

Young People

The Star Game

By K. B. Walker.

"We came to the country to live out-of-doors, and it has rained two days!" said Grace. And then all the children broke out together: "What can we do?"

Mama put down her book and smiled. "Why not make up a game?"

"You make it up and we'll play it," said Mary, sagely.

Mama looked thoughtfully at the five yellow heads clustered round her chair. "I have it, chicks!" she cried. "We'll play the star game."

"What is it?" cried the five.

"You shall see. Bess, bring me my scissors and that large sheet of gold paper in my top bureau drawer. Mary, ask Bridget for a candle and candlestick. Grace, make a tiny bit of flour paste."

Away they all flew except Dotty and Daisy, who jumped up and down, crying, "Are you going to leave us out 'cause we're young?"

"You are to be the best part of the star game," said mama.

Bess brought the scissors and gold paper, and the little girls watched mama curiously while she cut out a sun with rays, two stars and a crescent moon.

Then Grace brought the paste, and the fun began.

On Bessie's white forehead mama pasted the sun; on Grace's the moon; on Dotty's and Daisy's a wonderful star.

"I can't imagine this game," said Grace. But mama only laughed.

Then came Mary with the candle, and in a moment was told to light it. By this time five little girls were much excited.

"Now Bessie stands in the center of the room, holding the lighted candle; Mary stands at a little distance from Bessie."

"And what shall we do?" begged Dotty and Daisy.

"You may stand in this corner, dears, until I tell you to come out; and Grace may stand in the opposite corner. Now we're ready to begin. Bessie is the sun, Mary is the earth, Grace the moon, Dotty and Daisy are stars. Bess must stand still while Mary revolves round her in a circle, very slowly indeed."

"When Mary turns her back to the sun—the candle-light—you will know it is night, and Grace and Dotty and Daisy—the moon and stars—must come out and shine."

All the little girls clapped their hands. The game went splendidly.

After a while they added more to the game. Mary divided the chalk circle into four parts, and in one Bess scattered bits of paper for winter snow; in another Dotty and Daisy sprinkled red clovers out of mama's vase, for summer days; in the third Grace placed a rosy apple for autumn; and Bridget came with a piece of maple-sugar on a plate for spring.

Mary stopped at the close of each season, Bess put down the candle, and they "made believe" some more. When it was the summer season they went to the ocean for a dip and a frolic; when it was winter they went skating and snow-shoeing over the hills; in fall they were off for a nutting expedition.

Bridget watched the game with arms crossed, her honest face amazed. "Who would think," she said, "that the old earth was capering round the sun like that!"

The New Leaves

"Wake up!" said a clear little voice. Tommy woke, and sat up in bed. At the foot of the bed stood a boy about his own age, all dressed in white, like fresh snow. He had very bright eyes, and he looked straight at Tommy.

"Who are you?" asked Tommy. "I am the New Year!" said the boy. "This is my day, and I have brought you your leaves."

"What leaves?" asked Tommy.

"The new ones, to be sure!" said the New Year. "I heard bad accounts of you from my Daddy—"

"Who is your Daddy?" asked Tommy.

"The Old Year, of course!" said the boy. "He said you asked too many questions and I see he was right. He says you are greedy, too, and that you sometimes pinch your little sister, and

that one day you threw your Reader into the fire. Now, all this must stop."

"Oh, must it?" said Tommy. He felt frightened, and did not know just what to say.

The boy nodded. "If it does not stop," he said, "you will grow worse and worse every year, till you grow up into a Horrid Man. Do you want to be a Horrid Man?"

"N-no!" said Tommy.

"Then you must stop being a horrid boy!" said the New Year. "Take your leaves!" and he held out a packet of what looked like copybook leaves, all sparkling white, like his own clothes.

"Turn over one of these every day," he said, "and soon you will be a good boy instead of a horrid one."

Tommy took the leaves and looked at them. On each leaf a few words were written. On one it said, "Help your

mother!" On another, "Don't pull the cat's tail!" On another, "Don't eat so much!" And on still another, "Don't fight Billy Jenkins!"

"Oh!" cried Tommy. "I have to fight Billy Jenkins! He said—"

"Good-by!" said the New Year. "I shall come again when I am old to see whether you have been a good boy or a horrid one. Remember,

"Horrid boy makes horrid man; You alone can change the plan."

He turned away and opened the window. A cold wind blew in and swept the leaves out of Tommy's hand. "Stop! stop!" he cried. "Tell me— But the New Year was gone, and Tommy, staring after him, saw only his mother coming into the room. "Dear child," she said. "Why, the wind is blowing everything about."

"My leaves! My leaves!" cried Tommy; and jumping out of bed he looked

all over the room, but he could not find one.

"Never mind," said Tommy. "I can turn them just the same, and I mean to. I will not grow into a Horrid Man." And he didn't.

The Book

"Let us write a book," they said, "but what shall it be about?"

"A fairy story," said the elder sister. "A book about kings and queens," said the other.

"Oh, no," said the brother, "let's write about animals."

"We will write about them all," they cried together.

So they put the paper and pens and ink ready. The elder sister took up a fairy story, looked at it, and put it down again. "I have never known any fairies," she said, "except in books; but, of course, it would not do to put one book inside another—anyone could do that."



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