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"It's your turn to tell me a story,
now," he reminded her, and then he
shivered suddenly.

"It won't be a horrid one, will it?"
he entreated. "Not a fairy tale about
goblins or dragons, 'cos they are nasty
and make me dream bad things."

"I'll tell you a true one, also, darling,"
she told him. "It is rather a sad one,
but it won't frighten you. It's only
about a little child and a girl."

"A grown-up girl, like you?"
"Yes, a grown-up one. She was quite
old, about twenty-five, and she was mar-
ried when she was very young, and
while she was still young she had a
little child—a boy."

"What was his name?"

"His name was Cyril, and when he
was quite a tiny baby he seemed so
strong and rosy and well, but after a few
years he began to get delicate, and at
last the doctor told his Father and
Mother that he was consumptive,
and—"

"What's 'sumptive'?"

"Not strong. It means that he would
often be ill, and that perhaps quite soon
he might die, and—after a bit he
did die. He was just four years old."

The child was gazing straight in front
of him, with dreamy eyes fixed on the
rippling sea.

"And was she very sad about it, the
poor lady—his Mummy I mean."

"Very. Her husband was away at
the time, right out in Canada, and after
the little boy's death she felt she
couldn't stay in England any more, and
so she decided she would go out to Can-
ada too, and join her husband there, and
that then they could come back home
to England together after—after—she
had got over her little boy's death a
bit."

"And then?"

"Then on the ship going over she met
a little child. It was just when she was
feeling dreadfully lonely. You see her
own little child had only been in Heaven
a very few weeks, and she had left her
Mummy and Daddy and all her friends
in England, and she had no one on the
boat with her so she was often left
alone. And somehow the compani-
ship of the little boy cheered her. He
was a boy, and she had always been
specially fond of little boys. And this
particular one reminded her in some
ways of—her own little one whom she
had lost, and—"

But she got no further, for the child
was looking up at her, and there was a
light of understanding in his eyes. Or
was it only her fancy? Was it pos-
sible that a child of seven could under-
stand?

"I don't want you to go away," he
whispered, and she felt his slim little
form nestling closer to her, and a mist
swam before her eyes.

"Do you like my story, then?" she
asked him, and she put her arms about
him and cuddled him closer still.

"Yes," very softly, and with a little
short gasp.

"And can you guess who the lady
is?"

"Yes," softly again.

His blue eyes were fixed on the waves,
and he seemed to be dreaming of in-
numerable things. Then of a sudden
he jumped up with an excited little cry.

"Oh, look, there's a ship. How lovely.
Do come and see it please."

"Isn't it a lovely boat?" he exclaimed
ecstatically, and drew a deep sigh of
pleasure.

And she found herself watching and
wondering, for who can fathom the mar-
vellous workings of the mind of a little
child?

And so a whole week passed away, and
all too soon the last day came. The
boat put in at Halifax and the big girl
was to land there, but Basil and his
parents were going further on. Directly
after breakfast that morning she found
him waiting outside her cabin door. She
had her hat and coat on, all ready to
go on shore, and she held a case in either
hand. When she saw the little boy
there she put her luggage down a mo-
ment and stooped and kissed him on the
cheek.

"Are you going to say good-bye to
me, darling?" she asked him. "The boat
is in port, and I may not have the
chance to see you any more."

But he would not kiss her. Instead
a troubled look came into his blue eyes.

"Come up on deck with me," he told
her. "I want to be with you. Can't I
be with Mummy and Daddy and you?"

And he took hold of her hand to drag
her off, then noticed her cases and im-
mediately picked them up.

"I can carry them for you," he said,
and commenced to stagger along under
the weight of them, for he was very
slight for his seven years. But even
if he found them heavy, he would not
let her take them from him. At last
up on deck he placed them down again,
and turned to the girl and looked up into
her face.

"I want to be with you," he re-
peated, and slipped his little hand into
hers.

"You must keep near Mummy and
Daddy, darling," she told him. "I would
never forgive myself if you got lost in
the crowd. I can't take you with me
you know, but I'll write to you. Would
you like to write?"

"Yes."

"I'll write you stories, shall I, and
send them through the post?"

"Yes."

Then after a pause—

"Do you know where I live?"

She repeated his address in Antigua,
and he gazed up into her face.

"I've got another address besides that."

"What is it?"

"When we are in England we live at
'The Gables.' It's 'The Gables,' Mus-
well Green, Luton Park. No, I think
it's Luton Park, Muswell Green. And
next September when I go to boarding
school it will be 'St. Mildred's, Tun-
bridge. Will you send me letters when
I go to school?"

"Certainly I will. I'll write all the
addresses down in my book so that I
won't forget them. I'll always remem-
ber you. Will you try and remember
me, dear little one?"

"Yes."

Then a delighted little cry of "Daddy"
as the Colonel came in sight. He had
come up on deck in search of his small
son, fearful lest in the crush of passen-
gers landing he might perhaps get lost.
The child ran to him eagerly, and
hand in hand the two of them came
up to the girl again. It was pretty to
see the affection which existed between
the Colonel and his little boy.

"And so you're going to leave us," the
Colonel remarked, addressing the girl,
while Basil looked from one to another
with eyes full of a tender light.

"But she's going to write to me,
Daddy. She's going to send me stories
through the post."

And just then the girl had to hurry
away to see after some luggage in dis-
pute.

"I'll see you later to say good-bye,"
she called out to the Colonel, and the
child, but she never did, for half an
hour afterwards when the order was
given for passengers to land at once,
they were nowhere to be found. Just
as the last passenger was on shore how-
ever, they reappeared on deck again.
The girl waved to them, and the Colonel
was the first to notice and respond. Then
he stooped down and whispered some-
thing to the child, who ran to the ship's
side and waved his hand.

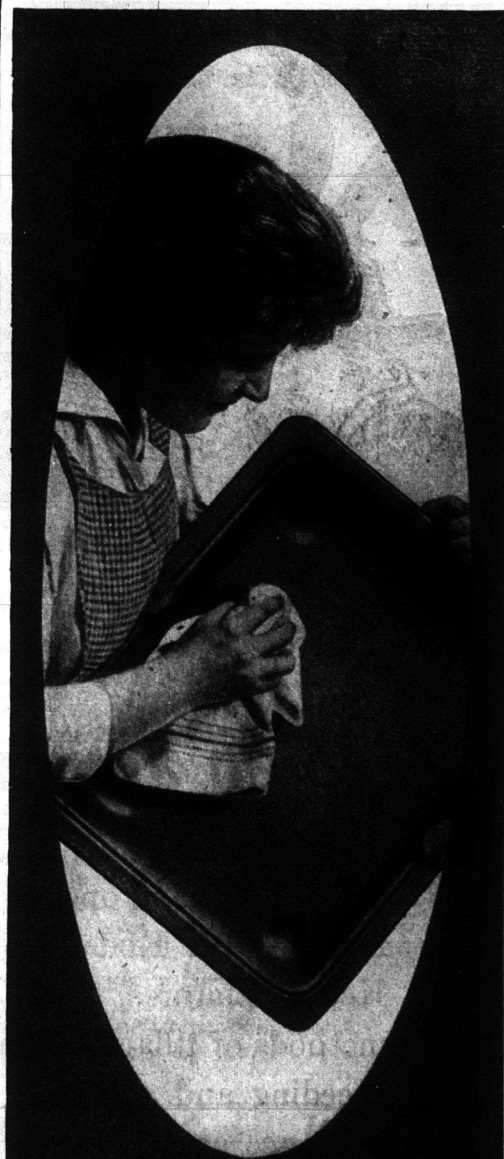
"Thank you for playing with me,"
his little voice rang out, sounding faint
as it carried on the breeze. "Don't for-
get to write."

And he waved again, while she stood
on shore and watched him until the ship
moved slowly away and she could see
his tiny form no more.

Then she turned her face landwards.
She had put foot in a new country, the
land of snow and mountains, and glori-
ous sunset glows. To her it seemed a
land of promise, and her heart, which
so short a time before had been sad and
empty, beat now with a wonderful
warmth.

"Ships that pass in the night."

She was going one way and the child
another, and it was unlikely that their
paths would ever cross again. But there
is such a thing as Memory, and gazing
out silently upon the new country to
which she had so lately come, the girl
imprinted upon her memory forever, the
face of a little child—the child, who in
his love and innocence, had brought life
back once more to her lonely, aching
heart.



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