

The child listened to the lugubrious canine wails for a moment; then she said thoughtfully: "I feel kind of sorry for this poor dog, though. He sounds as if he wanted the moon just dreadf'ly."

"Um . . . yes . . . I presume likely he thinks he does. But he'll feel better about it by and by. He'll realize that, same as you say, the moon wasn't made for a dog. Just as soon as he comes to that conclusion, he'll be a whole lot better dog. . . . Yes, and a happier one, too," he added, slowly.

Barbara did not speak at once and Jed began to whistle a doleful melody. Then the former declared, with emphasis: "I think *some* dogs are awf'ly nice."

"Um? . . . What? . . . Oh, you do, eh?"

She snuggled close to him on the bench.

"I think you're awf'ly nice, too, Uncle Jed," she confided.

Jed looked down at her over his spectacles.

"Sho! . . . Bow, wow!" he observed.

Babbie burst out laughing. Ruth turned and came toward them over the dew-sprinkled grass.

"What are you laughing at, dear?" she asked.

"Oh, Uncle Jed was so funny. He was barking like a dog."

Ruth smiled. "Perhaps he feels as if he were our watchdog, Babbie," she said. "He guards us as if he were."

Babbie hugged her back-step-uncle's coat sleeve.

"He's a great, big, nice old watchdog," she declared. "We love him, don't we, Mamma?"

Jed turned his head to listen.

"Hum . . ." he drawled. "That dog up town has stopped his howlin'. Perhaps he's beginnin' to realize what a lucky critter he is."