

LITTLE MAUDE *and her* MAMMA

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Charles Battell Loomis



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LITTLE MAUDE AND
HER MAMMA



The Runaway

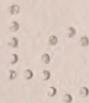
LITTLE MAUDE AND HER MAMMA

BY

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

AUTHOR OF "MINERVA'S MANŒUVRES,"
"CHEERFUL AMERICANS," ETC.

Illustrated by the Author



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DEDICATED, WITH LOVE, TO
MY DAUGHTER EDITH
WHO HAS BEEN MY INSPIRATION FOR
MANY A STORY

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LITTLE MAUDE AND
HER MAMMA

AUTHOR'S NOTE

HOW LITTLE MAUDE CAME

THIS is how "Little Maude" came to be written.

If one has a daughter of the right age it is easy to tell bedtime stories, and so one evening when Miss Soberface called me upstairs to "tell her about a story," I went into the bedroom and trusted to luck to bring me a story in time for me to give it utterance.

That is really the best way. If you prepare a story beforehand it may not suit your Miss Soberface, and then you have had your trouble for nothing. But if you leave it to chance, and just start, something is sure to happen.

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And so it was that evening. I started little Maude on her ride after the two four-legged horses, and the first thing I knew the horses were running away "and her Mamma did not know it," and then things followed in what seemed to be a perfectly natural sequence for a bedtime story.

When the tale was done Miss Soberface said, "Oh, you ought to write that out, papa."

Most persons do not need to be asked to write, and it was not many hours before I took the advice of my daughter and "wrote the story out."

When I had read it to a few "grown-ups," and they had liked it, I decided to send it to a grown-up magazine, and selected *The Century* as being a dignified background for a piece of fooling.

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Then as I wanted it illustrated, I made two sketches by way of suggestion, and mailed all.

Both Miss Soberface and I were pleased when the story was accepted, but I was pleased to the skipping and hurrahing point when *The Century* editors told me that they intended publishing my pictures just as I had drawn them.

There was never a writer who would not rather have been a singer or a sculptor or an actor or an artist, and I was naturally prouder of my sketches than of any story I ever wrote.

It seems that there must be many Misses Soberface in the country, for I heard on all sides of the use of "Little Maude" as a bedtime story.

After a time I came to use it as an

AUTHOR'S NOTE

after-dinner story, and then the good Mr. Bok asked permission to print it, together with the pictures, in his "That Reminds Me" column, and that gave it many millions of readers at one fell swoop.

After a while I thought I would like to have my story in a book since so many persons had asked me where they could get it, and so with the permission of The Century Company I put it into the mouth of a character in the only novel I am ever likely to perpetrate, "Minerva's Manœuvres."

This novel was published by Messrs. A. S. Barnes & Co., and they have now given me further permission to use the story in the form in which you see it here.

When Mr. Jerome K. Jerome came

AUTHOR'S NOTE

over to America to read, it so happened that I was chosen to read with him, and we followed 15,000 miles of railroad from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada to Mexico. And so surely as he read from "Three Men in a Boat" so surely did I read "The Mother of Little Maude and Little Maude," and as I always read it from the book I cannot to this day repeat it without the book.

There are very few states where the story that little Miss Soberface inspired has not been heard, and I have found that its utter absense of sense appeals to Yankee and Westerner and Southerner alike. One touch of nonsense makes the whole world grin.

Now when Messrs. Doubleday, Page & Co. approached me, and said that

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they wanted to make "Little Maude" into a book all by her lonesome, I told them that unless they printed but five words to a page, and had such interesting marginal decorations that the reader would forget the paucity of text, they could hardly get beyond a couple of covers and a preface or two.

But they suggested that little Maude might have had other adventures.

This seemed likely enough, and because little Miss Soberface had grown too old for bedtime stories, I went to my typewriter and told it the story of the shipwreck and the story of the fire.

Then as I felt that the decoration of a cover was far beyond my amateur pencil, the services of that genial and fanciful man or man of fancy, Mr.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Peter Newell, were called into play and——

Well, the book is in your hands. Now you see how it all happened.

Please do not think that I take it too seriously. The story was floating around somewhere, and when Miss Soberface asked me to “tell her about a story” it happened to be passing through my own brain and I allowed it to escape from so disorderly a place. The rest is chance.

CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

**THE MOTHER OF LITTLE
MAUDE AND LITTLE MAUDE**

I

THE MOTHER OF LITTLE MAUDE AND LITTLE MAUDE

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl named Maude, and she went out a-driving in a four-wheeled carriage drawn by two four-legged horses and driven by one two-legged driver. And the dear little girl named Maude sat on the front seat by the two-legged driver, and Maude's dear Mamma sat on the back seat by herself, which is not the same as *beside* herself.

LITTLE MAUDE

And all of a sudden the horses, which had only been running before, began to run away. And the dear little girl named Maude wished to let her Mamma know that they were running away, but she did not wish to alarm her too suddenly, for sometimes shocks are serious.

And the dear little girl named Maude saw a reporterman walking along the sidewalk looking for news for his paper. So she called to the reporterman and said, "I wish to speak to you on business."

And the reporterman was agile,

AND HER MAMMA

and he jumped on the step of the carriage, and the little girl said to him, "Please get it into your paper that the horses are running away, and I wish my dear Mamma to know it. I am none other than little Maude."

And the reporter did not know that the lady on the back seat was the Mamma of little Maude, so he raised his cap and jumped from the carriage and nearly fell down in so doing, for the horses were now running madly on eight legs, and the driver was getting nervous, and the reporter went to the newspaper

LITTLE MAUDE

office and wrote: "The horses of the little girl who is none other than little Maude, are running away, and it is a pretty serious business, for her Mamma does not know it, and there is no telling when the horses will stop."

And they slapped this news into type, and then it was printed in the newspaper, and a newsboy took the papers and ran into the street, crying, "Extry! Extry! Full account of the running away of the horses of the little girl, who is none other than little Maude."

And Maude's Mamma heard

AND HER MAMMA

the little boy, and she beckoned to him to bring her a paper. And the newsboy was also agile, and he leaped upon the step and sold a paper to the lady for a cent and then he jumped off again, for he had other papers to sell.

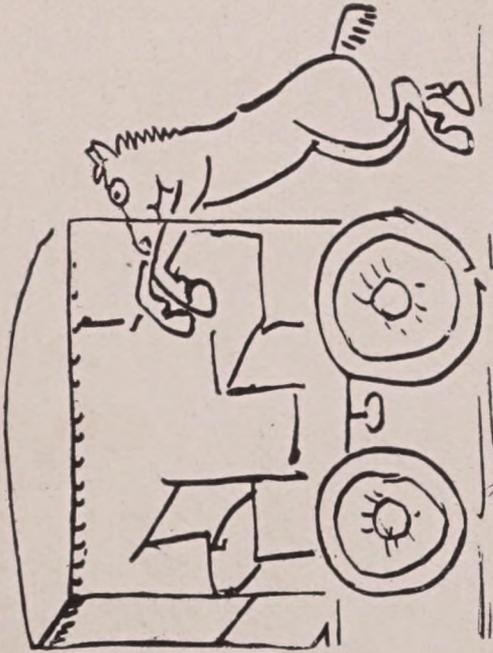
And the Mamma of little Maude began to read the news. And when she came to the part that said the horses of little Maude were running away, she looked straight ahead and saw that it was indeed true.

And with great presence of mind she climbed over the back

LITTLE MAUDE

seat and dropped to the ground unhurt. And when little Maude saw that her dear Mamma had escaped, she also climbed over the back seat and dropped to the ground unhurt. And when the driver saw that Maude's Mamma and little Maude had escaped, he also climbed over the back seat and dropped to the ground unhurt.

And the two horses, who were very intelligent and who had wondered what would be the outcome of their runaway, got into the carriage and they also climbed over the back seat and dropped to the ground unhurt.



The Escape

Loomis

LITTLE MAUDE AND THE
SHIPWRECK

II

LITTLE MAUDE AND THE SHIPWRECK

ON one occasion little Maude and Maude's dear Mamma were on the ocean going from New York to London. And Maude's Mamma was very sick.

She lay in her berth and wished that she had postponed the trip until they had drained the sea.

And little Maude, who was not sick, looked after her dear Mamma, but Maude's Mamma did not look either after or before her

LITTLE MAUDE

daughter. Her eyes were closed, and she would have moaned if she had had strength.

Little Maude, full of solicitude for her dear Mamma, said to her, "Can I bring you an *éclair*, Mamma?" And her Mamma made no response, at which the child was sorrowful, because she knew that if her Mamma was too sick to be polite, she was sick indeed.

"Shall I bring you some *pâte de foie gras*, dear Mamma?" said little Maude, changing the name of the food in hope of coming nearer to her Mamma's taste.



“Can I bring you an éclair, Mamma?”

AND HER MAMMA

At the mention of *pâte de foie gras*, the good lady moved uneasily, and little Maude saw that she had not as yet hit on the right article of food.

“They have nice fried eels, Mamma. Shall I have them bring you some with a little plum pudding?”

But Maude’s Mamma turned her head to the wall, and the dear child, seeing that she wished to engage in sleep, left her.

On the way to the deck she felt a sudden shock, and a minute later she learned that they were about to have a shipwreck, owing

LITTLE MAUDE

to the fact that the steamer had run upon a rock.

All was now haste and confusion, and the child could not avoid the query to herself, "How have these people been brought up that they so rudely push each other about and utter alarming cries?"

And then the child thought of her Mamma, and she went to the captain and said, "My dear Mamma is in no condition to take part in your shipwreck! She is quite sick, and I dread to tell her that the ship has struck upon a rock as I fear the consequences.

AND HER MAMMA

Will it not be possible to get rid of the rock?"

Then the captain, harassed though he was, removed his cap and said, "My dear child, if we had known that your Mamma was sick, and if I had noticed this rock, we would not have struck upon it. As it is, I am afraid that the good ship will founder, so I beg of you to ask your Mamma if she does not feel like coming up on deck and reclining in a life-boat. We have some very easy ones, and we expect to take to them soon."

"I thank you for your courtesy,

LITTLE MAUDE

good Captain," said little Maude, "and I will at once carry your message to my dear Mamma, but I am sure that she will not care to be disturbed, as she was too sick to be interested in fried eels, although we often have them at home. I fear for her life."

The confusion on board the ship continued to be very trying to little Maude. People pushed and shoved rudely as they tried to get into the life-boats that the sailors were making ready to ship. One of them had been freshly painted, and a number of ladies

AND HER MAMMA

ruined their frocks while hastily clambering into the boat.

When little Maude saw this, worried though she was about her Mamma, she stood alongside the boat and said, "Look out for paint," to those who came near, and this thoughtfulness on her part saved many a frock from ruin.

While she stood there, a gentleman who recognized that the girl was none other than little Maude, handed her a life preserver, but she refused it, although she thanked the gentleman for his attention.

LITTLE MAUDE

“Later, perhaps, I may avail myself of your kind offer,” said she, politely, “but now I must run to my dear Mamma, who is so sick in her cabin that I dread telling her what has happened.”

But the resolute child went down the stairs to the cabin of her dear Mamma, and said to her, “Mamma, I hardly know how to phrase that which I wish to communicate to you. If you could conveniently postpone your sickness it would be as well, because,—Mamma, dear, did you notice a little jar a while ago?”

“Yes,” said her Mamma, “I

AND HER MAMMA

think it was a jar of marmalade, but I told the stewardess to please take it away.”

“No, but I refer to a shock—oh, Mamma, the ship has hit upon a rock and is soon going to the bottom. Do you not think you could come up on deck and be rescued?”

“If I must, I must,” said Maude’s Mamma, “and let us get away as soon as possible. A cabin is no place in which to be sick.”

When they reached the deck, to Maude’s dismay, she saw that all the boats had been cast off, and that no one remained aboard

LITTLE MAUDE

the ship save the crew and the captain. He was still on the bridge, his trumpet in his hands and a look of relief on his face.

“Good morning,” said he, when he saw Maude’s Mamma. “Are you feeling better?”

“Yes, the fresh air has revived me. Tell me, Captain, do you think it would be good for me to go out rowing?”

“It will not be necessary, dear madam, thanks to the departure of the other passengers. Since they went the ship is appreciably lighter and will soon float off the rock, and then I will signal to the

AND HER MAMMA

engineer to go ahead and we will try to make some port.”

“Thank you, Captain, but tea will do me just as well. I am a teetotaler. I feel much better, and would relish a cup of tea and a biscuit this minute.”

When little Maude heard these words, she knew that her Mamma was once more restored to health, and she clapped her hands and said, “How true it is that blessings come to us out of seeming adversities. Do you not now feel like a little fried eel?”

“I believe I do,” said her Mamma, smiling sweetly.

LITTLE MAUDE AND THE
FIRE

III

LITTLE MAUDE AND THE FIRE

ON another day little Maude sat by her dear Mamma while the devoted lady read to her daughter out of a book.

Now little Maude knew that it is the height of rudeness to interrupt those who read to us for our delight, so when she saw a little flame curling in the next room, she let it curl, hoping that the chapter would not be a long

LITTLE MAUDE

one, and that the flame might get weary of curling and go out.

But it was a long and interesting chapter, and while Maude's Mamma read, little Maude saw other flames come to curl beside the one that had begun the business of curling.

Now after the flames had curled a while they began to lick the furniture. And when flames get to licking they are apt to destroy anything that is of an inflammable nature, and little Maude wished that there were no rules for politeness.

But her dear Mamma was so



“ Little Maude saw other flames come to curl ”

AND HER MAMMA

interested in the reading, and it was so kind of her to give her time to her daughter that little Maude forbore to speak.

It was not long before a maid saw the fire, and judging that it would be well to bring it to the attention of some one, she came to the door of the room to tell her mistress, but little Maude laid her finger on her lips to signify that her Mamma was reading, and would not care to be interrupted, so the maid went away—to pack her trunk.

And the fire went on burning and spread to other parts of the

LITTLE MAUDE

house. Then a fireman who happened to be going by in the street on his way home to luncheon, saw the flames, and said to himself very promptly, "My luncheon can wait, but this fire will wait for no man. Unless I go at once to my brave comrades, and tell them to hasten to this scene, the fire may ultimately resist our utmost efforts."

So he broke into a run without hurting the run at all, and hastened to the fire-house, and said to his companions, who were playing at draughts, "Come, let us go and put out the fire in the

AND HER MAMMA

house of little Maude. I have not yet had luncheon, but," said he, "what of that?"

Not a fireman answered his question. Perhaps they did not know what to say, but all leaped to their tasks, and the horses leaped to their shafts, and in a much longer time than it takes to tell it, they had reached the home of little Maude.

And it was almost no more.

The flames had destroyed the right wing, but the part where Maude and her Mamma sat had as yet been spared.

While some of the firemen

LITTLE MAUDE

rang the front door bell in order that they might be admitted to the house to carry a line of hose, others directed copious streams from without into rooms not yet a-fire, that they might flood them and make it harder for the flames to injure the wall paper, the hangings, and the furniture.

And some who were not as busy as the others went to a department store hard by and bought a life net.

At last a stream of water smote the window of the room in which little Maude's Mamma

AND HER MAMMA

was reading to the child, and broke it, and made a splash on the book.

Then little Maude's Mamma saw what had happened, and, putting her finger in the book to keep the place, she took her daughter's hand, and together they went to see the fire from a more advantageous point.

“What a pity it is not night time, the flames show so well against the black sky,” said Maude's Mamma.

She went to the window, and calling to the firemen she asked, “Where is the life net?”

LITTLE MAUDE

And the fireman said, "We are sorry, but the others have not yet returned with it. They are waiting for change in the department store in which they bought it."

So Maude and her Mamma walked down the front stairs, which, fortunately, had not yet been attacked by the flames, and soon reached the garden. On the way Maude's Mamma said, "How long has this been going on, my child?"

"Oh, Mamma," said little Maude, "it must have begun when you started to read the last

AND HER MAMMA

chapter. Do you wish to chide me for not telling you?"

"No, I have no wish to chide you," said the lady, "for I see you have poise. Come, we will finish the story in the garden, and then, if I can get some charcoal that is not too damp, we will make coffee for these brave fellows. How fortunate, my child, that the house is insured."

THE END

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