

Children's Department.

Very Cold.

Fast falls the chilling snow,
The flakes are large and white,
The birds are chirping mournfully
At such a dreary sight.

Upon the leafless tree
They perch quite close together,
Doing their best to keep them warm
This snowy, wintry weather.

What will they do for food?
There's nothing to be seen;
No worms, no berries, and no flies,
Nor any bit of green!

Why, children, now's your time;
Upon the threshold stand,
And throw your crumbs across the snow
With loving, liberal hand.

A Runaway.

BY CAROL HUNTINGTON.

Mrs. Tyler and her daughter Helen were driving slowly along a quiet country road one warm summer morning, when they saw, just under a tree by the roadside, the figure of a little girl. Her broad hat was pushed back from her pretty, smiling face. Her hands were clasped behind her. She might have been four or five years old.

The child watched them from under her long lashes as they drove up beside her, but she did not move.

"Good morning, little girl," said Mrs. Tyler, pleasantly, stopping up old Lightfoot with a mild "Whoa!"

The little girl still smiled without embarrassment, but she said nothing.

"Where do you live?" continued Mrs. Tyler.

The child pointed backward with a vague and sweeping gesture, as though she did not care to tell.

"What is your name?"

The sweet voice had its effect upon the child at last, and she answered, hesitatingly, "Florry."

"But the nearest house is a quarter-of-a-mile off. You are a good way from home this warm morning. Did your mamma send you on an errand?"

The child shook her head.

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"Well," persisted the good lady, "you had better jump into the phaeton with us, and I will take you home. Come!"—as Florry paused unwillingly.

"I isn't ever going home any more," she said at length. "They gived my little kittens away, and I isn't going home till I finds my kitties."

She swallowed a little sob as she spoke, and the ladies saw that there were traces of tears underneath the smile upon her round face.

"Oh, I wouldn't say that," expostulated Mrs. Tyler. "Just think how your mamma may be worrying about you at this very moment. People always have to give little kittens away. They can't keep all of them. There wouldn't be any room for little girls, nor anything for them to eat, you might almost say, if we tried to keep all the little kitties—and you don't

want to keep them, unless they can be taken good care of. It is a great deal of trouble to see to ever so many little kitties."

The child's quick eyes were fixed closely on the lady's face. She seemed to feel as though what she said had a glimmer of truth in it—truth which had never dawned upon her childish sense before.

"Ye-es," she admitted doubtfully, and half stepping forward to enter the low phaeton; "but my little kitties were so pretty,—and the old kitty took care of them—and she didn't mind the trouble,—and now they have gived away all but the yellow kitty—and there were four kitties."

Helen Tyler gently pulled the fat little hand, and the child was soon sitting between the ladies, while they turned about, hoping to find the little one's home.

Her dusty shoes indicated that she had walked a considerable distance. She could not describe her father's house, but it was not the first one they came to, as she emphatically declared.

A patch of wood intervened between this house and the next one. Many flowers grew in among the trees, and Helen Tyler stopped to gather some great purple orchids which were in plain sight from the road. Florry alighted with her and filled her hands with the gorgeous blooms.

"Don't go so far," Mrs. Tyler called after them as they strayed farther and farther off in pursuit of the enticing clumps of beauty which shone through the distant underbrush. "You know this child's mother is probably worrying about her, and we must try to get her home soon."

"Yes, mamma," shouted Helen, and she turned to come back; but at just that moment a tiny wail fell upon the child's keen ear.

"My kitties! My kitties!" she cried, and dropping her flowers, she ran toward the direction whence the sound proceeded. Helen followed as fast as she could, but by the time she reached a rock which lay in the way and was climbing over it, she saw that Florry had found her precious kittens. A perfidious "hired man" had taken them away, and had promised to drown them, but either his heart had failed him or he had decided to shirk or postpone a disagreeable duty—for here was the basket with four kittens in it, which Florry triumphantly declared to be the very four which she had been mourning. Of course nothing would do but that the basket should be transferred to the phaeton, and, in spite of the good advice which Mrs. Tyler had so freely bestowed upon the child, she saw that trouble and expense were not to be weighed in the balance against the love which she cherished for the furry, playful little balls.

At the very next house, a pleasant gray mansion set well back from the road, they saw an anxious looking woman standing on the piazza and shading her eyes with her hand, as she gazed up and down the fields.

"Mamma!" cried Florry, excitedly, "here I is—and here is the dear little kitties! That naughty John didn't give 'em to anybody. He just leaved them in the woods,—and the lady and I founded 'em."

The poor mother's dismay was apparent in every feature, but she was so glad to see Florry back again that she could not find fault.

"I think," suggested Mrs. Tyler, after all the thanks and explanations were over, "I think I might have a

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kitty or two to pay for bringing a little girl home."

Florry's face darkened, but her mother appreciated the lady's merciful intention.

"I think it would be only kind, Florry," she whispered.

"I like cats," urged Mrs. Tyler, "and we have just taken the cottage on the point for the summer, and we haven't any cats, not any at all."

Sympathy beamed from every line of the child's chubby face.

"Poor lady!" sighed her mother. So two of the precious kittens were left in the basket, and were driven off in the phaeton.

Whenever visitors came to the "cottage on the point" that summer, they were greatly amused with the antics of