

## \* \* The Story Page. \* \*

### A Morning-Glory House.

BY ELIZABETH S. HOOK.

Helen lived a few miles from a large town. She had plenty of grass to run about on and a garden where she could gather all the flowers she wished; but sometimes she was lonely, for she was an only child.

One evening after Helen had gone to bed Mrs. Duncan had a long talk with her husband, and the next morning Helen's father, looking over the top of his newspaper at his little daughter, said:

"Helen, how would you like a morning-glory house?"

"I do not know what it is," said Helen; "but I like the name very much."

"Let me see," said her father, laying down his newspaper and taking a pencil and paper from his pocket. "Now it is the first of June. It would take until the middle of August for the house to grow."

"To grow?" said Helen; "I did not know that houses ever grew."

"Yes," said her father, "morning-glory houses do; and you have to grow a new one every summer. But you must not be told all about it now or you will not enjoy building it."

"You said it grew."

"I meant seeing it grow," corrected her father.

"The first thing is to decide about the dimensions."

"The dimensions!" said Helen.

"The size of it. How long and how wide," answered her father.

After talking it over they decided that a house six feet long and four feet wide would do nicely. Mr. Duncan said that he need not put that on paper for he was six feet tall and Helen four feet. He could remember it in that way.

"I am afraid mamma will not like to be left out," said Helen anxiously.

"Of course she would not," said her father, "and besides we forgot the height in making our dimensions. We will have the house just as high as mamma, five feet, three inches. Now when the framework is ready you can plant your house."

This was Saturday, and on Wednesday morning of the next week a man drove up to the door in an open wagon. Mr. Duncan went out and talked with him for a few minutes, then he called to Helen, who was standing on the porch, to put on her hat and come with him. He told her when she joined him that the framework for the morning-glory house had come, and that the man would stay to set it up.

A place for the house had been selected on the east side of the garden close to the lawn. By driving along the carriage-way you could come very near to the place.

Mr. Duncan helped the man to take some long, slim stakes from the wagon. After measuring the distances a stake was driven into the ground at each of the four corners of what was to be the house. From stake to stake at top and bottom two-inch boards were nailed, and at either end, at the top, shorter stakes were placed so as to form peaks. These were joined by a long board.

Then the man stepped back, shut one eye, bent his fingers and looked through them at his work.

"The proportions are good," he said, slowly.

"Will you tell me what you mean by that word?" asked Helen, shyly.

"What word?" said the man.

"She means proportions," said Mr. Duncan.

"Oh," said the man laughing, "I don't know that I can explain it. But if a house is very wide across the front, you know, and not very high it looks too low, or if it is very high and very long it looks too narrow. In either case it would be out of proportion."

"Yes," said Helen, slowly, "I think I understand," and she thought what a wonderful thing her morning-glory house was already with its dimensions and proportions. The man now hurried to the wagon and took from under the seat some nails and a large ball of twine.

"The twine is for your house to climb on," said Mr. Duncan.

At regular distances along the cross-boards the man drove nails, which were left standing out a little from the wood; then he fastened the end of the twine to one of the lower nails, carried it up to the next cross-board, wound it around a nail there, then across to the next nail. Down came the cord and up again. The man worked so fast! The house began to look like a cage. Suddenly Helen cried:

"Oh, papa! I must have a door to my house!"

"How stupid I was not to think of it. We can have one in the front and one at the side."

So he told the man to skip six nails in the middle, on the front of the house, and six in the middle, on the side. "There are four doors," said the man, when he had followed out the directions. "You can tie the vines back for a window."

The man soon finished his work and drove away.

"To-morrow we will plant the house," said Mr. Duncan.

The next morning, when Helen came into the dining-room, she saw on a table at the side of the room a number of little brown paper bags with "Morning-glory Seed" printed on them in very black letters.

"The rain last night was just what we needed," said Mr. Duncan to his little daughter, "Rain is not good for building usually; but it is just the thing for morning-glory house."

After breakfast Helen went with her father to the stable for her little garden tools—a spade, a hoe and a rake.

"You must do the work yourself," said her father, "but I will tell you how. Close to the house you must dig a ditch about as deep as your little finger is long."

Helen began and worked steadily until she had dug the ditch on one side of the house. Then she felt tired, and her father told her to open one of the paper bags and scatter the seeds along and cover them with the dirt.

This change of work rested her, and she went on in this way until she had been around the house; then she raked the ground so that it looked very neat and nice.

"There is nothing more to be done at present," said Mr. Duncan. "You must wait now for the walls of your house to grow."

Helen tried to be patient during the days that elapsed before the first green shoots appeared. At last the delicate tendrils began to coil round the cords ready for them and she could count the "twists," as she called them.

One beautiful sunny morning Helen came running into the dining-room. Her cheeks were flushed, her eyes shining. "Oh, mamma! oh, papa! The glories! the glories! There are eight of them, blue and white and pink! Please come!"

Her father and mother followed her. There were the eight lovely flowers. Two large, purple ones right over the front door, as if to bid them welcome.

"It is really a morning-glory house now," said Mrs. Duncan, as she stepped aside. "This will be a pleasant place to sit and read and see your friends."

"When my house is done," said Helen.

"It will not be done until it is ready to come down," her mother answered smiling. "It is building all the time. You will see what a strange house it is."

In the afternoon Helen drove into town, but as soon as she returned she went to see her house. But what a disappointment awaited her! The eight beautiful morning-glories were gone. Helen went back quickly to her mother. The tears were running down her cheeks.

"Mamma, some one has picked all the glories."

"No one would do that, said her mother. "Let me go with you; I think I can convince you."

They went across the lawn to the morning-glory house. It looked quite bare with no bright blossoms among the green leaves.

Mrs. Duncan told Helen to come near the vines, and she saw, to her surprise, little shriveled-up flowers where in the morning the pretty blossoms had been.

"Now my dear, you see that the sun when it is high withers the frail flowers. They shut up and shrink together. But every morning there are new ones."

"That is why they are called morning-glories?" said Helen smiling through her tears.

"Yes; so your house will be fresh and more beautiful from day to day."

"It is lovely," said Helen. "A morning-glory house is lovely!"

After that the morning-glories came thicker and thicker, and, as it had been with the "twists," Helen could not count them.

One day in August when Helen was ten years old, she had three little girls to breakfast in the morning-glory house. For the breakfast there were rolls and delicate wafers, glasses of milk and large dishes of berries. In the centre of the table was a birthday cake, and around the edge were ten beautiful morning-glories.

What a merry time they had! Then the table was cleared and they blew bubbles with the morning-glories. "I did it when I was a little girl," said Mrs. Duncan.

"Take away the green cup that holds them and you will see what good pipes morning-glories make."

How pretty the large bubbles looked on the rim of the lovely flowers! The children were delighted, and were sorry when one of the children said:

"The morning-glories are all gone. It is time for us to go, too."

"The house will be dismantled in a few weeks," said Mrs. Duncan.

"Dismantled?" said Helen.

"Yes, the flowers will cease to bloom and the leaves will drop from the vines. But we will take down the framework, lay it away, and next summer plant another morning-glory house."—The Independent.

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### Jemmy's Mother's Bonnet.

"I want you to put jes' as many v'lets on as you ken fer twenty cents, right there in the front, so't they'll stick up an' look kind o' stylish." It was a thin, sickly-looking little boy that spoke. The young girl behind the counter smiled, but there were tears in her eyes as the grimy finger, undid the ungainly newspaper bundle, and took out a rusty black straw bonnet, which had seen a great deal of service.

"It's fur my mother," he continued, "an' it's a surprise. Do you think you ken git it done fur me by the time I take my papers down to the office and get back?"

"Oh, yes," said the girl; "only don't hurry too much. What is your name?"

"Jem," answered the boy; "an' I won't. An' there's the twenty cents. I'd wait fur it a couple o' hours if I had to."

He passed out, whistling cheerily. The clerk opened her shopping-bag, and taking out a bottle of shoe polish began applying it vigorously to the faded straw.

"Are you really going to try to fix up that old thing?" inquired another clerk, "and take your noon hour, too? Catch me! Why didn't you give him the violets and let him go? Twenty cents worth—humph!"

"Indeed, I am going to fix it up for the poor little fellow," was the earnest reply. "Just think, Mary, I suppose he's saved up that twenty cents for weeks! I'm so glad I happened to get this blacking this morning. You can't tell the bonnet when I get through with it, see if you can."

She hummed a happy little song, as she went putting on coat after coat, deftly turning the straw up here and down there.

"Mrs. Brown," she said as the proprietor of the store entered, "will you give me thirty-five cents worth of violets at wholesale? A poor little boy has brought me his mother's bonnet to trim, and I want to add a few violets to what he has ordered, and make it just as pretty as I can."

"Indeed I will," the proprietor answered; "and good measure at that!" And so it came about that the poor black bonnet was transformed into a beautiful "shiny" one, with bunches of violets peeping out here and there from the ribbons, so cunningly arranged that the worn, faded parts could hardly be discerned.

"Oh, you don't mean it; you don't mean that's my mother's bunnet, and all fur twenty cents?" exclaimed Jem, coming back just as the finishing touch was being given. "Oh, what lots o' v'lets! How did you get it so shiny? Oh, she'll be jes' tickled to death!"

It was a wonderfully happy little boy who gazed from the bonnet into the clerk's face.

As the door closed behind him, one who had been a silent spectator of it all went up to the young girl, and laying her hand on her shoulder, said: "This has been a lesson to me, my dear, a lesson that I never can forget. Out of the abundance with which the Lord has blessed me, I have begrudged to the poor and needy within my gates. Please God it shall never happen again!"

In her simple way, the girl pondered upon the woman's words, and wondered what her life had been, and what it would be. Ah, who can say! As the circles of a pool into which a pebble has been cast widen and widen until the ripples reach beyond our sight, so the influence of a noble, generous act, though one the world might call a small one, goes on and on through all eternity.—Our Boys and Girls.

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### Three Dog Stories.

Among the latest tales told by lovers of dogs are the following two related by the owners of their respective canine pets:

"I have a Maltese bulldog that shows infinite wisdom on every subject save that of wasps. He cannot realize that wasps were not created as the natural food for bulldogs, and he continues, therefore, in his reckless career of catching and swallowing every wasp within a reachable radius. Last summer he had the ill luck to encounter a retaliating specimen, and his painful experience of the havoc which a live wasp may create in a bulldog interior lasted for upwards of two hours. His day of reckoning came when he happened to swallow, without due mastication, a wasp sturdy and smart enough to realize that, before breathing his last, he could take a swift, sharp revenge on the stomach of his formidable enemy of his race. I happened to witness the wasp-swallowing incident, so that I was not surprised some minutes later when two or three members of the household announced in tragic tones that the bulldog had gone suddenly mad, and must perforce be shot. His tongue, swollen and blackened, hung from his mouth, the whites of his eyes rolled in real agony, and his whole appearance was so fierce that I deemed it prudent to chain him to his kennel. His appearance was tragic and piteous, and for two whole hours he rolled over in acute pain, his hair on end, and great knotty swellings all over his body. The wasp poison was evidently potent. Between the paroxysms, which occurred at short intervals, a veterinary surgeon administered huge doses of opium and chloral. Whether the result be due to the vast quantity of narcotics administered, together with a fair amount of stimulant, or whether it was a fair struggle between his healthiness and the wasp virus, I do not attempt to judge. At the expiration of a couple of hours his intolerable sufferings ceased, and he made a sudden convalescence. The same