Bear to take his winter sleep, and as the deep-wood animals had been known to help themselves to Mr. Bear's well-filled pantry while he was in the land of Nod he decided this year to give a supper the night before he curled up for the winter.

He invited all the animals, the most important of which were Mr. Fox and his wife, of course, and Mr. and Mrs. Squirrel, Jack Rabbit and his wife, Billy Possum and Tim Coon.

Of course there were many others, but these were the most prominent socially, as I said before.

Such a table full of goodies as Mr. Bear spread for them—pies and cake and puddings, and ice cream, and plenty of fried chicken and roast duck.

A great, big dish of honey was at the end of the table, and Mr. Bear stood beside that most of the time.

The guests all ate and ate till they could hardly move, and when it was time to go home they voted Mr. Bear the most delightful host they had ever known.

One by one the guests took their departure, until Billy Possum and Tim Coon were the only ones left.

Mr. Bear was going about putting his house in order before he retired, for he liked to find everything in apple-pie order when he awoke in the spring.

Billy Possum and Tim Coon were talking together all evening, but no one noticed them, all were so busily engaged at the table.

Now they came from the corner where they had been sitting and said to Mr. Bear, "Dear friend, you have given all your friends a most delightful evening and we think it would be cruel to leave you to do all the clearing up alone; we will stay and help you."

Mr. Bear was surprised at this display of thoughtfulness on the part of Billy and Tim, for they were never known to do anything for any one.

"Yes, we will help you tidy up, Mr. Bear," said Billy Possum, "and we will wait until you have gone to bed and put out the candle, for I

know it must be very lonely for you to begin your long sleep without a friend to say good-night to you."

Mr. Bear lived in his house all but the part of the year he slept, and for this particular nap he had a deep cave under his house.

So when all the dishes were washed and put in the closet and the room swept Mr. Bear put on his flannel wrapper, took his candle and started for the cellar door.

"We will lock the outside door," said Billy Possum, "and drop the key down the chimney, for they insisted upon seeing Mr. Bear right into his cave.

No sooner was the door closed behind him than Billy Possum and Tim Coon began to laugh and wink at each other, and then Tim softly turned the key in the lock.

"He is safe for the winter," whispered Tim. "Now we will keep house for him. It can't harm his bed to sleep in it or his house if we live in it."

"Or his preserves if we eat them and the other things he has stored away," said Billy Possum.

"I am tired," said Tim, "I have not worked so hard in a long time. "I am going to bed."

"Well, you can take it easy for the rest of the winter," said Billy. "I don't suppose we need to have locked the door. He never wakes up till spring time."

"I shall feel very much safer with it locked," said Tim, as he rolled into Mr. Bear's bed.

Billy jumped in after him and pulled Mr. Bear's soft blanket over his head and was soon asleep.

It happened that Mr. Bear wore a nightcap and he had forgotten to take it with him, so after fixing himself for his long sleep he suddenly felt a coolness about his head.

"My nightcap," he exclaimed. "I just cannot sleep without it. I should sneeze all summer, too."

Up jumped Mr. Bear and trudged up the stairs. "What is this," he said. "They have locked the door; they must have made a mistake and locked this door as well as the outside one. Well, I will have to break the lock."

Mr. Bear placed his shoulder against the door and pushed, but Billy Possum and Tim Coon were sleeping too soundly for the noise to awaken them.

Mr. Bear stopped when he came to the door of his bedroom. Was somebody in his nice,

soft bed? He looked closer, and on one head he saw his nightcap, for Billy Possum had put it on.

Mr. Bear tiptoed to the bed and looked closer; he saw who was in his bed, and then he smiled a most unpleasant smile.

He reached for Billy Possum, took him right by the top of the head and pulled him out of bed. He then reached for Tim Coon and took him the same way, growling all the time.

"Help! Help!" screamed Tim and Billy, thinking some dreadful creature was about to devour them.

"You can scream, you scamps," said Mr. Bear, shaking them until their teeth chattered. "No one will come, and if they did they could not help you. Take off my nightcap, Billy Possum!"

Billy untied the strings and took it off and laid the cap on the bed, then he gave a groan and over he went on the floor, just as though he were dead.

"You can't fool me, Mr. Possum," said Mr. Bear. "You may be able to fool Mr. Man, or Mr. Dog, but not Mr. Bear.

"Get up this minute or I will throw a pail of cold water on you."



HE SAW WHO WAS IN HIS BED, AND THEN HE SMILED A MOST UNPLEASANT SMILE

Billy did not move and Mr. Bear grabbed him again, and with Billy in one hand and Tim Coon in the other he went to the window, putting Tim under his arm while he opened it.

Then he shook them again and threw them out of the window. "I guess they will remember that for some time," said Mr. Bear. "They won't play any more of their sly games with me; I am glad I forgot my nightcap," and off he went to his cave.

Tim and Billy picked themselves up, they were so sore and lame they could hardly get home, and for a week after they stayed in the house nursing their lame backs.

"It would have been all right if he hadn't forgot that nightcap," groaned Tim.

"Yes, but he didn't forget it," groaned Billy Possum. "I had no idea he had such a temper either."

JACK RABBIT AND MR. TURTLE

IT had rained for days. Oh, how it had rained, poured right out of the sky as if old Mr. Sun was drawing the water up from the ocean somewhere and then pouring it out in buckets full all over the world.

The woods folk were in despair; those who lived in the ground were driven to the top of high rocks and those who lived in the trees could not get out to get food excepting the birds, and they complained that the yards for miles around were covered with water and no crumbs or worms were to be had.

Jack Rabbit sat on the top of a rock looking very forlorn and unhappy; he had sat there all night and all the day before, and besides being very tired and not daring to fall asleep for fear of tumbling off the rock into the water, he was very hungry.

Johnnie Squirrel chattered to him from his house in a tree, and told him he would gladly share his nuts with him if there was any way of getting them to him, and he would be glad

to give Jack Rabbit shelter if he could climb a tree.

"I wish Mr. Fox would come along, he is such a wise fellow," said Jack Rabbit; "he would be sure to think of a way to get me off this rock to a dry spot." But Mr. Fox did not come that way; he was having all he could do to find a place of safety for himself, for while he could swim and was tall enough to keep his head above water, it was no easy matter for him to find a place to sleep where he could be safe from the dogs and guns.

So, while Jack Rabbit wished for his friend, Mr. Fox was a long way off, wondering if he would ever again have a home.

"Why don't you ask Mr. Owl; he is as wise as your friend, Mr. Fox," said Mr. Squirrel, "perhaps he might help you out of your trouble."

"I do not think I should care for his advice," said Jack Rabbit, "besides, there is no one that could help me but Mr. Fox; he would carry me to a dry place on his back, I am sure."

"Could I be of any assistance, sir?" asked some one close beside Jack Rabbit.

Jack Rabbit looked around and saw Mr. Turtle slowly crawling up the side of the rock.

"Oh, dear, you cannot help me!" said Jack

Rabbit, "you are not large enough and I am sure you are having quite as much discomfort as any of us; you are so short."

"Why, my dear Jack Rabbit, you talk as though I never saw a flood before—I am better able to take care of myself than any of you; I can swim, you know."

"Swim?" said Jack Rabbit, "why you cannot run; you walk along so slowly and pokey through the woods, I wonder you don't get stepped on. Look out, you'll fall off and be drowned."

But Jack Rabbit's warning came too late—off tumbled Mr. Turtle into the water and Jack Rabbit expected he would be drowned before his eyes, but, to his surprise, Mr. Turtle paddled about with the greatest ease and came back to the rock.

"That is rather a slippery place you are sitting on, Jack Rabbit," he said, "I shall feel safer here."

He crawled on a stone that was partly covered with water and sat down to rest.

"Yes, I have seen many floods," he said. "This is nothing to the one I saw about a hundred years ago; I was quite a young fellow then ——"

"A hundred years ago!" repeated Jack Rabbit, "how old are you, Mr. Turtle?"

"Oh, about two hundred," answered Mr. Turtle, "and as I was saying, I saw a real flood a hundred years ago. You would have been lost in that flood, Jack Rabbit; it came up over the rocks, and even the trees looked short, the water was so deep."

"Mr. Fox would have been drowned in the flood, wouldn't he?" asked Jack Rabbit, beginning to think Mr. Turtle must be very wise if he was very old.

"Yes, Mr. Fox would have been drowned, and, in fact, everybody was drowned but the few I was able to save."

"How did you save them?" asked Jack Rabbit, becoming very much interested, and not thinking Mr. Turtle so much of a joke after all.

"On my back," said Mr. Turtle. "I saved an ancestor of yours that day, or you would not be here, Jack Rabbit."

"Did you?" said Jack Rabbit, very meekly. "Who was he?"

"Why Jack Rabbit, of course," said Mr. Turtle. "I carried him and his family to dry land on my back, and that is the way you happened to be here."

"Perhaps you will be as kind to me, Mr. Turtle," said Jack Rabbit, in a very pleading tone, "and carry me to dry land, too; I have been sitting here all night and all day yesterday, too; I am hungry, too."

"To be sure I'll carry you," said Mr. Turtle. "I was ready to do that when I first came along; in fact, I was looking for you, but you seemed to think I was so slow I could not be of any use, and that your friend, Mr. Fox, was the only one who could save you; now jump on."

Mr. Turtle came alongside the rock and Jack Rabbit very carefully crawled down to his back and sat on it very still, his ears sticking up straight with fright.

"You won't tip me over, will you, Mr. Turtle?" he said.

"No, no; of course I won't. Didn't I save your ancestor? You sit still and I will soon have you on dry land."

"Here we are, now jump off," said Mr. Turtle, crawling up the side of a hill, and Jack Rabbit jumped without being told a second time.

"Mr. Turtle," he said, "I am sorry I made fun of your slow way of getting about. I owe my life to you, and I will never forget it."

“Oh, that is all right,” said Mr. Turtle, “just mention it to your children so when there is another flood they will know I will look out for them. Good-by, Jack Rabbit, I may not be about here again for a hundred years or so.”

“I wonder how long he expects to live?” said Jack Rabbit. “Anyway, he is a kind-hearted old fellow, and I will not forget he saved my life. I expect a hundred years from now he will be telling the same story to another Jack Rabbit.”

GRANDMOTHER RABBIT'S STORY

LITTLE Patty Rabbit sat looking at her story book with a very dissatisfied look on her face. She was so interested in the pictures that she did not see her grandmother coming along the path and run to meet her as she usually did.

"Why, Patty, dear, what is the matter? You look as if you did not like the pictures or stories in your book," said Grandmother Rabbit.

"Oh! grandmother!" said Little Patty Rabbit, dropping her book on the ground and running to her grandmother, "I didn't see you coming. I am so glad to see you."

"Tell me why you were looking so unhappy? Don't you like your book?" asked Grandmother Rabbit.

"Y-e-s," said Patty Rabbit, "I like it sometimes, but I get tired reading all the time about Peter Rabbit and Jackie Rabbit and Bennie Rabbit and looking at their pictures. I should like so much to read a story about a little girl Rabbit.

"Don't little girl rabbits ever do anything that would make a good story, Grandmother?"

"Of course they do, my dear. "Didn't I ever tell you about Susie Rabbit that ate her doll?" asked Grandmother Rabbit.

"Oh! grandmother, do tell it to me!" said Patty Rabbit, dancing about her grandmother on her hind feet and her ears sticking right up straight at the thought of what she was about to tell her. "Tell me the story, quick, do!"

Grandmother Rabbit sat down on the steps of Patty's house and took her knitting out of a bag and as she knit she told the story of Susie Rabbit who ate her doll.

"Once upon a time," said Grandmother Rabbit, "there lived a little girl Rabbit named Susie. Her father and mother were poor, and they did not live as you do, where they could get plenty of food, and she didn't have a book with pictures in it, either.

"Susie Rabbit never had anything to play with. She was lucky if she had enough to eat.

"But one day Susie Rabbit saw a little girl with a doll going through the woods where she lived and ran home to her mother and cried for a doll. Her mother couldn't get her a doll be-

cause they did not live near a store, and if they had she did not have any money to buy one; so Susie cried and cried, and when her father came home she was still crying.

“‘What is the matter with Susie,’ he asked, and Susie’s mother told him she wanted a doll.

“After Susie was in bed that night her mother said to her father: ‘I have thought of something; we can make Susie a doll.’

“‘How can we make a doll?’ asked Susie’s father, looking surprised that his wife should suggest such a thing.

“‘I’ll tell you,’ said Susie’s mother, ‘you go over to the garden at the farmhouse over the hill and get me a big carrot and a head of nice crisp lettuce and I will show you how I can make a doll.’

“So away ran Susie’s father and got the carrot and the lettuce and brought them home.

“Then Susie’s mother cut the top of the carrot for a head and made eyes and mouth and nose of berries, and then she made a pretty dress of the lettuce with a ruffled skirt, which was long, so it did not matter if the doll did not have any feet.

“She made a cape of one lettuce leaf and a little bonnet from a small leaf; the clothes were

fastened on with little sticks which Susie's father whittled from twigs.

" 'There! I think that looks nice,' said Susie's mother, holding it up for her husband to see.

" 'It looks nice enough to eat,' said Susie's father, smacking his mouth. Susie's mother sprinkled the doll with water, so it would keep fresh, and put it by Susie's bed.

"In the morning when she awoke she saw it the first thing. 'Oh! I have got a doll! I've got a doll!' she cried, laughing and running to her mother with the doll clasped in her arms.

"Susie played with the doll for a while, but, as I told you, Susie did not have nice things to eat as you do, and a whole carrot and a head of lettuce all for herself was something new to poor little Susie Rabbit, so after a while she just nibbled a bit of the cape and then she nibbled one ruffle.

" 'I guess she will look just as well if she has only one ruffle on her skirt,' said Susie, so she ate one leaf of lettuce.

"After a while she ate the bonnet, and by and by she ate the other ruffle and the cape.

" 'A doll without a dress isn't any use,' said Susie, so she ate the carrot, and that was the end of Susie Rabbit's doll."

“Oh! grandmother, that was a lovely story,” said Patty. “I think that is good enough to print in a book. Won’t you have it printed? Please do. I know lots of little folks would like to read about a girl Rabbit as well as about Peter and Jackie and other boy Rabbits.”

So Grandmother Rabbit did as Patty Rabbit asked, and that is the way you happen to be reading the story.

JUDGE OWL'S CLEVERNESS

MR. COON had lost a bright tin spoon, and it was not the first time that he had lost one. This time, however, he was not able to get it back from Mr. Crow, because he could not catch him using it.

“But I know Jimmy Crow has my spoon. There is no one else who would care enough about bright things to carry it off,” said Mr. Coon.

“But you will have to prove it,” said Mr. Fox, who was quite wise about such things. “Just because there are a few feathers in front of my house, and the farmer has lost a chicken, does not PROVE I took it, you know.”

“No,” faltered Mr. Coon with a smile, “I suppose it doesn’t; but how am I to prove Jimmy is the thief, Mr. Fox? You are so clever—can’t you think of some way to help me get my tin spoon back?”

“Suppose I arrest Jimmy on suspicion,” said Mr. Fox; “and, to be fair about it, we will have one of Jimmy’s tribe for the judge. He

cannot object to that, and everybody knows that Judge Owl is very clever and wise."

"Very well. You arrest him," said Mr. Coon. "I know he has my bright tin spoon, and I hope he has kept it bright. I would not care a rap about it if it is not shiny."

Mr. Fox had to wait until he caught Mr. Crow on the ground, and one day, when he did, he crept up behind him and caught him by one leg. "I arrest you, Mr. Crow, for stealing Mr. Coon's bright tin spoon," he said.

"Prove it!" cawed Jimmy Crow. "How do you know I stole it?"

"We will let Judge Owl decide that," answered Mr. Fox. "He is very wise, you know."

"He will have to prove I have the spoon, and he can't do that," said Mr. Crow. "He has got to catch me with it, and he can search me if he likes; he won't find it."

Judge Owl looked very solemn and wise as he sat on a low limb of a tree looking down on Mr. Crow and Mr. Fox and Mr. Coon as they sat on the ground. "We will hear what the prisoner has to say," he said.

There were many other wood folk there, all listening to what the judge said, but now every

eye was turned on Jimmy Crow as he began to speak.

"I have not his tin spoon," said Jimmy, looking very boldly at Judge Owl. "You can search under every feather on me, judge, and you won't find it."

Jimmy ruffled his feathers as he spoke, and all the animals began to wonder if, after all, Mr. Coon was not mistaken, for of course the spoon would have fallen if Jimmy had it hidden.

"Well, perhaps you did not take it," said Judge Owl. "I know one thing; the one who did steal Mr. Coon's bright tin spoon hasn't any tail feathers; he has lost every last feather."

"They were all there this morning," said Mr. Crow, looking around at his tail before he thought what he was doing.

"You are the thief, just as I thought," said Judge Owl. "Go home and get that spoon, or you will loose all your feathers."

It was no use to deny it now. Jimmy Crow knew that when he turned around and looked at his tail and made that remark he had acknowledged his guilt, so off he flew, with a flock of Bluejays around him to make sure he did not run away.

“Wasn’t Judge Owl clever to catch Jimmy the way he did?” asked Mr. Coon as he sat in the moonlight talking it over with Mr. Fox, and Mr. Fox, who admired a clever trick, allowed that Mr. Owl was a very clever old bird.



"THEY WERE ALL THERE THIS MORNING," SAID MR. CROW, LOOK-
ING AROUND AT HIS TAIL

HOW MISS SPRINGTIME WAS STOLEN

JACK FROST is full of mischief, but he does not really mean to harm anyone with his pranks and snappy tricks, but old giant King Frost is a different sort of fellow. He will freeze things so hard and fast that sometimes even the warm work of Madam Summer cannot bring them back safely again.

One night when it was about time for Miss Springtime to come to town old giant King Frost, who had ruled with a rod of ice all winter, did not want to go back to his ice castle.

“If only I could catch Miss Springtime,” he said to himself, “I would carry her off to my castle and then I could come back and stay as long as I like.”

He knew well enough that Miss Springtime would be very careful not to come out while he was anywhere about, and not till he was back in his ice castle would she even put the tip of her dainty feet into town.

So it was out of the question for King Frost to catch pretty Miss Springtime. He must

think of some other way to carry out his wicked plan.

"There is Jack Frost," thought he. "Now, she isn't really afraid of Jack and often she lets him come close to her I am told. I might get Jack to carry her off if he did not suspect that I wanted to keep her a prisoner."

So he awoke the sleeping Jack and told him he wanted to play a trick on Miss Springtime and he wanted him to help with the joke.

Jack Frost, always ready for a lark, jumped up and ran down the mountain with King Frost, and here King Frost told him he must leave him, for he must hide behind the mountain. It would never do for Miss Springtime to suspect that he was anywhere around.

"Let her come to town," said King Frost, "and then you jump out from behind some place where you have hidden during the day and catch her when it is dark, and do not let her get away. Bring her here to this mountain and I will do the rest."

So off capered Jack Frost to do as King Frost told him and gaily came Miss Springtime tripping into town when the sun rose one morning, for there was no sign of the Frost King or even Jack Frost.

But that night when the sun went down and all was dark and still, out crept the fun-loving Jack and caught Miss Springtime fast asleep in a garden.

She awoke with a cry of alarm, but when she saw Jack Frost she laughed. "Oh, it is you," she said; "none of your frosty pranks, Jack. Run along, I am not afraid of you."

But Jack did not run. Instead he held Miss Springtime close in his frosty arms and off he ran with her struggling to free herself.

Away to the mountain he carried her and there was King Frost waiting, for he had been watching from the top and had seen Jack catch her up from the garden. When Miss Springtime saw old giant King Frost she gave a loud scream, for she knew that he was bent on doing something cruel and had got Jack to help him.

"Carry me back, Jack Frost. Carry me back to the garden quickly. King Frost is cruel. He will not play tricks as you do just for fun!" cried poor little Miss Springtime, struggling to get free.

Before Jack could ask King Frost what he intended to do, the wicked King had caught Miss Springtime from him and run over the mountain toward his home in the cold north.

Jack Frost started to run after them, but as he had planned to do some mischief for himself that night he turned back and ran to town, thinking that King Frost would bring Miss Springtime back when Rosy Dawn ran along the mountain top in the morning.

Madam Summer had heard Miss Springtime's cry for help, so she told Rosy Dawn to look for her the next morning, but, of course, she could not find her.

As soon as Mr. Sun was up Rosy Dawn ran back to tell Madam Summer Miss Springtime could not be found.

"It is old giant King Frost, who has done this wicked deed," said Madam Summer. "He shall pay for this if he does not bring her back."

But King Frost did not bring her back; he had Miss Springtime fast locked in his ice castle, and there he intended to keep her until he was ready to go home for good.

Long Madam Summer waited, and each day Rosy Dawn sadly shook her head; she could not find Miss Springtime.

Of course Madam Summer did not have many clothes; those she had were old and drab looking, but she knew she must forget her pride

and go forth to find Miss Springtime if ever the earth was to be freed from the grip of old King Frost.

So one morning she went along with Rosy Dawn and from the top of the mountain she looked around.

She was not dressed in gay clothes such as she usually wore and King Frost did not know her, so he did not bother to hide his home, but ran off to it while Mr. Sun was shining to snatch a few hours' sleep.

"Ah," said Madam Summer, as she watched him. "So that is your home, and there I know is poor Miss Springtime weeping out her heart. You shall pay for this, you wicked king."

Madam Summer went right to work. She ran down the mountain into the fields and gardens and over the ponds and ice-covered streams, but she did not go near the castle of King Frost.

When night came, out came the King and looked about; then he started to run down the mountain, but to his surprise he found he was not feeling strong; in fact, he seemed about to crumple and fall to the ground.

"I wonder if Madam Summer has come," he said, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

"I was sure she would not appear without her new clothes."

King Frost turned back to his home, but what a sight met his gaze when he reached the spot where his castle had stood!

Madam Summer had been there while he was away and on the castle and ice-covered forest she threw her warm breath and the castle was no more.

King Frost had no place to lay his old white head, for Madam Summer had worked fast and sure and his icy realm had disappeared.

With a mighty roar of rage old King Frost threw himself on the ground and tore his white locks, for Miss Springtime had not only escaped but he had been driven away by Madam Summer before he was ready to go.

Down he went into the frosty ground, his tears of rage melting for him a bed where he went to sleep to dream of his wicked deed all summer.

Poor little Miss Springtime had wept until she was pretty no longer; rivers of tears she had cried, and as Madam Summer led her through the town she looked with wet eyes at the gardens and fields she should have made ready for summertime, all empty and bare.

It was too late; she would have to go home now and wait another year, but no one blamed poor little Miss Springtime; it was all the fault of the wicked giant King Frost.

Madam Summer did not blame her, either, though Madam had to do all of her own dress-making that year as well as other things, and when fall time came along she was glad to go to sleep.

HOW SUNFLOWER BECAME AN OUTCAST

THE Dust Imps had held full sway for many, many days, for the sun had been shining warm and bright and little Dust Imps grow very fast in the sunlight.

The flowers and the trees were almost choked and were longing for the Raindrop Elves to give battle to the Dust Imps and put them to flight.

One night when the garden flowers were heavy with dust and hanging their heads even in the cool of the night air a little rosebush growing by the garden spoke to the sunflower growing near by.

“Sunflower, you are the first to greet the Sun in the morning,” she said. “Will you not ask him to find the Rain Elves and tell them how much we are suffering from the pranks of the Dust Imps?”

“My buds are drying and I shall never be able to bloom if the Rain Elves do not drive away the Dust Imps soon.”

Sunflower only shook her head in reply.

“Don’t you know that she is in love with the Sun and will never tell him not to shine even for one day?” whispered Honeysuckle Vine growing on the wall, “and, besides, those Dust Imps are up as soon as the Sun.

“Now I climb high on a tree on the other side of the wall and I will save the garden flowers, for I shall catch the tip-top breezes as they pass tonight and tell them of the sad plight of the garden flowers.”

Honeysuckle was a sweet, modest thing and though the garden flowers knew she was on the wall none of them felt that she really belonged to their set and they never noticed her.

Rosebush lifted her dusty leaves. “I have always thought you were sweet,” she replied, “almost too sweet to be pleasant, but if you do this for us I am sure we will never forget your kindness.”

So that night high up in the tree Honeysuckle caught a passing breeze and told it how the Dust Imps were choking and killing the flowers and if the Rain Elves did not hurry they would be too late to save them.

Just before daybreak, “patter, patter, patter” came the Rain Elves on the trees and flowers and on the ground, and before the Dust Imps

could jump up and give battle they were overpowered.

I am sure you have noticed sometimes when the rain strikes the dusty ground that the dust flies up a little. It is the Dust Imps trying to give battle to the Rain Elves, but they are quickly overpowered and are soon at the mercy of the conquering Elves.

And so it was on that morning in the garden when the Rain Elves came pattering thick and fast to save the garden flowers. The Dust Imps were soon limp upon the ground and the flowers were holding up their heads.

And then it was that Rosebush spoke. "It was Honeysuckle that saved us," she told the flowers. "Sunflower would not ask the Sun to find the Rain Elves, because she could not see her lover if the Rain Elves came.

"If it had not been for sweet Honeysuckle we might have perished, and I for one shall always treat her as one of us after this."

"And I think that Sunflower should be punished for refusing to help us," said a stately Lily. "I have never felt that she really belonged to our set, for one thing she is far too tall to be graceful and she is so countrified, always gazing over the garden wall."

And that was the way Sunflower became an outcast from the flower garden and grows mostly in back yards, because she refused to help the flowers once long ago when the Dust Imps fell upon them.

And often now Honeysuckle is seen on the fences of the garden where the prettiest flowers grow, for since that day when she helped them the garden flowers call her sister.

JACK FROST'S SWEETHEART

OF COURSE the Elf who awoke the Flower Elfin was to blame, but the sun was so warm he was sure it was Spring and time for her to bloom, so out she popped, but instead of the nice, soft, green cover she had always seen on the ground she found one that was quite white and soft.

The poor little Elfin was terribly frightened, for it was cold as well as strange looking and she could not find her way back under the ground, but while she was crying along came Jack Frost.

"Hello," said he. "What are you doing out here this cold weather?"

Of course Elfin flower was not a bit afraid, for she had never heard of Jack Frost and his cold breath, so she looked at him very sorrowfully and told him her sad tale.

"Well, well, that is too bad," said Jack Frost, "but now you are out, suppose you come along with me to my festival that will be held to-night. I am sure you will get used to the cold and not mind it at all."



SO SHE LOOKED AT HIM VERY SORROWFULLY AND TOLD HIM HER
SAD TALE

Jack Frost picked up the Elfin flower and carried her off to the crystal forest, where everything was ready for the grand festival of the Frost King.

The Fairies were there, and the goblins all dressed in their fur coats, and when they saw the little Elfin they all asked her how she happened to be out, for they knew that no elf or gnome ever comes out unless a fairy or goblin calls to them in the winter time.

She was a pretty little creature, and they all looked slyly at Jack Frost, for as he had brought her to the feast they wondered if he had fallen in love with her, and as the evening wore away they were quite sure this was true.

Jack Frost placed the Elfin at his right, which was the seat of honor at the table, and all the time he smiled and talked to her, almost forgetting his other guests.

When the feast and frolic was over and it was time for all of them to go home Jack Frost stood up and said: "My friends and guests: As this little Elfin has become used to our cold weather, don't you think we might make her a member of our winter society and let her always come out at this time each year?"

"She looks like a little rose to me," said the

Fairy Queen. "I am afraid she will never be able to stand the cold, especially Jack, if you treat her as you do other flowers who happen to overstay their time in the early fall days."

But Jack Frost was not to be upset by this remark. He smiled very sweetly at the Queen. "You, my dear Queen, can, with your little gold wand, do many wonderful things," he said. "Give this little Elfin a name and I promise that she shall bloom unharmed by me, and I am sure she will add beauty to the winter scenes."

"It is Christmas time," said the Queen. "She shall be called the Christmas Rose and bloom each year above the snow."

Jack Frost bowed low before the Elfin and said, "My Christmas Rose, I am glad to welcome you as a member of our winter society," and the little Elfin, who was quite white before, blushed a pale rose color which was most becoming, for I forgot to tell you she wore a green bonnet.

Then everyone said good night and Jack Frost, taking the little Elfin by the hand, ran swiftly out into the night.

"He is in love with her," whispered the fairies and goblins; "we will watch and see what happens."

If mortals could see what the magic folk do they would find when the Christmas Rose comes out each year that Jack Frost always is near and whispers to her that she is dainty and sweet, and that is the reason the fairies say that sometimes the Christmas Rose is white and sometimes a pale rose color—she blushes when her lover tells her she is beautiful.

And while mortals call the winter rose the Christmas Rose, the magic folk call her Jack Frost's Sweetheart.

WHY DAN DE LION GROWS WHITE

MR. DAN DE LION awoke one morning to find growing near him pretty Miss Daisy.

Dan was ever bold, but this pretty little flower growing so close beside him made Dan bolder than ever.

He turned his bright face toward her and spoke. "Miss Daisy," he said, "in this beautiful world there cannot be two more certainly made for each other than you and I.

"Just look at the yellow of your gown. Doesn't it just match the yellow of my clothes? Now what do you say if we are married and live in this field where the sunshine is bright and warm, as two happy lovers should?"

Miss Daisy shook out her white petaled skirt and looked down at the ground, then she turned a sidewise glance at Dan, who was swaying with impatience waiting for her answer.

"The sky is so beautiful and blue to-day," she said, "I cannot think about anything else. Perhaps to-morrow I will give you my answer."

So poor Dan had to be content and wait until the morrow, but when the sun rose the next morning and Dan asked Miss Daisy for her answer she replied that the sun was so bright and warm she could think of nothing else.

“But,” she said, “perhaps to-morrow I shall be able to think about your proposal and give you your answer.”

So Dan De Lion sat all day with his face bright and happy because he felt sure the morrow would certainly bring rain and then Miss Daisy would have time to think about him.

The next morning the raindrops were falling fast on the meadow and Miss Daisy’s upturned face never once looked toward her lover. She was drinking the longed-for water and had no time to notice poor Dan.

The next morning after the rain everything was so clean and fresh and all the flowers were so bright and happy that Dan again spoke to Miss Daisy of his love.

“Oh, the world is so beautiful and fresh this morning I cannot think of anything else,” replied Miss Daisy as she flirted the dewdrops from her white skirt.

But Dan was not discouraged, he still waited and hoped for his answer, but one morning poor

Dan awoke with a head quite white. He had grown old with waiting and his long, white locks fluttered in the breeze.

Then one day Miss Daisy grew tired of the beauty around her. She cast her eye toward her lover and to her horror she saw he was quite bald. Not even one spear of white hair was there on his head.

“Oh,” exclaimed Miss Daisy, “how funny you look. Why you are old, Mr. Dan De Lion. I could not think of marrying you now. Good day.”

And that is the reason, so the meadow flowers say, that the Dandelion grows faded and old with long white locks on its little round head. Long ago its ancestor waited so long for Miss Daisy's answer that he grew old and bald.

THE WHITE WORLD

ONE morning Mr. Cardinal Bird opened his eyes very early, as usual, intending to fly to the white birch tree and sing before breakfast.

He looked all around him and then he closed his eyes again, for a strange sight had met his eyes and he felt he must be dreaming.

When Mr. Cardinal looked again he was surprised to find the world looked just as it did the first time he opened his eyes. "My dear, get up and look at the world," he called to Mrs. Cardinal Bird.

Mrs. Cardinal opened her eyes and looked. "Whatever is the matter with the world?" she asked, in alarm. "I never saw it look like this before. I don't like it. Where is our nice green world? I am sure something dreadful has happened."

Mr. and Mrs. Cardinal hopped to the end of the limb of the tree, where they had started housekeeping very early in the spring and looked around. Instead of the green grass

and trees and the brown earth they were accustomed to, everything was white.

They winked and they blinked and they chattered, wondering whatever was the matter, for they had never seen a white world before, and they dared not fly down from the tree.

"It looks soft," said Mrs. Cardinal. "I think we better fly down on the ground and try it; the little I found on the limb here didn't hurt a bit when I stepped on it and we must have breakfast you know."

"You stay right here, my dear," said Mr. Cardinal, "and I will fly about a short distance. It may be that somebody has put some flour all around this place. I feel sure the whole of the world cannot have changed in one night."

Mrs. Cardinal stayed in the tree and hopped about, turning her little head first one way and then the other, hoping to see some spot that was not white.

By and by her husband returned. "It is all alike," he reported to her. "The world has turned white and it is cold and wet. I do not know what will become of us birds. We never can live in this white, cold world."

"It seems nice and warm in this sunny spot," said his wife; "come here and sit by me."

“Good morning,” said Robin Redbreast, alighting on a limb not far from the Cardinals. “I was afraid we came from the South too early this year, but it will not last long.”

“What is the matter with the world? What turned it white?” asked Mr. Cardinal.

“Oh, dear, did you never see it this way before?” asked Robin Redbreast.

“No, never anything but green,” replied Mrs. Cardinal. “Whatever shall we do?”

“Don’t you know what all this white is?” asked Robin. “It is snow. It will melt soon, and then you can find lots of worms and good things to eat.

“I have been caught in a snowstorm many times when spring started in early, but it always grows warm again.”

“Oh! I don’t like it,” sighed Mrs. Cardinal. “I like a green world best; I am so cold and hungry.”

Grandmother Sparrow alighted on a limb nearby and heard what Mrs. Cardinal said about being cold and hungry.

“Don’t fret, it will be warm soon and you will find plenty of food, for all the folks are very kind to the birds when the snow comes. You will find plenty of crumbs, my dear.

“And as for being cold, I will tell you how to keep warm until it grows warm again. Just fly over to that house you see and get behind a shutter or creep under the eaves that keep the wind off.”

Away flew Grandmother Sparrow and Mr. Cardinal and his wife followed her advice and flew to the house, where they were soon snugly tucked behind a blind.

The sun melted the snow, and the next morning when the Cardinals awoke the world looked just as it always had to them, and they found so many worms that they were almost glad the snow had come.

“I have learned one thing,” said Mrs. Cardinal, “and I never before knew just what the saying meant.”

“What is that?” asked her husband.

“Oh! something about a touch of nature making everybody akin or feeling kindly toward everybody else,” said Mrs. Cardinal.

“Well, what has that to do with the world turning white I should like to know?” asked her husband.

“Everybody was so kind yesterday when the ground was white and cold. Even old Madam Sparrow, who is always cross and never will

let anyone have a worm without trying to take it away from them, yesterday saw we were all in the same trouble with the world all white, so she forgot to be cross and told us where to go to keep warm and how it would soon be over and all would be well again.”

“That is so,” said Mr. Cardinal, “but I do hope that touch of nature, as you call it, will not come again while we are here, even if it did make old Madam Sparrow kind.”

“Oh! I am rather glad,” said Mrs. Cardinal, “for now I shall always think of the Sparrows more kindly than I did before.”

THE CATBIRD

ONCE upon a time the birds were talking about the dangers of the woods and how hard it was for them to bring up their families when so many hunters came along with guns and bad boys sometimes stole their eggs.

"I am going out of the woods to live," said a little thrush. "I will live right in the yards where the houses are and that may help me, for who would think of looking for a nest right near where folks live."

"You are very silly to take such a chance," said the other birds. "And besides getting your nest robbed there is puss; she will catch you."

"I don't care, I am going away from here and try it," said the little thrush. "It cannot be any worse than here and, besides, I shall have all the crumbs I want, and more worms, and I know there will be plenty of bugs around the garden of Mr. Man's house."

So off flew the little thrush and left the woods to seek a home nearer where Mr. Man lived. He built a nest right in the big bush in

a yard and took his wife with him, and one morning there were five little ones in the nest.

There was a Kitty Cat living in the house in the same yard, and Mr. Thrush had his eye on Kitty Cat from the very first, so one morning, when he saw her looking right up at his nest he told his wife to keep quite still and not leave the baby birds, no matter how near to the nest the Kitty Cat came.

Mr. Thrush had been watching Puss and he had been listening to her voice as well. Every day he had tried to make a mi-ow, mi-ou, just as he had heard Puss.

This morning he hid behind some leaves on a branch and watched Puss as she came under the bush and looked up at his nest, and when she was near enough so she could hear him when he began to call "Mi-ow, mi-eu, mi-ow, mi-eu!"

Puss stopped and looked around. "There is another cat in the yard," she said. "I won't stand that. No cat can come in here and share my home. Now where can she be, I wonder?"

Puss stood still and looked all around, but she could not see the cat she had heard. "That's funny," thought Puss, "I was sure I heard a cat call."

Mr. Thrush hopped around to the nest and told his wife how he had fooled Puss, and then he taught her to make the same noise, so that after a while Kitty Cat did not know what to make of it, hearing so many cat calls and never finding a cat.

One morning, however, she was determined to get at the nest, for she was sure the birds were ready to fly and would be gone before she had what she thought was her share, so she came under the bush and began to climb toward the nest, when up from the nest flew Mr. and Mrs. Thrush and their young ones, all calling "Mi-ow, mi-eu, mi-ow, mi-eu, mi-ow, mi-eu."

Puss tumbled off the bush with surprise and stood staring after the birds that were mocking her. "You little wretches," she said, "I dare you to come here again. I'll eat everyone of you if I catch you."

But the birds only laughed back at her, "Mi-ow, mi-eu," and off they went to the woods to visit their cousins and tell them about how they had fooled puss and escaped from her, too.

And that is how the American Thrush, who is really a cousin of the mocking bird, got its name of Catbird, for all the birds called them

Catbirds after that, and they never lived in the woods again, but always build their nests near where Mr. Man and Mistress Puss live without fear.

They are very bold, too, for they build a large nest of dry twigs and weeds and never try to conceal it, but choose a bush or tree where it can readily be seen, and if there is one bird that puss likes to bother more than another it is the bird who mocks her by calling "Mi-ow, mi-eu," but they are all good fighters, and Puss seldom gets one, I am glad to say.

JENNIE WREN TELLS MR. CARDINAL WHAT SHE THINKS

LITTLE JENNIE WREN was not afraid to speak her mind to anyone who happened to get in her way, and it happened one day that handsome Mr. Cardinal bird did this very thing.

He flew over from the top of a tall pine tree to the tree near the stone wall by the road where Jennie lived and began to sing while Mr. Wren was singing on a low limb of the tree.

“Such impertinence,” sputtered Jennie Wren, flying out of her home in the tree hole. “He thinks just because he is so handsome he can do anything he likes. I will soon tell him, though, what I think of him,” and up she flew near to where Mr. Cardinal was sitting singing merrily.

“You get right away from this tree or stop singing this minute,” scolded little Jennie. This tree is where we live and my husband is singing; you needn't think just because you wear handsome feathers you are the only

singer in the woods, and my husband and I do not care for your song at all; we like our own much better."

Mr. Cardinal was so surprised that he stopped singing and listened, and when Jennie Wren stopped to breathe he said calmly: "Have you heard my sweet-voiced wife sing? You may like to hear her song better than mine; I do."

Jennie was the surprised one this time and she nearly lost her balance as she angrily hopped about and bobbed her tail, for she had expected Mr. Cardinal to quarrel with her.

"Huh!" replied Jennie, "your poor little wife; I should think you would say something in praise of her. The way you treat her is disgraceful. I know, and everybody must think so, too, that you are ashamed of her because she wears that brownish-gray dress all the time, while you go flying about all dressed up in fine clothes.

"For my part I admire her clothes much more than yours. She shows better taste dressing in such modest colors, and besides, if she did wear red, I guess the Cardinal family would soon come to an end, for she could be seen plainly enough by those who wish to harm birds and get their eggs."

While Jennie Wren was scolding and hopping about a trim little bird flew to a twig near Mr. Cardinal, and when Jennie again stopped for breath, Mrs. Cardinal—for it was she—said in a very sweet voice: “You are wrong, Mrs. Wren; my husband is not ashamed of me. He loves me very dearly and there is no bird that has a husband more devoted in his attentions than my handsome husband.”

Again Jennie Wren was surprised, but she called back as she flew down to her home: “You poor thing; I suppose you do not dare say your soul is your own before your handsome husband; for my part I’d rather have one that is on an equal with me in appearance.”

Mrs. Cardinal flew beside her husband and snuggled close. “Come back to the pine tree and I will sing to you,” she said, “though I know well enough your own song is sweeter than mine.”

“Not to my ears, my dear,” answered Mr. Cardinal. “I think you have the sweetest voice in the world, but if you could not sing a note I should be thankful that you do not scold like Mrs. Wren.”

MR. OWL AND HIS CALLER

ONE day Mr. Owl was awakened from his sleep by hearing a tapping at his door; at least he thought it was until he went to his door and found no one there.

“That is funny!” he thought. “I must have been dreaming.”

So back to bed he went, but had hardly gone to sleep when “Tap! tap! tap!” sounded again, and again Mr. Owl got out of his bed and opened the door. No one there!

“Now, can it be possible I cannot see a thing in the daytime?” thought Mr. Owl. “I cannot see as well, of course, as at night; but I have always been able to make out objects before!” So he poked out his head and looked again, but no one could he see.

Back to bed he went once more, but hardly had he covered his head when, “Tap! tap! tap!” came again. And this time Mr. Owl opened his window and looked out, and there at the side of his house stood Mr. Woodpecker, tapping away.

He stopped as soon as Mr. Owl raised the window and looked up at him. Of course, Mr. Owl thought he had made a mistake and instead of knocking at the door, had knocked on the side of the house.

"The door is on the other side," politely said Mr. Owl. "Come around and I will let you in."

So around went Mr. Woodpecker and Mr. Owl opened the door and invited him to come in.

Mr. Owl was so sleepy that he could not keep his eyes open part of the time, and it was so dark in Mr. Owl's home that Mr. Woodpecker could hardly see.

"I don't see why he called on me," thought Mr. Owl. "He must know I sleep in the daytime."

"I don't see why he bothered me, when I was having such a fine time eating insects," thought Mr. Woodpecker. "I don't like calling, but he was so polite I could not refuse to come in!"

Pretty soon Mr. Woodpecker said he must be going, and Mr. Owl bade him good day and asked him to call again. And back to his bed he went to finish his sleep.

But hardly had he gone to sleep, when "Tap!

tap! tap!" sounded on the house again. "Well, if he isn't back!" said Mr. Owl. "I didn't ask him to call again to-day. What a queer fellow he is! Now I may as well get up, I suppose, or he will keep on knocking all day."

This time Mr. Owl opened his door and went out. "You are knocking on the side of my house," he said. "Why don't you knock on the door? You will get in quicker then, and I shall not have to look for you."

"But I don't want to come in," said Mr. Woodpecker, tapping away at the wood. "I am too busy to visit any more to-day."

"You do not want to come?" asked Mr. Owl. "Then tell me why in the world you keep knocking at my house?"

"I guess you do not know who I am," replied Mr. Woodpecker, telling his name to Mr. Owl for the first time.

"Well, Mr. Woodpecker, will you tell me why you keep knocking on my house?" asked Mr. Owl again.

"To get the bugs and insects," said Mr. Woodpecker as he went on tapping. "Your house is full of them."

Mr. Owl was sure this was not true, but when he watched a while he found the old

tree he was living in was just as Mr. Woodpecker said, full of insects.

That night when Mr. Owl went out, instead of hunting for food as usual he hunted for a home. "That fellow Woodpecker will never stop tapping on my house until he has the very last bug, and that means I shall never have a decent day of rest unless I move."

So the next day Mr. Owl went to a barn near by and made his home and there he lived ever after, but Mr. Woodpecker never knew that he was the one who started the Barn Owl family by knocking on Mr. Owl's house in the daytime and driving him out of the woods.

Mr. Woodpecker did not even know who Mr. Owl was, and he told his mate the next day when he brought her to the tree that the funny old bird must have gone away. "And it is a good thing, my dear," he said, "for you could not get more than three strokes of work before he would invite you in the house and in such a polite manner you could not refuse, and of course you can see how that interferes with our work."

"Of course," said Mrs. Woodpecker, "that was the reason you were so hungry when you

came home—you had not eaten your usual lunch.”

“That was the reason,” said Mr. Woodpecker, “and now let us get at our work, for I am sure he has gone or he would have been out before this.”

MRS. ROBIN AND THE SIGNBOARD

ONE morning Mrs. Robin, who was the first one out of the woods, saw a sign nailed to a tree. "Now, what in the world can that be about?" she thought, flying around to take a good look at it.

But, of course, she could not read, so she flew back to get Mrs. Blackbird and ask her if she could read what was printed there.

Mrs. Blackbird said she had left her glasses at home, so she couldn't read. "But if you will wait," she told Mrs. Robin, "I will fly right home and get them."

Mrs. Blackbird was a clever creature, and she did not wish to tell Mrs. Robin she could not read, so off she flew to a cornfield and did not return.

Billy Blue Jay flew along while Mrs. Robin was waiting, so she asked him to read the sign. "Oh, I can't stop; really I can't," said Billy. "I have to go to the farm over the hill and back in a hurry."

"I don't believe he can read," said Mrs.

Robin as she watched him out of sight. "I will go over to Jim Crow's. He surely will be able to read it. He knows all about signs."

Jim Crow came hurrying back with Mrs. Robin.

"Why, of course I can read!" said he, as they came up to the tree with the sign on it. "Easiest thing in the world to guess what that is. It is a scarecrow, put up there to scare all you birds out of the woods," said Jim, holding his head on one side and looking at Mrs. Robin to see if she believed him.

"I don't believe you can read at all," said Mrs. Robin. "You said it was easy to guess. If you can read you do not need to guess at it."

"All right, all right," cawed Jim Crow. "Don't believe me then, but you ask Mr. Owl and see if I am not right."

"Why, of course! He is the wisest bird in the woods," said Mrs. Robin. "I wonder I did not think of him at first!" And off she flew to the home of Mr. Owl.

Mr. Owl poked out his head from his window, and when he heard what she wanted he said:

"Oh, yes! Of course; I'll be right over when

it is dark. You know I cannot read in the daytime."

"Oh, dear! I never thought about that," said Mrs. Robin; "and I do so want to know what is on that sign! Well, I suppose I shall have to wait. Now don't forget to come."

All day long Mrs. Robin flew about the tree where the sign was, and when it came night she decided to sit on a limb in the tree right over the sign so that she would not miss Mr. Owl.

But Mrs. Robin was not used to staying awake after dark, and soon she was nodding, and before long she was fast asleep.

There is very little that Mr. Owl does not see at night, and while he had no notion of letting Mrs. Robin know he could not read, he did want to have a look at the sign, so he flew quietly to a place near the tree and looked around.

The very first thing he saw was Mrs. Robin fast asleep on the limb, and then he flew closer and looked at the big black letters on the sign.

He flew away without awaking Mrs. Robin, and the next morning when she called to scold him for not coming to the tree as he promised Mr. Owl told her he did come, but no one was there.

So all that day poor little Mrs. Robin fluttered hither and thither around the tree, asking everyone she saw what was on the sign and missing all the worms and bugs which the other birds were finding.

Just at night time Jack Sparrow flew to the tree, and when Mrs. Robin asked him what he was doing so far from the farm where he had a nest behind the blinds, Jack Sparrow told her he was going to live in the woods.

“Don’t you see that sign?” he asked. “That says that no one can shoot birds in these woods and so I am coming in here to live because it is safe, I heard the Farmer say he put this sign up, so I flew right over to make sure.”

“You don’t tell me that is what is on that sign,” she said. “And Mr. Owl never told me a word about it.”

Out of a sound sleep she awoke Mr. Owl to tell him what she thought of him. “Why didn’t you tell me what it said on the sign?” she asked. “I might have gone out of the woods and risked my life.”

“You didn’t ask me,” said Mr. Owl. “I never tell anybody anything unless they ask.”

And off flew Mrs. Robin to tell all the birds in the woods what the sign said.

“That was a narrow escape for me,” said Mr. Owl. “I should have lost my fame for being wise if she had found out I could not read. Now I wonder what is on that sign-board, anyway?”

SUZETTE AND THE BUTCHER

SUZETTE was a doll, a pretty French doll with dark eyes and hair that curled, and her clothes could be taken off and fastened with hooks and snaps like the clothes of a real lady.

Suzette lived in a playroom with many other toys, but Suzette was by far the most stylish and important doll or toy in the room, for did she not come from across the big ocean and was she not made in a foreign country?

“Suppose I was made in France,” said Suzette one night when all the toys were talking, “and suppose my clothes are dainty and pretty, don’t you suppose I like to talk with you other toys?”

“You all treat me as though I didn’t have a heart at all, you never come over to my part of the playroom; and if I happen to come near when any of you are talking you stop at once and only stare.”

“We supposed you were stuck up and proud,” said Teddy Bear, who found his speech first,

"we had another doll in here, and she hadn't come from France either, and she would not have a thing to say to any of us; said we were just toys.

"She wasn't as pretty as you are either, Miss Suzette."

"Well, I cannot help what the other doll did or said," replied Suzette, "but I find it dull and stupid sitting here night after night and no one speaking to me."

"We will all come over to your corner this very night," said all the toys.

A few days after this a very stylish boy doll was brought in the playroom by the little mistress and placed in a chair by Suzette.

That night when the house was still all the toys came trooping over to Suzette's corner for a chat.

"This is Boy Doll who has come to live in the playroom," said Suzette to the toys. But instead of smiling and saying he was glad to meet them, Boy Doll stared at them and then turned his head.

The toys did not stay long that night, for in spite of all Suzette could say no one seemed in their usual humor.

When the toys had gone and Suzette and

Boy Doll were alone he said to her: "Suzette, how can you be friendly with those common toys? Why, you even talked with the butcher boy who has the shop across the room. We belong to a much higher order of toys; you must have more pride if you expect me to marry you."

"I do not expect to marry you," said Suzette, "and I wish you had not come here to live; the toys are just getting so they speak to me, and we were having such jolly times."

"Jolly times with the butcher and the jumpingjack, and Teddy Bear, and the cart driver, and all those common toys," said Boy Doll with a high and haughty air; "really, Suzette, I never could marry anyone who had such common taste."

"Nobody asked you to marry me," said Suzette with a toss of her head.

"Ah! but there is no one else for you to marry; you will be an old maid," said Boy Doll.

"We will see about that," said Suzette, walking across the room and joining the other toys, to whom she repeated what the haughty Boy Doll had said.

The butcher, in his nice, clean white apron,

stepped nearer to Suzette. "Could you love a butcher man, Suzette?" he asked.

"If he loved me," answered Suzette.

"He does," said the butcher, who was a toy of few words.

So Suzette and the butcher man were married and Suzette lived on the opposite side of the playroom, where the butcher man had his little shop, and the Boy Doll, after a little while, went to live in a box in the far corner of the playroom.

Sometimes of a night, when all the toys are laughing and having a jolly time in front of the butcher man's shop. Boy Doll peeks over the box where he lives and looks at them.

"Perhaps after all Suzette is happier than I am," he will sigh. "No one cares whether I am alive or not."

And Suzette, in her gingham dress—for she no longer wears her pretty French frocks—looks across at her old home on the other side of the playroom and says: "I am glad I live over here. I'd rather be the happy wife of the butcher man than live on the other side alone."

"But you could have married the Boy Doll," the butcher man said to her.

"Oh! I had forgotten all about the poor bach-

elor Boy Doll," Suzette answered. "I wonder if he will ever marry?"

"Not unless some other doll comes to the playroom to live, for I married the only doll in the room," the butcher man replied, "and it is lucky for you that I did."

"How is that, you saucy man?" Suzette laughingly asked.

"Because if you had married Boy Doll I would have sold you tough meat," answered the butcher man with a laugh.

LITTLE IMAGE MAN

ONCE in a far-off country, in a temple, lived a funny-looking little image. His face was very solemn and he held his head up and his mouth a little way open, as if he would scream at the slightest touch.

Not far from him was an Elephant—an image, of course—and on his back he carried a tall, towerlike affair.

The little Image Man often looked at the Image Elephant, even though he did not seem to be looking at anything, and sometimes he saw little curls of smoke coming out of the little windows of the tower the Elephant carried.

But the thing that most concerned the little Image Man were the gorgeous trappings which the Elephant wore.

Over his back, under the tower, was a beautiful, colored covering of silk, and over his head, hanging down between his eyes, was the same beautiful silk, and from his neck hung a beautiful gold tassel.

Little Image Man thought there could be

nothing in the world that could bring greater happiness than to ride on the back of such a gorgeous creature as the Elephant. Sometimes at night when all was still he would lower his head and by the dim light which was always burning in the temple he would look at Elephant, and once he thought of speaking to him and asking if he would mind tumbling off that tall tower and taking him for a ride. He was sure the tower must be much heavier than he was.

But he never quite had the courage and then one day something happened. A terrible noise was heard outside the temple and then the doors were thrown open and many queer creatures came rushing in.

They were soldiers, foreigners, the little Image Man learned afterward, and when it was all over the Elephant, among other things, was gone from the temple.

It was very lonely then, for little Image Man, and he sighed as he thought of all the images that were gone, but most of all, he missed the handsome-looking Elephant and wished he had asked him for just one ride, but now it was too late.

One day the little Image Man was carried

away from the temple, and for a long time it was all very dark for him. He was being carried far away from the temple across the ocean in a box, but of course that he did not know.

One day he found himself in a place much lighter than the temple had been, and when it came night and the place was very still he lowered his head and looked around.

There were many strange things all about him, but at one end of the table on which he sat was another image man, and to him he spoke.

"Tell me, Brother Image," he said, "what is this strange place and why are we here?"

"This is a store and we are to be sold," replied the image; "how we came here I know not, but I have heard that we were taken from a temple far off across the water where there was a war."

The next day someone came to the shop and bought the little Image Man and carried him away.

He was put in a beautiful room on a long shelf-like place in front of a window and that night when all was still in the house the little Image Man felt something gently touch his arm.

The light from the street came in through

the window, and when the little Image Man turned around his astonished eyes saw the temple Elephant, who had touched him with his trunk.

It did not take them long to tell each other about the strange trip they had taken, and little Image Man told Elephant what he had heard in the shop.

“It is much nicer living here,” the Elephant said. “In the temple you could not see what was going on outside, but here all day I look out of the window and see strange and interesting sights.”

And then one night little Image Man grew bold and asked for the ride he had so long coveted.

“Of course I will give you a ride,” replied the Elephant, and down on his knees he went, and with the help of another image made of brass little Image Man soon had the tower off Elephant’s back and he was in its place.

And so very often the maid coming to dust the ornaments in the morning finds the tower on the back of the Elephant crooked, and she wonders what could have put it out of place. “It must be the jar of the heavy teams in the street,” she always says.

But little Image Man smiles to himself and thinks: "We must be more careful about putting the tower back on Elephant's back, or we will be caught some night."

And there they live—the little Image Man and the gorgeously decked Elephant, and when sometimes there is incense put in the tower and little streams and curls of smoke come out of the windows little Image Man wonders if the fire will burn out in time for him to ride that night; but it always does, and they live very happily even though they are far away from their native land.

KNITTED GENTLEMAN NED

ONE night a knitted gentleman, Ned,
Tumbled out of his little bed;
Hit on the floor with a terrible thump
But as he was knitted it saved him a bump.
He lived in the playroom away upstairs,
With dolls and dogs and fierce furry bears.
Although he was knitted, he was very brave,
And many a toy he had managed to save.
One night, when the house was all very still,
A mouse ventured out, as mice sometimes will.
He lived in the playroom wall, you see,
And that is the way it happened that he
Stole into the playroom that night to seize
A nibble of sugar, a crumb or some cheese,
But not finding either, stood looking around
Until in the corner Miss Dolly he found.
Now, although her costumes were paper and paste,
She dressed in the fashion and excellent taste;
And whether the mouse fell in love at first sight—
For Miss Dolly was pretty and the moonlight was bright—
Or whether the paste which fastened her clothes
Was scented afar by Mouse's sharp nose
Will never be known. But he passed one and all
'Til he came to Miss Dolly, close up by the wall.
There Mr. Mouse stopped, and his bright eyes did wink
As he looked at Miss Dolly, dressed gaily in pink;
He was trying to think just how a conversation
He could manage to start, when, to his consternation
From over his headknitted Gentleman Ned
Tumbled suddenly down from his soft, snowy bed,
Hit first on his stomach, then, taking a twist,
He hit Mr. Mouse on the nose with his fist.
Mr. Mouse gave a squeak and started to run,
While all the toys laughed and thought it great fun;
And there on the floor sat Miss Dolly and Ned,

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While he told her just why he had jumped from his bed.
"Though the others may think from my bed I did fall,
I assure you, Miss Dolly, 'twas not so at all—
I jumped to save you from that terrible beast;
He'd have carried you off, I don't doubt in the least."
Of course, they were married. In the playroom they dwell,
And on moonlight nights the other toys tell
How Gentleman Ned saved Miss Dolly one night,
And sent off Mr. Mouse in a terrible fright.
This is never denied by Gentleman Ned,
But the truth, between us, is—he fell out of bed.

CHINA SHEPHERDESS AND THE PICTURE

THE Little China Shepherdess stood on the mantel in the parlor of an old farmhouse. She shaded her eyes with one hand and looked straight across the room at a picture on the wall.

Little China Shepherdess leaned against a candleholder and one hand held a gilt crook as if she were looking for her lost sheep.

But she was not looking for sheep even in the days when a wax candle burned in the candleholder behind her. She had no sheep. She knew nothing of sheep even though she was a shepherdess.

For many years now the candlestick had been empty. She stood looking as of old, but now Little China Shepherdess was looking at some one. She was looking at the pretty boy in the picture and wondering where she had seen him before, for the picture had been hung in front of her only a few days.

One day, when all was very still and only

the humming of the bees could be heard from the garden outside the window the little boy in the picture seemed to smile at the Little China Shepherdess.

He was a pretty boy with big eyes and curly hair, and on the top of his little head one curl hung down in the middle of his forehead like the little girl who was sometimes very good and sometimes bad and horrid, but this little boy was a good little boy. You could tell that by his sweet face.

He sat in a chair that had fringe around it, and one arm rested on the arm of the chair, and under him was one foot which one little hand grasped as if he feared it might slide down beside the other which hung over the front of the chair.

He looked right at the Little China Shepherdess and smiled; she was sure of that, so she smiled back. "Have I not seen you somewhere before?" she asked, for she felt it was perfectly proper for her to speak, as she had been there so long.

The big eyes twinkled and the smile spread across the chubby little face of the boy. "Of course, you have," he said. "Don't you remember me?"

"I seem to remember your face," said the Shepherdess, "but I cannot say I ever saw you looking just as you do now. You are a new-comer, are you not?"

"Oh, dear, no!" laughed the little boy. "I have been here in this parlor for years, but I hung on the other side of the room right close to you, so, of course, you could not see me. I have just been hung here because my grown-up picture hangs in the place I used to be."

"Then I must be mistaken," said the Little Shepherdess, "I'm sorry I spoke to you."

"Oh! you needn't be," said the little boy; "you have seen me before but not in this picture; think and see if you cannot remember."

"I can tell you something that may help you; the hand with which you are shading your eyes is broken at the wrist and is glued on."

Little China Shepherdess turned pink with shame, for that was something of which she thought no one knew. "Oh how did you know?" she asked.

"Don't you remember the day it was broken?" said the little boy.

Little China Shepherdess thought for a minute and then she smiled! "It was you, of course, I remember you now, you climbed up

on one of the slippery chairs and took me in your hand and then you fell and dropped me on the floor."

"Yes, I did it and I am so sorry," said the little boy, his eyes growing very sad. "I was shut up in my room and could not have any dinner to punish me for coming in here alone."

"Oh! don't you feel bad about it," said Little China Shepherdess; "really no one ever notices it these days."

"But I have never forgotten it," said the little boy, "and some day my grown-up self is to have you for his own and carry you away to the city, where he lives."

Just then the door to the parlor opened and a gentleman came in leading a little boy by the hand.

"Here she is," said the gentleman, and he took the China Shepherdess down from the mantel. "That is where I dropped her and broke her pretty little hand," he said, showing the mended place to the little boy.

"Isn't she pretty? I was always in love with her when I was little like you," he said, "but I was naughty and came in here alone or my pretty Little Shepherdess would not have a broken wrist."

When the door closed the Little Shepherdess looked at the boy in the picture and smiled. "It is worth it, even if I have had a broken wrist all these years," she said. "I hope they do not take me away from here now. I know you love me."

"Oh! that will not be for many years, I think, and I shall go with you. I am sure of that," said the little boy.

In the still hours of the night and when the house is quiet in the daytime the Little China Shepherdess and the little boy in the picture still look straight at each other and smile, and always they know, whether they speak or not, that the love of long ago is still young in their hearts and they hope never to part.

LAFAYETTE

ALTHOUGH that is a name big enough for a big man, the Lafayette I shall tell you about is a dog—a French poodle, and for short they called him Fay.

One day Fay was lying on a blue silk cushion in a window seat that faced the yard, and hearing a bark outside, he aroused himself and looked out.

It was the bark of a yellow, shaggy looking dog chasing a cat. At first Fay turned up his pretty nose, as he usually did when he saw a common-looking dog, and was about to lie down again when something came over him that made him wish to watch what happened.

The yellow dog barked and jumped at the big cat standing on top of a fence with her back humped up and tail bristling with anger.

But jump as the dog would, he could not make the cat move. Suddenly Fay heard a loud bark, and, to his surprise, his nose went bump against the window. It was he who had done the barking this time, and in his excitement he

had jumped, for he felt sure if the dog outside would only jump a little higher the cat surely would run.

A maid came running to Fay to see what was the matter. "Oh! Fay, must not bark at the horrid cat and dirty-looking dog," she said, patting him and shaking the silken cushion for him to rest on again.

Fay lay down with a sigh. Something had come over him. He wanted to go out and chase that cat and he felt sure he could drive the dog away, too, for was he not right in his yard?

Then Fay began to think. "Lafayette," he said; "now what a name to give to a dog! Why could they not call me Ned or Ted or even Bill?

"My coat, too, is awful; all curly and long and white, too. I wish something would happen to my coat that would make it black.

"All the dogs in the park look at me with a grin when I go out with that maid and I used to think I looked so handsome that they were envious, but now I know they were just making fun at me.

"I don't wonder when I have to wear a different colored bow every day on my collar. I suppose if I were black they would not dress me so silly.

"I just won't stand it another day," growled Fay.

"What in the world is the matter with you this morning?" said the maid running to Fay again. "I never heard you bark and growl like this before."

Fay only winked his eyes, but his tail wagged in a manner that plainly said if the maid had only understood that he would show her when she took him out that morning. By and by the maid came back again, dressed for the morning walk. She tied a pink bow on his collar and also snapped on a leash.

Fay jumped down and followed her with a forlorn air. He did not hold up his head or strut as usual that morning. He was ashamed of his looks for the first time. When they reached the park two stray dogs jumped out from the bushes and gave a bark and growl at Fay. It was too much. His fighting blood was up and as the maid was not paying attention to her charge, Fay had no trouble in pulling the leash from her hand, and off he went. Although the leash bothered him, Fay made short work of the two dogs, which were so surprised when he sprang at them that they dropped their tails and ran.

“What fun!” thought Fay! “I am going to run away where that maid will never again find me. Oh! I wish I could find a cat.”

With leaps and bounds Fay ran over the grass and was soon out of sight of the maid and the policeman, who did their best to call him and head off his run.

On a cross street a newsboy stopped Fay and tried to hold him to read the name on his handsome collar, but somehow Fay managed to slip out of the collar and at last he was free.

The frightened boy gave the collar to the policemen who saw him try to catch the dog, and off they ran after Fay, for they were sure there would be a good reward given for his return.

But return was the last thing that was in Fay's mind; he was running away and he did not want to return. What he wanted most at that moment was to find a cat.

On and on ran Fay, and soon he was out of the neighborhood where he had lived so long.

The streets were muddy, and as soon as he thought he was far enough away from the maid Fay rolled over and over in the gutter until he would never have been known for the spot-

less and dainty looking dog that started out that morning.

When he came out of the gutter Fay stood still for a minute and looked around. He really did not stand still, for he stepped about and sniffed and pranced, wondering which way to go.

It was soon decided for him by another dog who came along.

"Hello!" said Fay, "isn't this a great world?"

"I don't know, is it?" asked the other dog.

"Why, to be sure," said Fay; "this morning I was on the other side of the world and I ran away and came over here, so it is not only great, but a fine world, too, I have discovered."

"I don't know about that either," said the strange dog. "I find it pretty bad sometimes when I can't find a bone."

"What is a bone?" asked Fay, who had only been fed on bits of cooked meats and chicken when he had been given meat to eat.

"Don't you know what a bone is?" asked the strange dog, looking at Fay with wonderment; "have you no teeth?"

"Of course I have," said Fay, showing his sharp teeth; "but what is a bone?"

"I guess you never lived around here," said

the strange dog; "bones are scarce, but we do get one once in a while. Where did you come from? Did you say the other side of the world?"

"Yes, a long way from here," said Fay; "but what is a bone? You have not told me yet."

"Come along with me," said the strange dog. "I'll show you where there are a lot of bones, but I don't dare take one—the dog who owns them is a fighter."

"Show me where they are," said Fay.

Over a fence and through an alley the strange dog led him, but Fay was game. He was out for an adventure and he would not stop at anything.

When the strange dog came to a hole in the fence he stopped. "Look through there," he said, "and see if that is not a tempting looking pile of bones."

Fay put his nose close to the hole and saw the bones, but they did not thrill him in the least.

"What are they for?" he asked.

"To eat, of course," said the strange dog jumping about and looking through the hole with longing eyes.

"They don't look very good to me," said Fay, "but if you like them, why don't you take one?"

"I told you that the dog who owns them is a fighter and drives away every dog who goes near them," replied the strange dog.

"Are you afraid of him?" inquired Fay.

"I can't say I want him to get me," said the dog.

"Pooh," said Fay, "I am not afraid. I'll get you a bone; you wait here."

"You better be careful," said the strange dog; "he will come out of that house with a bound when he hears you, and he is bigger than you."

Being big did not mean anything to Fay, for he felt he was pretty big himself. He was taller than most dogs he had seen, so he crawled through the hole and ran through the yard toward the pile of bones.

With a growl and a bark out came the owner of the bone pile, but Fay stood still and looked at him, although he was a pretty big dog.

"Get out of here," said the Dog. "I'll fight you if you don't."

"Where did you get all those bones?" asked Fay. "I am sure you stole them and I am going to take one for a friend of mine," not

that this was just the right way to look at it, but it is the way dogs reason sometimes.

The Dog was surprised that Fay did not run as all the other dogs did. He was not quite sure how to act, but when Fay picked up a bone it was too much for him to see without trying at least to stop him.

He jumped at Fay, grabbing him by the leg, but no sooner had he done so than Fay dropped the bone and turned on him and for a minute dogs seemed to be everywhere.

And then with a loud yelp the other dog fled, leaving Fay alone with the pile of bones.

Fay shook himself and looked at the hole in the fence. "Come in and help yourself," he said to the strange dog on the other side. "You can have all you want now. He won't come back."

"I didn't think you had it in you," said the strange dog, crawling through without a second invitation. "What's your name?"

This was the first time Fay had felt anything but pleasure, but now he looked crest-fallen—he just couldn't tell the strange dog his awful name.

"I say, what is your name?" asked the dog again, as he gnawed at a big bone.

"My name is Bill," replied Fay, who had to think quickly. "What is yours?"

"Tige," replied the dog. "I hate it, and wish it was Napoleon, or something fine-sounding."

"I think Tige is a nice name," said Fay; better than Bill, even, and I like mine pretty well."

"Yes, that is all right, but some of those dogs that live up among the rich folks have fine-sounding names. I meet one in the park sometimes. He is white and a maid is always with him, and sometimes he wears a pink bow or a blue one on his silver collar. I think his name is Fay, or something like that. My, he is a handsome fellow!" said Tige, still gnawing at the bones.

"I don't believe he is as happy as you—I mean we are," said Fay, glad he was rid of the bow and collar.

"Huh," said Tige, "I'll bet he is happier than we ever thought of being. Why, Bill, my boy, those dogs up among the rich folks have their food brought to them on a silver plate, I have heard, and all cut up ready to eat, and I have heard it said they sleep on a cushion, too."

"What do you sleep on?" asked Fay, before he thought what he was asking.

“On the ground most of the time. Don’t you?” replied Tige.

“Oh! yes, of course,” said Fay. “I thought you might sleep on a rug, though.”

“Do I look it?” asked Tige. “I never slept on anything soft in my life.

“But why don’t you try one of these bones, Bill. This is your party, and you have not tasted a bone yet.”

“I was watching you eat,” said Fay, “but I will take one. I never ate one before.”

“My, I didn’t think any dog could be poorer than I am,” said Tige. “But you must be if you have never eaten a bone.”

The bone tasted much better than Fay expected, and soon he was gnawing away as happily as Tige.

“Is that your dog?” asked a voice.

Fay dropped his bone and looked around, and there stood the maid and the park policeman and another policeman.

The maid looked at Fay and then she said: “Fay, is that you, you bad doggie?”

Fay made a dash for the hole in the fence, but this time the park policeman was too quick for him.

“Of course that is your dog, Maggie,” he

said. "He looks like a scrapper, though; not much like the white fluffy bunch with a pink bow you lead around the park mornings."

"Oh! dear, what will the mistress do?" said Maggie when she saw him. "And his fine silver collar gone, too."

"Oh! I know where that is," said the other policeman. "A friend of mine has it, but that dog is no pet; he is a scrapper. You should have seen him whip a big dog that had all those bones."

"Oh! what will the mistress say to her pet dog fighting?" cried Maggie. "Come here, you bad Fay, and go home with me this minute, and I'll give you such a scrubbing."

Fay wriggled and squirmed, but a cord was tied about his neck, and he was being led away when he thought of Tige. He hardly dared look a good-by for fear he would not look at him.

Tige, however, was only waiting for that look, and as soon as Fay turned, Tige bounded beside him and licked his nose.

"Go away, you dirty dog!" said Maggie.

The policeman laughed. "Your pretty white poodle isn't very clean looking," he said.

But it was no use, Fay would not go peace-

ably without Tige, and Tige would not be driven away, either, so off went Maggie leading Fay, and Tige trotted along beside him.

It would be too long a story to tell you all about it, but Tige hung around Fay's house after he was pulled in by the butler, and Fay sat in the window and howled at Tige until Fay's mistress was obliged to give in and have Tige brought inside.

He was given a bath and a new collar was put on his neck, and Fay and Tige sat in the window on rainy days, when the maid could not take them in the park, and looked out in the yard for cats on the fence, but as cats are not fond of wet weather, Tige had to tell Fay all he knew about them.

"And to think I never got a chance to chase one," said Fay. "Perhaps some day we can run away again, and then you can show me where to find one."

"No," said Tige, shaking his head, "there isn't going to be any 'some day,' Bill, my boy. I shall take no chances on losing this nice home, and you and I will trot right along beside Maggie every day in the park. I know what it means to be without a home and you do not, so you listen to my cat stories and think about

chasing them all you like, but let it end there."

And Fay, being a sensible dog and very fond of his new-found friend, did as he said.

I must tell you one thing more: Although to each they were Bill and Tige, to everybody else they were Fay and Cæsar, so Tige got his fine-sounding name at last.

REYNARD'S SCHEME

“SOMETHING must be done, and done at once!” said Reynard one night as he was returning empty-handed from the farms around his part of the country.

“All the farmers for miles around have set traps and are out hunting for all of us wood folks, and if I do not set my wits at work I shall starve; that is certain,” he continued.

Reynard did not go to bed when he reached his home. First he stirred the fire and made it burn more brightly, and then he put on the tea kettle. Then he put on his old carpet slippers and dressing-gown and filled his pipe. When the water boiled in the kettle, Reynard made himself a bowl of hot ginger tea, which he drank, and, having gotten all nice and warm, he lighted his pipe, sat down in a rocking chair before the fire, and, putting his feet on the stove, he began to smoke, rock, and think all at the same time, which goes to prove that he could do more than one thing at a time.

It was nearly sunrise when he stopped think-

ing and rocking. His pipe had gone out, but Reynard still held it in his mouth, because he could think better with it there, he said.

"I have it," he said at last, slapping his knee and jumping up so quickly that he upset the rocking chair, but he did not stop to pick it up; he was too much interested in his scheme just then.

Reynard went to his pantry, which was almost like Old Mother Hubbard's, and found a crust of bread which he had overlooked the day before. This he put hot water over and a pinch of salt and ate for his breakfast. :

He could hardly wait for the sun to be well up before he started out calling on the wood folk.

Reynard called at Mr. O. Possum's house first and then at the home of Mr. Rack Coon; then he stopped at the door of Mr. J. Rabbit and Mr. Squirrel and then he knocked at the door of Mr. Bruin Bear.

Each one he told to be at his house at noon time as he had something very important to tell them.

Everybody hurried with the work that morning, for they were all as anxious as could be to hear what Reynard had to tell them.

After they were all seated on the ground in front of the house, Reynard came out and sat on the doorsteps.

“My friends and neighbors,” said Reynard, looking very serious and speaking in a serious tone as well, “I have called you all here upon a very vital question. Of course you all know what vital means, so I will not stop to explain.”

Each wanted the other to think he was wise, so they all said they knew perfectly well what the word meant, though they really had not the least notion.

“We will proceed then,” said Reynard. “We wood dwellers have done a great deal of wrong in the past—we have stolen the farmers’ vegetables ——”

Up jumped Mr. J. Rabbit and Mr. Squirrel and Woody Chuck and opened their mouths to object, but Reynard held up his hand. “Wait!” he said.

“And we have stolen the farmers’ poultry and his pigs, and even a lamb once in a while.”

“I have not tasted a lamb in an age,” growled Mr. Bruin Bear, “but I should like to; I do not mind admitting it.”

"Please be quiet, my friends," said Reynard. "I know, as I told you at the beginning, that this is a vital subject."

"Just as I thought; it means something to eat," whispered Woody Chuck to J. Rabbit.

Reynard continued with his speech. "This is a vital subject, and I know it will be hard on us fellows for a while, especially Mr. Rack Coon and Mr. O. Possum and myself, and even Mr. Bear, but I feel we must overcome our habits, which I have come to the conclusion are bad; very bad, indeed."

Everybody sat up straight now and listened, wondering what could be coming next, for everybody in the woods knew how much Reynard thought of eating.

"Yes, we must give up stealing food from the farmers," said Reynard. "It is not right, and what is not right is wrong, and to do wrong is to be wicked, and I feel sure none of us wish to be wicked, my friends."

Everyone looked solemn as an owl, and said they did not wish to be wicked.

"Then, my friends, we must stop going to the farmers around here and live on the things we find in the woods. I am sure we will be happier and better for it," said Reynard.

“Now, how many are willing to be wicked?” he asked.

Of course not one raised his hand or stood up, and Reynard said, “Good, I knew all my friends and neighbors wanted to be good, as much as I did, only no one ever mentioned it to them.

“Now, from this time on, all of us are to live on roots and leaves and nuts and things, and never, never again go to any of the farms. Is that agreed upon?”

Everybody said “YES,” but no one looked happy but Reynard, and Woody Chuck told J. Rabbit, as they went along the path home, that he intended to make himself sure that Reynard kept his part of the agreement, for he never did trust him, and for one of the Fox family to have such sudden ideas about being good seemed very strange to him.

Woody Chuck watched and watched, but not once did he catch Reynard going out of the woods, and he began to think perhaps he had wronged the Fox family, when one night he saw Reynard stealing out of the house with a bag over his shoulder.

“Ah!” thought Woody Chuck, “now we will see, Mr. Reynard Fox, how good you really are.

I suspect very much you are off for the farms to pick up a few hens or ducks."

And Woody was right, for out of the woods stole Reynard and over the hills he went, and when he returned his bag was filled. He had planned to have all the animals keep away from the farm until the farmers thought they had frightened them away and did not keep such close watch or set their traps any more, and then Reynard would have it all to himself.

But Reynard did not count on little Woody Chuck; in fact, he had always thought Woody a stupid little fellow, but he was to learn better now. As soon as Reynard had left the woods, Woody Chuck scampered around to all the wood folks' houses and told them what he had seen, and when Reynard arrived at his own door with the full bag over his back there they were all waiting for him. From behind the trees and bushes they all jumped until Reynard thought all the animals in the world had gathered there.

"Good evening, Reynard," they all said. "You are out very late to belong to our Good Club. What have you in your bag?"

"Squawk, squawk," went a hen. "Quack,

quack," went a duck, and Reynard did not need to answer; they all knew what he had.

"We will expel him from the Good Club," said Woody Chuck. "He is wicked according to his own idea of wrong doing and no longer fit to be a member."

Reynard looked very foolish and upset, too, but he brightened in a minute and said: "My friends and neighbors, you do me wrong, I have this night prepared a little surprise for you, knowing just how much you have denied yourselves by belonging to this club, and as I was the one who started the club, I wanted to reward you all for being such good members.

"But like all good intentions, mine have been misunderstood, but I will explain if Mr. Woody Chuck will allow me to do so."

"Go ahead," said Woody, showing his long front teeth as he smiled at Reynard in a most sarcastic manner.

"If you can explain your actions this night and still be an honored member of the Good Club, we will be glad to hear you."

"I can and will explain, and in a most satisfactory manner, to all members, I assure you," said Reynard.

"I have in this bag two fat ducks, five fat

hens and five geese, to say nothing of turnips and cabbages and a small pig for Mr. Bruin Bear.

"This I brought on my back over all the hills to give you all a party to-morrow night and celebrate the anniversary of our Good Club, which was started just a month ago."

When Reynard had finished his speech everybody looked at poor Woody Chuck, but he still showed his long front teeth and said very calmly: "I feel sure this is a surprise party, Reynard, but if there had not been a surprise I doubt very much if there would have been a party—for us at any rate.

"But I am satisfied if the others are and shall not ask for you to leave the Good Club. But there is something I wish to ask. It is this: When you started this club you made a speech and spoke of the subject as being vital. Did you not pronounce that word wrong? You meant victuals, didn't you, Reynard?"

"Well, maybe I did," said Reynard, glad to get out of such an embarrassing position so well. "Anyway, it is victuals to-morrow night, and a plenty of them."

"Make it to-night," said Woody, not at all sure there would be a to-morrow as far as the

bag of food was concerned, and everybody else saw the point and said: "Yes, to-night is a fine night for a party."

When everybody had eaten all he could and was feeling happy, Woody Chuck arose from the table and said: "I think our friend Reynard has proved that this club is well named. This is a Good Club and this has been a good party, and Reynard is a good fellow (when he has to be)." This last part he said to J. Rabbit, who laughed so hard he fell off his chair.

"Oh! we are all jolly good fellows," sang all the animals as they went home, but Reynard sat smoking by the fire, his feet on the top of the stove, and he rocked fast as he thought, "I wonder if that stupid little Woody Chuck caught me all alone, or did O. Possum or Rack Coon set him up to it?" He never knew, but the Good Club still exists in the woods, where they all live, though it does not mean the same sort of good Reynard intended it should when he started the club.

The animals all like it much better, for it means something good to eat when they have a meeting of the club once a month, and everybody then agrees again that the Good Club is rightly named.

HOW MR. FOX PROVED HIS FRIENDS

IT had been a very long, cold winter, and many of the animals in the woods had found it hard to get enough to eat.

Mr. Fox, however, had not been one of those who were unfortunate, for this had been a very prosperous winter for him.

The farmers had found it impossible to keep Mr. Fox out of their poultry yards and houses, and Mr. Fox grew fat while many of his friends in the woods grew thin.

His friends had called many times at his house, knowing he had a well-filled pantry, and as they had many times had Mr. Fox at their home for supper and dinner they had expected now, when he had so much and they had so little to eat, that he would ask them to eat at his table.

But Mr. Fox didn't do anything of the sort. He would eat a very big breakfast, and then if anyone called he would let them stay and stay until they felt quite sure Mr. Fox did not intend to bring on any food for them and they would go away hungry.

“They needn’t think I am going to hunt and run my legs off bringing home chickens and geese for them,” he would say after he had closed the door on one or two of his neighbors.

“Times are hard for all of us, and just because I happen to be able to find something to eat I do not see why I should have to divide with all my neighbors. Friends are a nuisance, anyway. If I did not have any friends at all I should be far happier and could eat in peace.”

One night when the wind was blowing and the snow falling fast, Mr. Fox looked into his pantry and found he had plenty of food for several days. “I will not go over the hill to-night,” he said; “it is far too cold, and besides I feel like having a feast to-night. It is storming so that all the neighbors will have to stay in instead of prowling around my house bothering me. I’ll just build up a big fire and bring out a nice fat duck and a chicken, too, and I will brew a big pot of tea and eat that big plum cake I brought from the house over the hill.”

So Mr. Fox fastened his door and his windows, too, and drew the shades, so it was dark from the outside as if no one was at home. Then he put a lot of wood into the stove, and when the water boiled he poured it over the

tea in a big tin pot and set it on the back of the stove. Then he pulled the table up close to the stove and put the big lamp on it, and from the pantry he brought the duck and chicken and a big loaf of bread and a pot of butter, and last of all he brought out the big plum cake.

Mr. Fox then drew up his chair in front of the stove and began to eat. He ate and ate until the table looked bare, and then from eating so much and drinking the hot tea Mr. Fox began to nod.

Nod, nod, went his head, and he was sound asleep. But what Mr. Fox did not know was that he was too near the stove and that the wood had made a very hot fire and that his coat was beginning to smoke.

Up curled the smoke, and by and by a tiny spark showed on his coat tail and Mr. Fox began to cough from the smoke.

He coughed so hard that he awoke. The spark had become a tiny flame and came right up in Mr. Fox's face when he awoke.

My, but he was frightened; he jumped up and ran for the door, upsetting the lamp as he went.

Outdoors he ran, screaming "Fire, fire! Save me, save me! I am burning up."

Out of their homes ran all his neighbors. Jack Rabbit was the first to reach him. "Roll over in the snow," he said to Mr. Fox.

Then Peter Rabbit and Mr. Bear and Old Reddy Fox came along and they threw snow on Mr. Fox, and soon they had Mr. Fox out of danger, although his coat was not worth calling a coat.

"Oh! look at your house," said Peter Rabbit, pointing to the smoke coming out of the open door, and sure enough Mr. Fox's house was on fire from the overturned lamp.

Mr. Fox ran for home, all his neighbors following. Peter Rabbit got a pail and drew some water from the well and Jack Rabbit took it to the door of the house and Mr. Bear threw the water on the fire.

Mr. Fox was so badly frightened he could not do a thing but stare with wide-open mouth, but his friends and neighbors worked hard and soon they had put out the fire, but the house was so full of smoke that Mr. Fox could not stay there, so Mr. Bear asked him to come over to his house and stay that night.

But before he went Mr. Fox told his friends that he was sure that the pantry was not burned, and that if they cared to get

in the pantry window they might eat all they found.

It did not take Mr. Bear long to open the window and Jack and Peter Rabbit jumped in.

They found a basket and into it they put ducks and chickens, bread and everything else they could find.

They all went over to Mr. Bear's house for the feast, and a feast they all had; that is, all but Mr. Fox. He laid down on Mr. Bear's couch and thought about the narrow escape he had, and that if it had not been for his friends and neighbors he might have been badly burned and lost his home, too.

"I guess friends are pretty nice to have after all," he thought. "I'll never again treat mine as I have this winter. The next time food is scarce I will share mine, if I have any, with my friends who are less fortunate."

WHAT HAPPENED IN A GARDEN

ONE day a very beautiful butterfly alighted near a rose. "Rose," she said, "I have stopped here that you may admire my beautiful colors. I am sure I am very kind and thoughtful and I hope you will appreciate it."

The Rose was a beautiful red rose and very proud of her beauty and fragrance. At first she was so angry she could not reply, but when the Butterfly spread her wings and turned around, saying, "I shall let you see me from all sides, for I know you have never before beheld such glorious colors," the Rose spoke.

"You vain and impudent creature," she said, "how dare you talk to me of beauty—I, who rule the garden because I am more beautiful than any other flowers? Begone! I care not for your colors."

"Oh! you are an ungrateful creature," said the Butterfly, "and, no doubt, jealous of my wonderful beauty. Why, my dear, just look into the pool of water behind you and you will soon hide yourself in shame."

“You are all red, while I am blue, and yellow, and black, and each wing is so dainty there is nothing to compare with it.”

“Hush, you vain creature,” replied the angry Rose, “one of my petals is softer and more fragrant than both your wings! Who are you that you should dare address me?”

“If it were not for the flowers, what would become of you, I should like to know? I am not at all sure you did not steal your colors from the flowers—the yellow from the golden glow, the blue from the violet. I suspect you were black before you took the colors from the flowers.”

“Oh! you are jealous of my beauty; that is all,” said the Butterfly. “I only ask that you turn to the pool behind you and look. I will go, too, and you will soon see who is the most beautiful, my dear.”

The angry Rose turned to look in the pool, and—snap!—she broke from her stem and fell into the water.

Butterfly, seeing the Rose was close to the water, thought she would have as close a view of herself, too, so she flew right on the water, and her pretty wings were wet and she could not fly.

“Oh, save me, Weeping Willow!” cried the Rose. “I will never mind anything that silly Butterfly says again.”

So the Willow bent its branches over to the water and caught the Butterfly and Rose in its leaves and swung them safe to the shore.

The Butterfly soon flew away, but she forgot to thank the Willow for saving her; and the Rose was picked up by a little girl and carried into the house.

“Do you wonder that I weep?” asked the Weeping Willow of the Bush nearby. “I cannot help it when I see so much vanity and ingratitude all about me. The Butterfly did not thank me for saving her; the Rose did not give me a parting glance when she found she was safe and to be cared for.”

“But, surely, you did what was right. You were kind, and that ought to make you glad,” said the Bush. “I would not weep. You should be happy!”

“Oh! I weep not for myself; but for those who are foolish and vain,” said the Weeping Willow.

“I think that is a very silly thing to do,” said the Bush. “You will be weeping the rest of your life if you bother about the vain Rose

and that silly Butterfly. Cheer up and be merry!"

"I could not do that," said the Weeping Willow. "I must be true to the family honor and weep; else we would not be weeping willows."

"The Rose was vain, and the Butterfly was silly and vain," said the Bush to itself, "and I think the Weeping Willow is silly, too. It is going to weep all its life just because it belongs to a weeping family.

"I am glad I have no family honors to live up to. What is the use of weeping when there is so much to laugh about in this world?"

Just then a breeze came along and the Bush swayed and bobbed about as merry as if it were dancing. It had forgotten all about the Rose and the Butterfly.

But poor, sad Weeping Willow drooped its branches to the water and wept over the vanity and foolishness of others.

THE QUARREL OF THE MONTHS

MOTHER EARTH was getting her twelve children ready for the new year and she had called them all to her to see what was needed to make them fresh and beautiful.

But before Mother could say a word to them they all began to talk at once.

Mother Earth, who is very wise, told them all to be quiet and that each in turn should have a chance to speak.

January, being the first to be sent out, thought she should speak first, so it was agreed that each should speak as they came in order.

“I start all the year,” said January, with a toss of her head. “I think I am the most important of all my sisters, and while I may not be as beautiful as some of them, I feel I should be given the most praise because I am the first month of the year.”

“I do not agree with you, sister,” said February, with a look of cold disdain at January. “I am the most beautiful of all the months. Who can compare with me in my snowy robes

and crystal trimmings. Give me the place of importance, Mother Earth; I am your child of beauty."

March had been bustling about waiting for her chance to speak. "Who dares claim my place?" she snapped. "I am the most important month who prepares the way for the spring. I ask Mother Earth, am I not the most important of all your daughters?"

April, with tears streaming down her pretty cheeks, spoke next. "Mother Earth, I do not wish to take any glory from my sisters, but do I not give you water and make you smile? I feel I am at least a help of some importance."

May, the laughing child of Mother Earth, spoke next. "Oh! how happy I am," she said, dancing and singing around Mother Earth. "I really do not know how important I am, dear mother, but I know the whole world is glad when it beholds me."

June, all blushes, her fragrant breath sending forth sweet perfume, spoke next. "I am the month that Youth loves best, of that I am sure," she said. "I am most important in the gardens, for what would a garden be without my roses? So I feel I should be given a good share of your praise, Mother Earth."

"I care not for all that has been said, I am the warmest month, Mother Earth," said July. "Give me the place of importance and your praise. Do I not make the whole world warm, and what would the vegetables do, I should like to know, without me?"

"Wait, sister," said August, "you and I are almost twins. I will divide the honor with you, but I will not allow you to take the whole of the praise from Mother Earth for being the most important month of all; together we help to bring forth the vegetables and we keep the whole world warm, so together we will share the place of first importance, sister."

September spoke next: "I am the one who brings the first cool breeze, therefore I must be of the most importance, Mother Earth, and the glorious days I bring are more beautiful than those of the other months, I am sure."

"October is the month of beauty, sister; you have forgotten me, who brings to the world the glorious coloring that my days give," said October. "The praise should be given to me and the place of importance, Mother Earth."

November spoke in slow, sad tones. "Some think I am the saddest month of all the year," she said, "and others say they love me best of

all. I have not much to give, but what I have I give freely, and I am sure I must help or I would not have a place to fill."

December said she was the most important. "Let one of you deny it," she said. "Who brings Christmas cheer and makes the whole world merry, I ask you, sisters? I do; the question is settled, Mother Earth. You cannot deny your daughter December is the most important of your twelve children."

All this time Mother Earth had kept quiet, but when December finished speaking she smiled sweetly on all her daughters. "You are all the most important," she said, "for how could the year be perfect without each one of you in your turn? I love you all alike, so do not quarrel, my children, about which is the important one, for there is no choice; the most important place in my heart is filled with you all."

The twelve months smiled and became friends once more. The Mother love had brought harmony out of discord.

January kissed her sisters good-by and began the year smiling with happiness and love.

THE BATTLE OF THE WINDS

OLD FATHER NEPTUNE says he does not cause the sea to make big waves and toss about the ships, and one day when a Little Mermaid asked him why the waves rose so high and made so much trouble for the sailors, he told her this story, and some little bird, flying over the rocks where they sat, listened.

A little bird, you know, always tells, and that is the way this story got abroad. Just whom he told it to cannot be discovered, but anyway, here is the story:

“Sit down beside me, dear,” said Father Neptune, “and I will tell you about the battle of the winds,” so the Little Mermaid curled up beside him on the rocks and listened.

“One day when I was taking my nap at the bottom of the ocean,” said Father Neptune—“this was many years before you were born, my dear—I was awakened by hearing the trumpeting of the sea shells, and, jumping up, I went to the top of the water.

“There I heard the North Wind in a very

angry voice calling out: 'Get out of my way; I shall blow wherever I like.'

"'Not if I can help it, and I think I can,' answered the East Wind, blowing at a terrible rate toward the North Wind. 'You do not own the ocean; get out of my path.'

"'Not thinking they would do any harm, I sat down on some rocks to watch them,'" said Father Neptune, and the Little Mermaid was so interested and afraid she would lose some part of the wonderful story she did not say a word, but kept as quiet as a mouse.

"'Nearer and nearer came the North Wind,'" said Father Neptune, "and the East Wind grew more angry. 'If you come closer I shall drive you back,' it screamed.

"'I have never changed my course for any one, and I do not intend to be driven by you, Mr. East Wind,' howled the North Wind furiously.

"'By this time I saw there was to be a battle, and down to the bottom of the ocean I went in a hurry,'" said Father Neptune, "and called for my sea horses and chariot.

"'Then I called to Triton, my trumpeter, to call his helpers and follow me, and in a very few seconds we were at the top of the ocean.

“Oh, my child, such a scene as met our eyes. North Wind had kept his threat to go where he wished and East Wind would not be frightened, so they had met in a terrible battle, which was raging when we reached the scene.

“I urged Triton to blow his loudest blast and I waved my trident high over my head, my faithful sea horses dashed over the waves at high speed, but the noise of those two furious winds was above all.

“The ocean, of course, was lashed into a terrible fury by the two winds and for a minute it seemed as if even my power could not still it, but at last one mighty wave, higher than all the others, my powerful seahorses mounted and I made myself heard.

“Then in I dashed between the North Wind and the East and I separated them, driving each to his home growling and snapping all the way.”

“But Father Neptune,” said the Little Mermaid, as he stopped speaking. “I thought you were the one who caused the waves to grow big and the sea to roar and the ships to be tossed about.”

“No, my child, that is a story which has been told so long it has come to be thought

true by many who do not know, but the truth is that when the sea is dashing and rolling the winds are battling and angry.

“Why should I, who live in the deep waters, cause them to be troubled? Restless they are to be sure, but never do they grow troubled unless the angry winds are lashing them when they are having a battle.”

“Oh I am so glad you have told me,” said the Little Mermaid. “I could not bear to think you made the poor sailor toss about and sometimes drown, for you are so good and kind to all your subjects it did not seem possible you were cruel to mortals.”

“No, my dear, I help the sailors always, and that is the reason I will not allow you and your beautiful sisters to come out on the rocks oftener, because your wonderful beauty attracts the attention of the sailors who should be attending to the ship. When he sees one of your family he forgets all else but you and sometimes lets his ship run upon the rocks. Mortals have everything about us mixed up, for I have heard it said that I send you out to wreck the ships, but you know, my dear, that is not true.”

“Oh! no, indeed, good Father Neptune, we know quite well that is not true, for you keep

us under the water always when a ship sails along.”

“Well, here comes one now,” said Father Neptune. “Jump into the sea and run home before more harm is laid to us.”

CALLA LILY'S COUSIN

ONE day little Jack-in-the-Pulpit was telling the wild flowers about him how wonderful was the world in which they lived.

“Just think,” he was saying, “how fortunate are we to be out here growing in the light and fresh air when all those flowers we can see through the big glass windows have to live inside and never breathe the clear, crisp air.

“And here we are close to this stream and those poor hothouse plants have to wait until someone brings water to them. We should be very thankful for all our comforts, and though those flowers look very pretty through the big windows, I am quite sure they often wish they were out here with us.”

Right near the window of the conservatory, which was what Jack meant by the big glass windows, grew a stately Calla Lily in a big pot. She often looked out at the modest wild flowers that happened to be growing near the little stream which ran along by the conservatory.

Often the wild flowers had nodded to the

hot house flowers and some of them had bent a little in answer, but not the stately Calla Lily. She pretended she did not see them or their friendly nod.

And there was a reason for this, for Calla knew that Jack-in-the-Pulpit was a relative of hers—distant, to be sure, but still he was related, and if one stopped to look and compare Calla and Jack they would see at once a family resemblance.

Calla's dainty, wax-like cup resembles Jack's greenish-brown pulpit, and Calla's pretty, yellow, upright center resembles in shape Jack himself as he stands beneath the curved pulpit. And that was the reason Calla Lily did not nod or notice the little wild flowers outside her glass home; she was afraid that someone would know that she and humble little Jack were cousins, for she supposed that Jack knew it and was bragging to the other wild flowers about it.

"They will be sure to tell it to some of the flowers standing near the door some day when the gardener leaves the door open," Calla Lily was thinking to herself, "and I would not for the world have the hothouse plants know that I, the queen of this place, have a relative such as that common little Jack."

The truth of the matter was that Jack knew nothing about the stately relative growing inside the hothouse, and if he had he would have pitied her, for he was quite happy and satisfied growing out in the air and light and would not have changed places with Calla for all her beauty and stately bearing.

He loved the woods and the moist spot where he grew and his friends that grew about him.

There were the fickle, late-coming wind-flowers, and though they never tarried, Jack was always glad to see them and hear them prattle of the sights they expected to see, and their farewell flutters as they sailed away always made Jack glad he did not care to roam, as they did.

There were the wild Lilies-of-the-Valley; they were friends of Jack's also, and he felt they had much in common, for their name was as long as his; there were the birds and the trees, too. Jack was happy in his wild home and gave no thought to high-toned relatives.

But if Calla Lily had but known it there was another Jack not far from the one she could see from the window, of whom she had more to fear, for he bore much more striking resemblance to the stately Lily than the other Jack.

This second Jack-in-the-Pulpit had a greenish-white covering which looked very much like Calla's wax white cup, and if some time you are in the place where the little Jacks grow, and you look, you may be fortunate enough to find this other Jack under the greenish-white pulpit, though this is not so common a variety as the dark-colored Jacks.

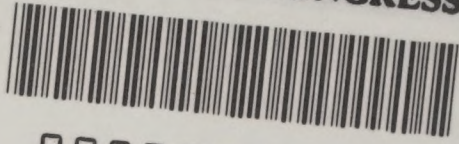
But you can be sure both Jacks would rather live in their airy, light homes in the woods than in the glass house where their stately cousin Calla Lily lives.

THE END





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