

snow, with bill and feet of roses; and tiny round eyes like black diamonds encircled with rubies. The wings moved, opened, fluttered and delicious cooing filled the air.

The children were dumbfounded by the wonderful sight; but soon recovered and danced and sang for very joy.

One of the doves flew to the blessed Virgin and nestled on her shoulder: Seeming so happy and perfectly at ease under her caressing touch.

The other, on the contrary flew to a palm-tree and perched there. Mary called it to her, but it would not come. Presently, hearing twittering and chirruping it flew away to investigate, and saw on the roof of a pagan temple, some distance away, a great number of birds. It joined them, without exactly knowing they were the very kind it should avoid. At first it was well received, and like many another vain little simpleton, swelled with pride and self-importance, at the praise bestowed on its pretty plumage. Soon, however, bickerings arose, followed by nasty quarrels, in one of which the innocent little dove totally unused to such scenes, and unable to defend itself, was attacked by a vicious old raven, who trampled it under foot and rolled it in the gutter.

At night the much abused fledgeling returned to the home of the Holy Family; heartsore, dirty, minus many of its fine feathers. It tapped timidly, with its bill on the window. St. Joseph came and took it in.

As soon as Jesus saw it, he had pity on it. He washed it, bathed it, restored its missing feathers and gently said:

Take care, little birdie, you do not love my Mother: that is a very bad sign in a dove! You go and keep company with wicked pagan birds of Memphis, instead of remaining at home like your little sister: You run many dangers especially from the sparrowhawk "Horus," which the Egyptians worship, but which is nothing, more or less, than the devil himself disguised. Oh! I beg of you, take care, for if he catches you, he will eat you up.

The little culprit seemed sorry and promised not to go back to those evil birds again.

Alas! the very next morning, as soon as the window was opened, lured by the air and sun, it forgot all its