

whom she lived had taught her the sin and folly of giving way to passion, and Polly sometimes tried hard to conquer her unruly spirit, but her failures were many, and her victories but few. But to-day, as she hurried towards the shore, her merry, eager face showed no sign of anything but good temper. The tide was out, and Polly was going on the low rocks to gather sea-weed to use as manure for their little potato garden. With her long rake she would scrape together the slippery black weed (so much prized by fishing folk), and carry it to the beach, where she carefully piled it above high-water mark. When she had got together a good large heap her grandfather would bring their old donkey Jack, and load him with a large bag of sea-weed, which he would patiently carry to their garden.

This morning, although the wind blew Polly's rough curls into her eyes, and fluttered her short petticoats, the sun shone brightly, and with a light heart and busy hand the little girl began her work. There were several other people scattered over the rocks engaged like herself, but Polly did not take much notice of them, she was too busy scraping and picking to need any company, and very soon her pile of sea weed rose to a good height.

Now, one of the sea-weed pickers was no friend of Polly's. He was a great, awkward-looking boy called Bob Thomas, and he liked nothing better than to see Polly in one of her tempers, so he never lost a chance of teasing the little girl, and making her 'flare up,' as he called it. To-day was too good an opportunity to be lost, so the naughty, thoughtless lad waited his time. It soon came. Polly, who had not even noticed him, so intent was she on her work, had just stepped on a rather dangerous point of rock, so slippery that her bare feet had a difficulty in keeping their hold.

Right under it was a pool of deep, clear water, while all around was a splendid crop of sea-weed. Polly was raking with uncommon ardour, and cleverly balancing herself as she did so. At this moment her enemy drew near, and thinking it a good time to play off one of his foolish jokes, stole softly up to the poor lit-

tle sea-weed gatherer and shouted 'halloo' right in her ear. The unexpected noise made Polly start, she lost her balance, tried to recover it, and struck out wildly with her rake, and at last fell into the middle of the pool. Her upset was greeted with a shout of laughter from Bob, in which some of the others were unkind enough to join. Polly scrambled to her feet, drenched to the skin, and turned on her tormentor a face crimson with rage. Clenching her little fists she poured out a torrent of angry words directly she found her breath. 'Oh, you wicked, wicked boy. I hate you, I do. I'll——' but what Polly would do was lost in renewed shouts of laughter, and certainly she presented a very comical little figure with her clothes all sticking to her, and the water running in little streams from her hair. Still, it wasn't kind of them to laugh at her. Perhaps it will seem strange that Polly did not run home at once and change her clothes, but fishermen's children are used to frequent wetting in salt water.

So, still flushed and angry, Polly simply wrung most of the water out of her things, and went to work again. But she was in a very different mood to that in which she had begun her work. All the brightness had gone from her face, and although she raked and gathered with as much energy as ever, it was in a sullen, unhappy spirit. Badly as she had been treated, she felt she had done wrong in going into such a violent rage. She was sure God was not pleased with her, and yet she felt as if she could never forgive Bob Thomas. So some little time passed away. The tide, which had turned long ago, was now flowing in fast. It would soon reach the spot where Polly stood—she was alone now, the others had gone further along the shore. Raising her eyes to glance at the oncoming waters to judge how much longer she had to stay there, Polly caught sight of a long rake lying just at the edge of the water. Directly she saw it, she knew it belonged to Bob Thomas, even before she saw the great staring letters R. T. cut on the handle. Bob had evidently forgotten it. All at once an evil thought came into Polly's mind.

She would not tell Bob about the rake; she would leave it to be covered and lost in the waves. It would just serve him out for treating her so badly, and Polly turned her back on the rake and went on with her work. But somehow she could not feel satisfied to leave it so. She felt she was giving place to the evil one. What should she do? And so the conflict went on in the little girl's heart. Meanwhile, the waves came tumbling in very fast, one quicker than its fellows almost touched the handle of the rake. If Polly meant to save it she must call out to Bob at once or it would be too late. For one moment she paused, glanced first on Bob's far-off figure, then on the rake, now half-covered with water. Then from the little tempted heart rose the cry, 'Lord Jesus, help me; help me to do what's right,' and the help came.

In a very choky voice Polly called out, 'Bob Thomas, Bob Thomas, come and fetch your rake, it's most covered in the waves.'

Bob looked up and glanced toward the place from which the sound came. Suddenly he remembered his rake, and rushed to the spot just in time to save it from being swallowed up in the sea. Polly had turned away, and was picking her way to the beach with her bundle of dripping sea-weed under her arm. But Bob followed her, looking very red and shame-faced. 'Stop a minute, Polly, I want to say something to ye. If you ain't a regular good one I don't know who is. It was downright good of ye to tell me about the rake after the shabby trick I served ye. In another moment it would ha' been gone and I should ha' caught it finely from father; and look here, Polly,' said Bob, striking the rock with the rake to enforce his words, 'I'll promise ye this, I'll never tease ye again as long as my name is Bob Thomas.'

And Bob kept his word. So Polly gained her victory—a double one too, for she conquered herself and her enemy.—A.I.D., in 'Children's Friend.'

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