

On Wednesday, the day before the aunts and uncles were coming, there were such various and suggestive scents, as of plumcakes in the oven and jellies in the hot state, mingled with the aroma of gravy, that it was impossible to feel altogether gloomy: there was hope in the air. Tom and Maggie made several inroads into the kitchen, and, like other marauders, were induced to keep aloof for a time only by being allowed to carry away a sufficient load of booty.

"Tom," said Maggie, as they sat on the boughs of the elder-tree, eating their jam-puffs, "shall you run away to-morrow?"

"No," said Tom, slowly, when he had finished his puff, and was eying the third, which was to be divided between them,—"no, I sha'n't."

"Why, Tom? Because Lucy's coming?"

"No," said Tom, opening his pocket-knife and holding it over the puff, with his head on one side in a dubitative manner. (It was a difficult problem to divide that very irregular polygon into two equal parts.) "What do *I* care about Lucy? She's only a girl,—*she* can't play at bandy."

"Is it the tipsy-cake, then?" said Maggie, exerting her hypothetic powers, while she leaned forward toward Tom with her eyes fixed on the hovering knife.

"No, you silly, that'll be good the day after. It's the pudden. I know what the pudden's to be,—apricot roll-up—O my buttons!"

With this interjection, the knife descended on the puff, and it was in two, but the result was not satisfactory to Tom, for he still eyed the halves doubtfully. At last he said,—

"Shut your eyes, Maggie."

"What for?"

"You never mind what for. Shut 'em when I tell you." Maggie obeyed.

"Now, which'll you have, Maggie,—right hand or left?"

"I'll have that with the jam run out," said Maggie, keeping her eyes shut to please Tom.

"Why, you don't like that, you silly. You may have it if it comes to you fair, but I sha'n't give it you without. Right or left,—you choose, now. Ha-a-a!" said Tom, in a