

FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS

ON THE TOP FLOOR

There was great commotion in the work basket; it was a tall three-storied structure, and the tenants on the first floor were annoyed by the constant disturbance above them. The tenants on the first floor were very exclusive, being usually bits of fine white work or fancy silk or rare old lace or embroidery, which had found its way to the work basket for some light treatment. They were for the most part soft and refined, and often very beautiful, and it hurt them to hear the noise and contention of their less refined neighbors. But on this special occasion they actually shivered and pressed close together in their terror. The second floor was bad enough; it was used entirely for stockings, which were quite inoffensive, and though they were very much out at the heel, they had evidently seen better days. But the top floor, and the exclusive ones below, shuddered at the strange noises which floated down to them.

On this special occasion it was entirely the Thimble's fault. She held a little girl by the hand and was guiding one fat finger across a seam, when she made a fatal slip, and the needle held by the other fingers pricked the soft white skin till the blood came. This was not all; that one tiny drop of blood fell upon one of the tenants of the first floor. The Thimble saw it, but went on with the little girl to the end of the seam just as if nothing had happened. When she was safely at home, however, on the top floor, she got very angry.

"I don't see," she said, turning to the Emery Bag, "why it is you make your needles so slippery; that was the cause of all the trouble. We will hear from the tenants on the first floor; they are always complaining, and though I pretended to take no notice, that drop of blood fell on a piece of white satin, and poor little Elsie, I'm afraid, will be blamed for it."

"Serve you right!" snapped the Emery Bag, red with wrath. "Elsie is never allowed to come here, and I won't be blamed for other people's faults. I can't help being thorough; give me a needle and I'm bound to polish it."

"All the same," said the Thimble. But the Big Scissors cut her short.

"What's the use of an argument? The thing's done, isn't it?"

"I think," said the plum piece of French chalk, "that I might venture below and offer some assistance to Mrs. White Satin."

"That spot will have to come out," said the Scissors, sharply.

"All the same"—persisted the Thimble.

"Look here," said the Emery Bag, "you might just as well fix the blame on that little fat Cushion over there. That's where Elsie found the needle, if you must know."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Thimble, "I'll have it out at once," and he went over to where the innocent looking Cushion was quietly reposing. She gave him a smart rap on the head—the Thimble was always giving smart raps—but the Cushion took no notice. The Thimble thumped and thumped, but it made no difference. The scene grew interesting, the Emery Bag rolled over to see the fun and so did the Darning Egg, and even the Tape Measure edged nearer inch by inch. Finally a crowd collected, while the Thimble, getting excited, thumped harder and harder; still the fat Cushion made no sign. The Thimble grew visibly tired, and two or three balls of Darning Cotton and a big roll of White Tape volunteered to do a little punching while she rested, so they flung themselves with some force upon the enemy.

Then suddenly the Cushion seemed to rouse himself, for the attacking party retreated with groans and cries.

"Oh, oh, oh!" exclaimed the balls of Darning Cotton as they pulled several sharp needles from their sides. "The Cushion is carrying concealed weapons; he must be arrested at once."

"Put him out, put him out!" called the Thimble, "he's not fit to live among us," and they all made a rush toward the fat Cushion.

But at this moment the tenants received a shock; the three-storied structure was caught up with no gentle hand and moved to the other side of the room.

"There, now!" said a voice, "here's work for an hour at least. The top of my work basket is in terrible confusion; straighten it out in your best style, Elsie, and when it is in order I'll give you a little box to hold all the needles you can squeeze out of the fat Cushion; you have no idea how many are hidden away there."

"That'll fix him," said the Thimble, triumphantly.

"Indeed it will," echoed the Emery Bag.

"Tie the Emery Bag to the side of the basket and put my Thimble in its case," was the next order, much to their chagrin.

And so thoroughly did Elsie do her work that with a sigh of relief the tenants on the first floor settled down to a life of peace and quiet.—Washington Star.

THE FIRST TANGLE

Once in an Eastern palace wide,

A little child sat weaving,

So patiently her task she plied,

The men and women at her side,

Flocked round her, almost weeping.

"How is it, little one," they said,

"You always work so cheerfully?"

You never seem to break your thread,

Or snarl, and tangle it, instead

Of working smooth and clearly.

"Our weaving gets so worn and soiled,

Our silk so frayed and broken,

For all we've fretted, wept and toiled,

We know the lovely pattern's spoiled,

Before the king has spoken."

The little child looked in their eyes,

So full of care and trouble;

And pity chased the sweet surprise

That filled her own, as sometimes flies

The rainbow in a bubble.

"I only go and tell the King,"

She said, abashed, and meekly;

"You know, He said, in everything"—

"Why, so do we," they cried, "we bring

Him all our troubles weekly."

She turned her little head aside;

A moment let them wrangle:

"Ah, but," she softly then replied,

"I go and get the knot untied,

At the first little tangle."

Oh, little children, weavers all!

Our broi'dery we spangle

With many a tear that need not fall,

If on our King we would but call,

At the first little tangle.