

which she was quite sure had never seen her, and didn't belong to the Museum. He was rather ugly in appearance, with a sour, stingy looking face, and Brenda, who had been going to say politely, "I'm ve y well, thank you," drew back instead and stammered: "I don't know you." "My name is Ourang Outang, f. om Central Africa," said the stranger, "and I wasn't speaking to you, but to my small relative in there," and he nodded towards a marmoset in a case close by. "Can that pretty little fellow be a relative of yours?" asked Brenda in surprise: "is he your first cousin?" "Hardly that, I think," said Ourang Outang rather abstractedly. "Then, maybe he is your last cousin," ventured Brenda. "No, I think not," was the answer. "In fact they do say that's yourself," and he moved off muttering something about having to set the table, leaving Brenda very much puzzled and on the whole rather displeased, but she made up her mind that he was an ugly creature anyway, and really didn't know what he was talking about. Just then a bell rang, loud and insistent, and a magpie, perched on a branch near by, called out in a complaining tone: "There's the dinner bell and the table not set, dear, dear, dear!" Brenda didn't see any table, and was going to tell the magpie so, when suddenly all the birds and animals began to talk, and looking round, she saw a table, and it was set too,—quite a long table with a place for everybody. Brenda was puzzling over it, and in walked a long procession of strange animals, one by one. An elephant came first, and Brenda was sure there never had been an elephant there before. Perhaps Mr. Brown kept him in the basement or in the kindling wood chest, and fed him on the confiscated gum and apples, and abandoned lunches. Was it a pang of

jealousy that seized her, as she saw him walk past her, over to Katie Bell and gently lifting her in his trunk, placed her in a chair and sat down beside her at the table? For Katie had on a lovely pink silk frock, pink shoes and stockings and a wide hat with a fine feather in it, while Brenda realized all at once that she was wearing one of her old school pinafores, with a hole in it too. Johnnie and Willie were suddenly alert and ranged themselves on each side of the giraffe, who had hung up a pail on a hook in the opposite wall, and was eagerly eating his dinner from it. Just then Brenda was lifted into a seat, with little ceremony, and looking round, saw that she was beside Ourang Outang, and felt more certain than ever that he wasn't any cousin of hers, first or last though he was evidently anxious to thus politely assert his claims to relationship. "Stop there," said the elephant, calling down the giraffe; "telescope your neck till everyone is seated. Now, all ready. I'm hungry as a hunter. Pass the macaroons; where, and oh where, are my macaroons?" and he trumpeted so loudly that all the plates rattled, but nobody seemed to mind. "Here's your baron of beef," said the bear, placing a huge dish in front of the mouse. "And this curry powder is for you, brother snail." "I don't want it," querulously said the snail; "give me strawberry jam on the shell; rats and mice may have their choice and surely I'll have mine." It was feeding time in earnest now, and for five minutes the clatter of knives and forks, the smacking of lips and the eager drinking of deep draughts, caused Johnnie to say to Willie, "Ain't this like threshing day at home?" "Music is next in order," said the elephant, and then he bluntly added, "Will the rhinoceros be good enough to blow his own horn?"