

# LITTLE MISS WEEZY



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“WHAT MADE MAMMA DRAG HER OUT OF CHURCH IN SUCH A HURRY?” — PAGE 22.

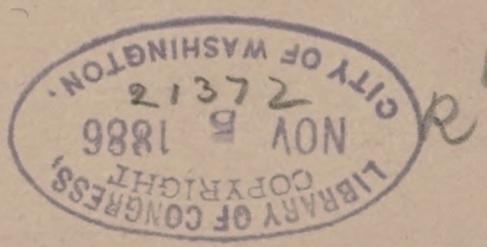
# LITTLE MISS WEEZY

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# LITTLE MISS WEEZY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### TEASING POKY.

“I’s Weezy Wozy, and I’s *two* old,” said little Louise Rowe on her second birthday; and from that time forth everybody called her “Weezy,” though it wasn’t her real name any more than it is yours.

There were two other little Rowes in the family, — Kirke, six years old; and Molly, eight. Their father lived in a pretty Queen Anne cottage at the end of the street, and the Wyman’s just around the corner. Mrs. Wyman was aunt Clara, Mr. Rowe’s sister.

Having no children of their own, Dr. and Mrs. Wyman were fond of borrowing their youngest niece; and this birthday morning the doctor's voice was heard calling from Mr. Rowe's gate, —

“Has anybody here a little girl to lend? a little girl two years old.”

“Here I is, *unker Docker*. *I's* two old,” cried little Miss Weezy, toddling through the hall.

“Possible? Then you must be the very young lady I'm looking for. Get your bonnet, Snowy-locks.”

Mrs. Rowe brought the dainty white Normandy cap, and tied it under Weezy's chin.

“You must be *unker Docker's* darling,” said she, lifting her into the carriage.

Weezy bobbed her head till the cap-frill quivered like a spray of cherry-blossoms in a wind, and away she was whirled to her uncle's door.

Aunt Clara came out, with her bonnet on, to ask Dr. Wyman to drive down to the dress-maker's.

"And if you'll be a good girl, Weezy, and stay with Poky, we'll bring you home an orange," said she.

"A *dreat*, *bid* ollange?" asked Weezy, always sharp on a bargain.

"Yes, dear; a great, big orange, the biggest in the store."

"Oh, ho, I *likes* ollanges!" remarked Weezy, prancing away to find the colored girl, whose long name was Pocahontas.

Poky was washing. After giving Weezy the clothes-pins to play with, she hastened back to her tub on the other side of the kitchen. Suddenly two little white arms splashed into the soapsuds beside her own black ones.

"Poky tired. Weezy *he'p*," said the little guest, who had climbed a chair unnoticed.

“Sho, Miss Weezy! *peart* help you are, *for shore!*” cried Poky, wringing her out, and standing her upon the table, while she herself put a basketful of clothes into the boiler on the range.

Then, believing the child safely penned, she brought her a cookie, and ran out to hang the clothes-line. Unfortunately, Poky had failed to notice that one end of the wash-bench was near the table. Left to herself, Weezy speedily dropped down upon the bench, and from that to the floor; and thus it came to pass that she ran and slammed the door behind Pocahontas almost as soon as the girl had crossed the threshold.

“Poky *tan't tum in!*” crowed Weezy, turning the key in the lock.

“*Please* let Poky in! Oh, Weezy must let poor Poky in!” shrieked the startled maid, running back to the porch, and shaking the door.

“No, no! Poky tan’t tum in,” repeated the little tease, delighted to make a sensation.

Pocahontas could hear the soap-suds bubbling in the wash-boiler, and she knew it might at any moment overflow and scald the child. But what was to be done? Half wild, she ran from window to window, and found every one of them bolted. The front-door, too, was fastened, and the key was in Dr. Wyman’s pocket. A sharp clattering in the kitchen drew trembling Poky to the window in the rear.

“Oh, oh! Little Miss Weezy’ll kill herself, and the doctor’ll blame me!” groaned she, looking in as Weezy thrust the poker into the range.

“I’s makin’ fire,” shouted the child proudly, while in the boiler above the water foamed and seethed.

“Weezy’ll burn! Weezy’ll burn! Oh, please come!” cried Pocahontas with chattering teeth.

Weezy laughed roguishly, and rattled the poker.

“Quick! oh, quick!” sobbed Poky, almost beside herself, as she saw streams of water beginning to course down the sides of the boiler.

Weezy looked up, and the tears in Poky’s eyes melted the child’s perverse little heart.

“Poor Poky *ky*; Poky *s’all* come in,” said she, skipping across to the window.

Her flight was none too soon; for the soap-suds that moment boiled over, flooding the range and every thing within reach. Even far away as she was, Weezy’s pretty Gretchen dress was spattered from neck to hem.

Little did aunt Clara think of that, as she sprang into the kitchen, and caught up her mischievous pet, crying, —

“Thank Heaven, my darling is safe! What *was* Poky thinking of, to leave you alone!”

“Poky out doors! Weezy shut Poky out!” said the little rogue demurely.

“*You* shut Poky out!” exclaimed astonished aunt Clara, kissing the wee meddling hands, still black from the poker. “Well, well, who ever heard the like?”

And it was Mrs. Wyman who let poor Poky in, as Weezy could not turn back the key.

## CHAPTER II.

### GOING TO CHURCH.

WEEZY was fast learning to talk, and her brother and sister delighted in teaching her long and difficult words, such as "Mexico" and "Constantinople."

Molly was a motherly little girl, always worrying over the shortcomings of Weezy and her young brother. It is true that Kirke was often led astray by a rough little playmate, Jimmy Maguire; and Weezy was perhaps instructed in mischief by a three-years-old neighbor, Kisty Nye : still, it might have been as well if Molly had found less fault with the little ones, and thought more of correcting her own sad failing, — a quick and troublesome temper.

One evening the three children were swinging together in the hammock in their front yard, watching for grandpa Rowe.

“Now sing ‘Little Sally Walker,’ darling, please do,” said Molly, playing with her little sister’s flaxen curls.

Weezy had already hummed “Bring back my Bonnie to me,” and various other tunes, and was tired.

“Tan’t sing; sing’s all gone! Loot!” said she, opening her mouth very wide, to show how empty it was of music.

“Grandpa’s most here!” shouted Kirke, leaping from the hammock and running to meet an old gentleman walking up the street. Yes, it was grandpa Rowe, a dear white-haired minister, with kind blue eyes, and a face as smooth and pink as a baby’s. And the satchel he carried held a written sermon; for he was going to stay over Sunday and preach for the village pastor, Mr. Cutler.

“It isn’t every little girl that has such a good grandpa, Weezy, I can tell you,” said Molly wisely, as they hastened after Kirke. “Why, if you should be naughty, it would make him want to cry.”

The remark seemed to amuse Weezy very much; and when the “good” man took her in his arms to kiss her, she shouted gleefully, —

“Gampa goin’ to *ky*! What a keer old gampa!”

Molly was so mortified that she ran into the house, and kept out of the way till tea-time.

Grandpa’s visits were always a delight, and it was considered a great treat to hear him preach. The next morning Mr. and Mrs. Rowe both wanted to go to church; but with Lovisa Bran, the housemaid, away, what could be done with Weezy?

“Can’t Molly stay with her?” suggested Mr. Rowe, closing the dining-room door for fear of being overheard.

“Of course she might do it, with neighbors so near; but she has been depending upon going to church with her grandfather.”

“Yes, I know. She thinks it a high honor to have a minister in the family. I overheard her boasting last night that she was the only girl in her class who had a grandfather that could preach!”

“I would stay at home myself if it was respectful to father,” said Mrs. Rowe thoughtfully.

When she went up-stairs by and by, she found Molly trying on the pretty fall hat that she had not yet worn. It was a white felt, trimmed with blue velvet and blue and white ostrich plumes, and suited well her fair complexion and rich auburn hair.

“It is lovely, dear, and I know it will be a sad disappointment to you if you can't wear it to-day,” said Mrs. Rowe, coming up behind her daughter at the glass.

“Not wear it? It doesn’t rain. Why can’t I wear it?” cried Molly in great excitement.

Mrs. Rowe hesitated. It was certainly her own place rather than Molly’s to attend church to-day; but she found it hard to crush her little daughter’s pleasant anticipations.

“You forget, Molly, that Lovisa is away, and somebody must look out for little sister,” said she gently. “Aren’t you willing to be the one?”

“No, I’m not, mamma, I’m not willing. I think it’s too horrid, hateful mean! I never can go anywhere or do any thing I want to, just because of that little tagging fuss-budget,” cried Molly, tearing off the cherished hat and flinging it on the bed in a towering passion.

“That will do,” sighed mamma, walking away. “And you need not stay at home, Molly. I should be sorry to trust our little Weezy to the care of a girl who does not control herself.”

“Any thing wrong, Mary?” asked Mr. Rowe, meeting his wife in the hall.

“Only Molly’s temper again,” said she wearily. “She feels so abused at being asked to stay at home with Weezy that I think it wisest not to urge the point, but to leave her to herself, and let her find out how naughty she is.”

“Poor Molly, that quick temper of hers is always getting her into trouble; but she is sure to repent bitterly,” said Mr. Rowe, as he followed his wife down-stairs.

“Do you know what’s in my mind?” said Mrs. Rowe, pausing on the landing, with an air of being about to say something startling. “I’m half inclined to take Weezy to church.”

Mr. Rowe whistled.

“There must be a first time,” went on Mrs. Rowe; “and she might behave very well.”

“I’m willing to risk her if you are,” said Mr. Rowe, on reflection; “and I know it would

gratify father to see the whole family in the pew."

"Weezy's going to church; oh, goody!" cried Kirke, clapping his hands at the news; whereupon Weezy clapped hers also, though she had no more idea what "going to church" meant than a baby heathen. She was highly pleased to be going anywhere in her cardinal velvet bonnet and cloak, and ready to make any number of promises to be good.

When, at the ringing of the church-bell, Molly stole down-stairs with red eyes and downcast lids, Weezy ran to take her hand; and the three children walked together up the street, the little sister hopping along in the middle, as radiant as a young flamingo. Mr. and Mrs. Rowe in front of them, with grandpa, turned every now and then to smile upon the happy baby.

"I hope she won't disgrace us to-day," remarked papa; "but I must confess I feel some-

what as though we were taking a menagerie to church."

"A menagerie that has good intentions ; yes, so do I," laughed mamma nervously, pausing to help Weezy up the steps.

The child's ruff was askew ; and while it was being straightened, and secured with a pin, grandpa went on up the broad aisle, and mounted the stairs to the pulpit.

Weezy did not see him go ; but, the moment she was seated in the pew with the rest of the family, she missed him, and began to stare about her in every direction. Unfortunately, she was so short, and the pulpit was so tall, that she could not get so much as a glimpse of her grandpa's head behind it.

"Poor gampa's lost hisse'f," thought she, distressed for a moment ; but she could not grieve long, where every thing around her was so grand and so strange. It was early yet, and she amused herself for some time in

watching the colored light that streamed in through the stained east window. One red ray adorned the crown of Miss Blount's bonnet in the seat in front; another ray of green rested, like a plaster, on Deacon's Crosby's nose. Weezy wanted to laugh; but she didn't laugh, for she meant to be "mamma's goody girl."

All this time people were moving along the aisles and galleries to their pews. Weezy thought these galleries very queer.

"What for do they have such high up *pee-saz-zas*, mamma?" whispered she.

"Hush, dear," said mamma anxiously; "folks mustn't talk in church."

Weezy puckered up her lips like the rim of a wilted morning-glory, and sat as prim as a little nun till the organ sounded the first notes of the voluntary.

"*Wind blows*," whispered she; then, as the grand music pealed forth, she fairly quivered

with delight, and sprang up to lean over the back of the pew, her brown eyes sparkling and her cheeks aglow.

Mr. Rowe looked at her proudly, wondering if there was ever a more bewitching child.

Dear papa! his look of pride soon changed to one of dismay; for as the music ceased and Weezy turned, she saw her grandfather rising in the pulpit, and gave a little squeal of joy.

"I see gampa," cried she, in her ringing, childish voice. "Look, papa; *there's* gampa, on the manty-piece."

It was rather droll to think of a grown-up minister tucked away on a mantle-piece, and several people smiled; but grandpa Rowe read the hymn as solemnly as though he had not heard a word.

Papa shook his head at Weezy, mamma put her finger on the child's lip, and Molly looked ready to cry; but merry little Kirke could not keep from laughing. He laughed till he had

to stuff his handkerchief into his mouth; and of course the more he laughed, the harder it was to control Weezy.

The congregation now arose for the opening hymn; and the moment Weezy heard her papa's voice, she thought she ought surely to sing too. So with the best will in the world she struck up "Little Sally Walker," clear and high.

Dear, well-meaning baby! she had always before been called a goody girl for singing, and why didn't mamma like it *now*? What *made* mamma drag her out of church in such a hurry? It was so queer!

Wretched Molly, left alone at the head of the pew, cowered over her hymn-book, shrinking from the eyes of the congregation.

"O mamma, mamma! don't you see how I felt?" sobbed she, an hour later, in her mother's room, whither she had rushed from church to beg pardon for her angry words

in the morning. "I know everybody was thinking, 'There sits that selfish, selfish Molly Rowe. Why didn't she stay at home with her little sister, instead of letting her come to disturb the meeting?'"

"Hush, dear: I don't imagine they thought any such thing," said her mother soothingly. "You were not to blame for Weezy's actions."

"But, oh, mamma, you know you wouldn't have taken her to church if I hadn't been such a naughty, horrid girl. Sometimes, mamma, I can't help being mad to think I'm so wicked."

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PUMPKIN HOOD.

THERE was a great bustle next morning at the Queen Anne cottage. Right after breakfast grandpa Rowe went away on the train; next Lovisa appeared in the Braxton stage; and, lastly, the older children had to be helped off to school, for the fall term began that day.

“I tell you, Mrs. Rowe, it does seem good to see live children again,” said Lovisa, standing in the doorway, with Weezy clinging to her gown. Kirke was frisking down the path on his toes: but stout little Molly walked with great dignity, in order not to spill the small phial of soapsuds strapped between her books.

It was the fashion among the girls to carry soapsuds to school for washing their slates, and Molly had stained hers a lovely scarlet by soaking in it a scrap of red flannel.

“Turk go to 'c'ool, Molly go to 'c'ool, Weezy must go to 'c'ool,” wailed the little sister, in a spasm of lonesomeness.

“Tut, tut! Weezy wants to see what I have brought her in my bag, that's what Weezy wants,” said Lovisa, taking the child up-stairs to give her a great scalloped seed-cake.

“Funny old cooky, all *wiggly*,” cried Weezy, sitting down upon the broad window-seat to eat it.

Pretty soon she spied a big pumpkin hood bobbing along under the window. A hood could not travel about of itself; she knew that, and she pattered down to see what was beneath it.

“Her's *keer* old girl, mamma: got *pincoossun* on,” cried she, capering into the sitting-room.

“Ask Lovisa to give her something to eat,” said mamma, who had seen the beggar-maid pass.

Weezy went skipping back. A few minutes later Mrs. Rowe found her perched on the kitchen table, looking on with great round eyes while the young stranger munched a slice of bread and butter. In all her little life Weezy had never before seen so droll a figure. No wonder she called the child's head-covering a “pincushion.” It certainly did not look like a hood. It was made of rusty black cloth, and stuffed with cotton, which was bursting through in twenty places.

“’Ittle dir’s dess all *waggetty*,” chirped Weezy, pointing to the rents in the child's gown.

“What is your name, my child?” asked Mrs. Rowe kindly.

“Ellen Nolan,” answered the little vagrant; and she went on to say that her father was

dead, and her mother had "taken the sickness."

"Where do you live?" continued Mrs. Rowe.

"Big tenement t'other end of Spruce Street," said Ellen, with her mouth full.

"*Sp'uce Stweet.* Funny to say *Sp'uce Stweet,*" put in Weezy, listening with great interest.

"I'll find something for your mother," said Mrs. Rowe, taking the child's basket into the pantry. Next moment Weezy frisked after her.

"Her hasn't *no playsings*, mamma. Can't her have Weezy's wabbit?"

"If my little daughter gives away her rabbit, I'm afraid she will cry for it by and by," said Mrs. Rowe, opening the cake-chest.

"No, no. Weezy won't *ky.*"

"Well, well; run and get the rabbit, dear," said her mamma; and Weezy brought the

neglected animal, that had been lying under the piano on its cotton-flannel back.

“Now *you's* got a *playsing*,” said she benevolently, crowding it into Ellen Nolan's basket, between a biscuit and a doughnut.

Then, attracted by some musicians in the street, she scampered back to the sitting-room to join in the tunes.

“O mamma!” cried she, hopping up and down in ecstasy, “hear the banders blowin' moosic, and Weezy singin' what they blows.”

Having watched the players out of sight, she ran into the kitchen to entertain her guest; but the funny little beggar-maid had disappeared, — basket, “playsing,” and all.

“Her's tooken away Weezy's *wabbit*,” sobbed the resentful baby, slipping through the door left ajar by Ellen. “Her's a *nugly*, naughty *sing*.”

In three seconds more she was out of the yard.

"Him was Weezy's wabbit. 'Tittle dirl mustn't keep Weezy's wabbit *allus*," grumbled she, stubbing her indignant toes over the pavement.

Meanwhile Mrs. Rowe had been hastening to wind the spools in her work-basket before her little daughter should return to tangle the threads. Presently she was struck by the unusual stillness of the house, and went to see what the child was doing.

"I took it for granted she was with you," said Lovisa, appearing from the basement, where she had been at work ever since Ellen Nolan left. "Isn't she up-stairs?"

"No: I've looked everywhere; and the porch door is open. I'm afraid she has run away."

"I'll cut across to Cedar Street," said Lovisa, running out bareheaded.

Seizing her bonnet, Mrs. Rowe hurried over to Mrs. Nye's, in the hope that Weezy might

be with Kisty ; but none of the family had seen her that day. More and more alarmed, Mrs. Rowe hastened on down the street. Passing a group of laborers digging by the roadside, she remembered with a shudder that new water-pipes were being laid throughout the city. What if her baby had fallen into one of the deep trenches opened for these? Entering the nearest drug-store, she telephoned to her husband that Weezy was missing ; and then, at a loss what further to do, ran home again to learn the result of Lovisa's search.

All this time Weezy was enjoying the world. April child that she was, she soon forgot her tears ; and catching sight of a small white dog, with long silky hair hanging over its eyes, she trudged along behind him, talking to herself.

“ You's a keer doggy : ought to be '*shame*,” said she. “ Hair all snarled up ! ”

Following the dog into Main Street, she

stared with happy wonder at the gay shops on either side. A gaudy barber's pole especially pleased her.

"You's got pitty scarf," said she, hugging it, and trying to pick off the painted stripes.

"My stars alive, what little creetur is this!" exclaimed a policeman, spying her.

"I's papa's 'ittle Fidget," said she promptly, pleased with his uniform.

"And where does your father live?"

"Way, way off."

"Yes, yes; but what street does he live on, little girl?"

"*Spruce Street*," answered Weezy, suddenly remembering the funny name Ellen Nolan had spoken.

"Spruce Street? You don't mean to say you've walked bareheaded all the way from Spruce Street?" asked the puzzled policeman.

"Why, it's more'n a mile!"

"Weezy don't want to be talkin', talkin' all

a time!" cried she pettishly; "'t isn't *plite*. That's what my mamma says!"

"Think a minute, little miss. Don't you live on Pine Street?"

"Weezy *says* her lives on Sp'uce Stweet," cried the little witch impatiently.

"Oh, so your name's Weezy! What's the rest of it?"

"I's Weezy Wozy," said she, playing with a nutshell in the gutter.

"*Woolsey*, she means, I guess," mused the man. "I'll take her to Mr. Woolsey's on Spruce Street. He has children."

Stepping upon a horse-car that moment passing, he soon reached the house, with Weezy in his arms.

"Here's where your father lives," said he, ringing the bell.

"No, *him don't*," cried Weezy, nibbling a peppermint-drop given her by the policeman.

That instant she caught a glimpse of Ellen

Nolan plodding homeward with her heavy basket.

“Her’s got Weezy’s *wabbit*,” cried she, springing down and running toward her, while the policeman followed with long strides.

“Do you know where this child lives, my girl?” asked he, laying his hand on Ellen’s shoulder. “If you’ll show me the way to her house, I’ll give you a dime.”

“Yes, I’ll show you soon’s I’ve left my basket,” said she, rushing in at a neighboring door, and coming out empty-handed.

“You’s got a *playsing*, hasn’t you?” prattled Weezy, as she walked along with the policeman and Ellen. “Weezy don’t want *wabbit* now. Weezy’s got *pepnits*.”

And when, a few moments later, her mother clasped her to her heart with tears of joy, Weezy said, “Poor mamma! *pepnits* make mamma feel *besser*.” And that was all the

little gypsy realized about the anxiety she had caused.

Then papa and Lovisa hurried in, followed by Kirke and Molly fresh from school; and Ellen Nolan afterwards told her mother that she never saw the like of the fuss made over that baby.

As to Ellen herself, she went home the proudest girl on Spruce Street; for Mrs. Rowe had given her a neat gingham dress of Molly's, and a brown straw hat with "a stick-up feather, *fire red.*"

## CHAPTER IV.

### WEEZY'S PICKLE.

“IF Weezy is going to be in the habit of running away, I think we'd better let people know where she belongs,” said Mr. Rowe one morning, after the child had been brought back by the policeman.

Accordingly he went to his writing-desk, and printed on a correspondence-card, in big, black letters:—

**MR. EDWIN H. ROWE,**  
**No. 6 Oak Street.**

He pinned the card to the back of Weezy's dress, right between the shoulders; and after

that, as long as the warm weather lasted, it was pinned there every day. Weezy was rather proud of the badge. Kirke called it "Weezy's guideboard."

She did not run away again that fall; for no better reason, it is to be feared, than that she could not turn the new button that her papa had put on the gate. When it grew too cold to play in the yard, she became so restless and mischievous that even Lovisa lost patience.

"I've always said I liked *live* children, Mrs. Rowe," cried she, bursting into the sitting-room one day, half-scolding, half-laughing; "but when it comes to their crawling into my flour-barrel, they're too lively for me."

"I isn't *lively* little dirl, mamma: I wanted to be *white* little dirl, just like *Coopid*," sneezed Weezy, capering behind Lovisa, powdered with flour to her waist.

"O Weezy, Weezy!" cried mamma, trying not to smile at the white little image, which

certainly did resemble the marble Cupid in the library.

She did not feel in the least like smiling when it came to brushing the flour from the child's hair; neither did Weezy, for the process was long and tedious, hardly finished by dinner-time.

"The little rogue will wear you all out, Mary," said Mr. Rowe, after laughing heartily over Weezy's prank. "You really need a nurse-girl."

"If we could find some child to amuse Weezy while Molly and Kirke are at school, it would be a great relief," said Mrs. Rowe. "I have been wondering whether it would do to trust Ellen Nolan."

"Ah, I understand," returned Mr. Rowe playfully: "you want to help yourself a little by helping Ellen a great deal! That is just your way. Well, why not take Ellen a week on trial?"

"Would you?" asked Mrs. Rowe. "Perhaps I'd better."

Ellen came the very next Monday, and proved so useful about amusing Weezy that Mrs. Rowe was glad to have her come every day during the winter, to remain from eight o'clock until four.

She was still with the Rowes, when the first of March arrived, bringing the Rev. Mr. Cutler's birthday.

"We have invited Mr. Cutler to dine with us to-day, Ellen," Mrs. Rowe said to her that morning, "and I want the dining-room kept tidy. You and Weezy can play in the sitting-room; but remember, you must not go into the dining-room."

"No'm," replied Ellen rather crossly. "If the minister is coming, they'll have out the new pink china dishes, and them pretty silver spoons with gold inside of 'em," she was thinking to herself. "And I say it's real

mean of Mrs. Rowe not to let me go in and see the table *set*."

Of course, this was wrong, besides being silly; but Ellen dearly loved fine things, and she had handled so very, very few of them!

As she built block houses for Weezy, it drove her nearly wild to hear the rattling of the dinner-service; and by and by, when she knew Lovisa had gone into the kitchen to see about the pudding, she opened the dining-room door, — "the least crack," you know, — and peeped in.

Weezy always did what Ellen did: so she peeped too.

"Weezy mustn't go in," said Ellen, with a longing look at the silver fruit-stand on the sideboard.

"Yes, yes; her *must*," cried little Weezy, who had not thought of going in till Ellen spoke, as the crafty nurse-girl very well knew.

“Her *must* go,” repeated Weezy, stamping her foot.

“Well, then, hush. Don’t make a teenty-tonty speck of noise,” whispered Ellen, throwing the door wide open.

“Her mother doesn’t want her to cry, and get her eyes and nose all red when there’s company coming, now, does she?” reasoned Ellen. “If Mrs. Rowe should happen to catch us in here, I could say I couldn’t make Miss Weezy stay in the sitting-room best I could do.”

But, dear me! Ellen didn’t have a bit of a good time after she crossed that forbidden threshold. While she stopped to examine the little silver owl that was really a pepper-box, Weezy tipped over the silver cat that sprinkled salt through its head. And she had hardly brushed the tablecloth clean before Weezy was in the closet, dipping her fingers into the pickle-jar. Worse than that, in the second



“WEEZY TURNED HER BACK UPON ELLEN, AND PLAYED WITH THE NOSE OF THE TEAPOT.” — PAGE 41.



of time it took to replace the cover of the jar, Weezy seized the best silver teapot, and ran away with it.

“Oh, give it back to me, Weezy; do give it back to me!” begged Ellen, following in great distress. She dared not snatch the teapot, lest it might be injured; besides, Weezy would scream, and that would bring her mamma, who was up in her room dressing for dinner.

Weezy turned her back upon Ellen, and played with the nose of the teapot. “I’s making tea,” said she roguishly, “nice tea for papa.”

“Weezy Rowe, you horrid, provoking little wretch!” muttered Ellen, at her wits’ end.

Hark! Mrs. Rowe was leaving her chamber. She would come right down and find them in the dining-room, and she would know Weezy couldn’t have turned the door-knob herself. Oh! oh!

Such a state of mind as Ellen was in at that moment! It is impossible to say what she would have done if Mr. Cutler had not just then walked up the path, and attracted Weezy's attention.

The little rogue dropped the teapot in a hurry, and darted to the long window that opened on the front piazza, exclaiming, —

“The *goody* man has come. I must go see the goody man.”

Ellen whisked the teapot into the closet, and Weezy out of the window, before Mr. Cutler had mounted the steps; and she had closed the window and opened the front door in the time that he was saying, —

“Well, and how does little Miss Weezy do?”

And she was demurely taking the minister's hat when Mrs. Rowe descended the stairs.

“There, didn't I get out of that fix well?” mused Ellen, hurrying Weezy back to her

blocks. "Nobody in the house will know that I didn't mind Mrs. Rowe."

Sly, foolish Ellen! Before dinner was over everybody in the house, from grave Mr. Cutler to frolicsome little Kirke, knew all about it. It was the teapot that told.

The pudding had been served, and Mrs. Rowe had asked Mr. Cutler whether he preferred tea or coffee.

"I'll take a cup of tea, if you please," he replied; and then he went on talking to Molly about her school.

Mrs. Rowe tipped the teapot, but no tea came out of the spout.

"What can this mean?" thought she. "There certainly must be tea enough, or the teapot would not be so heavy."

She kept tipping it more and more. Suddenly a dark object flew out, followed by a deluge of tea. The object was about as large as Kirke's little finger. It flew right into

the minister's plate, and there it lay, — a wee cucumber pickle.

Mrs. Rowe was too mortified to speak; but Weezy clapped her hands, crying, —

“See Weezy's stopper. *Weezy* put it in, all nice.”

“I suppose the funny stopper must be a present to me,” laughed the minister; while shamefaced little Ellen brought him a clean plate, and Lovisa took away the soiled tray-cloth.

“The teapot was in order at breakfast-time, and how Weezy has found a chance to meddle with it is a mystery,” said Mrs. Rowe, trying to laugh. “She couldn't have done it since Ellen came at nine o'clock, for I charged Ellen not to let her go into the dining-room.”

Mr. Cutler did not say a word. He purposely fixed his eyes on Lovisa, just then bringing in fresh tea in an earthen teapot.

But Ellen knew that he knew of her disobedience, and she was so ashamed that she began to cry; and after that everybody understood the story of the teapot.

## CHAPTER V.

### DICKERY, DICKERY, DOCK.

A FEW days after the dinner-party Ellen Nolan went home, ill with the mumps. This left Weezy without a playmate, and with so much spare time on her hands that she immediately began to turn her attention to housework.

It was all very well so long as she contented herself with rolling out cookies on her little cake-board, and cutting them with a thimble; but, when she aspired to be chief cook, it was hard for herself and hard for Lovisa.

“First she salts the hot apple-sauce, and next she burns her fingers stirring the salt in,” cried Lovisa one morning, carrying her,

wailing, into the sitting-room. "She's a dreadful capable child."

"Yes, Lovisa, I agree with you. She's capable of most any thing," said Mr. Rowe gayly, as he tossed Weezy up to the ceiling.

His little daughter's exploits usually amused him, and he wondered that they should annoy Mrs. Rowe and Lovisa; but that noon, on coming home and finding that Weezy had learned how to unlock his writing-desk, he was not at all amused.

"This'll never do, Mary," said he to his wife. "I can't have her meddling with my papers. She'll be damaging them."

"What! can Weezy open the desk?" said Mrs. Rowe, who had been busy up-stairs. "We must teach her not to touch it."

"It will be a difficult lesson for her," said Mr. Rowe, locking the desk. "I believe it will be easier, as well as safer, to put the key where she can't get it."

“If such a place is to be found,” said Mrs. Rowe, smiling.

“I flatter myself that such a place *is* to be found; and, moreover, I flatter myself that I have found it,” said Mr. Rowe, smiling too, as he hung the key above the tall clock beside the desk. “There, the little squirrel won’t reach that nail this year, or next,” added he triumphantly; and he followed his wife to the dining-room, where the three children were waiting for their dinner.

Molly was in high spirits. Mr. Nye had brought her home from school in his new dog-cart, and he had promised some day to take his little daughter Kisty and Weezy and herself to drive in the park. Could they go? Oh, did her mother think they could?

Then Kirke had his story to tell about Miss Bailey, his favorite teacher, who that morning had been summoned to the bedside of her sick mother; and about Miss Cumstan, the new

substitute, that couldn't keep order. During a recitation Jimmy Maguire had crawled half way down the aisle to say that Ben Cugley would sell his toy printing-press for three dollars. Might Kirke buy it? Oh, did his father think he might?

The lively chat continued through the meal, and nothing more was said or thought about the key to the writing-desk. After dinner Mr. Rowe went to his office, and Molly and Kirke hurried to school, leaving Weezy in the sitting-room tending Sambo. Mrs. Rowe had gone up-stairs to finish mending a curtain, when Weezy frisked into the dining-room, clutching Sambo by the button of his cap.

"See poor 'ittle Sambo, 'Visa," cried she, in a tone of the deepest sympathy. "Sambo's got 'e mumps, *dust* like Ellen."

"Dear, dear! if the little fellow has got the mumps, he must stay where it's warm," cried Lovisa, hastening to clear away the table.

“Take him back to the fire this minute, and here’s a lump of sugar for him.”

“The sugar will keep Weezy out of mischief long enough for me to wash the silver,” mused she, bringing a bowl of hot water.

“Dess Weezy’ll wock Sambo. Dess him feel besser,” prattled Weezy, running off to her little rocking-chair in one corner of the sitting-room.

As she swayed to and fro with the ailing doll in her arms, she all at once spied the key over the clock. It looked very odd there, very much out of place.

“Oh, my ’tars!” cried she, greatly astonished. “What for’s papa’s key flied up so high, you b’lieve? Oh, hum! wiss I’s a big, bouncin’ *nangel*, so I’d go up and get it.”

She looked at Sambo in her lap. Surely *he* was not an angel, but why couldn’t he knock down the key as well as anybody? Dancing across the floor, she tossed him as

high as she could. That was as high as the writing-desk, and he fell upon the top of it, flat upon his flat nose.

“Oh, hum!” muttered Weezy, climbing into a chair, “’spect I’s got to go *myse’f*.”

“Lie ’till, Sambo; I’s a-*tomin’*,” she cried, scrambling from the chair to the broad ledge of the desk. She stood upon the ledge a moment, resting her chin upon the shelf where Sambo lay. “Dess I tan det it. Weezy isn’t ’ittle *’fraid dirl*,” said she cheerily, preparing to mount.

Clinging to the rail of the desk, she climbed up beside the doll, and, springing to her feet, reached for the key. She could just touch it with the tips of her fingers.

“Oh, *dee, dee!* wiss Weezy’s arm was growed bigger,” fretted she, scowling down upon Sambo, still flat upon his nose.

Ah, ha! There was another way to make him of service. She could use him for a cricket.

How her mamma would have shuddered if she had seen her little girl at that moment, poised on tiptoe upon Sambo's back! But Weezy was agile as a kitten. She did not fall, though she presently made the key fall with a clatter.

A few minutes later Lovisa peeped in at the door, and discovered the writing-desk open, and Weezy busily cutting paper dolls out of one of her father's deeds.

When Mrs. Rowe showed them to him at tea-time, Mr. Rowe was a good deal vexed.

"That was an important deed, Mary, and the loss of it will cause me much trouble," said he. "How *did* Weezy get hold of the key of the desk?"

"Dickery, dickery, dock,  
The mouse ran up the clock,"

answered Mrs. Rowe with a grave smile.

"Do you mean to say that baby helped herself to the key?" cried Mr. Rowe, actually

turning pale. "It's a mercy that she didn't break her neck."

"Poh! I don't think that was much of a climb," said Kirke. "Weezy's twice as spry as Molly."

"She's rather too spry, and altogether too daring, like a certain small boy that I know," said Mr. Rowe.

"You were right, Mary; we must teach Weezy not to meddle with things, for it is plain that we can't put things beyond her reach."

## CHAPTER VI.

### UNKER DOCKER'S BEARD.

WEEZY'S Sambo had hardly rallied from the mumps when she herself was attacked by the same disease. One afternoon her face and throat began to swell, and by the next morning she looked like a fat young Eskimo.

"Oh, ho! What a cheeky little girl! I never saw a little girl so cheeky," cried Kirke, laughing merrily, at his first glimpse of her, bolstered up in her mother's bed.

"I isn't *sheeky* 'ittle girl. Make him 'top, mamma," moaned wretched little Weezy, beginning to cry.

"Now, mamma, I didn't mean to tease her. I didn't, *honest*," exclaimed Kirke, balancing

himself across the foot-board. "She cries as easy as a wink."

"Oh, she does, does she?" said Dr. Wyman, bustling in. "Well, my young man, we must forgive her. Mumps seldom make people jolly."

"O unker Docker, I don't want any more mumps," wailed Weezy, reaching out both hands.

One held the comb with which she had been arranging Viola Maud's blonde wig. Viola Maud was the lovely great wax doll that Mrs. Rowe called "her own," and *lent* to Weezy only when the little girl was ill or unhappy.

"Of course you don't want any more mumps, dearie, and so you're going to stay in mamma's room, and keep quiet," said her uncle cheerfully, sitting down beside the bed.

"But the mumps is *here*, unker Docker.

They's got *in*," replied Weezy, in a discouraged tone.

"Is that so?" asked Dr. Wyman, pretending to be very serious. "Then, I tell you what we'll do to get 'em out. We'll take some castor-oil. Mumps don't like castor-oil."

"Don't they?" said Weezy, deeply interested.

"I was afraid she would object to taking medicine, and I am agreeably disappointed," thought the doctor, sending Kirke at once for a teaspoon, and a little milk in an egg-glass.

But when Dr. Wyman had poured some oil into the milk, and brought it to Weezy, it became evident that there had been a misunderstanding.

"No, no. *Unker Docker* take slippy oil *his-se'f*. *Unker Docker* make naughty mumps go 'way. *Weezy* don't want slippy oil," cried she, putting her hands over her mouth.

Plainly she reasoned that, provided the medicine was swallowed, it did not matter who swallowed it; and if unker Docker had not meant to do his part in driving out the mumps, why had he said, "*We'll* take some castor-oil"?

Dr. Wyman disliked to scold a little girl who looked so feverish and heavy-eyed, and he began to talk to Weezy in a coaxing manner.

"Come, darling," said he, "if you'll take this like a good little lady, the minute you are well, I'll give you a nice long ride."

Weezy shook her head, being sufficiently shrewd to know that she could have the drive without the medicine.

"Well, if you'll take it, I'll tell you a story."

"A great long 'tory," said Weezy, pricking up her ears; "a 'tory long as this house?"

"Not quite as long as this house, perhaps," returned Dr. Wyman, "but as long as, — as a

hen-house, we'll say. It's a story about a chicken."

"About a truly chicken — a egg-chicken?"

"Yes, about a truly egg-chicken. Now, open your mouth."

"And may I comb *yours* whixers all the time what you's telling?" persisted Weezy, pausing with the cup at her lips.

"Yes, yes," said her uncle with a wry face; for his whiskers were nearly as long as Weezy's arm, and he always winced when she dragged the comb through them.

Without another word, Weezy shut her eyes, and emptied the glass. After Kirke had carried the teaspoon and glass downstairs, and gone off to school, Dr. Wyman began his story:—

"Chicken Little came to town very unexpectedly" —

"Did he *wide*?" interrupted his listener, flourishing her brush.

“Yes. He rode all wrapped up in an egg-shell blanket. If you don't believe it, you can ask my aunt Lovejoy, when she comes this summer. She lives in Indianapolis; and the first call Chicken Little made in the city, he made at her house.”

“*Who* did he call?” asked Weezy, beginning to braid her uncle's beard into little tails.

“Whom did he call? Oh, he called aunt Lovejoy!” replied Dr. Wyman, laughing to himself. “You see, this was how it happened. It was a hot morning, and aunt Lovejoy was in the kitchen, stirring up a pudding for dinner, when Tilly — Tilly was her German girl — came home from market with a basket of eggs. Tilly set the basket on the table, and went round to the corner-grocery for something, — a yeast-cake, I think it likely: they eat bread at aunt Lovejoy's.”

“*Course!*” put in Weezy, with disdain.

“Yes, sometimes it's *coarse*, and then again

sometimes it is fine," continued her teasing uncle. "Well, all this while, you must understand, aunt Lovejoy was going on, stirring her pudding; and, as she stirred, she kept hearing a little sharp, clicking noise. At first, she supposed it was made by her spoon hitting the bowl; but, when she stopped stirring, she heard the noise just the same, and it seemed to come from the market-basket on the table. Aunt Lovejoy said to herself, that there must be a dreadful ringing in her ears; and I've no doubt she blamed her doctor for having given her so much quinine. But before she finished stoning her raisins, the sound had grown so loud, that she ran to the basket. As she raised the cover, something said to her, "Peep, peep!"

"I know, unker Docker, I know!" shouted Weezy, forgetting her sore throat. "Chicken 'ittle was in the *baxet*."

"What a bright girl! How could you

guess!" said her uncle. "Yes; you are right. There sat Chicken Little in an egg-shell, sticking his yellow head out just far enough to play 'peek-a-boo' with aunt Lovejoy."

"Had he got his eyes open?" asked Weezy anxiously, thinking of her blind kitten.

"Got his eyes open! I should say he had, —and his mouth too!" answered Dr. Wyman, cringing at an unexpected snarl in his beard. "Don't you believe the little fellow was glad to find somebody to speak to, that was alive? Those eggs must have been poor company for a wide-awake chicken."

"How did he get out?" asked Weezy, bringing her uncle back to the main point.

"After a while, he *broke* out. He pecked and pecked with his bill, till he had made a hole in the egg-shell, big enough to squeeze through; and then he marched forth, stretching his wings, first one, and then the other, to show aunt Lovejoy how yellow and downy

they were. He was pretty hungry by this time: so aunt Lovejoy mixed some corn-meal and water in a cup, and" —

Here the door flew open, and Kirke dashed in, crying, —

"Come, quick, uncle Doctor! Oh, please come quick as ever you can! My teacher's most killed! Not Miss Cumstan, but *pretty Miss Bailey!*"

"Where have they taken her?" asked Dr. Wyman, with a rueful glance at his beard, hopelessly tangled into six little tails, which Weezy called braids.

"Into my class-room. She came back to school only this morning, and a horse and carriage got frightened and ran into her," sobbed Kirke, half frantic. "They sent me and another boy to bring you. O uncle, do hurry!"

"I will, I'll go this instant," said he, rising.

He had been hastily attempting to comb

out the braids; but he now threw down the comb in despair, and seized his hat.

“I look like a picture in a comic almanac,” thought he, as he pressed on with the boys; “but that is no reason why I should keep that suffering girl waiting.”

“They say Miss Bailey’s broken her bones,” Kirke further explained as they drew near the schoolhouse. “She’s fainted all in a heap.”

When Dr. Wyman entered the class-room, she had rallied from the fainting fit, and her arm was paining her severely. She was so weak and nervous, that at sight of tall, dignified Dr. Wyman, with his beard plaited like a girl’s hair, she began to laugh, though it mortified her to be so rude.

“I wear my whiskers in this style because my little niece is ill, Miss Bailey,” said the doctor humorously. “Now, if you please, I’ll examine your arm.”

It proved to be a small bone that had been

fractured, and he was glad to be able to assure Miss Bailey that in a few weeks she would be as well as ever. Having properly attended to the arm, and promised to call the next day, Dr. Wyman went home through a back street, and spent a whole hour, by the clock, in smoothing out the comical little braids under his chin.

## CHAPTER VII.

### WEEZY'S SAMBO.

MR. ROWE was fond of fun, and he seized the first opportunity to joke Dr. Wyman on his droll adventure.

“Ah, doctor, I understand you’re getting so vain, that, before calling upon the ladies, you have your beard crimped!” said he, overtaking him on the street. “I suppose next you’ll be having it rolled on curl-papers.”

“I suppose I shall if my fair young barber so wills it,” replied Dr. Wyman sportively. “I only hope she won’t prefer to curl it with tongs.”

“Very well, if you choose to let Weezy make a guy of you, why you can,” said

Mr. Rowe good-naturedly; "but one thing is certain, I sha'n't let her make a guy of *me*."

"Don't be too sure of it: she may take you unaware," returned the doctor with a smile, as Mr. Rowe entered his own door.

Weezy had come down-stairs that morning so nearly well that Viola Maud had been wrapped in tissue paper and laid away. Weezy did not miss her much, she had so many dolls of her own. Indeed, she had more than she could keep properly supplied with features and limbs; for the six had only four noses among them, and not half enough arms to go round.

"You's cross 'ittle girl, Eva, snarled yous face all up," said Weezy, climbing to the sitting-room window-sill with her bruised gutta-percha baby. "D'ess all tored, too. Oh, I be 'shame! Now you mus' clean house for punish you."

She began to rub the doll up and down the glass in a brisk way, extremely annoying to Kirke, upon the sofa taking his turn with mumps.

“You call that fun, miss, do you?” growled he, from the depths of the afghan.

“Oh, defful fun; but this is *funner*,” cried she with provoking sweetness, turning Eva upside down to polish the window-pane with her head.

“Oh, do stop that racket, Weezy! it makes my head ache. Please run out and see the kitties.”

“Oh, ho! I 'most didn't think 'bout the kitties,” exclaimed Weezy, throwing down the doll, and skipping away to the cat's basket in the back entry.

There were three kittens,—two white, and one gray all except a white spot at the tip of his tail. The gray was Weezy's favorite. She waked this from its morning nap, and

pulled it out of its warm nest to carry it to Kirke.

“Loot! he’s the *tip-tail* kitty! He makes up faces; he can’t help *hisse’f*,” said she charitably.

“Help himself! I should like to *see* the poor little fellow help himself, when you pick him up by the neck that way,” cried Kirke scornfully, raising himself on his elbow.

“Kitty’s *mamma* picks kitty up that way wiv her mouf: I *sawed* her,” retorted Weezy triumphantly.

Dropping her little mewling burden upon the lounge beside her brother, she suddenly discovered that the kitty’s eyelids had parted far enough to disclose a glimmer of blue.

“Oh, loot, loot!” shouted she, hopping up and down in transport. “Kitty’s eyes is *unshuttin’!* Kitty’s eyes is unshuttin’!”

“Is that a fact, little girl? Why, why, you don’t say so!” cried her father, who had

that moment parted from Dr. Wyman at the gate.

“They *is*, papa, they truly *is*,” cried Weezy, trying to blow open kitty’s three-cornered eyelids as she had seen Molly blow open the petals of a rose-bud.

“Stop, stop, little daughter,” called Mr. Rowe, laughing. “Her eyes are not like blue gentians; you can’t pry into them without hurting kitty. I’d give her back to her mother, and run and find Sambo.”

Sambo was Weezy’s pet doll, made of worsted yarn, — pink face, blue jacket, yellow trousers, and all. It injured other members of her family to be dipped into the bath-tub, or dumped into the coal-hod; but Sambo could bear rough treatment, he was so strong and well-knit. Oh, he was a doll to be depended on! And from the crown of his red cap to the soles of his green shoes, Weezy loved every inch of him. Yet on occasion she could dis-

cipline him strictly; and when after a long hunt she found him under the hall mat, she shook him till one of his bead eyes fell off.

“What for, Sambo, you *yun* away and hide?” scolded she. “I shall be ’bliged to tie Sambo, for ’cause Sambo didn’t mind.”

But to what should she tie the naughty little wretch?

Frisking about the hall, she spied upon the hat-tree her father’s overcoat. She could just reach the buttons on its back.

“Does you see that button, Sambo?” said she severely. “Well, I’s going to tie you to that button till you’s a good boy. I’s *sowwy* to hurt you, Sambo, but I does it for *yous good*.”

As she talked, she was winding the ends of Sambo’s scarf around the button: and she ran in to dinner, leaving the poor doll swinging to and fro like a queer kind of tassel.

Mr. Rowe chanced to be in haste that noon; and before Weezy had finished her plate of

custard-pudding, he asked to be excused from the table, and went out into the hall to get ready to go down-town. It was so dark there that he put on his overcoat without noticing what was attached to it. Then he caught up his hat and gloves, and stepped briskly into the street with Sambo bobbing up and down behind him.

The faster Mr. Rowe walked, the higher Sambo jumped and kicked. Oh, it was very, very funny! Jimmy Maguire laughed so hard at the sight that he rolled off the door-step where he had been sitting. A group of boys on the corner shouted and clapped their hands. Mr. Rowe could not see any thing to laugh at: he wondered what all the excitement was about. He might have gone the entire length of Main Street with Sambo's yellow legs dancing a jig at his back, if he had not at the next crossing come upon Dr. Wyman, waiting for a street-car.

“Good-afternoon,” said the doctor, with a roguish twinkle in his eye. “I hope you and your friend are enjoying your walk.”

“Friend! What friend? I fail to see the joke,” returned Mr. Rowe, wheeling so abruptly that Sambo bounced against him, and struck him between the shoulders.

“It’s a joke that Weezy has had a hand in, I fancy,” said Dr. Wyman, chuckling, as Mr. Rowe gazed savagely about for the person who had hit him. “Turn your head, my stiff-necked friend; now look down, and try to see yourself as others see you.”

When Mr. Rowe beheld Sambo swaying backward and forward like the pendulum of a clock, he could not help laughing himself, though his face grew very red.

“I must say I’ve cut a pretty figure, and I don’t blame the boys for shouting,” said he, groping behind him for the doll. “Do, doctor, tear the thing off somehow. Quick, for here

comes your car, with thirty pairs of eyes in it."

Dr. Wyman speedily unwound the scarf, and presented Sambo to Mr. Rowe with a bow, saying jestingly, "Ah, you are the gentleman, I believe, who an hour ago boasted that Weezy shouldn't make a guy of him!"

Mr. Rowe shrugged his shoulders. "I've half a mind to toss this ridiculous image into the gutter," said he, as Dr. Wyman swung himself upon the car. But then he thought of his little daughter; and, instead of throwing Sambo away, he crammed him, head first, into his pocket.

"I'll take him home to Weezy this time," said he to himself; "but if she ever hangs him on to my coat-tail again, I'll burn him up, cap and boots."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### WEEZY'S FIGS.

“WELL, Kirke, my lad, you need not mope indoors any longer,” said Dr. Wyman, calling in at the Rows the next Monday morning. “I pronounce you quite well enough to go to school.”

“Rather stay at home, a great sight,” muttered Kirke, playing with the “tip-tail kitten.”

“Nonsense! Why, I thought you liked to go to school.”

“Did like it when Miss Bailey was there; but now they’ve put that tall, strapping Miss Cumstan in her place, and” —

“And Miss Cumstan is to blame, I suppose,

for being tall and strapping, — whatever that may be.”

“Oh, she’s homely, and she’s cross; and, besides all that, she’s mean! She bangs the boys against the piano, and gets it out of tune, and then, sir, she makes ’em pay for tuning it.”

“Easy, my boy, easy. Mustn’t tell tales,” said Dr. Wyman gravely. “I dare say Miss Cumstan isn’t half so black as the scholars have painted her; but, anyway, she won’t be likely to come in your way again very soon, for Miss Bailey’s arm has got well, and she is going back to school this morning.”

“Good, good, good!” cried Kirke, dropping the kitten and skipping out into the back-yard, where Weezy was, to relieve his feelings by turning a summersault.

“I don’t see how you’ll get along without me to amuse you, miss,” said he loftily; “but

I'm going to school. Miss Bailey's come back, and I'm going *a-kiting*."

"*Be still* stepping on my dollies," said Weezy, not at all impressed by the news, if indeed she had heard it. She was very, very busy; for she had a garden to make, and nothing to do it with but an iron spoon and a tin mustard-box.

"Hoh! call *those* dollies, do you?" cried Kirke, hopping cautiously over a row of poppies standing on their heads on the lower step. "*I* should call 'em posies."

He need not have gone off laughing. The poppies, in their ruffled scarlet skirts, made very nice dollies for a little girl used to dolls without arms; and their green-leaf aprons were neat and becoming.

"Jingle, jingle," up the street.

"Spect that's the *beggar-man*," said Weezy, tumbling over her spoon in her haste to tell Lovisa.

"*Beggar-man's* coming! *Beggar-man's* coming!" shouted she, running into the kitchen, where her mother was helping about the fruit-cake.

"Dear me! if he is a tramp, I don't want him to come into the house," exclaimed Mrs. Rowe. "Do take him out something to eat, Lovisa."

Lovisa hurried to the pantry as fast as she could, for a bowl of bread and milk; then she heard the man coming up the walk, and she ran back to the kitchen to hand it to him before he should have time to enter.

"Here's something for you," said she, opening the door just far enough to put the bowl through. "You can sit down outside on the doorstep and eat it."

Instead of taking the bowl, the man began to laugh; and Lovisa opened the door wider, and saw he was Mr. Blake, *the baker*.

"Beg your pardon, sir," stammered she,

very much confused. "The little girl said you were a *beggar-man*." And upon that *she* began to laugh, too, and laughed so hard that Mrs. Rowe herself had to give the order for "two graham loaves and a loaf of sponge-cake."

"Run, dear, and get mamma's purse off the bureau," said she to Weezy. "I want to pay Mr. Blake some money."

The child brought the purse, and looked on while the bread and cake were being paid for.

"Here, dear," said her mother, shaking some soiled visiting-cards out of the portmonnaie, "you may have these to play with. Now put mamma's purse back where you found it."

Weezy was gone some time, but presently she ran down again to her garden. Mrs. Rowe would not have felt so easy stoning raisins in the pantry if she had known the baker had left the gate unfastened.

Weezy was not long in discovering the fact.



“‘WEEZY’LL GO A-CALLING,’ SAID SHE, WHISKING THROUGH THE GATEWAY.” — PAGE 79.



Unfortunately, she still held the cards in her hand. They gave her an idea.

“Weezy’ll go a-calling,” said she, whisking through the gateway, with a backward glance to see if anybody was looking. She felt quite equal to the undertaking; for hadn’t she been visiting once with her mother, and carried the card-case all the way?

“‘Come in, you pretty little pet;’ *that’s* what the lady’ll say,” she prattled on to herself, climbing the steps of the first house around the corner, dragging armless Sambo after her by the stocking-yarn hair.

“Oh, what a high-up bell!”

Even on tiptoe she could not reach it. She laid Sambo down and stood on top of him, but even then could only touch the bell-knob with the tips of her fingers.

“Oh, my suz! guess I’ll have to knock.”

And she did knock, so very gently that nobody in the world could have heard her.

“People’s gone away off,” said she, slipping a card under the door, as she had seen her mamma do when nobody answered her ring.

“Weezy’ll give ’em a card for when they come back. Don’t want to be a *selfish* girl.”

After that she did not try to pull any more bell-knobs, but contented herself with leaving cards at every house on that side of the street. One happened to be a church, and another an oyster-saloon ; but it was all the same to Weezy.

When she reached the provision-store on the second corner from home, she had only a single card left. As the door stood open, she carried it in, and ran up to a pleasant-looking clerk, who was sorting apples.

“I’ve come calling,” said she blandly, sitting down on a pile of codfish.

“What upon earth !” cried the young man, starting in surprise at the droll little figure.

“Me and Sambo, we’ve come a-calling,” re-

peated Weezy, holding up the long-suffering dolly. "Sambo's tired. Take him, please."

"Thank you, no; you must excuse me. What's your name, — Grandmother Gripsey?"

"Weezy Rowe," replied she, drumming her small boot-heels against the codfish, in some resentment at being called "grandmother."

"Where do you live?"

What made folks for ever and ever ask her that? She drew in her lips till there wasn't a snip of scarlet to be seen, she was so afraid she should tell; for she shrewdly suspected the man wanted to send her home. In offering Sambo to the clerk, she had dropped her card; and it lay on the floor, face upward, with "Mrs. Edwin Rowe, No. 6 Oak Street," written very clearly upon it.

"Is that yours?" asked the young man, reading the address.

"It's my mamma's. We use 'em when we

go a-calling," said she, with a longing glance at the apples. "I like apples, I do."

The clerk ran to the door and called out to a boy in a market-wagon, "Here, Jim, you have orders on Oak Street: leave this bundle at number six, will you?"

Then, almost before Weezy knew it, he had lifted her and Sambo upon the seat, and given the boy the card, so he could not mistake the direction.

The horse trotted off at a brisk pace, and the square baskets on the floor of the wagon danced up and down the middle. These were filled with vegetables and other articles that people had ordered for their dinners, and Weezy's driver stopped every now and then at a door to leave one. She found it great fun to go about in this fashion, and was having a most delightful time when they drew up at her father's house on Oak Street.

"But I don't want to be *home*," said she,

with a twinge of conscience at the thought of meeting her mother; for in the depths of her little heart she knew it was wrong to run away.

But, when the boy lured her with a paper of figs, she was wonderfully soothed. She let him lift her down at once, and skipped past him through the back-gate.

Of course, he ought to have gone in with her, and told her mother where he had found her; but, being a bashful boy, he did no such thing. He watched her in at the kitchen-door, and then drove off.

Nobody had missed Weezy. Her mother was up-stairs combing her hair, when the child came in with her frock full of figs.

“See what I’ve got for mamma.”

“Why, where did you get them, child?”

“’Way, ’way off,” replied Weezy evasively.

“Isn’t they good?”

Mrs. Rowe looked at her little daughter in

amazement. She had run against a molasses barrel in the store, and smeared her dress, and then whitened it in spots with flour; and, as her mother raised her on her lap, she perceived an unmistakable odor of fish about her.

“Weezy, where have you been?” said she sternly: “tell mamma the truth.”

“Riding ’way, ’way off,” persisted the child, sobbing now.

“But who gave you the figs?”

“Oh, the queer old boy I went a-riding with!”

Mrs. Rowe opened the window, and gazed up street and down, but did not see any “queer old boy.”

What could be the meaning of this wild story? Lovisa knew nothing about it.

“And surely,” thought Mrs. Rowe, “if a man had brought my baby home, he would have left her in somebody’s care.”

Could Weezy have got the figs at the

grocery opposite? Her mother had sometimes let her run over there to buy a cent's worth of peanuts, while she stood in the doorway watching her. But the grocer was not fond of children. That he should have given her the figs, seemed unlikely.

Mrs. Rowe's purse still lay on the bureau where Weezy had put it. Mrs. Rowe unclasped it with an uneasy feeling. She distinctly remembered, that, after paying the baker, there had been left a dime and a roll of bills; and now the dime was gone. Mrs. Rowe recollected with a throb of pain that Weezy had been a long time in carrying back the portmonnaie.

"Mamma has lost some money," said she. "Does Weezy know any thing about it?"

"No'm," sobbed the child, terrified by her mother's solemn tone.

"Didn't my little daughter buy figs with it? Think a minute."

"No, she didn't," said Weezy, smothering herself in her apron.

Mrs. Rowe was distressed.

"It was very naughty to spend mamma's money," said she gravely; "but it would be a great deal naughtier if Weezy should tell a wrong story about it."

"I didn't mean to. I'm so sorry," cried the baby. "Weezy *will* be good."

"And mother's darling won't ever do such a dreadful thing again, will she?" said Mrs. Rowe, much relieved. "Don't you think mamma ought to tie those wicked hands, to make them remember?"

"Yes'm," said Weezy meekly.

Five minutes after, Lovisa knocked at the door. Weezy sat on the bed, her chubby wrists bound together by a neck-ribbon.

"Here's a dime, Mrs. Rowe, that I found under the kitchen-table. I suppose you dropped it in making change."

“Weezy *didn't* take mamma's money,” shouted the little gypsy gleefully. “Isn't it *so* nice Weezy didn't take mamma's money?”

“The next time I punish Weezy I will try to be sure we both know what the punishment is for,” thought Mrs. Rowe, as, between laughing and crying, she untied the child's hands. “How shall I ever learn to bring up my baby?”

## CHAPTER IX.

### KIRKE AND JIMMY.

WEEZY was so tired after this that she went to sleep in her high-chair at the dinner-table. Papa laid her on the sitting-room lounge; and she slept on, till, late in the afternoon, the slamming of the gate waked her.

A second after, the porch-door creaked, and Kirke skipped into the room in his butternut suit, as eager and frolicsome as a tan terrier.

“Oh, you just ought to see Miss Bailey!” cried he, spinning about on one foot like a humming-top. “You just ought to see her!”

“Weezy want to see too,” yawned his little sister, rubbing her eyes.

“I’m glad you have your old teacher back again, my dear,” said mamma, setting her work-basket on the table out of reach; for things had such a trick of upsetting wherever Kirke was.

“Yes; and I tell you what, mamma, she’s nice,” said Kirke, standing his slate up end-wise and sitting down upon it. “She’s some like aunt Louisa, and she’s some like you; but she’s most of all like grammy.”

“Indeed? what a dear old lady she must be!” said Mrs. Rowe mischievously.

“Now, mamma, she isn’t old: you know she isn’t. She’s just as young as she can be. Only she’s like grammy because she looks *goody*. She doesn’t peek through glasses like that great cross Miss Cumstan, and shake her finger at a boy when he moves his lips a little easy; no, sir. She’s real kind and pleasant, and I’m going to be as still as a mouse in *her* school.”

But, his slate slipping, Kirke's mother saw just then a noisy little boy sitting down hard upon the floor.

"I'm glad your intentions are so good," said she, tenderly smoothing his thick brown hair, which wouldn't stay parted, and would hang straight over his eyes, making his head look like a little hay-cock, or an old-fashioned English bee-hive. "Now you have entered the intermediate grade, I want you to be a manly little fellow."

"Me too, mamma," put in Weezy, anxious to be whatever Kirke was.

"Oh, you silly, silly goosie!" shouted Kirke merrily. "Molly, come in and hear Weezy. She wants to be a boy."

"No, I don't *ever!* I don't, *shoe's* the world!" cried Weezy, rolling off the lounge in high resentment.

Now, I must tell you, that for one whole week after Miss Bailey came back, Kirke was

a model boy, out of pure love to his old teacher; but then came review day, which always was a day of temptation to Kirke. He didn't see the use of studying what he knew already; and the figures he made on his slate he certainly couldn't have copied from the arithmetic, though he had ciphered through long division.

First he drew something which would have been a circle if it had only been round, and placed inside it two big O's, with a tall straight line between them, and the sign of subtraction beneath. This stood for a woman's head; though you might just as easily have supposed it was a tea-plate, with two doughnuts and two sticks of candy in it.

Kirke thought it a very good head indeed; and he put such a furious mop of hair on it, that he quite wore out his slate-pencil. Then he perched the head on a sort of pincushion,

with two club feet, and over the whole wrote *Miss Cumstan* in chalk letters.

Kirke always put down the names of his portraits nowadays: he found it saved awkward blunders. No danger this time of anybody's taking his drawing for a pepper-box on stilts!

He felt an artist's pride in his work; and with one eye on his spelling-book, and the other on Miss Bailey, he passed the slate across the aisle for Jimmy Maguire's approval.

"She ain't got no arms," whispered Jimmy, who had never heard of a grammar.

"Pencil's gone up," answered Kirke, behind his hand.

"Give her here: I'll fix her," said Jimmy, grasping the slate.

Miss Bailey was busy at the desk; but she had quick ears, for all the gold bells in them, and she looked up in the direction of the sound. Kirke seemed to be studying with

all his might; but Jimmy, putting on Miss Cumstan's arms with dashing strokes, looked any thing but studious.

"Bring me the slate, Jimmy," said Miss Bailey, satisfied that no example in the simple rules could require such peculiar figuring.

Jimmy dared not disobey, though he did manage to blur the image with his left elbow as he went along.

"Lay the slate on the desk, and remain after school, James," said Miss Bailey: "I want to talk with you;" and Jimmy took his seat with head very high, — for the boys were all looking, — but with spirits fearfully low.

You wouldn't have thought that he cared one bit. Somehow, it would seem that a boy in such an ugly jacket, and with so many warts on his hands, couldn't have much feeling. Why, all the boys would have laughed at the idea of his minding being "talked to," — this Jimmy Maguire, who was always getting feruled.

But Jimmy did mind, because Miss Bailey, ever since she came to the school, had spoken kindly to him, and treated him "as if he *was* somebody." Kindness was a new thing to him, and he liked it.

But now it was all over with him! Miss Bailey would inquire about him, and find out that his father was in the State prison; and of course she would hate him, just as everybody else did. And there sat Kirke Rowe looking as innocent as a Jack-in-the-pulpit. Nobody suspected *him* of getting into scrapes: *his* father wasn't a jail-bird.

"Are you going to tell on me, Jimmy?" whispered Kirke at recess.

The boys were in the yard, with a long flight of stairs and two closed doors between them and the schoolroom; but Kirke couldn't speak aloud.

"Tell on you? No, baby, I don't tell tales," said Jim fiercely; "but you better

keep your old slate at home next time, or I will."

Kirke felt relieved. That very morning Miss Bailey had patted him on the shoulder, calling him her "good boy;" and now he always would be good: he wouldn't draw any more pictures, and nobody need know any thing about the forenoon's mischief. He hadn't got caught whispering: if Jim had, Jim must bear the blame. He didn't ask Jim to draw Miss Cumstan's arms, and put a ferule in one hand and a book in the other. It wasn't his fault if Jim did get "talked to."

So Kirke went home at noon among the "good-department scholars," and tried to believe that the reason he felt so uncomfortable was that he was hungry. As if he didn't know better! He knew, as well as you do, that he had been a very mean little boy; but he didn't say any thing about it, not he!

He only grumbled at every thing, and made himself more disagreeable than a grown man five times as large could possibly have done, if he had tried with all his might. His mother couldn't think what ailed him, unless he was coming down with measles.

"I'm going to have a birfday to-morrow, and Kisty'll have a birfday too," said little Weezy.

"Well, what of it?" said Kirke crossly, and hurried out of the house.

He was trying to hush his troublesome mite of a conscience, which kept telling him, over and over again, that he ought to confess to Miss Bailey that he drew the picture.

It is just possible that he might have done so before school in the afternoon, if Jimmy hadn't made mouths at him as he came down the aisle. Kirke couldn't stand that, and he got very angry indeed. He didn't care what happened to Jimmy. He hated him. He hated Miss Bailey: she had green eyes!

After that, it really seemed as if Kirke couldn't be naughty enough. In the arithmetic-class he chalked the seams of Peter Flint's jacket, — stupid Peter Flint, who never could tell how many grains make a scruple; and afterwards, when Miss Bailey was writing a question on the blackboard, for the boys to perform, — it is dreadful to think of, — he blacked his own face with a bit of coal, at which Jimmy Maguire laughed outright.

Miss Bailey turned around in dismay. If an example in reduction wouldn't keep a boy sober, what would?

“James Maguire” said she severely, “I cannot excuse this second misdemeanor. At recess you will report yourself in this room, for punishment.”

But behind Jimmy at recess came a very frightened little boy, the roguery crowded out of his eyes by tears.

“Please, Miss Bailey,” said Kirke, winking

very fast, "it's *I* that's to blame. 'Twas I, playing chimney-sweep, that made Jimmy laugh. I drew the picture, too, this morning,—all but the arms,—and I whispered as much as Jim did!"

The story was out now; and, in spite of himself, Kirke's handkerchief had to come out too, just like any girl's; though, maybe, girls' handkerchiefs are not usually made into rabbits, as Kirke's was.

Miss Bailey was surprised and grieved to find her pet boy had been so naughty; though she forgave him in a minute, with a smile for all the world like grammy's.

But Jimmy, poor Jimmy, there he stood, as stock-still as an exclamation-point, too astonished to speak.

Just think of that little snip of a Kirke Rowe owning up to a trick he hadn't been caught in! Poor Jim couldn't understand it: he hadn't had any bringing-up, you know.

But it gave him a clearer idea of honesty than he had ever had in his life before, and did him as much good as it did Kirke, which is saying a great deal.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE BIRTHDAY DRIVE.

THE day Weezy was four years old, Kisty Nye was five, — quite old enough to be called Christine, if the family had thought about it. Mrs. Nye had made her little daughter a birthday cake, and invited Weezy to supper. Ellen Nolan was not now at Mrs. Rowe's. She was attending a primary school.

“I'm a year older than I was yesterday, mamma,” said Weezy that afternoon, when her mother was tying her bonnet. “Pretty soon won't I be every teenty speck as old as Kisty?”

Before Mrs. Rowe could reply, Weezy was whisking down the gravel-walk, dragging be-

hind her a dust-pan tied to a string. The dust-pan held two dolls and a clay pipe.

“Oh, ho, Weezy, I shouldn’t suppose you’d let your dolls smoke a pipe!”

“My dollies *never* smoke pipes. You’re a naughty boy to say so,” cried Weezy, much offended.

“Ah, I know now,” said Kirke, with an innocent air. “You smoke that pipe yourself.”

“O Kirke, *what* a story! Kisty ’n’ I blow bubbles with it. You know we do.”

“Oh! Kisty *Nye* blows bubbles,” said Kirke, pretending not to understand. “And why don’t *you* blow ’em too?”

“Well, I said I did. I said Kisty ’n’ *I* blow bubbles,” cried Weezy pettishly, twitching her dust-pan carriage out of the way of her brother’s stilts, as he hopped through the gate.

“Yes, Kisty *Nye* blows bubbles. Just what you said; and this makes twice you’ve said it,”

cried teasing Kirke, slamming the gate behind him.

“H’m! I don’t like to have folks shut gates in my faces,” grumbled Weezy, pushing it open in high displeasure. “I think you’re a very *plaguing-y* boy.”

Kirke laughed, and stooped down to close the sweet little scolding mouth with a sugar-plum.

“Old Mr. Nye gave me three of ’em, and I saved one for you,” said he. “Who says I’m a *plaguing-y* brother?”

“You are not *plaguing-y* now any more,” said Weezy serenely. “Oh, hum! wish *Mr. Old Nye* would give ME three sugar-plums myself.”

Once more in gay good-humor, she trudged along with Kirke to Kisty’s house, not far up the street, and, the moment she saw Kisty, threw both arms about her waist. It was a chubby waist; for Kisty was a chubby little

girl, broader than Weezy, though not an inch taller.

“Oh, I know something sp—len—did!” said Kisty, squeezing her fat palms together very hard. “We’re going to have something; guess what.”

“Pin-nuts,” suggested Weezy breathlessly.

“Better’n peanuts. Something that hasn’t any shell on to it.”

“Gum-drops?”

“No, no! You can’t guess, you can’t guess,” cried Kisty triumphantly. “They grow on trees, and they have seeds in the middle.”

“Watermelons! I about know them’s um,” cried Weezy, giving Kisty another hug.

“Poh! watermelons don’t grow on trees. Watermelons grow on *bushes*, ever so low on the ground. I’ve seen ’em in grandpa’s garden,” said Kisty, proudly reflecting that she knew a great deal more than Weezy, who was only four years old.

“Honest? Well, sugar gooseberries, then,” said Weezy, considerably crushed.

“No, indeed. Those don’t grow: those are baked in the oven. I shall have to tell: it’s apples, — red, ripe apples.”

Weezy clapped her hands.

“Ned is going into the country to buy the apples, and mamma says for him to take us with him in the new dog-cart,” said Kisty, fairly out of breath with the excitement of spreading the good news.

Weezy screamed with delight; and, leaving the dolls flat on their backs under the lilacs, scampered off to the stable, Kisty following as fast as her clumsy, fat legs would carry her. They found Ned backing the horse into the thills of the dog-cart.

“Mamma says, Ned, you must buy a bushel of the best apples you can find,” panted Kisty, running to the house again for her hat.

“I rather think I’d better steal ’em,” an-

swered her tall brother, with a sly wink at Weezy. "Wouldn't you, little Miss Weezy? Supposing we creep into every orchard we come to, and taste of an apple on every tree in it, so we can pick out the nicest, and fill our baskets with them? Don't you believe that would be the best way?"

There was no response, but the young man had not looked for any. He was busy buckling the harness, and thought no more about Weezy, till, looking up presently, he saw Kisty climbing into the buggy all by herself.

"Why!" said he, "where's the other little birthday girl?"

Kisty did not know. She ran to ask her mother, and her mother did not know. Weezy was not in the stable, or in the garden, or in the house.

After a long search, Ned found her in the hammock at home, sobbing bitterly. Mrs. Rowe and Lovisa had locked the house and

gone away; and the poor little girl was all alone, with nobody to speak to.

“Ah, here you are, little runaway,” said Ned playfully, pulling her hands from her wet eyes. “Isn’t this a funny time to play hide-and-seek, when you’re going to drive, and the horse is waiting for you?”

“I’m not a-going. I don’t want to ride; wish you wouldn’t *bovver* me,” wailed she, rolling over upon her face.

“Oh, come along, dear!” urged Ned; “come right along, before Kisty cries herself sick. When we’ve got our apples, we’ll go to see a red and green parrot I know of, that’ll say, ‘Walk in, walk in, have a chair?’”

Weezy shook her head till her neck must have ached, and no amount of coaxing on Ned’s part would induce her to go with him. He did not know what to make of her, and at last hurried home to ask what it was best to do.

Mrs. Nye felt as uncomfortable about the occurrence as Ned did; and the moment she saw Mrs. Rowe enter her front-door, she advised him to rush across to tell her the story.

“I can’t imagine what has come over Weezy,” said he, catching up his hat. “I never knew her to act so before.”

As he paused on Mr. Rowe’s door-stone to wipe his feet, he heard the child in the sitting-room sobbing, and this was what she was saying, —

“He was going to steal the apples: he truly was, mamma. S’pose I’d ride with boys that steal? Course I wouldn’t. But, oh, mamma, it’s *such* a cunning doggy-cart; and, oh dear! I wish I had some apples.”

“You precious little goosie!” cried Ned, bursting into the room, laughing. “Did you think I really meant to steal the apples? Why, Weezy, dear, I was just in fun. I wouldn’t steal them any more than you would.”

"You *said* you would, you truly did," said Weezy, peeping through her fingers at him with an air of doubt.

"I was making believe, pet; just making believe. I'll leave it to your mother if I wasn't," said Ned gayly. "Come along with me, and I'll promise not to steal so much as an apple-core."

Picking her up, tears and all, he carried her away to his father's stable, where the horse still stood in the harness; and, when he set her down in the dog-cart, her face was beaming with smiles.

She had a lovely drive, and saw for herself that Ned did not steal a single apple, though he bought as many as the dog-cart would hold. And on their way back they called upon the parrot, and he invited them to "walk in, and have a chair," as politely as if he had been a gentleman.

When they drove into Mr. Nye's yard, tea

was ready : and the two little " birthday girls " sat side by side at the table, Kisty in her high-chair, and Weezy in a common chair with the big dictionary in it ; and each had a piece of the birthday cake, and all they wanted besides.

And when, by and by, Ned went home with Weezy, he carried a beautiful little new basket filled with choice apples, and gave it to her to keep.

So you see, Weezy had a pretty good kind of a birthday, after all.

## CHAPTER XI.

### WEEZY AND KISTY.

IT was more than a year after Weezy's birthday drive that grandpa and grandma Rowe came to her father's house to spend Thanksgiving.

When they returned to the parsonage away up among the Berkshire hills, they took Weezy; and, that Weezy might not be homesick, they invited little Kisty Nye to go with her.

Weezy was five years old now, but, alas! no nearer Kisty's age than she had been before; for Kisty was now six. They found at the parsonage Mr. Henry Bishop, grandpa's oldest grandson, who took Weezy up in his lap and

told her that he was her cousin, and that he boarded at grandpa's, and taught the village school.

"Kisty and I haven't ever been to school, not ever," said Weezy plaintively. "Please can't we go, Mr. Cousin Bishop?"

"You? I'm afraid you don't know enough," said Mr. Bishop, patting her cheek. "Can you say all your letters?"

"Most all, *incept* two or three *little* ones," said Weezy briskly. "I can spell too."

"Indeed! What can you spell?"

"Oh, I can spell all the easy words, — d, o, g, dog; c, a, t, cat; g, o, t, goat," said Weezy, proud of her knowledge.

"Oh, I see, you spell by sound, the phonetic way!" said Mr. Bishop, throwing back his head and laughing.

"Don't know what is *fonetti-quay*," returned Weezy, rather disturbed. "My brother could spell it, I guess. *He* can spell awful hard words."

Then she frisked away to beg grandma to send her and Kisty to school to "Mr. Cousin Bishop."

"What should I do without my dear little girls?" said grandma, smiling over her spectacles. "No, no, I couldn't spare them."

But, by the close of the week, the "dear little girls" had become so tired and cross from endless romping, that grandma concluded she could spare them very well. The school-house was near, and she thought it would be really better for them to go to school than to play all day long: so the next Monday morning she dressed them in their warm plaid gowns, and sent them off, each with a cooky in her pocket.

They were by far the smallest scholars of any; and Mr. Bishop soon found that when they were not at his knee, picking out their letters in the primer, it was puzzling to know what to do with them. If they sat together,

they would whisper and make too much noise; and if they sat apart, Kisty would go to sleep, and Weezy would be miserable.

At last he hit upon the expedient of sending them out to play in the sunshine the moment they had recited. They liked this very much.

Right behind the schoolhouse was a steep bank, down which the boys and girls coasted at noon and at recess. Kisty and Weezy thought it fine fun to slide there all by themselves, and clumsy Kisty did not mind a fall or two, with only Weezy to see.

One afternoon, indeed, she grew so daring that she slid standing up for the whole length of the slope; but unfortunately she lost her balance at the foot, and pitched forward on her little snub nose. It bled furiously; any nose would have bled, treated in that way; and Kisty howled so dismally that Mr. Bishop heard her from his desk, and sent one of the large girls to bring her in.

The girl found frightened Weezy mopping Kisty's face with her own Mikado pocket-handkerchief, and tugging with all her might to drag her up the bank.

"This accident puts an end to your sport, little girls," said Mr. Bishop, after they were again in their seats. "I must forbid your sliding any more."

"I think it's real mean," whispered Weezy behind her primer. "He's just as *selfish* as he can be!"

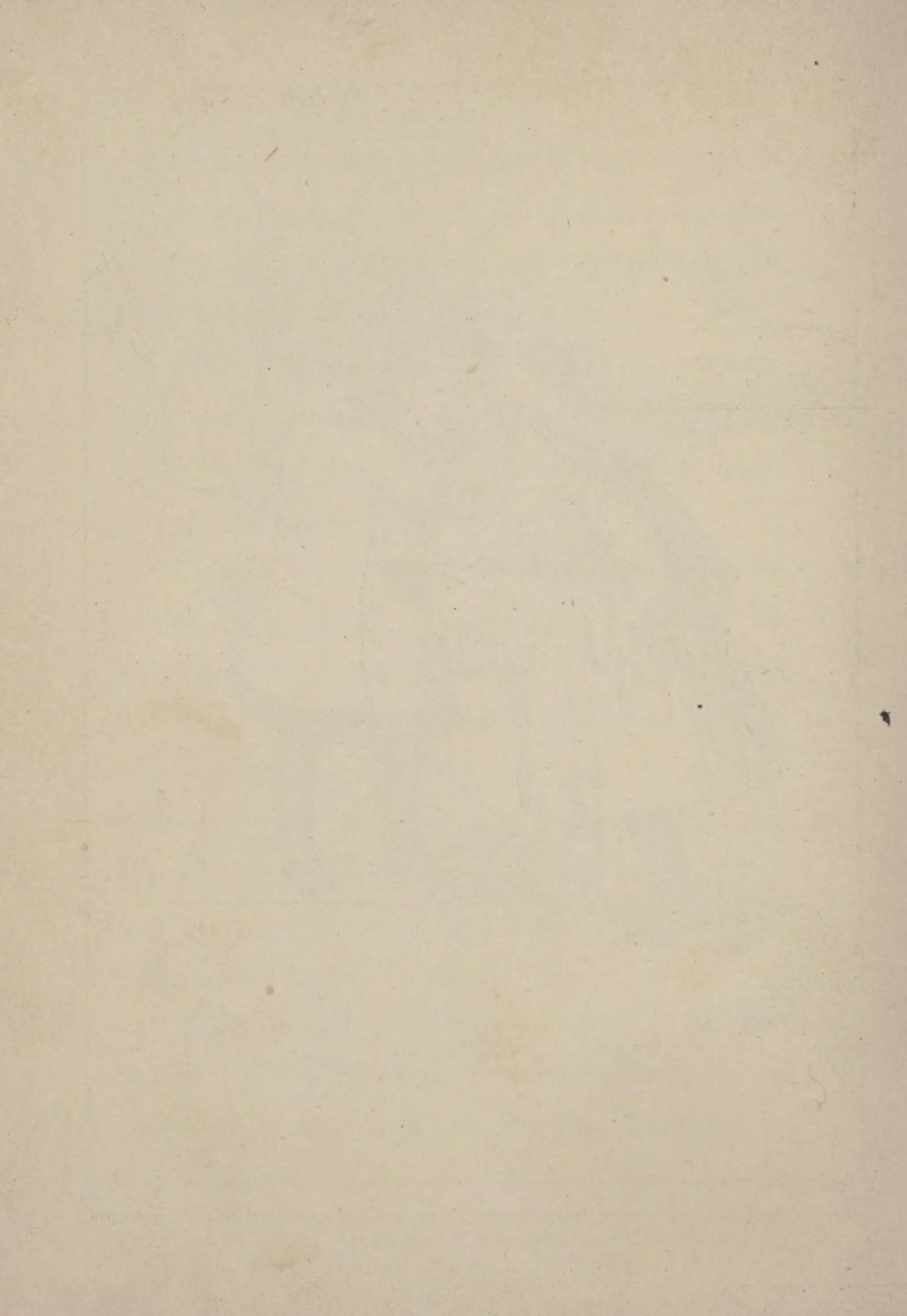
"'Tisn't *his* bank either," grumbled Kisty.

"I wish you wouldn't go and be such a little tumble-down girl, Kisty Nye," went on Weezy rather spitefully. "If you hadn't gone and hurt your nose, he would have let us slide some more."

"Well, do you s'pose I could help it, Weezy Rowe? Do you s'pose I hurted my nose to purpose?" retorted Kisty, burying her face in her apron.



“ FOUND FRIGHTENED WEEZY MOPPING KISTY’S FACE WITH HER OWN MIKADO POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF.” — PAGE 114.



“Don’t cry,” said Weezy, putting both arms around Kisty’s neck. “Please not cry. It makes the blood leak out again.”

“The primer class next,” called Mr. Bishop. Pulling her apron from her head, Kisty followed Weezy down the aisle to his desk for their reading-lesson.

Mr. Bishop enjoyed his two little pupils, and had taken so much pains in teaching them that they could now spell out such sentences as, “Do we go up?” quite glibly.

“That’ll do,” said he, when they had finished the page, and had each spelled “goat” and “coat” three times over without missing.

Then Weezy jogged Kisty’s elbow, and Kisty jogged Weezy’s; and it was Weezy that spoke first.

“Please can’t Kisty ’n’ I go out and play?”

“I hardly dare let you,” replied Mr. Bishop regretfully.

"Please," pleaded Weezy. "I'll hold on to Kisty so tight she can't fall."

"She'll hold on to me," echoed Kisty.

"Will you promise to take only one slide?"

"Yes, sir, truly; but bare one," cried they in a breath.

"Well, if you'll be very careful, I'll try you," said Mr. Bishop, smiling; and they ran away, two happy little children.

They were gone so long that he entirely forgot them till late in the afternoon, when he was dismissing the school. Then, from a back window, he caught sight of them disappearing below the bank. Presently they climbed in view again, Weezy dragging Kisty.

Three times they went up and down the slope, while Mr. Bishop stood watching them with a grave face, grieved to think they should have broken their promise to him.

At last he rapped upon the pane; and they

came dancing in, their cheeks glowing like cabbage-roses.

"I'm sorry I cannot trust my little girls," said he soberly, taking down his overcoat.

Bashful Kisty hung her head, but Weezy opened her great brown eyes in indignant wonder.

"*We* haven't done any thing," said she.

"Think, Weezy. Didn't you tell me you would take but one slide? And I've seen you take three myself."

"Oh, no; honest, we never," cried Weezy.

"Never, now, certi'gly," echoed Kisty.

"Hush, children," said Mr. Bishop sternly. "It is very naughty to speak an untruth, and I say I *saw* you sliding."

"Truly we slid only but just once," persisted Weezy, with an honest face.

Kisty pulled her apron over her head, sobbing dolefully, as she always did when scolded.

Mr. Bishop looked down upon the weeping bundle of calico, sorely puzzled.

"Did you forget your promise when you slid so many times?" he gently asked.

"We never *did* slide so many times," said Weezy indignantly.

"'Cause we promidged," wailed Kisty. "Me and Weezy was only but just heeling and toeing the bank."

Mr. Bishop tried hard not to smile.

"Indeed, was that all? But *how* did you heel and toe it? I want to see."

"It's just as easy as nothing," said Weezy, frisking off to the snow-drift, where she and Kisty had been playing.

At sight of its steep side riddled with holes, like a cliff full of sand-martens' nests, Mr. Bishop laughed outright; but he caught his breath when fearless little Weezy ran swiftly down, setting her small boot-heels in these holes, one after another.

"*That's* how to *heel* the bank," she called back from the bottom. "Quick! look, Mr. Cousin Bishop. *This* is how to *toe* it."

And, facing about, she ran up, pressing the toes of her little boots deep into the tracks their heels had made.

"What will these children do next to kill themselves?" thought the teacher. "I hate to keep breaking their hearts."

But, when he told them that they must not "heel and toe the bank" any more, Weezy only said, —

"Well, we *didn't* slide so many times; now did we, Mr. Cousin Bishop?"

"And we didn't never break our promidge," added Kisty, emerging from her apron.

"As if we'd be little *tell-lie* girls," said Weezy, as she and Kisty trudged home hand in hand behind Mr. Bishop.

When she went into the sitting-room, her grandpa and grandma sat by the open fire,

with an empty chair between them, and both were smiling.

“You’d better shut the door, dear,” said grandma quietly.

Weezy turned around to obey, and then, for the first time, saw her father, who had been hiding behind it.

“O papa, papa, you funny papa!” cried she, springing into his arms, and half smothering him with kisses. “Who brought you to grandma’s house? Did mamma?”

“No, dear; mamma couldn’t come, so she sent me to take you home for the Christmas-tree. She has a wonderful present for you.”

“Oh, oh! What is it, papa?”

“I promised I wouldn’t tell; but something that moves.”

“A tricycle? Oh, is it a tricycle?”

“Something that can make more music than a tricycle,” replied papa, with a glance at grandma.

“Is it a hand-organ? Oh, is it?” cried Weezy, clapping her hands.

“No, no, little quiz; it’s not a hand-organ,” laughed Mr. Rowe. “And now I sha’n’t tell you another thing about it, or, before I know it, you’ll be guessing what it is.”

## CHAPTER XII.

### A BEAUTIFUL PRESENT.

MR. ROWE staid at the parsonage one day, and then went back to Gallatin, taking with him Weezy and Kisty. Kisty's brother Ned met her at the station, and drove her away in the dog-cart; and Weezy went home with her father in a hack.

"There's Kirke looking out of the window. Oh, oh! and there's Molly. Guess they'll be glad to see their dear little sister," cried Weezy complacently, as the driver stopped at the gate.

"Did you tell her, papa? Did you tell her?" shouted Kirke, dancing out in his slippers, and catching up Weezy at the risk of breaking his back.

“No, no, my son, I didn’t tell her,” said papa, laughing. “I remembered my promise to you and Molly.”

Molly was already on the threshold, hugging and kissing “her dear little sister;” and Mr. Rowe had to drive the excited children in, before he could close the door.

“Where’s mamma? Where *is* my mamma?” cried Weezy, running into the sitting-room.

“Up-stairs,” said Molly, her blue eyes sparkling. “Papa’s gone up; and we’re going in a minute, just as soon as I can get your things off. Dear, dear, I do believe your hood is tied in a hard knot.”

“Bust the string; *I* would! Oh, come ahead,” cried Kirke impatiently, perching on the railing of the stairway.

“In a minute. The knot’s undoing. There, now we’ll scamper,” said Molly, dropping the hood, and taking one of Weezy’s hands; while Kirke skipped down and took the other. Side

by side the three children hurried up-stairs, into their mamma's chamber.

"Here I am, mamma! Don't you feel *belighted* to have your little girl come home?" cried Weezy, frisking up to her mother, who sat in an easy-chair by the grate, in a new cardinal wrapper, holding on her lap a white flannel bundle.

"Yes, dear, I am *belighted*; indeed I am," said mamma, kissing the bright, eager face again and again. "Have you been grandma's little comfort?"

"Some," replied Weezy, rather doubtfully. "Gramma says I improve."

"Let me show it first; please let me show it first," whispered Kirke, fingering the white flannel bundle, which his little sister had not yet observed.

"You haven't asked what mamma has for you, Weezy," said papa, very near telling.

"It's yours, and it's Molly's, and it's mine,"

said Kirke, turning down the blanket with a flourish. "There, sir, what do you think of that? It's a little live brother!"

"An onty donty little brother! Oh, oh, oh!" gasped Weezy, hopping up and down, and gazing at the awakening little stranger. "Truly, mamma, is he ours to keep?"

"We trust so, dear."

"O mamma, just see his little fists wiggle! And, mamma, look: he's got his eyes open a'ready."

Kisty ran over early the next morning to see the baby; and, when she and Weezy became too noisy, Mrs. Rowe sent them into Molly's room, where, to tell the truth, they were not wanted. Molly sprang up and hid her work in a drawer; for she was doing something that her little sister must not know of at present, — something that would please her vastly by and by.

To begin at the beginning. Mrs. Rowe had

said one day that at Christmas she should give Viola Maud to Weezy. Whereupon Mr. Rowe had remarked, that, if she did so, he should give Weezy a new "gentleman doll" in place of Sambo, who had now grown old and decrepit.

Then it was that it came into Molly's head to marry these dolls to each other, and make them a fine wedding. She and Kirke had talked about it a great deal during Weezy's absence, and made all the arrangements. Kirke, with his toy press, was to print the wedding-cards; Lovisa had promised to make the wedding-cake; and Molly herself was to provide the bride's *trousseau*, which must be as elegant and ample as Viola Maud herself could desire.

It was nearly completed; and Molly was setting the last stitches in the bridal veil this morning, when interrupted by Weezy and Kisty.

The little girls were discussing the new baby with great animation.

“What do you suppose makes him cry so funny?” exclaimed Kisty, inclined to be jealous of his young lordship.

“Oh, he hasn’t learned how!” cried Weezy, warm in his defence. “Course he can’t cry nice *yet*. He hasn’t been down here only but just two weeks.”

“Oh, so he hasn’t! I forgot,” said Kisty meekly.

“Before he came down he used to be a little angel fluttering ’round the sky,” added Weezy instructively; “and, you know, he didn’t hear anybody crying up there.”

This must be so, and seemed to settle the matter; and no more fault could be found with his manner of crying.

“Who cut off his wings?” queried matter-of-fact Kisty, sniffing Molly’s cologne. “Was it your mamma?”

"I don't know. Guess they dropped off."

"He's got awful little feet," remarked Kisty, putting the stopper back into the cologne-bottle.

"Awful little," echoed Weezy; "and so soft and pinky!"

"I don't think baby's nose is very pretty," said Kisty frankly.

"I don't care: it's prettier'n yours is, any old how, Kisty Nye," retorted Weezy, backing away from the bureau where Kisty stood.

"'Visa calls it a Roman nose," said Molly, with a grown-up smile, very irritating to her small sister.

"Well, I don't care if it is a *roaming* nose; it's just as good as anybody's."

"Yes, indeed, dear," said Molly soothingly; "and mamma says it won't look so big when baby gets plumper. And now if you and Kisty will run down and play in the dining-

room, I'll give each of you a piece of candy out of the box grandma sent me."

"Well," said Weezy, again in good-humor, "if you won't give us the *tongue-smarty* kind, we'll go."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE DOLLS' CHRISTMAS WEDDING.

ON Christmas Eve Mrs. Rowe came downstairs to see the Christmas-tree that aunt Clara had arranged; and, to please Weezy, nurse brought the baby.

It must be admitted that the little fellow behaved abominably; making up faces at everybody, and even squaring his fists at the lovely silver mug presented to him, as if he scorned the name of Donald Rowe that Santa Claus had had engraved upon it. But then, as Weezy justly remarked, baby was not used to company.

Everybody else fully enjoyed the wonderful tree, laden with gifts. There was a dark meri-

no for Ellen Nolan, an overcoat for Jimmy Maguire, and a great package of books for the minister, Mr. Cutler. There was a nice work-box for Lovisa, a warm red shawl for Pocahontas, and a lovely picture-book for Kisty, beside gifts without number for the Wymans and Rowes.

But what captivated Weezy more than all these things was the sight of two dolls sitting under the tree side by side. One was Viola Maud, gorgeously arrayed in a party dress of pink satin; and the other was an elegant little bachelor in a black broadcloth suit, with white waistcoat and gloves, and a watch no bigger than a buttercup.

“Oh, oh, oh! the *beautiful, beautiful* dollies!” cried she, dropping on her knees before them. “O Molly, *do* you s’pect they’re for me?”

“Yes, yes, every bit of ’em,” replied Molly, almost as excited as Weezy. “And here

are Viola Maud's clothes. Mamma cut 'em out, and I sewed 'em, all but the button-holes."

"Oh, you *are* a darling sister! Oh, what a beautiful little trunk!"

"Kirke bought you that. Doesn't it look for all the world like aunt Clara's big Saratoga?"

Weezy pulled out the garments, one by one, uttering little squeals of delight, and hopping up every other moment to kiss Kirke and Molly. The trunk contained six complete suits, not counting the red jersey jacket; and by changing about,—putting the polonaise of one dress over the skirt of another,—Viola Maud, you see, could have two different gowns for each day in the week.

Then there were half a dozen hats of the latest mode, and handkerchiefs of real lace, beside two sets of under-garments all ruffled and tucked. Certainly it was a fine outfit

for a little girl of eleven to fashion, and Molly deserved much credit.

Before the presents were taken from the tree, Kisty was brought over to see it; and Kirke and Molly told her and Weezy all about the marvellous doll-wedding to be celebrated on the morrow, and how Kirke was going round early in the morning to invite the wedding guests.

“He’ll bring me a card too,” thought Kisty, delighted; “and I never had a wedding-card in all my life.”

Christmas dawned clear and bright; and after breakfast Kirke and Molly bustled off to one corner of the library, with an air of great importance.

“Are you sure you’ve printed invitations enough?” asked Molly anxiously.

“Hoh, yes. Here they are, — one, two, three, four, five, six, seven,” said Kirke, counting over the cream-tinted correspondence cards in his hand.

They were dainty affairs, and read in this way:—

*Miss Weezy Rowe*  
*Requests the pleasure of your presence*  
*At the Marriage of her Doll,*  
*Viola Maud,*  
*To Mr. Clarence Osborne,*  
*On Christmas, at 3 o'clock P.M.,*  
*6 Oak Street.*  
*P.S. Please bring all your Dolls.*

Molly had hesitated about the postscript, but had finally concluded it would be safer to add it.

While she was trying her pen, Kirke slipped the seven cream-tinted cards into their seven cream-tinted envelopes, each bearing the monogram R. O., which of course meant Rowe and Osborne.

Then Molly carefully addressed these envelopes to the seven little girls that Weezy knew best, and laid them in a pretty willow basket, with a white satin bow on top.

When they were ready, Kirke took the basket, and went out to deliver them. From her mother's room Kisty Nye saw him coming down the street, and her heart went pit-a-pat. But alack and alas! Kirke walked straight by, and never turned his head!

He left an invitation for Jenny Lancey right opposite, and one for Matty Lee at the corner; and after that he came back by the house to leave one on Elm Street for that snip of a Dolly Wright, whom Weezy hardly knew at all!

Kisty had been so sure she herself should be invited. And why not? Oh, it was very, very hard! No wonder she nearly cried her eyes out, and at dinner left her pudding untasted, feeling that this was a

very cruel world for a little girl only six years old.

Quarter of three came at last; and as Molly remarked, it was almost late enough to begin the wedding.

She and Kirke had got all the old dolls together in a row on the sitting-room lounge, to represent Viola Maud's "poor relations," when Jenny Lancey rushed in, exclaiming, "O Molly, did you mean to leave out Kisty Nye? She feels dreadfully because she isn't invited."

"I did invite her; I invited Kisty Nye first of any," cried Molly, flying across the room in wild excitement. "Kirke Rowe, you've gone and forgotten to give Kisty her invitation. You naughty, horrid boy! I think you're just as" —

Molly bit her lips, trembling with anger, and began to cry.

"Oh, dear, dear!" sobbed she, in quite a

different tone, "you're made me lose my temper again. O Kirke! how could you, when I promised mamma I'd try to be sweet for baby's sake?"

"I delivered every note there was in the basket, so now," said Kirke sulkily.

"Who came to the door at Mr. Nye's? Was it the girl?"

"I don't know; I don't believe I went there," said Kirke, considering. "I'll go and see."

"Wait, wait," said Jenny. "Take Kisty a card, can't you? She'll be mad, not to have one like the rest of us."

"I didn't print but seven," said Kirke.

"Well, I'll write her one; she won't know the difference," returned Molly, running into the library, and dragging out her desk.

As she lifted the lid, the first thing she saw was a cream-tinted envelope, so plainly directed to Kisty Nye that grandma herself might have read it without her spectacles.

“There, miss, who’s to blame now?” cried Kirke triumphantly, peeping into the envelope to make sure the card was in it.

The next moment the front-door slammed, and he was racing down the street bareheaded, to bring Kisty; for, dearly as he loved to tease, he could not bear to have anybody made unhappy.

You may be sure Mrs. Nye was not long in putting on her little daughter’s hood and cloak; and the rest of the wedding guests had hardly assembled before Kirke and Kisty appeared among them, Kisty’s happy face beaming with smiles.

There was a hush in the room, when the doll bride and bridegroom, supported by Molly, entered arm in arm, and took the places in the bay-window, beneath a marriage-bell of Christmas evergreen. The bride wore a white satin gown, with a most extravagant train; and her long lace veil was fastened with a wreath

of fine white flowers, supposed to be dwarf orange-blossoms.

She stood gazing straight at the minister, while the bridegroom leaned toward her with an affectionate stare, his left hand grasping a cambric handkerchief, with which to dry her eyes in case she should shed tears during the trying ceremony.

Kirke, in his father's best white necktie, officiated as clergyman; and as Viola Maud could only say "papa" and "mamma," and as Clarence Osborne was too much stuffed to speak at all, Molly had to make the responses for both parties.

"Do you, Clarence Osborne, take this woman to be your *awful* wedded wife?" began the acting minister, in a tone of deep solemnity.

"I do," squeaked a faint voice, while the bridegroom bowed with all his might.

"Do you, Viola Maud, take this man to be your *awful* wedded husband?"

“I do,” answered a voice still fainter; and the bride’s head bent gently, like a flower caressed by a butterfly.

“Then,” said the minister clearing his throat, “I pronounce you man and wife.”

The nervous strain was over at last, but it had been too much for the sensitive bride. As the bridegroom turned to salute her, she tottered and fell fainting into his arms.

Fortunately, Molly, foreseeing such a catastrophe, had provided herself with a smelling-bottle, which she now held to the nostrils of the swooning little lady.

“Mrs. Osborne” was kind enough to revive very soon, and to receive the congratulations of the guests crowding about her; and it was observed, in her praise, that she greeted her “poor relations” just as cordially as she did the most richly attired doll in the room.

Afterwards Weezy and Kisty passed around the wedding-cake and the bride’s-cake; and

Molly and Kirke brought in hot chocolate in pretty little china cups, that all might drink to the health of the bride and bridegroom.

Oh, it was a lovely, lovely afternoon! And its close was better than its beginning; for the little girls and their dolls were taken home in Dr. Wyman's great double sleigh, in which Mr. and Mrs. Osborne had set out on their honeymoon trip.

And so ended the dolls' Christmas wedding.



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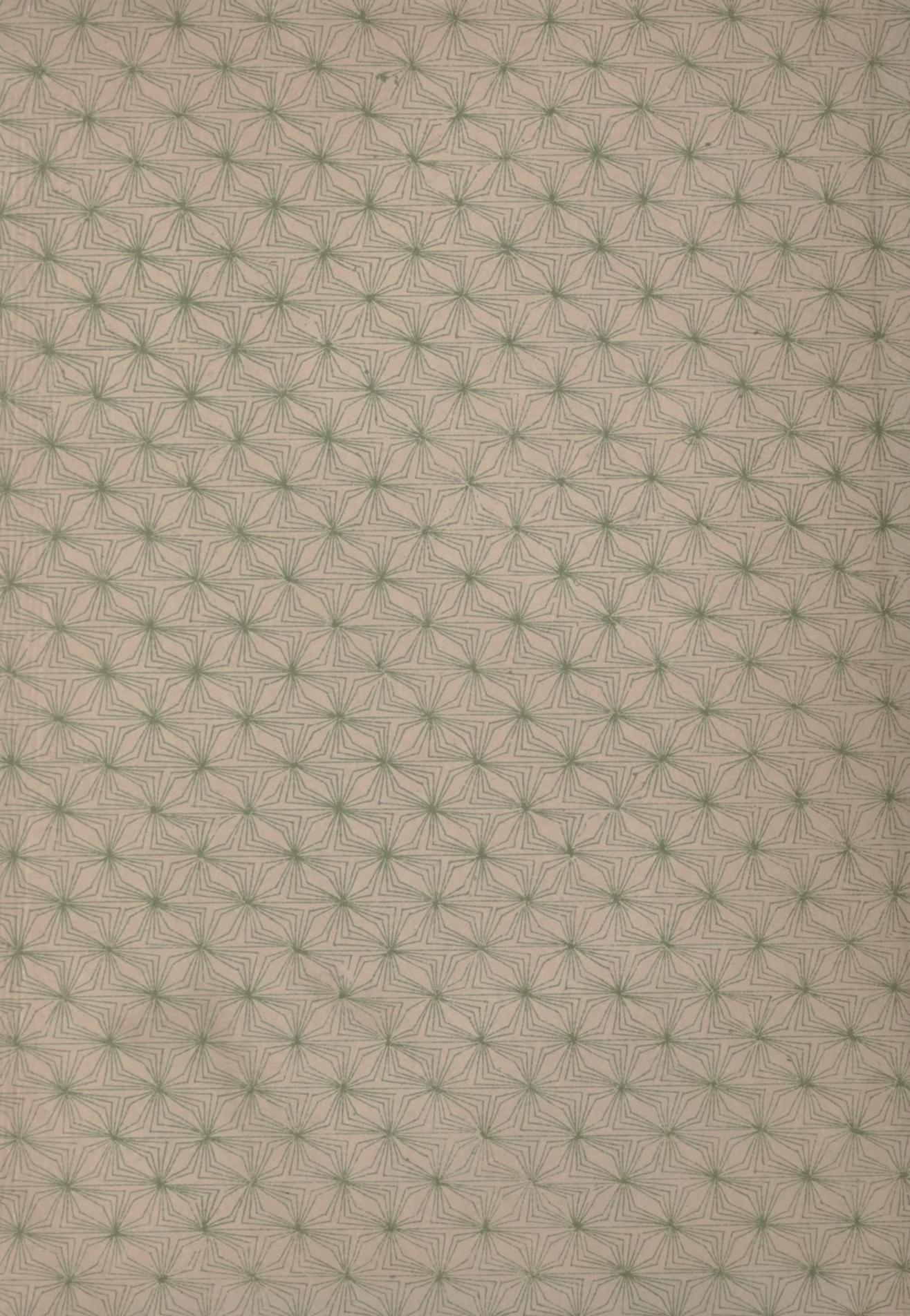
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