

last he said, 'Are you afraid, Winnie?'

'No-o,' said Winnie, 'at least, I am trying not to be. The last thing Mrs. Sinclair said was that she was sure God would take care of us, because we have no father, and because we are "of more value than many sparrows."'

'What shall we do?' said John. 'I think we may freeze to death if we have to wait here long.'

'Oh, some one is sure to be coming soon,' replied Winnie bravely, 'and till then we'll play house here in this queer little station, I wonder if we could bring in the box out of the snow, and then we'll unlock it, and I'll get out your other coat and my old dress, and we'll wrap ourselves up and keep as warm as we can.'

The effort to drag the heavy box into the room helped to warm them, but most of the little garments it contained were thin and threadbare. Still, two coats or jackets are decidedly warmer than one, and Winnie made a comfortable pillow of their under-clothing.

'It's getting quite dark,' said John, anxiously, 'Perhaps Uncle John doesn't really want us.'

'Well,' replied Winnie thoughtfully, 'if he doesn't, perhaps God knows of some one else who does. Listen; I'll say my verse about the sparrows. Cuddle up close against me, Jackey, and we'll be as warm as toasts.'

'Tell me that about the sparrows again,' said John, after a pause.

'Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Now, I'll play that you are my baby, and I'll sing you to sleep.'

The child was very tired, and he soon fell asleep, but the wind howling round their rough shelter kept Winnie awake. Besides, her feet were like two lumps of ice. She still murmured her verse to herself, and she was at last getting drowsy, when a wild shriek rang through the air, and the very ground beneath them seemed to throb and tremble. They both started up in alarm.

'What's that?' cried John, clutching his sister round the neck.

'Nothing; it's only the cars,' said Winnie softly. 'Perhaps they'll stop, and some one will tell us the way to get to Uncle John's.'

But it was an express, and it thundered through the little wayside station at full speed.

'Has it gone?' gasped John. 'Oh, Winnie, my feet are freezing, and the snow is blowing all over my face through that big crack.'

'I'll get some more things out of the box, and stuff the crack up,' said Winnie. 'Now, I've put everything over us that we have, even my Sunday dress, so we'll lie down and sleep till morning.'

Once or twice again they were awakened by a train's thundering through the station, and then they both slept soundly. John's feet were no longer cold, his sister had wrapped him up so well, and she was so tired that she soon forgot the pain in hers.

The night grew colder and colder, but morning dawned at last. A beam of sunlight fell upon John's face, and he sat up, much wondering where he was. Then he remembered everything, and tried to rouse Winnie, but she was sleeping soundly, though her cheeks were almost as white as the snow that had drifted over her black dress.

'Wake up, Winnie,' he shouted; but though he shook her she did not stir. 'It's morning, Winnie. Wake up!'

By this time he was thoroughly frightened, and the tears came into his eyes as he ran out on the snowy platform screaming for help. But there was no one to hear, and

he stopped through sheer lack of breath. At that moment a whistle sounded in the distance, and presently the rails began to tremble.

The little lad stood waiting for a second, then darted into the waiting-room, seized the red flag, and sprang to the edge of the platform. The train was rounding the curve, and John held his flag high above his head, and waved it madly.

The engine still came on, went snorting and puffing past him, and then stopped short.

Two or three men were on the platform of the car nearest John, and one of them—the conductor—said, in a business-like voice, 'Now, hurry up, young man. We can't keep her waiting, even for you. Come, get in.'

'Oh, please, sir,' cried John, 'I don't want to get in. I wish someone would get off. Winnie won't wake up, though I've shouted ever so, an' Uncle John forgot to meet us, an' we've had no breakfast—'

The men looked at one another. Then a big, jolly-faced farmer jumped down into the snow. 'All right; ahead,' he said to the conductor. 'I should get off at the next station anyway, and we can't leave that baby here alone.'

'Now, where's Winnie?' he asked, as the long train went rattling on its way.

'There she is,' said John, pointing to the waiting-room.

The big farmer gave one look at Winnie, then said, 'Promise me, sonny, to stay here till I come back, and mind not to stop any more trains.'

The next moment John saw him plunging through the drifts on his way to the nearest house. It was not long, however, before he came back with another man and a big jug of hot coffee in his hand.

Between them they managed to waken Winnie from her strange sleep. Then the newcomer wrapped her up in his big coat, and carried her away down the line. Meanwhile the farmer bundled all the clothes back into the box, and, putting it on his shoulder, held out his hand to John, saying, 'Come along, laddie, and tell me who you are.'

'I'm John and she's Winnie,' replied the small boy, and as he trotted along between the lines he told their whole history.

'Well, it's a mercy you weren't frozen to death,' muttered the farmer.

Two hours later he astonished his wife by driving up to the door with the two children in his sleigh.

'William Williams, whoever have you got there?' she exclaimed.

'Two little sparrows that I found at Merton Station,' was the answer. 'You know you've always said that you wanted a little girl, wife, so I've brought you one, and a boy into the bargain.'

'Poor dears! Perhaps this is why I never could get any one to spare me one of their lasses,' said Mrs. Williams, gently. 'But do you really think we can keep them?'

'Why, yes, Sally. It's the strangest thing! You remember John Shaw, who has just gone to live up Morton way?—he's their uncle. Well, the poor innocents were sent off to Merton by mistake—Shaw always did write a horrid scrawl—and I'm sure he'll be glad to let us keep them. He has several children of his own, you know.'

Mr. Williams was quite right. John Shaw was very willing to give up his guardianship of the children.

They were very happy in their new home, and it was all the brighter for their presence. Truly, as Winnie said, 'God had been taking good care of them when he let them get off the cars at the flag-station.'

A Suit For a Song.

(By Eleanor W. F. Bates.)

'Twas a cold winter's morning. The great clothing store

Had folded its shutters and opened its door, The full ranks of salesmen were busy as bees,

For patrons were many to fit and to please, The large plate-glass windows were shining and bright,

And behind them arranged was a wonderful sight—

Piles of clothing galore, both for boys and for men,

While mirrors each side showed their glories again;

And a great gilded sign (broad its letters and long),

Bore this legend enticing: 'A suit for a song.'

The master of all, the rich merchant, stood by,

Prosperity shown by his keen business eye, His carriage erect and imperative hand,

As he glanced right and left with an air of command,

While he stood, through the door crept a mite of a boy,

Not one of the dainty curled darlings of joy.

But a ragged and dirty and half-frozen child Looked up at the merchant and timidly smiled,

And then like a chime of far bells set a-swing,

Half murmured, half whispered: 'Please, sir, may I sing?'

He sang, and his voice trembled sweet on the ear;

He sang—oh! the angels might bend down to hear!

'Twas the lyric of childhood, and passionate pain,

And joy's magic music was mixed in the strain.

It was low—'twas the cry of a heart stricken sore;

It was soft, and the ardor of faith went before;

It was shrill, tears unbidden sprang swift to the eye,

For cold and starvation rang keen in the cry;

It was sad with the pleadings of hope long deferred,

Yet, 'twas sweet as the lay of a nest-building bird;

Yes, 'twas sweet; it flung memories of home on the air,

Of purity's shrine, of a mother's low prayer; It faltered and failed into silence; and then,

Looking round at the circle of listening men, He said—though his voice for a moment fell mute—

'I've sung you a song—will you give me a suit?'

He pointed his thin, grimy finger to where The sign in the window was lustrous and fair,

'A Suit for a Song'—it was this the child meant,

Every eye on the prosperous master was bent.

He spoke not, he moved not. Far back in the years

He roamed with a vision sweet almost to tears.

His face was downcast on the quivering child,

But in one moment more he had looked up and smiled.

And patted the boy. 'I suppose I'm a fool—Here, you! dress this imp in a suit fit for school,

And the rest of you fellows—with mimic beating—

'To your work! and be quick; there are customers waiting!'

All day was the heart of the merchant prince warm

As the suit that now covered the little one's form;

And whenever the issues of business perplexed

His brain to confusion, a wandering text From an old-fashioned volume brought peace out of strife,

And calm and content to an oft-worried life: 'Naked I was, and ye clothed me': the words

Chorded sweet as a chorus of jubilant birds—Nay, sweeter; as faith is far sweeter than joy:

They were sweet as the song of the newly-clad boy.

—'American Messenger.'