

"I am a prince —
Pray do not wince,
My meaning soon
I will evince.

"I wear a beak
And do not speak,
That I your bower
May safely seek.

"Here do I sit,
And never flit;
But sing all day
For love of it."

"For love of you
I sing and sue;
Then be my own
Oh! maiden true.

"Prince Yellow Bird."

Milly dropped into a chair, too much amazed to stand.

"I wonder if there really *are* fairies," she said, "for never, in my whole life, did I hear of anything so queer and so delightful."

Then she took her crutches and limped across the room to wash her hands. But when she lifted the lid of the soap-tray she gave a little jump, for there, on the soap, lay another note. This was what it said:

"TO MILLY.

From her Valentine.

"Little hands, little heart,
Keep them pure and white,
Fit for heavenly errands,
And the angels' sight.

"Other hands, tired hands,
Fearless, clasp and hold,

Warming, with warm touches,
Weary hearts and cold.

"So shall hands, so shall heart,
Fair as lilies be,
When, life done, the angels
Come and call for thee."

Milly almost cried over this. She washed her hands slowly and carefully, repeating:

"So shall hands, so shall heart,
Pure as lilies be.

"Oh, I wish they were," she said to herself.

Fastening her dress, she felt in the pocket after a pocket handkerchief. None

was there, but lo! a parcel met her touch. Wondering, she drew it out. The dress had not been with her at Uncle Silas's. It had been left hanging up at home, but there was no parcel in the pocket when last she wore it.

Milly's fingers trembled with excitement. She could hardly untie the string. Inside the tissue paper which wrapped it, was a cunning pink box, full of jeweller's cotton. Milly lifted it. Something lay beneath, so pretty and shining that she fairly screamed when she caught sight of it. It was a locket of clear white crystal, with a gold rim; and inside a tiny strip of pink paper, on which were these words:

"FOR MILLY, who gave up her own pleasure to make her sick grandpapa happy, with the compliments of

"St. Valentine."

Grandmamma was surprised enough a moment later, when Milly came into the dining-room almost at a run, her crutches clicking and tapping like castanets, and in her hand the locket and the four wonderful letters. She had never known her darling to be so much excited before.

"Did you ever see anything so lovely?" cried Milly. "I don't believe there will be any half so pretty at the party to-night. But who *did* send them, Grandmamma?"

"I can't imagine," replied Grandmamma, thoughtfully. "Ralph didn't say a word about them when he was here."

"Ralph here? Cousin Ralph? When?"

"Yesterday morning. He came over to see how Grandpapa was, he said. It was pretty dull for him, I'm afraid, for old Mrs. Beetles came in and I had to sit with her, and Ralph stayed most of the time with Grandpapa. He went upstairs, now I think of it, and I did hear him in your room. It's queer."

Milly said no more, but she looked surprisingly happy. She loved Ralph very much. Had he really taken all this trouble to give her a pleasure, she thought?

So you see, in spite of her losing the party, St. Valentine did pretty well for Milly, after all. Don't you think so?—St. Nicholas.