

THE PINCUSHION DOLL.

Once upon a time there was a pincushion that wished to be a doll. It belonged to the mother of two baby girls whose names were Laura and Mary Anna. Day after day the pincushion saw the little sisters hugging and cuddling their dolls, singing to them, and playing with them from morning until night. The pincushion did not dream that she could be a doll herself until she discovered that almost anything will do for a doll; a doll was sometimes a towel rolled up, or a pillow case, or a little old dress—it made no difference to the babies; they were all cuddled and loved.

When the pincushion noticed that, she began to fidget. She squirmed pins loose, soiled her dress, and untied her bows; she was a long pincushion, with a soft, soft doll heart. She began to tumble toward the front of the dressing table, and she hoped and hoped that the babies would see her. At last the pincushion had her wish.

It was the day of the evening party that Laura and Mary Anna's mother noticed that her pretty pincushion was soiled. "We must wash this pincushion cover and press the ribbon," said she. "Everything in this house must be fresh and spotless."

When mother sat down to undress the pincushion, Laura and Mary Anna stood by her side and watched. The pincushion kept saying over and over in its soft heart, "Oh, let me be a doll, little girls! Oh, let me be a doll!"

Straightway the wonder happened. "Why, it is a doll!" exclaimed Mary Anna, and she ran away for a moment. She came back with the bisque doll's muslin bonnet, which exactly fitted the pincushion's head.

"Now wrap something round it," begged the little sister.

Straightway the pincushion was wrapped in a towel, and became a doll in Mary Anna's soft, round arms. You can understand how happy Mary Anna was, but unless you have been a pincushion you can have no idea how happy the new doll felt as Mary Anna rocked and cuddled it and cuddled and rocked it.

After awhile Mary Anna let Laura hold the doll, and Laura sang kindergarten songs to it, all about the old owl that lived in the tree, the shoemaker, and ever so many others.

At noon, when the little girls went to luncheon, they put the pincushion to bed, bonnet and all. You may be sure that the doll did not sleep, but lay there wide-awake, thinking and thinking what a beautiful thing it is to be a doll.

About three o'clock that afternoon mother began to search for the pincushion. She wished to put on the fresh cover.

So Laura and Mary Anna carried the pincushion to their mother.

Mother had to go to the telephone, and when she came back, the cushion was nowhere to be seen. No one could find it for a long, long time.

You see, the pincushion was trying the magic of hiding in plain sight. It did not wish to be a pincushion again, and that was why it tried the hiding magic. In every room mother and Laura and Mary Anna searched for that pincushion; high and low they hunted; in chairs and under chairs, on beds and under beds they looked, until at last they found it on the arm of mother's wicker rocking-chair.

"It doesn't like to be a pincushion," said the little girls. "It wishes to be a doll."

"That is sad, I am sure," said their mother. "We must grant the wish."

And so ever since that happy day the pincushion has been a doll; it wears a muslin bonnet and a starched plaid gingham dress, and is loved and cuddled by two little girls.

—*Youth's Companion*

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