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Maysie's Hungry Day.

BY MARGARET M'K. M'TAVISH.

It happened in the summer holidays.

Maysie's father, the Rev. Mr. Anderson, with her mother and baby brother, went to spend several weeks in Muskoka, and it was arranged that Maysie should stay during their absence in the country at Grandma Anderson's.

This was a delightful arrangement, Maysie thought, for, as her home was in the city, the country was a perfect fairy-land of wonders to her. Of course, as she was only eight years old, she missed her mother somewhat, especially at bed-time. But there were several uncles and aunts around grandma's who kept her from getting lonesome; and there was so much to do and see, from the time the cows came up the lane to be milked in the morning until she watched the chickens settle on their roosts at dusk, and then went in to bed herself, that she really had no time to get lonely.

She had a companion of her own age, too, in Ella, a little cousin, of whom she was very fond, and whose home was on the concession back of grandma's. It was quite a long way around to go by the road, but a delightful walk when you went down the lane, over the meadow, across the brook, through the woods and fields, till you reached the lane leading to Uncle Donald's.

Maysie had taken this walk many times. At first she was always accompanied by Aunt Maggie or Aunt Christy, but later, if they were busy, she was permitted to go alone. There was nothing to fear and no danger of being lost, so the little girls were allowed to come and go as they pleased. Very fond they were of stopping by the brookside and taking off shoes and stockings for a wade in the cool water, which was quite shallow and safe.

It was through one of these walks to Uncle Donald's that Maysie came to have what she always afterwards referred to as her "hungry day."

A message came from Ella one evening to the effect that she was not very well, and would like Maysie to come early the next morning and spend the whole day with her. Grandma was quite willing; so, immediately after breakfast the following day, Maysie started upon her walk.

"Good-by, lassie. Tak' care o'yourself, an' dinna' get lost!" said Grandma.

Maysie laughed gaily at the thought of such a thing and went skipping briskly down the lane. There was a high wind that morning which sent her curls flying into her face, tried to run away with her hat, and challenged her to run races with it. So, by the time she reached the brook, she was quite breathless and glad to sit down on the foot-bridge for a few minutes to rest.

Just beyond this bridge, on the other side of the brook, was an old log house, now all in ruins. This, Maysie knew, had once been grandma Anderson's home, and in it her own papa had been born. Not far from the old house was a log barn in a much better state of repair than the house. It was still used as a storing house for hay.

As Maysie rested she saw a pretty, striped chipmunk dart around the corner of this barn, listen a moment, then quickly flash through the open door and disappear.

"Oh! I believe he has a nest there!" she exclaimed.

"I am going to see if I can find it."

Up the bank and over the grass she hurried to follow the lively little fellow, but in her eagerness she tripped over a stick which propped the barn open, and knocked it away. Without giving a thought to the fallen prop, however, she was up again in a minute and into the barn. She stood a moment gazing about, but could see no sign of the chipmunk. Then suddenly all thoughts of it were driven from her mind; for the wind caught the heavy door from which she had kicked the prop, and sent it shut with a force that shook the building.

"Oh! Oh! said Maysie, with a gasp. "I don't believe I can open it again!"

She lost no time in trying, but found, as she feared, that she could not move it at all. It was fastened on the outside with a heavy wooden latch. When the wind drove the door shut this had fallen into position. The part by which this latch was raised from the inside was gone—has probably been gone for a long time.

So, after some ineffectual efforts to find something by which to raise the outside bar, Maysie realized that she was a prisoner, and sat down to think over the situation.

"It's no use calling," she thought, "for they could not hear as far as Grandma's, even if there was no wind. And the men are all working on the other side of the farm, so there won't be any one past here all day. Oh, dear! I wonder if Ella will come to look for me when she finds I don't come! No, she can't, either, for she's sick. Whatever will I do? I wonder if I can't find a hole where I could get out."

She looked eagerly around, but, though there were many chinks between the logs where the light streamed

through, there was no place where there was any possibility of a little girl of eight working her way out.

"If only I were not so fat!" she sighed, gazing at her plump little figure. She looked very grave for a while, but it was not her nature to be still long.

"Well," she said at last, resigning herself to the inevitable, "I guess I'll just have to play I'm an imprisoned princess all day. I'll make my throne up in that hay."

Suiting the action to the words, she climbed up to the mow and began piling up the hay. Suddenly, with a great cackle and noise, out flew a gray hen, almost under the little girl's feet.

"Ah, ah! Mrs. Speckles," exclaimed Maysie, "so I've found you out at last! My! but grandma and I have had the time hunting for your nest!"

This announcement did not seem to worry Mrs. Speckle at all, for she soon stopped cackling, and began to scratch and peck around the barn floor.

Maysie watched her a while and then resumed her play in the fragrant hay. Tiring of this by and by, she lay down and fell asleep. When she awoke the sun was high and the air was hot. She found herself both hungry and thirsty, and started up with the idea of getting a drink, only to realize with a shock that she was a prisoner still.

"Oh, dear!" she thought, "even imprisoned princesses have some one to bring them something to eat and drink, and I won't get a bite or a drink all day. I wonder if I'll starve! Perhaps I'll look like those pictures in the papers of the poor famine orphans in India! It must hurt awful before you look like that! It seems like years since I had any breakfast, and I didn't get any ten o'clock bread and milk, and now I won't get any dinner, or supper either, perhaps!"

Down on the barn floor, old Speckle was still scratching and picking.

"I wish I were a hen," thought Maysie, as she watched, "then I could eat hayseed and bugs, too." Then a smile crossed her face. She was thinking how funny Speckle had looked one day when she and Ella had dressed her and some other hens in their doll's clothes. With the remembrance came an inspiration. Feeling in her pocket, she drew out first her handkerchief, which she spread carefully on the beam of the mow. Next came a stub of a lead pencil. It was one she had used yesterday to write a letter to her mother.

"Now," she said to herself, with a laugh, "I'm going to write a letter to grandma, and make Speckle carry it. I see a hole over there that will just do to post her at."

That evening, when the twilight shadows were beginning to gather, Grandma Anderson stood at the entrance of the lane, gazing anxiously down it.

"Collin," she called to a tall youth who came into the yard, "ye maun gang east to Donald's and bring home the bairn. I'm thinkin' she's stayin' ower lang awa."

"All right, mother, I'll go and bring her home on my back. She'll like that," said good-natured Collin.

Just then, strolling leisurely along the lane, came Speckle.

"Save us a'!" exclaimed grandma. "What's on the hen? Hand her, Collin, and tak' it aff."

Collin caught the unsuspecting hen with one sudden swoop. Across her back, and knotted firmly to a leg at each side, was Maysie's handkerchief. Collin held it up to the light for a minute or two, then dropped both hen and handkerchief and started down the lane on a run. Grandma gazed after him in astonishment, then picked up the handkerchief and read:

"Dear Grandma:—I have been locked in the log barn all day, and I am nearly starved. Have lots of milk and bread and chicken pie and berries and everything ready. I guess I am pretty near like a famine orphan. Come quick. Your loving

"Maysie."

It did not take many minutes for Uncle Collin to bear the little prisoner triumphantly home and seat her at the table that grandma had provided with everything good. Maysie did full justice to it all, and in a short time had quite recovered from the effects of her day's fasting.

But the experience made a deep impression upon her. The next day her grandma found her standing before the mirror, with a paper containing a piteous picture of some of the poor sufferers in India. She was looking from the plump reflection in the glass to the picture in her hand, and the tears were running down her cheeks.

"Oh, grandma," she cried, "it must hurt dreadful before you get like that. Why, you can't see a bone in me, and I was just terribly hungry. I am going to send them all the money I can get."

She was as good as her word, and between the pennies she earned and saved herself and the sum given her by others, she had at the close of the holidays a large amount which went over to India as the gift of "a little girl who once was very hungry."—"The King's Own."

A Grand Day at Grandma's.

BY EDGAR L. VINCENT.

Only two of them, and they were not very old or very large, and yet some of the neighbors listened to the sounds which came from Grandma Winthrop's house that day and fancied that there must be at least a dozen romping, bolsterous children visiting the old lady.

They were not twins, although nearly of a size. Marjorie was six and Mabel a few months younger. Both had blue eyes and fair hair, and grandma looking at them believed that they were indeed angels come to her unaware. She was sitting in the front room with her Bible in her lap when they lifted the latch of the gate and came bounding in.

"All day long, grandma! We are going to make you such a long visit! And we may stay all night, too. Will you let us sleep in the deep bed that goes away down to the bottom the minute we touch it?"

Marjorie had such recollections of that downy bed! In all the world no one but grandma had such a lovely bed.

"And we are not to make one bit of trouble, grandma. Mamma said so, because that would make you never want to have us come again. If we were naughty, grandma, would you ever want us to come again and visit you? Now, honestly."

Could grandma look into those clear eyes and tell Mabel such a thing as that? You could not believe it. No more would I.

And so the day began. They told grandma all about the folks at home, nibbling the meanwhile one of grandma's sweetest cookies with the big raisin in the middle. Were ever cookies so good? And the raisin in the middle. How carefully they ate all around it, saving it until the last.

And the real fun came afterwards. Do you think they enjoyed their day at grandma's? If you have a grandma, you know whether they did or not. Busy in the house, grandma almost forgot about her little visitors; then suddenly a great squawk came from the old turkey, followed by a general scattering among the hens. Everybody in the neighborhood was startled by the outcry. The turkeys ran furiously along the lane leading to the road, the old turkey gobbling loudly and the hens crying "Quit!" as fast as they could protest against this unexpected disturbance. Out in the road they rushed, just in time to frighten a large flock of sheep which a man was driving past. The next instant the sheep were scattered far and near, the lambs crying to their mother and the old sheep calling back to the little ones.

For a little while confusion reigned.

"I should think folks would know better than to let their children make so much trouble," the man who was driving the sheep declared, wiping his face with his handkerchief, when the flock had once more been gathered. "All they care about them, though. Shows their manners as well as those of the children."

"We wanted to see how he did it, grandma," Mabel explained to her grandmother. "The old turkey had her fan up so high, and he marched around just like this."

And Mabel drew herself up grandly, just as the turkey had done. "Then all at once he put it down and began to run. Then we ran too, grandma."

Grandma drew them to her side and simply said: "But you will not chase the turkeys again, will you?" And they promised.

But there were many other strange happenings at grandma's that day. Old Ben, the horse, thought so when all at once the cat came tumbling down through the opening by which his hay was put down, right in front of his very eyes, and went hurrying out at the top of his speed as if something dreadful were after him.

The hired man thought so when, hearing a terrible clattering at the barn, he rushed in to find that the fanning-mill had been turned into a threshing machine, which Mabel was whirling as fast as possible, while her sister was putting hay into the hopper. He thought so more than ever that evening when old Betsey, the cow he was milking, suddenly sprang away, upsetting the pail of milk and leaving him sitting there alone in surprise. A long stick poked through a crack in the high fence near which Betsey had been standing told the story of her fright.

"You'd better go away from here!" the man shouted to Mabel. "I'll be glad when your visit is over. You need some one to train you."

And away they ran to escape the "training" Joe threatened.

But at last the day ended, and the two little girls crept into the seat under the old apple-tree in the front yard to rest and to think. What a grand time they had had. But then days at grandma's were always grand.

Now the quiet of the evening was upon them. They sang one of their songs. Grandma listened with a full heart.