

NOT STUCK UP.

WELL, you do look like a posy, sure enough," said Susan, the maid, as Elsie walked through the hall. "Wher are you going this nice morning?"

"I'm going down to poor old Aunt Dinah's, to take her some flowers," said Elsie. "She says she gets 'pow'rful tired in dis Norf country secin' so few flowers.'"

Susan laughed as Elsie went out into the garden.

Anyone who had seen the dear little maiden would surely have agreed with Susan.

She walked about, taking in the full sweetness of the early June day, wondering if ever a day had been quite so perfect before. Every dewdrop added a brightness to the smile with which the darling little flowers looked up in the sunshine. The birds chirped and trilled and twittered as if they were all trying which could say the most about the beautiful day.

"Don't be sorry because I pick you, you beauties!" said Elsie. "I know it's nice to stay here in the sunshine and just look pretty; but mamma says everything cught to be good for something else besides that. And that's what I'm taking you for."

But outside the garden, and down the road, Elsie found some things not so pleasant as the flowers and the birds. Three shabby, unwashed little children—a boy and a girl and a baby—were playing in the sand.

"My, ain't she dressed up nice?" exclaimed the girl, as she looked at Elsie.

"I know she's stuck up!" said the boy. "Folks like that always is stuck up. She thinks more of her clean duds 'n anything else in the world."

Elsie thought it very disagreeable for anyone to talk so.

Aunt Dinah was sitting alone in her wee little house, looking wistfully at the beautiful world outside, when Elsie came to her window and held up the flowers.

"You'se for all de world jes' like a summer mornin' yo'self, honey," she said, as Elsie found a vase for the flowers.

"Aunt Dinah," said Elsie, soberly, "is it any harm to like to have on clean clothes and look nice?"

"Any harm! Why, bress your little heart, didn't de good Lord make such as you jes' to go roun' a shinin' an' a beamin' like de flowers?"

"I don't know, Aunt Dinah," said the little girl, shaking her head very gravely. "It seems to me that little girls ought t' be good for more than flowers. If they weren't meant to be so, they wouldn't have been able to walk about and talk, and do lots of other things, would they?"

"Dat's more'n I can tell, honey. But I don't make no doubt you'll be 'nough sight better'n a flower some time."

"I'd like to be now," said Elsie, as she walked away, after saying good bye to Aunt Dinah.

She did not like to go by the rude children again, so she went down a little lane, which brought her out by the river just above the saw-mills.

"Ha! ha! There she is again!"

"And just as stuck up as ever."

The other children must have liked the lane and the brook as well as she. There they were, and the saucy boy stooped to pick up a bit of dirt to throw at her as she hurried by.

But it was never thrown, for as he raised his arm he caught sight of something which made his face turn pale.

"The baby!" he screamed.

Elsie looked where he pointed. Down the bank the poor little unkept two-year-old had made his way, and had crept upon a log which lay in the water close to the shore. From this he had climbed to another and another log, until he now stood balancing himself upon one which lay next to the dark water beyond.

With shrieks for help the boy rushed toward the mills, while his sister ran wildly about, screaming, "Mamma! mamma!"

Elsie was older than either of them. Swiftly into her little head came thoughts of stories she had heard about the folly of people allowing themselves to become frightened in times of danger instead of trying to do their best to help. She ran down the bank, and, before the boy had reached the mill, was setting her feet upon the logs.

Her head grew dizzy as they tipped and rolled under, and she half thought of going back. But she heard a pitiful little cry from the baby, and could not find it in her heart to turn her back upon him. Nearer and nearer she came, and had almost reached him, when he slipped into the water. Elsie threw herself at full length on the log, and stretching out her arm could just lay hold of his dress. She grasped it tightly, holding on with all her might as the cruel water seemed determined to sweep her away.

"Hold on a minute longer!"

Shouts and footsteps were coming near, and Elsie was seized by a pair of strong arms just as she was being drawn into the water.

"You're a brave little girl," said the man who carried her to the bank, while another brought the baby.

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"Someone at the door wishes to see you, Elsie," said her mother to her the next morning.

A very dirty, bareheaded, barefooted little boy stood there with a great bunch of wild flowers which he offered to Elsie, saying:

"You ain't stuck up a mite, and I'm no end o' sorry I said you was. You laid right down on the dirty log with all your clean things on—and if you hadn't—we—we shouldn't a' had any—baby to our house this mornin'."