

Will and his mother hurried out of bed and into the room of the hut from which the singing had appeared to come. But they found no birds there, nor was there a golden haired little girl with a squirrel and rabbit in her arms. However, they found surprises enough, for although Will's stocking was hanging limp and unfilled on the chair where he had pinned it, a glorious fire was roaring up the chimney, the little table was laid with a breakfast good enough for a king, and—wonder of wonders!—in a corner of the room stood a Christmas tree laden with beautiful and useful presents.

"Mother, mother," cried Will, dancing around the room, "you do know now that I didn't dream the little girl, the birds, the squirrel and rabbit. They did truly come to see me, and they've been here again."

"Someone very good and kind has been here," said the widow, looking up from a purse full of money, with her own name written on it, that she had just taken from the tree.

"Oh, mother, mother," cried Will,

"I tried the happy little boy and girl, I know you can find them!" "How shall I?"

"Yes," she said, "and send my little boy to school, where he may learn to be wise as well as good. See, there are new clothes for you on the tree and school books, also toys and candy."

It would take too long to tell of the happy Christmas Will and his mother spent in the little hut far away in the forest or of the bright days that followed, in which Will and his mother used their gifts and planned what they would do when the snow melted away.

When the spring did come, Will and his mother moved into the nearest town. Will went to school and, after a great many years of patient study, became a famous man. But, with all his cleverness, he never found out where the little golden-haired girl, with her furry pets, lived, and when he walked in the forest and heard the little birds sing, he could not understand the exact meaning of their telling of the story.

