

# Our Boys and Girls BY AUNT BECKY

**WHAT WAS IT?**  
 Guess what he had in his pocket. Marbles and tops and sundry toys. Such as always belong to boys. A bitten apple, a leather ball? Not at all.

What did he have in his pocket? A bubble-pipe and a rusty screw. A brass watchkey broken in two. A fishhook in a tangle of string? No such thing.

What did he have in his pocket? Gingerbread crumbs, a whistle he made, a knife with a broken blade. Buttons, a nail or two, with a rubber gun? Neither one.

What did he have in his pocket? Before he knew it, he slyly crept under the treasures carefully kept. And away they all of them quickly stole.

"Twas a hole!  
 -Child's Hour."

**THE FIREMAN'S CAT.**  
 Old Duffy was Tom Field's cat. Tom was a fireman. He lived with his father and mother in a little house on Dan Street, just outside the city limits—that is, he lived there during the day. At night he stayed at the engine-house to be on hand in case of a fire.

Although Tom was a great, strong fellow, with a deep, gruff voice, Old Duffy knew that he had a kind, warm heart; for he had picked her from the streets one stormy night when she was a homeless kitten, hungry and forlorn, and cared for her ever since. She had grown to be a fine-looking cat, and you may be sure that she was very fond of her master.

Every morning when Tom came home to breakfast, Old Duffy went down to the gate to meet him; and in the evening, when he started for the engine-house, she would go with him a little way. When her four kittens were born, she was not easy until she had coaxed him into the barn loft and he had properly admired them. What clean, fat little kittens they were! Two were jet black and two yellow—just like herself.

When Tom wanted to pay these

kittens a visit, he had to climb a ladder, then cross a beam, open a door, and go through a low narrow doorway. This door was generally closed. There was a hole in it through which Old Duffy came in or went out, as the case might be.

One night Old Duffy was awakened very suddenly. The air was full of smoke, and outside there seemed to be some unusual excitement. There was the sound of many feet running to and fro, and voices were shouting "Fire! fire! fire!"

Old Duffy sprang up in fright, seized a kitten in her mouth, and started to rush through the opening in the door. But she was driven back by clouds of smoke, through which leaped angry red flames; and with the kitten still in her mouth, Old Duffy jumped upon the sill of the loft window. The room was full of smoke.

"Me-ow!" she called piteously. Tom's father was in a crowd below. He heard the cry, and holding his arms up toward her, he called:

"Come, Duffy. There's a good Duffy! Jump!" Old Duffy looked down hesitatingly. She could hear the roar of the flames beneath her, and she seemed to know that the only way of escape was through the open window. She crouched down and made ready to spring. Just then one of her kittens gave a soft "Me-ow!"

Old Duffy turned from the window and went back to the basket which contained her family.

"Purr-me-ow!" she said gently to the kittens.

Brave old Duffy! She could not save her kittens, and she would not save herself.

Then came the hissing of a fire-engine, and more commotion outside. And then a fireman's ladder was raised against the window, and Old Duffy heard Tom's hearty, cheery voice. It made her purr for very joy.

In a moment more Tom lifted Old Duffy and her kittens from the basket and carried them down the ladder amid the cheers of the crowd.

"I'm not the fellow to let the plucky cat burn to death," said Tom, as he carried Old Duffy and her family into the house.

as nurse asked me," said Jane, now beginning to toss the first handful instead of the last.

While the feeding was going on, who should come out to watch as well but Dr. Wenley.

"Oh! here is Uncle Fred," cried Olive, darting to him, and fluttering into his arms, like a dusky chick with white wings. Now Ellie trotted to his side, a small walking daisy, in holland frock with blue sash, her blue pleading eyes misty as with morning dew.

"Tears in the eyes, little woman?"—may be remembered last night's disgrace, maybe not—doctors do sometimes forget.

"No, papa, it's laughing," returned she, bravely. "Oh, see that chickie," and laughed a tinkling little laugh at a wee creature running away with a big mouthful to gobble it up alone.

"Yes, he's looking out for number one," said Dr. Wenley.

"What, papa? I don't understand," replied the child, clinging to his hand.

"He's selfish, dear; thinking only of self and papa's comfort."

"Oh yes, papa."

"Same as you, when you wanted to be dressed first, instead of me," explained Olive complacently.

"Oh I—I—the speedwell eyes came near to overflowing, the down-cast face became rosy pink; Ellie winked very hard, but she could not make her protest.

"My little girl must not be a selfish chickie," said her father gravely; and the feeding over, he bade both little girls run in to breakfast.

"I gave up, Marjory, and didn't much mind, but papa thought me selfish," whispered the little one in her nurse's ear, as she tied on her sun-bonnet, when she was going with Olive to the apple orchard.

"Never mind what people think, dear," said Marjory; "up is better than down, any time; up leads to all that is noble, and worth living for."

"Ellie, Ellie, may I come?" It was the same boyish voice which had rung across the orchard the morning before, and when Ellie called back, "Yes," like an answering echo, ever vaulted Guy again, over the stile, into the orchard among the apple blossoms, still drifting down through the air.

"This is Cousin Olive, Guy," said his half-embarrassed little friend; "and she knows her scales, and, oh! a lot of things."

"Whew!" laughed the boy, with a touch of shyness, regarding the two mites; "then I suppose you are nowhere."

"Oh, I couldn't be nowhere; I shall always be somewhere," said Ellie, with a little cooing laugh; "and perhaps best, too."

"Ah, will you? We shall see," returned he, pulling one of her yellow rings of hair peeping out from under her sun-hood.

"Well, a dunce can't be best," observed Olive with conviction, "and that's what uncle called her last night."

"Come, come; if you tell tales like that your tongue must be split for a tall tale tell," was the boy's condemnation.

It was Olive's turn to flush now.

"You are a rude boy, you are!" she told him.

"And you are a rude girl to call people dunces to their faces."

"Oh, Guy, I don't mind much," said Ellie, linking her hand in his and feeling so strong with her champion beside her.

"I came to take you over to see mamma," he told her, when she asked him so simply if they should all walk about and talk.

"I'm so glad," cried she, with a jig of pleasure. "Aren't you, Olive?"

And Olive said "Yes" with such a patronizing nod, that Guy drew a long face that made Ellie laugh.

They were soon in the bay-window of the drawing-room, where the bees were still working, and Mrs. Rainsford making friends with Olive, even allowing her to go to the piano and rummage her scales.

"Ellie doesn't know a scale yet, nor a note," she remarked.

"No; but she will in good time," replied gentle Mrs. Rainsford. "Now dears, go and see Guy's pets."

So out they swept into the garden so gay in the May sunshine, round to the tool house and the rabbit and doves. Olive was very much in love with Nigger, and claimed her right as a visitor to take him from Ellie's arms to fondle him, half afraid the while, and he sniffed, and peered up into her face with his little bead-like eyes, as if scarce thinking himself in safe quarters. But while she held him, down came Silverwing from somewhere and settled on Ellie's shoulder, giving her soft cooing note of welcome. With this, down

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went Nigger from Olive's arms, and she darted to grasp the new-comer, crying—

"He's a nasty smelly thing; but Silverwing is a beauty. Let me have her for my very own!" she asked coaxingly of the boy.

"Well, I couldn't do that if I wanted to," he said, "because I've as good as given her to Ellie."

"Oh! Ellie can have Nigger, and I Silverwing—that's fair, isn't it, Ellie?" And Olive coaxed the dove from Ellie's shoulder to hers, where it cooed and seemed half inclined to stay.

"No," said Ellie, almost tempted to cry at the bird's fickleness, "I cannot give you Silverwing; she and Nigger were mine—mine and Guy's—before you came."

"Then you're unkind—you're selfish and cross, same as that greedy chickie—you want everything for yourself," pouted Olive. "But I will have Silverwing, and Nigger, too, if I like, for I'm the eldest, and the eldest must always be first, and have their own way."

"Not so fast," spoke Guy with authority. "I'm the eldest, and I've the right to say no about my own, and I do say it. Silverwing is Ellie's, if I like to give her to her, and possession is nine points of the law, Duke says."

"Duke—who is Duke?" questioned Olive with childish scorn.

"Somebody that'll put you to the right-about. You'll not dare to be masterful with Duke."

"I'm not masterful—masterful isn't a nice thing for a lady to be."

"No, I should think not; so if you will be first in everything you'll know what you are—no lady," said Guy, with a decisive nod.

"And you're no gentleman," returned Olive, with an answering nod.

Mrs. Rainsford now came out and joined them, leading them to an arbor under a pear-tree, wreathed about with flowering honeysuckles. Here they sat down and looked away at the shining waste, dotted here and there with fisher boats.

"Oh, the pretty boats!" laughed Ellie. "How I should like to be a boat."

And Mrs. Rainsford took her on her knee and sang to them, as she often did.

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## HER WILFUL WAY.

By the Author of "Dolly's Golden Slippers," "Claimed at Last," etc.

Then he put her into Ellie's chair where she always sat by his side, and motioned his little daughter to the other seat placed there at the table, as if waiting to be filled by a stranger, not by her. Her pretty silver-tipped knife and fork were laid for her in the place where Olive now sat: these she also took as her right, and began to use gracefully and easily. Her papa had even forgotten to kiss her, his little daughter, whom he had never forgotten before.

"Papa!" she said faintly, "papa!" and then she blushed and hung her head.

But she need not have blushed nor been confused, for her papa did not heed her; he was helping Olive to this and that, and she was chattering to him.

"Uncle Fred"—she called him Uncle Fred as easily as if she had known him for years. "Uncle Fred," she was saying, "I had such a long delightful journey, only there was such a funny old lady sitting by me, and she asked me so many questions that I didn't like her, and said so."

"Yes, my dear, we meet with funny folk everywhere; still, there is no reason why we should be rude to them, or dislike them," returned he. "Oh, one can't help it," said the child.

"Yes, but we may be funny to some people; and do you know what comes next?" asked the doctor, scanning the intelligent little face beside him.

"And we want to be liked," said the nimble little tongue.

"How old are you, Olive?" inquired her uncle presently, passing an apple for her, and doing the same for his little daughter.

"Six, uncle; going for seven," she informed him.

"But I shouldn't wonder if you're quite an accomplished young lady; my small daughter will be nowhere beside you—eh, Ellie?"

"I nearly know all my scales, and I can read and write, and know my tables," so the girl little tongue prattled on, while Ellie's spirits went lower and lower, till at last she bowed her head on her arms, and soothed as she had perhaps never sobbed before.

"My darling, what is it?" asked her father, kindly then.

To which there came only this sobbing response: "Oh! papa, papa!"

"Is it because you are a little dunce?" he whispered in her ear.

"No, papa, it's because I feel like

somebody else," came the words, amid sobs.

"But you're not somebody else; you're my own little daughter, going to have such pleasant times with Olive, and growing wiser every day."

She kissed her; then she ventured to whisper, "Papa, love me best. Oh, papa, papa!"

"I don't know whether you deserve it, Ellie—jealous on the first evening," was the grave response, which Olive hearing, she remarked—

"I'm never jealous, because I always will be first; and the first can't be jealous, and 'tisn't lady-like, is it?"

"It's not good, little Olive," said her uncle, almost severely; and as Ellie continued to cry, he put her from him, and bade her run and tell Marjory to put her to bed, as the best place for a jealous little girl.

So the mite was dismissed in disgrace on the first evening of her cousin's coming to Elm Lodge, as Dr. Wenley's house was called.

Olive slept in a little nest of a room opening out of the nursery.

"Bo-peep!" it was Olive's dusky head peeping into the nursery from her nest the next morning, and her slim white-robed self darted in, when she saw Ellie's eyes were open. The children kissed each other, Olive springing upon Ellie's bed, and nestling there.

"I came to say good morning, and to be dressed—dressed first; I always like to be dressed first, Mrs. Marjory," she said to that good woman.

"All in good time, Miss Olive, but I thought of dressing Miss Ellie first, so that she may run down and see Jane feed the chickens; she always does," was the reply.

"But I should like to see Jane feed the chickens; dress me first, and let me go down. Ellie can come after—that would be nice—wouldn't it, Ellie?"

And Ellie answered, after a short perplexed pause, "Yes, nice for you," and looked at nurse with dumbly appealing eyes.

"Right, dearie," nodded nurse, as if the child had guessed a riddle; and she whisked away downstairs on an errand of her own.

"Now, Miss Olive, come," said she briskly, upon returning, and proceeded with the child's bath and toilet.

"There, Miss Olive, I think you'll do," said she—she looked daintily pretty in her white frock and red sash.

"Ask Jane to keep just a wee handful till I come," called Ellie wistfully after her cousin, as she went away.

"I think she will, dearie," were nurse's reassuring words. "You were right to give up."

"I mean to give up all the days," returned the child in unconscious self-sunder.

And soon the too was below, in the morning sunshine, standing among the fowls in the yard.

"I wanted all you came, miss, same

## WATCH The Kidneys.

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Sail away, little boat, sail away, Out over the stormy sea, Dost know little eyes, little hands, little hearts, Are waiting on land for thee?

Sail away, little boat, sail away, Wherever thy course may be, For fond little loves, little hopes, Little prayers, Are thrilling on land for thee.

Sailing home, little boat, sailing home, Over the fair sunset sea; On shore little lips, little eyes, little smiles, Are waiting to welcome thee.

And oh! little boat, little boat, If lost on the stormy sea, Be sure little eyes, little loves, little hearts, Will weep, and remember thee."

"Oh, Mrs. Rainsford, I shouldn't like to be a boat—I shouldn't—I shouldn't!" cried Ellie, when the ditty came to an end, laying her head on the gentle lady's bosom, and sobbing.

"No; and it's not worth crying about, Ellie, because you never will," observed sensible Guy.

"No; and people need never cry over what never comes true," added Olive complacently.

"Well," said Guy, "it must be awfully hard to be lost at sea, and to feel that they at home were waiting for one, and not knowing a bit of what was happening to one."

Ah! could the boy have looked into the future, so mercifully hidden from us all by the mists shutting us into the golden present—golden, because it is really all of life which is ours to use.

Well, he took no such peep, but sauntered away with his two little girl friends, to leave them at the gate of Elm Lodge, himself returning to hard work at lessons in his

father's study. Ellie stayed on the lawn for a romp with Rover, losing a ball hither and thither, she and the dog tumbling over together in their scramble after it; but Olive went indoors to be down, she said, because she was tired.

Presently Ellie stopped in her play to watch a bright, many-colored butterfly careering along—just like a beautiful lady, she thought—following it as it fluttered on and on. In at the glass door of the drawing-room standing ajar, and admitting many a bee and butterfly; in went the beautiful flying lady, in followed the child, ball in hand. Flit, flit, the small creature made the tour of the place, Ellie after it, if so be she might catch it. But what was that? A costly vase lying in fragments on the floor in her way; one of her dear dead mamma's vases and which she had heard her papa say was priceless in his eyes. She had always been warned not to touch it or its fellows, may, she had been forbidden to enter the drawing-room without leave, only the butterfly made her forget, and now here she was, and there lay the costly vase in pieces at her feet. How had it happened? Had she done it? In a maze of bewilderment she stood; away flew the butterfly from the blame, if blame there were, and only remained regarding it with baby concern.

"Ellie, what is this?" It was her father, come home to luncheon, and entering the house this way, who has done this?" he inquired, sorrow and sternness in his voice, the while he laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Not me, papa! oh, not me!" said the startled, terrified child.

"Not you—who then?"

CHAPTER IV.—A MYSTERY—THE CAPTIVE PRINCESS—DRIFTING OUT TO SEA.

"It must be a story, Ellie," so her father spoke his conviction.

"No, papa, no." She did not sob now, only made her pitiful protest.

"Well, tell me how it happened, and let me judge."

Thus admonished, the child told her story.

"I saw a pretty butterfly come in

and I came in to watch it, and—and I saw mamma's vase all in bits, and—and I think the butterfly did it." This last babyish idea was against her.

This little daughter of his shifting the blame off her own shoulders to lay it on the butterfly, rather than own the truth. This was the view the hard-working doctor took of the case, understanding his patient's ailments better than his own child's heart.

"Ellie, I can't believe you. Go; I haven't time to go into the matter now, but tell Marjory not to send you downstairs to-night, for I fear you're a very naughty child."

He put her from him, and she went straying away, too dazed and bewildered to cry or to make any childish appeal. Whither could she go? To Marjory, of course.

Strum—strum—strum—that was practising her scales in the library, on the little old piano there. The door stood open—she went wandering in, a child's craving for a child's sympathy prompting her to enter.

"Olive?" The little daisy face was now drenched with tears, as she stood disconsolately at the other's side, and Olive's hands stayed their strumming to inquire—

"What is the matter, Ellie?" keeping her face turned shyly away, as if not liking to see the tears in her cousin's.

(To be continued.)

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