

an industriously inquiring thumb and little finger. But a borrowed baby, it seems, is of no use whatsoever; the satisfaction is said to be temporary—nothing more—and to leave a sense of vacant arms and a stinging aggravation of envy. So what Pattie Batch wanted was a baby to *keep*—a baby she could call her own and cherish against meddling—a baby that should be so rosy and fat and curly, so neat and white, so scrubbed and highly polished from crown to toe-nails, that every mother in the land, beholding, would promptly expire on the spot of amazement, incredulity and sheer jealousy.

There were babies at Elegant Corners—a frowzy, listless mud-hole of the woods, near by. They were all possessed by one mother, too. The last comer had appeared in the fall of the year; and Pattie Batch—when the great news came down to Swamp's End—had instantly taken the trail for Elegant Corners.

"Got another, eh?" says she, flatly, to the wretched Mrs. Limp.

"Uh-huh!" Mrs. Limp sighed and rolled her eyes, as though, God save us! the ultimate misfortune had fallen upon her. "Number eight," she groaned.

"Don't you *like* it?" Pattie demanded, hopefully.

Mrs. Limp was so deeply submerged in tears that she failed to commit herself.