



Polly in Fairyland.

Once upon a time there was a little girl whose parents had christened her Florida. But when she was a tiny mite that big name was so hard to pronounce that she twisted it up and shortened it down, and called herself Folly. And so everybody called her Folly—her parents and her grandparents and her great-grandparents, and even the minister when he came to call.

Now, the day that this story is about was Christmas Day, and Folly was nearly nine years old. She was having one of the very nicest Christmases in the world. When she awoke in the morning she found her long black stockings full of goodies and toys. Later on had come the Christmas tree with its wonderful gifts—a doll that could say papa and mamma, a little white mull, a writing-desk, a ring with a pearl in it, and, oh, lots of things, but, best of all, a big book of Fairy Tales.

And then had come the Christmas dinner, with its blazing plum pudding, and after that it seemed to Folly that there would be nothing in all the world so nice to do as to cuddle up on the big divan in the library and read that fairy book.

So she piled the pillows into a perfect nest, tucked herself away in it, and began to read. Many of the stories she knew before, but that doesn't make any difference with fairy tales; they are always just as good as ever, even after you have heard them a thousand and one times. And Folly proved this, for she picked out to read first the very ones she knew best.

But soon the book seemed to grow heavy and heavier, and just as it dropped from Folly's hand there was a merry chuckle of laughter and another merry chuckle of laughter. Folly heard them both quite distinctly, although they were exactly alike and happened at exactly the same time. And then she saw standing behind her, hand in hand, two dear little children, whose names I don't know, but they were jolly little things, with round, chubby faces and wide, staring, blue eyes.

The little girl was just like a snowball, with her white furry cape and white furry hood; and the little boy was just like a snowball, with his white furry coat and white furry cap. "We are the Babes," they said, cheerfully.

"Indeed," said Polly politely, "but may I ask how you came in? There is no door open."

"Why, we came from Fairyland; we never uses doors. We're the Babes in the Wood, and dese are our wobins."

Then Folly saw behind them a whole flock of robins hopping around each with a strawberry leaf in his bill.

"You dear things!" said Folly, jumping up and hugging them both. "Are you really the Babes, and did your cruel uncle leave you to die in the wood?"

"Yes," said they, and they always spoke exactly together and said exactly the same thing. "Yes, he did in the storvy, but of course in Fairyland we don't always live according to the storvy. Come wiv us, we'll show you Fairyland."

"But I can't," said Folly. "I'm not a fairy."

"Does you wants to be one?" said the twins, doubtfully.

"Oh, yes, indeed! I'd love to be one; I've always wanted to be a fairy."

"All wite, we'll get you the fings." And the Babes bobbled away, still hand in hand, and the robins hopped along behind them.

In a few moments they bobbled back again with their arms full of most marvelous clothes.

"I brought some and Babe brought some," they said. Folly stared in amazement as they spread out a real regular fairy costume. Airy, spangled skirts, shiny, sparkling wings, a gold crown and a long gilt wand.

"Are these for me?" she asked in delight.

"Yes. Can you dress yourself if we help wiv the buttons?"

"Oh, yes," said Folly's little red plaid frock was soon discarded and she was arrayed in the new gar-

ments. "Now you is a buful fairy," said the Babes; "now we'll go."

Folly felt herself going—right through the main ceiling. She went up and up, through mamma's room, through the ceiling, through the attic, through the roof, and then she floated along through the air above the tops of the tallest trees. The twins were at her side, followed by their robins.

"This is Fairyland," they said suddenly, and they all floated down to the ground and stood at the entrance of a thick, dark wood.

"Is it?" said Folly, much disappointed. "Why, I never supposed it looked like this."

"Oh, this is only our wood, and we can't go out of it, but you can go froo and see all the uvver fings."

"Well, I will," said Folly, "but I want to see your wood first. So here is where your cruel uncle left you, is it?"

"Yes, and we went to sleep—y right under this tree—so—and the wobins came and clobbered us up—so."

The two little tots were now lying under a great oak tree, and the robins were industriously bringing strawberry leaves so that in a few moments the children were almost covered. They seemed so sound asleep that Folly thought it a pity to wake them, and decided to investigate things for herself.

knew so well the approved style of fairy talk, she might as well use it.

"Gladly would I constitute myself thy guide, most noble Princess," replied Jack; "but I must hie me to yonder fastness, where lives a great giant with whom I must do battle. But go by this straight path, which leads to the House that Jack Built, and there wilt thou find guides galore." And with another bow, so low that his curls almost touched the ground, he strode away. Folly was sorry to see him go, for Jack the Giant Killer had always been one of her favorite heroes, he was so brave and so handsome. She looked down the straight path he had shown her, and sure enough, at the end of it she could see a wide, high gate, which must be the entrance to the House that Jack Built.

In great glee she started to run down the path, but as she ran her wings seemed to lift her from the earth, and though her toes touched the ground at every step, it was really no exertion whatever.

How lovely it is to be a Fairy, thought Polly, and she waved her wand about in sheer gladness of heart.

When she reached the great gates she again felt a little timid, for they were of massive wrought iron, and the designs represented dragons and griffins, and so, though they glared fiercely at her with their great eyes, she only smiled back at them and

sleeping potion when I retired last night, I couldn't sleep through that crow of yours. It's a regular scare-crow!"

The cock didn't seem at all offended, but winked one eye at Folly in a friendly way.

Then the priest, who was clean-shaven, and whose hair was cut quite short, and who had a perfectly round bald spot on the top of his head, turned to Folly. "Do you wish to go to the house, my daughter?" said he.

"Yes, if you please," answered Folly. "I hied me hither on the advice of a knight I met walking hard by. A comely youth he was, yclept Jack the Giant Killer." Folly was wonderfully pleased with herself for accomplishing this speech, which she felt sure was a fine specimen of Fairyland diction.

The priest seemed pleased, too, and holding up his cassock, for the morning dew was still on the grass, he daintily picked his way toward the house. Folly followed, and though she felt a desire to prod the fat old fellow with her wand, she didn't dare do so, lest she offend his dignity.

Just then they met two people swinging between them a milking pail. The man was clothed in beautiful garments of velvet and lace but they hung in rags and tatters. His satin doublet was slit and frayed and his velvet mantle was torn to ribbons. The woman with him, though fair and young, had the saddest, most pathetic expression on her sweet face. As they passed they bowed to the priest, who said "Good morning, my children." Then he turned and watched them a moment, and Folly looked, too. "They go a-milking," said the priest.

"Of course," said Folly, "to milk the cow with the crumpled horn. I see her down yonder in the meadow. Where is the dog she tossed? Oh, here you are, you dear little thing!"

As a fluffy little white dog came running toward her. He limped a little, which the priest said was due to his repeated tossings. "But he is still

except the one I thought of pulling out of."

"It seemed strange, but he advised me strongly to let the insurance stay where it was, even persuading me that the L. M. Mutual was perfectly sound. He said he could do no better by me, and perhaps not so well. So of course he lost so much business."

"Well," said the older man, "I'm not only not surprised, but I should not have known what to make of it if you had had any other experience with Mr. Patlin. He always advises everybody else to do what he himself would do in the same circumstances. It never makes the least difference to him whether what he says is going to increase or decrease his own business. That is the way with all that family; his brothers are just so, in other lines of trade."

"But how do they get along?" the young man queried. "Does the agent make a success by letting business go by that is all ready to drop into his lap?"

"No business man in town has more to show as the result of his methods," replied the other; "and yet I suppose some of the self-proclaimed 'hustlers' would think Mr. Patlin a little slow. What they lose sight of is the long haul. He has been here a good while; he intends to be here a good while longer. People for some reason get back to his office, even if he does drive them occasionally."

The young man didn't carry the argument any further, but he was away with something new to think about.

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SHE WAVED HER MAGIC WAND.

On she went, through the wood, to its farthest edge, and then, behold—Fairyland! Spread out before her were gorgeous gardens and wonderful castles, with glittering spires, lakes and fountains and mountains, and a bewildering maze of paths that seemed to lead everywhere.

And then a young man came striding down the road. Folly determined to ask him to direct her, for she began to feel confused. He was walking so fast she feared she could not attract his attention, and as he drew nearer she noticed that he wore a pair of most marvelous boots. These, and the enormous strides which they enabled him to take, convinced her at once that he was no other than Jack the Giant Killer, and feeling sure that he would be kind to her, she timidly held out her fairy wand, at sight of which he immediately came and stood at her side.

"What is your will, oh Fairy Princess," said he, removing his plumed hat, and dropping on one knee before her.

"Sir Jack," said Folly, "I have but now come into Fairyland, and fain would I be made familiar with its ways and byways. If I go unadvised I fear me I shall become lost." This was quite different from the way Folly usually talked, but she thought to herself that as she

tapped three times on the gate with her wand.

As she did this the gates flew open and right before her stood a great rooster, almost as high as Folly herself. He was a magnificent bird, with such bright feathers that he seemed to be freshly painted. His comb waved like an auction flag, and as he caught sight of Folly he gave such a loud "Cock-a-doodle-doe!" that it almost deafened her.

"Oh," she said, "you're the Cock that crowed in the morn, aren't you?"

"Yes," said the noble fowl, seeming pleased that she recognized him, "and I set the style for the cocks, I do assure you. You notice they've all crowed in the morn ever since, and it's really the best time to crow."

"Certainly it is," said Folly. "I can always do anything best in the morning, too; and you do crow wonderfully well."

Just here a fat old priest came shuffling down the walk from the house. He was rubbing his eyes, and looking very sleepy.

"Did I waken you?" said the cock, politely; "that was too bad."

"Waken me!" said the priest, "I should think you did! Although I took seven sodding draughts, and a

lively enough to worry the cat," he went on. "Would you like to see the performance?"

Folly hastily declined, for she was a kind-hearted little girl and hated to see animals abused. She also said very decidedly she had no desire to see the rat, at which the priest laughed heartily.

"Why, my child," said he, "you couldn't very well see the rat, for the cat killed him years ago." Folly was glad of this for she had a horror of rats, and, indeed, she was not exactly fond of mice.

By this time they had reached the house and stood on the broad verandah. "Is Jack at home?" asked Folly.

"Yes," said the priest, "and he will be very glad to see you."

Was There to Stay.

"You have a peculiar fire insurance agent in this town," remarked a newcomer one day to an old resident, "I had about made up my mind to change my insurance from the L. M. Mutual Company to some other concern; I had a suspicion that it might not be absolutely sound. So, having seen the advertisement of a number of companies on the window of a Mr. Patlin, your agent, I went in there. He seemed to represent almost all the important companies about here