

out at the toes, and in very cold weather he had nothing extra to wear around him except an old red and green plaid shawl of his mother's; he didn't like to wear that, because the boys shouted after him and called him "Dutchy." So in *very* cold weather he was apt to plan to do all his errands in the evening, when the boys wouldn't notice the shawl. Neither did Beth go to school, for much the same reasons that kept Reuben at home. Besides, she could help; her mother sat all day long, in that one low chair by that one window, and sewed as fast as she could, on boys' shirts for one of the wholesale stores in the city; and Beth could overhand some of the seams, and hem the edges, and take many stitches in the course of the day to help her mother; so as soon as their bit of housework was done—and you would have been astonished to see what a little time it took to do the housework—Beth would draw her chair as close to her mother's as she could get it, and they two would sew.

It was getting dark in the room; the sun had looked in, and said good-night to them, as if he were in too much of a hurry to stay even as long as usual, and the shadow of the big barn next to them was creeping further and further over the house. The fire was getting down, too; in fact, they always shut the dampers about the time the sun was expected, so as to save all the coal they could. Beth shivered, and drew her chair away from the window.

"Mother," she said, "sha'n't I open the damper,