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Boys and Girls.

In Explanation.

Yes, I'm the family baby,
And oh, the day I came
They did the greatest talking,
A-finding me a name!

For sister wanted Ethel,
And brother, Bess or Nan,
While auntie favored Winifred
And Grandma Hester Ann.

They did the greatest talking!
But father, when 'twas through,
Just called me after mother, dear,
And so I'm Little Sue.

The Little Bird Prisoner.

He fluttered against the bars of his cell and begged to be let out. All his little feathers were getting crumpled and torn so soon. That troubled Teresa most of all. The poor little peep-peep-peeping she could stand quite well, now that she was getting used to it.

"You won't be homesick very long, birdie mine," she said consolingly. "You'll get 'customed to it. I did. First I s'posed I'd die; but, when I didn't, I kept getting cuder 'n' cuder until I was all well. If you only keep still long enough."

The little prisoner had been in his beautiful gilded prison only a very short time. Just the tiniest bit of a while ago he had been at home in the long-handled elm with the rest of the children. He had never dreamed of going to jail—oh, no, no! How could he know that Teresa had the little prison door all open, ready, the minute Felix should catch him? "I've got him!" at last Felix had shouted in triumph, and then the prison door had shut. It had stayed shut ever since.

Teresa's window was sunny and full of bright flowers. It seemed like a beautiful place to swing, in a golden cage; but the little captive oriole was homesick. He kept right on beating his tiny wings against the bars, and calling piteously to the oriole mother in the long-handled elm. And at last she came. She brought him juicy worms, and sat on the outside of the cage and talked little encouraging talks to him, as other mothers do. She came again and again. One day Teresa sat in the window, and listened drowsily to the conversation. "Peep! peep!" Why, no, it was in words, like other people. Teresa held her breath in wonder, and listened harder than ever. The oriole mother was saying something. Hark!

"Cheer-up, cheer-up. Things will clear-up, clear-up," she sang in her sweet, plaintive voice. Teresa thought it sounded as if there were tears in it, as Mother Annet's voice did when she felt sorrowful.

"Never-mind, never-mind, dear. Somebody-will-be-kind, dear," trilled on the little voice, comfortingly. The little mother pressed close to the prison bars, and her bright feathers mingled with the little captive's. For a while they seemed to be whispering, and Teresa could not hear what they said. Then the mother kissed her child good-bye—it truly looked so! Teresa could hardly believe it; but didn't she see it with her own eyes, and hear the queer, chirpy little "smack?"

"Cheer-up, cheer-up, dear. Things will clear-up, clear-up, dear. Somebody will be kind. Never mind. Somebody'll open the gate, dear. Somebody will be kind," the little bird mother sang all the way home.

Then Teresa opened her eyes. She had been asleep! To be sure, the little bird mother was there, but she wasn't talking in words at all. The tears were in her voice, though. Teresa was sure of that.

"Cheep! cheep!" coaxed the little prisoner. "Che-ep! che-ep!" answered the oriole mother wistfully. And how very much it did sound like "Cheer up, cheer up!" to Teresa.

The little girl sat in sober thought for a long time. Then she sprang, to her feet, and ran to the window. The mother bird had flown back to her other babies, in the long-handled elm, and her clear song came floating across to them on a special little breeze—a kind little breeze.

"Somebody will be kind," murmured Teresa; and she was not thinking of a little breeze just then. She put up her hand and gently opened the door of the golden-barred prison.

"Things will clear-up, clear-up, dear. Somebody-will-be-kind."

And with one shrill, glad note the free little fellow hurried home.

My Boy.

Ah, there he goes, my manly boy,
The dearest lad of all;
Some little one's in trouble now,
Has had a blow or fall.
But Fred is sure to be on hand,
When trouble is in the air;
Where wrongs rise up or right deeds aid,
My manly boy is there.

He never sees a weak one hurt,
Whate'er the game may be;
Strong and brave as his blue eyes light,
True hearted, too, is he.
He is trusty as a man could be—
Whatever he has said,
Be sure his promise he will keep;
My honest boy is Fred.

He is always gentle in his ways,
As if his tender heart
Holding some love for everyone
Of each act formed a part.
A fault with him is soon forgot,
Or trifles that annoy;
His bright face meets full many smiles—
My thoughtful, loving boy.

The Candid Little Boy.

Don't want to be no angel,
With wings, an' other trimmin';
Ruther have a holiday
Fishin', or a-swimmin'!

Ruther be off yonder,
Singin' in the sun—
Don't want to be no angel
Till I can't help bein' one!

What's the Use.

I
What's the use o' growin' up?
You can't paddle with your toes
In a puddle; you can't yell
When you're feelin' extra well,
Why, every feller knows
A grown-up can't let loose.
I don't want to be no older—
What's the use?

II
What's the use o' growin' up?
When I'm big I don't suppose
Explorin' would be right
In a neighbor's field at night—
I don't like to get my clo'es
I don't want to be no older—
What's the use?

III
What's the use o' growin' up?
You couldn't ride the cow,
An' the rabbits an' the pig
Don't like you 'cause you're big
I'm comfortubest now,
Praps I'm a goose;
I don't want to be no older—
What's the use?

IV
What's the use o' growin' up?
When yer growed, why every day
All watermelon juice,
You just have to be one thing.
I'm a pirate, or a king,
Or a cow-boy—I can play
That I'm anything I choose.
I don't want to be no older—
What's the use?

A Modern Miracle.

Once, w'en I'm sick, th' doctor come
An' 'en I put my tongue 'way out,
An' he says, "H-m-m-m! Nurse get some
Warm water, please." An' in about
A minute, w'y, she did, an' 'en
He put a glass thing into it
An' 'en he wiped it off again
An' put it in my mouth a bit.

'En after w'ile he took it out
An' held it up w'ere he could see,
An' 'en he says, "H-m-m-m! 'st about
Too high a half of a degree."
An' 'en ma asked him if I'm bad
An' he says "Nope!" 'st gruff and
cross

An' 'en she's mad an' he 'st bust
Out laughin' an' he says "Don't fret,
He's goin' t' be all right, I trust."
W'y, he ain't even half dead yet.
An' 'en he felt my pulse, 'st w'ay,
An' patted me on my head
An' says, "There ain't no school to-day,
'Cuz one of th' trustees is dead!"

An' my, I'm awful sorry w'en
He told me that. An' 'en he said
"He'll be all right by noon," an' 'en
He went away. An' ma says "Ned,
How do you feel?" An' 'en, you know,
Since doctor told me that, somehow,
I'm awful sick a while aro.
But, my! I'm almost well right now!

So Say We All of Us.

When I was just a little boy,
My gran'ther used to say:
"Just keep on growin', sonny, and
You'll be a man some day."
Ah, would my gran'ther could decree
Another kind of joy,
And I would grow the other way
Until I was a boy!

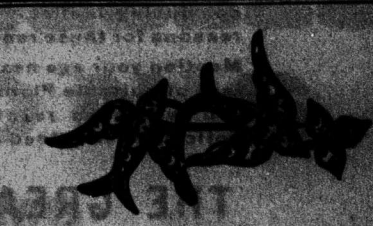
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