

THE BOYS AND GIRLS

Jo's April Fool

"Poor boy! He has two decayed teeth. How I wish I could take the ache and have them pulled for him!"

That was mamma talking to Aunt Helen across the breakfast table. Some one had left the stairway door ajar, and I could hear every word.

All night, mamma had trotted upstairs and down, trying to ease those dreadful jumping teeth. Just at daylight the ache grew better, and I slept as sound as a coon in winter, till awakened by the sharp clatter of the breakfast dishes.

"He is asleep now, and his teeth will probably only grumble today, but I expect to be up with him tonight again. Poor boy!"

"I should say, 'poor' mamma, too," Aunt Helen answered. "Why doesn't Jo have his aching teeth out?"

I sat up in bed to hear mamma's answer.

"The poor boy so fears having a dentist touch his teeth, I dread telling him that, unless they soon loosen, he may have them drawn. I dread the extracting even more than he does."

"April fool! April fool!" the milkman's boy shouted out in the street. Those dreadful teeth had made me forget it was April Fool Day, and all the first-class fools I had planned to play on our folks.

Mamma brought up my breakfast, a real company breakfast, but she looked so tired and so good that to tell her, as I had planned, that her apron was afire, didn't seem funny at all; nor to hurry her to the window, telling her papa's horse had run away.

After breakfast, I dressed and went downstairs, but not one of my April fools did I try all the forenoon. It seemed too mean when everybody else was so kind, trying to help keep the ache out of my teeth.

Mamma was frying the ham for dinner, and Aunt Helen was tying on her hood to run down street for a dozen eggs papa forgot to order, when the brightest April fool plan you ever thought of popped into my head. I would have those two teeth out without mamma knowing a hop of it, and a just splendid April fool it would be for her when she came to look for them in my mouth.

I didn't stop to think how it would hurt, but whispered my plan to Aunt Helen. She nodded her head, softly closed the sitting-room door, hurried on my overcoat and cap, and in three minutes we had crept from the sitting-room as still as mice, through the front hall-door, and were soon in the dentist's office.

"Think of the dear mamma you're saving so many hard steps in the night; how she dreads this for you, and of the grand April fool you'll have to play on the home folks!" Aunt Helen whispered just as I climbed into the dentist's chair.

I shut my eyes tight and opened my mouth wide, and in a minute it was over. Just two short pulls and those teeth were out, ache and all, and I was so glad I wanted to turn a double hand-spring on the dentist's swinging-table.

Aunt Helen bought her eggs, and we got home without mamma missing me from the sitting-room.

After the ham and eggs were fried, she opened the door to ask: "Jo, my

boy, is it toast and jelly, or a soft custard for your dinner?"

I said: "Ham and hot potato and eggs, if you please, mamma, a big plateful, for my mouth is better, and I am as hungry as a bear."

Aunt Helen's eyes shone like stars when mamma crossed the room, and said, "Let me see those poor teeth, Jo; maybe they have loosened."

I opened my mouth, and, oh, wasn't it fun alive when mamma stooped to look for them, and wasn't it a real First-of-July April fool when she stared and stared for those two miserable, gone teeth, and I halloed: "April fool!" A big, big April fool for you, mamma!

Some Merry Games

A fine game is called "kick the cushion." The more people there are to play the merrier, but two equal sides are necessary. The sides join hands in a ring and have a cushion or hassock, end up, in the centre. Then they dance round it, and suddenly one side gives the other side a violent tug to make one of the members knock down the hassock. Whoever knocks it down first is out of the game.

"Fox after chickens" is another good game. An older person is the fox, and her position is to run about pretending to pick up sticks. The "hen," who is the mother of the chickens, should also be an "elder," and should have a long train of chicks behind her, all standing one behind the other, holding on to

Another interesting game is "Hop." A ring of chairs (one for each person) should be placed in the middle of a room, with one vacant. Some one should stand in the ring. Then the fun commences. The persons seated slide quickly from one chair to another, so that the vacant chair is difficult to be seen. The person in the middle must try to get into the vacant chair. When he succeeds, whoever was on the chair last must go to the middle.

The Fussy Canary

I had once a canary which, in spite of all my coaxing, simply would not bathe. Every time I came near his cage with the little white bathtub filled with water he would curl up into the sulkiest little yellow ball you can possibly imagine. High on the topmost perch would he sit, the very picture of rage. If I put the tub in the cage he would fight me, shriek out little sharp, discordant notes and fly into such a tempest of anger that for fear he would hurt himself, I had to take out the hated tub.

So I had resigned myself to his untidy nature, when, one day, I accidentally broke the white tub and in its place I chanced to take a curiously shaped little Japanese dish of blue-and-white china.

As I came near the cage Tramp's joyous morning carol stopped short and he flew up to the topmost perch, as sulky a little bird as you would care to see. But what is this? I placed the dish in the cage and as the sharp little black eyes rested on it the yellow ball flew down with outstretched wings and glad chirps of joy, perched for an instant on the brim of the dish and then splashed into the water with every indication of the utmost joy. I was amazed, of course, and could not understand the change. Day after day



Mr. Fox entertains Mr. Rabbit at Easter Dinner.

each other's frocks; the one next the hen should take hold of her. When the hen sees the fox she asks him what he is picking up sticks for. "To boil a pan," is the answer. "What is going to be in the pan?" "A chicken." "Where will you get one?" "From you." Then the fox tries to capture one of the chickens, while the hen tries to dodge the fox and guard her chicks. If the fox catches a chick he takes it to his den. This is continued until all the chicks are captured.

went by and each morning Tramp welcomed his bath in the blue-and-white dish.

Then, one morning, the blue-and-white dish was broken and I proffered a white one similar to the old one. Once more Tramp showed the old aversion to his bath. Sulkiest than ever now, he flew to the topmost perch and greeted me with shrill chirps of rage. So it continued until I found another blue-and-white dish. Then my little pet resumed his daily bath.