

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS

BAD LITTLE BEULAH.

The neighbors all said she was the worst child that ever lived, and really I believe you would have thought so too, if you only knew half the bad things she did.

In the first place, she had been the baby for eight years, and when her little baby brother came she didn't like it one bit that her nose was knocked out of joint.

She was just learning to talk when she demanded why her mamma had named her Beulah—but you mustn't think she kept that name long, oh, no!

"You're a wilful little witch; you're nothing but a Madge Wildfire," her nurse had said, after she had rescued the little shoes from a tub full of water, where Beulah had put them to float, and saved her mother's best dress from Beulah's hands, when the young lady wanted to see how she would look grown up. So Madge Wilfire she was named henceforth.

From the very first Beulah declared she wouldn't stand that baby brother and begged them to send him away. Mamma laughed, and nurse told Beulah she was a wicked little girl and the bad man would get her if she didn't learn to love her brother.

But instead of learning to love him and trying to be good to him, Madge Wildfire, as they called her, amused herself by picking her little brother and sticking pins in him whenever she got a chance. And one day her little brother lay sleeping in his little cradle when Madge Wildfire wandered in. She had nothing to do, so over she came to the side of the crib and promptly poked the little baby until he woke up. Instead of crying loudly the little fellow opened his big blue eyes and cooed as sweetly as could be.

Mamma had company in the parlor and nurse was busy ironing, so Beulah decided now was her chance. She dug her little fingers into the baby's big eyes until he screamed and screamed with pain, and the nurse came running in.

"You little fiend! Whatever are you doing now?" she exclaimed.

Beulah looked surprised. "I just wanted a pretty glass marble," she explained, and really the poor little girl had been trying to gouge out her brother's blue eye, thinking it a glass marble.

"Well, if your mamma don't whip you well for this, I don't know why!" said nurse, as she indignantly gathered up the baby and went straight to the parlor, where mamma was called out and the case stated. Mamma said to the caller:

"Now, please excuse me for one moment while I whip Beulah."

And she did, for she felt there was no time like the present, and, you see, Beulah had been such a bad little girl.

But one day Beulah simply surpassed all her previous badness and caught her neighbor's pet cat and went with it and a bit of rope to the end of the garden, and proceeded to hang that poor little kitty to a branch of a peach tree. Of course the kitty struggled and scratched, but Beulah tied him firmly and enjoyed the fun hugely until she saw John, the neighbor's big black coachman, approaching.

"You, Miss Beulah, you better let that cat alone," and when John reached the tree he cut the rope and freed the poor cat. Beulah fell on her knees and began to weep.

"Oh, John, don't tell Mrs. Jones I hanged her cat; please don't tell her I killed her cat!" she begged.

"I'm going to tell your ma, and you're goin' to get the worst whipping you ever had," and John did tell, and Beulah was whipped again.

And as the days went by Beulah grew worse, and finally one day, when she was again to be punished, her mother said:

"Oh, my little girl, what must I do to make you good?"

"Mamma, just let me say my prayers," begged Beulah, and down she got on her knees and prayed the Lord not to let her mamma whip her, and her mamma was so overcome she didn't.

That is all long ago. Beulah is a grown woman now, and Beulah's golden hair, which used to fly straight out so that they all called her Madge Wildfire, is neat.