

In the Orchard.

What a merry time little Grace Darnley was having in the orchard! She had no brothers or sisters, yet no child had more playmates, or chatted away more merrily to her dumb companions.

She never thought them dumb. No; to her they talked away fast enough, and funny conversations they had. As for "Snuffy" the terrier, he really could nearly talk; and Grace understood everything he would say.

She placed her four dolls on the seat under the apple-tree, and made "Snuffy" stand on his hind legs, grasping a long stick in his paws, to guard them.

"Now, stand there, Snuffy; you are a soldier, you know, and must guard the ladies from harm. I am going to fetch some biscuits, and when I come back you shall have some. But don't move."

Snuffy gave a sidelong glance at his little mistress, as she picked up her large straw basket and gave him a parting admonition, with uplifted finger, to "behave like a brave soldier, and stay there."

But alas for the game! Snuffy soon got tired of his cramped position, he dropped the stick, and curled himself comfortably round for a short nap on the grass, leaving the dolls on the seat to take care of themselves as best they could. What will Grace say when she comes back!

Two in a Crib.

"Oho, brother Richard, the sun's very high?" called mamma, on her way to the bath-room.

Evelyn turned over in her pretty brass cot and yawned. She knew very well what this quotation from Mother Goose meant, for mamma generally roused her lazy little girl in some such merry way in order to put her in a good humor at the start.

Sometimes this plan succeeded, and sometimes it didn't; to-day it didn't. Evelyn lay still, and watched the ladder of sunshine made by the light coming through the half-open venetians, and wished she was a "big lady," so she could lie in bed all day.

But when mamma came back from the bath her tone was quite different. "Get up, Evelyn, at once," she said, and passed through the nursery without another word.

There was still time for a brisk little girl to get dressed before the prayer-bell rang, but our little girl quarreled with the tangles in her hair, with every button on her shoes, with all her hooks and eyes, and so she was too late for prayers. This meant going to bed a half-hour earlier than night.

"Mr. Alexander," said mamma, serving the coffee-urn while she spoke, "are there any gypsies about?"

"Gypsies? What makes you think so?"

"Well," said mamma soberly, "I've heard stories about gypsies changing little children in their beds, and I think somebody has changed mine. I put a dear little daughter to bed last night. She said her prayers, gave me twenty hugs and kisses, promised to be a good girl to-day, and let me put out the light without a word. But this morning the little girl who woke up in that crib was cross and disobedient; she hasn't kissed me once, and I don't believe she has even said her prayers."

"O that is easily explained," said

papa; "you put two little girls to bed in the same crib last night, and the wrong one woke up this morning."

"Two little girls?" exclaimed Evelyn, surprised out of her sulkingness.

"Certainly. Don't you know there were two little girls inside of you? They take turns in looking through your eyes, speaking through your mouth, using your hands and feet. The one who is good and sweet and merry and loving is our dear little Evelyn; the other—suppose we call her 'Neverlyn'—hates Evelyn, and would kill her if she could. But we hope Evelyn is going to drive her out some day, and have her crib, and her eyes and mouth, and her hands and feet, all to herself."

The idea of being two little girls seemed so funny that Evelyn could not help laughing.

"Ah!" said mamma, "that's a good sign, for I have observed that Neverlyn never laughs."

Evelyn quickly forgot that second little girl when she got to school. Dear me! it takes all a little girl's thoughts to remember when the *e* or *i* comes first in "believe," and what part of speech "such" is, and how to divide by five figures. But the day-card had "Excellent" written on it, and mamma looked pleased enough when she read it.

"You must have left Neverlyn at home, locked up," she said slyly.

"If I thought she'd help me to say my lessons, I'd take her along," laughed the little girl.

"She never helps," said mamma, shaking her head, "her business is to hinder."

The day went by with quick, silent steps; night took her place, and lighted up the star-lamps, and Evelyn's bed-time came a whole half-hour earlier than usual. It was rather hard on the little girl, for Susy Belt had lent her that charming book, "Lady Jane," to read, and she barely had time to finish her lessons before mamma whispered:

"Bed-time, deary, but don't let Neverlyn know it."

This brought a smile to drive away the coming frown, and Evelyn followed mamma upstairs, singing over the Mother Goose rhyme mamma had used in the morning:

"Richard and Robin were two pretty men;

They lay in bed till the clock struck ten. Then up jumps Robin, and looks at the sky.

"Oho, brother Richard, the sun's very high!"

"Mamma," she said suddenly, leaving the rhyme unfinished, "does everybody go double?"

"Yes, everybody," answered mamma, "as long as they live in this world. Everybody has an evil nature, a Neverlyn, which wants us to be mean and disagreeable, and a better nature which wants to do right."

Evelyn listened soberly, and then mamma tucked her up in the soft white bed.

"Good-night, mamma," she said, smiling to herself as the light went out, and the saucy stars peeped in at her. "Call me early in the morning, so you won't wake Neverlyn."

Pie-crust is always better for being rolled up a day before it is baked. Keep it in the ice-chest or in a very cold place. The shortening seems to diffuse itself better for standing over a day, and it is more flaky when again rolled out.

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