

THE WHISTLING MOTHER

She kissed me good-night, when we broke up, in just exactly the old way—no extras. Oh, maybe I did put a little more muscle than usual into the hug I gave her—Mother's great to hug, just exactly like a girl—but that was all. We parted with a laugh. Afterward, when I was in bed, with the firelight still flickering on the little hearth in my old room, she came in, in some kind of a loose, rosy sort of silk thing, and her long black hair in two braids, and stooped down and kissed me, and patted my shoulder, and went out again without saying a word. . . . Maybe I didn't turn over then for a minute, and bury my head in my pillow and have it out a bit. But that didn't count, because nobody saw.

Next morning was just the same; and we had the greatest sort of a breakfast—