



OUR grand business is not to see what lies dimly at a distance, but to do what lies clearly at hand.—
Carlyle.

Rose of Old Harpeth

By MARIA THOMPSON DAVIES

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(Continued from last week)

"IT'S as He will, daughter," answered Uncle Tucker as he laid a tender hand on the braids resting against his shoulder. "It isn't wrong for us to go on keeping it if we can just pay the interest to our friend—pay it to the day. That is the only thing that troubles me. We must not fall behind and—"

"Oh, but honey-sweet, let me tell you, let me tell you!" exclaimed Rose Mary with shining eyes. "I've got just lots of money, more than twenty dollars, nearly twice more. I've saved it just in case we did need it for this or—or any other thing," she added hastily, not willing to disclose her tooth project even to Uncle Tucker's sympathetic ear. Uncle Tucker's large eyes brightened with relief for a second and then clouded with a mist of tears.

"What were you saving it for, child?" he asked with a quaver in his sweet old voice, and his hand clasped hers more closely. "You don't ever have what pretty women like you want and need, and that's what grinds down on me most hard of all. You are young and—and mighty beautiful, and looks like it's wrong for you to lay down yourself for us who are a good long way on the other side of life's ridge. I ought to send you back across the hills to—find your own—no matter what happens!"

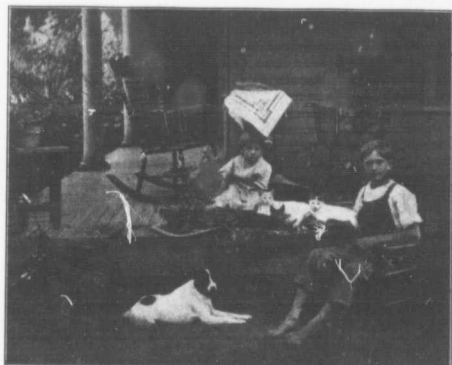
"Try it!" answered Rose Mary, again lifting her star eyes to his. "I was saving that money to buy Aunt Viney a set of teeth that she thinks she wants, but I know she couldn't wear them when she gets them. If I'm as beautiful as you say, isn't this blue homespun of over twentieth century style, adorned enough? Some people—that is some one—Mr. Mark said this morning it was chic, which means most awfully stylish. I've got one for my back and one for the tub all out of the same old blue broadspread, and a white linen marvel contrived from a pair of sheets for Sunday. Please don't send me out into the big world—other people might not think me as lovely as you do," and her railery was most beautifully dauntless.

"The Lord bless you and keep you and make the sun to shine upon you, flower of His own Kingdom," answered Uncle Tucker with a comforted smile breaking over his wistful old face. "I had mighty high dreams about you when that young man talked his oil-wells to me a months ago, and I wanted my rose to do some of her flowering for the world to see, but maybe—maybe—"

"She'll flower best here, where her roots go down into Sweetbriar hearts—and Sweetbriar prayers, Uncle Tucker; she knows that's true, and so do you," answered Rose Mary

quickly. "And anyway, Mr. Mark is making the soil surfer for you, and if we follow his directions there is no telling what he will make next year, maybe the interest and some of the money, too, and the teeth and—a sky-blue silk robe for me—if that's what you'd like to see me wear, though it would be inconvenient with the milking and the butter and—"

"Tucker, oh Brother Tucker!" came a call across the garden fence from the house, in a weak but com-



The Joy of Ownership is Common to us All

Why is it that this little boy is so proud of his terrier, that this little girl thinks that her kitten are "just it's it's because they own them. Ownership and its responsibility that goes with it, particularly when the things owned are living animals, does much to develop in children those traits that will afterwards make them useful men and women.

manding voice, and Rose Mary caught a glimpse of Miss Lavinia's white mob cap bobbing at the end of the porch, "that is in Proverbs tenth and nineteenth, and not nineteenth and tenth, like you said. You come right in here and get it straight in your head before the next sun sets on your ignorance."

"Fly-away!" exclaimed Uncle Tucker. "now Sister Viney's never going to forgive me that Bible slip-up if I don't persuade her from now on till supper. But there is nothing more for you to do out here, Rose Mary, the sun'll put out the light for you," and he hurried away down the path and through the garden gate.

Rose Mary remained leaning over the garden wall, looking up and down the road with inkerst shining in her eyes and a laugh and nod for the neighbors who were hurrying superwarmed or stopping to talk with one another over fences and gates.

A group of men and boys stood and sat on the porch in front of the store, and their big voices rang out now and again with hearty merriment at some exchange of wit or clever bit of horse-play. Two women stood in deep conclave over by the Potet gate, and the subject of the council was a small bunch of flannel and lawn displayed with evident pride by a comely young woman in a pink calico dress. Seeing Rose Mary at the wall they both smiled and started in her direction, the bearer of the bundle stepping carefully across the ditch at the side of the walk.

"Lands alive, Rose Mary, you never did see nothing as pretty as this last Potet baby!" exclaimed Mrs. Plunkett enthusiastically. "The year before last one, let me see, weren't that Evelina Virginia, Mis' Potet? Yes, Evelina Virginia was mighty pretty, but this one beats her. I declare if you was to fall up with these spring babies, Mis' Potet, it would be a disappointment to the whole of Sweetbriar. Come next April it will be seven without a year's break, astonishing as it do sound."

"It would be as bad as the sweetbriar roses not blooming, Mrs. Potet," laughed Rose Mary as she held out her arm for the bundle which cuddled against her breast in a woman-maddening fashion that made her clasp the mite as close as she dared.

"Yes, I tell you, seven hard-run-

the store for some tansy, when he weren't a hour old, he found all the menfolks had done named him that for us, and it looked like we didn't have the chance to pass the compliment. We ain't told you-all nothing about it, for they all wanted Mr. Tucker to read it in the deed first."

"And ain't them men a-going to have a good time when the time Mr. Tucker that deed to read? Looks like, even if it is some trouble, you couldn't hardly begrudge Sweetbriar these April babies, Mis' Potet," said Mrs. Plunkett in a consoling voice.

"Law, Mis' Plunkett, I don't mind it one bit. It ain't a mite of trouble to me to have 'em," answered the mother of the seven hardily. "You, all are so kind to help me out all the time with everything. Course we are poor, but Jim makes enough to feed us, and every single child I've got is for hand, and I don't have a size for somebody else's children. Five of 'em just stair-steps into clothes of Mis' Rucker's four, and Mis' Nickols saves me all of Bob's size. Mis' Potet, for sun-down is a mite of worry over any of 'em."

"Yes, I reckon maybe the worry spread over seven don't have a chance to come to a read on any of 'em," said Mrs. Plunkett thoughtfully, and her shoulders began to stoop dejectedly as a perturbed expression dawned into her grey eyes. "Better take him on home now, Mis' Potet, for sun-down is house-time for babies in my opinion. Hand him over, Rose Mary!"

Thus admonished, with a last, clinging embrace, Rose Mary delivered young Tucker to his mother, who departed with him in the direction of the Potet cottage over beyond the milk-house.

"Is anything worrying you, Mrs. Plunkett?" Can't be, said Rose Mary as her neighbor lingered for a moment and glanced at her with wistful eyes. Mrs. Plunkett was small, though round, with mournful big eyes and clad at all times in the most decorous of widow's weeds, even if they were of necessity of black calico on week days. Soft little curls fell dejectedly down over her eyes and her red mouth defined a dimple that had been wont to shine at the left corner, and kept to confines of straight-tipped propriety.

"It's about Louisa Helen again and her light-mindedness. I don't see how a daughter of mine can act as she does with such a little feeling. Last night Mr. Crabtree shut up the store before eight o'clock and put on his Sunday best and set on the front steps a-availing of her, and in less'n a half hour that Bob Nickols had whistled for her from the corner, and she stood at the front gate talking to him. We talk about Mr. Plunkett and all our young days and I felt real comforted. If I can just get Louisa Helen to see what a proper husband Thomas Crabtree will make for her we can all settle down comfortable like. He wants her bad, from all the signs I can see."

"But—but isn't Louisa Helen a little young for?" began Rose Mary, taking what seemed a reasonable line of consolation.

"No, she's not too young to marry," answered her mother with spirit. "Louisa Helen is eighteen years old in May, and I was married to Mr. Plunkett before my eighteenth birthday. He was twenty-one, and I treated him with proper respect, too. I never said no more to him, and Louisa Helen says to that Nickols boy, even to Mr. Crabtree, himself."

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