

The Wooden Doll.

Bertie Morton had one great wish, and that was to be able to make a wooden doll all by himself. He had been so delighted with the dolls that had been sent to his little twin sisters, Gertie and Nettie, some time ago; but now, sad to say, they were broken, and Bertie thought he would like to make another for the little girls.

They were all staying at the seaside for the summer, but one day Nettie got a chill and had to lie in bed. Poor little Gertie fretted and tears fell fast. But what was the secret, I wonder, that Bertie whispered into her ear, that made her rub the tears away with a smile, and clap her hands?

It was this: Bertie had made up his mind to make Nettie a wooden doll, and had already made grand preparations. He had found an old knife, and some wood. So after breakfast next morning Gertie and Bertie stole out of the house and ran down to a quiet nook on the shore, Bertie chattering all the way about the easiness of making a doll.

But alas! for such dreams; first the wood split, and then the knife was too blunt, and at last poor Bertie threw himself on the ground and burst into tears, sobbing out that "it wasn't any good trying to do anything for anybody."

Just at this moment a rough but cheery voice quite close to them said, "Hullo, my little man, what be the matter?"

It was the village carpenter, whose friendly face Bertie knew; but now he could only point to the hacked bit of wood, while Gertie said, "He tide to make a dollie."

"Oh!" said the carpenter, "if that's all, come along with me, and I'll make you one in a very short time. I have half an hour or so to spare."

Then giving a hand to each child, he strode along to his work-shop. The two sat down and watched the man with wide-open eyes, as he whittled away, and in about twenty minutes he held up before the eyes of the delighted children a very fair specimen of a wooden doll.

"Now just you wait a bit, and I'll give her a touch of paint." And so he did; and when the doll was handed to them it nearly took their breath away. It looked beautiful with its red cheeks, blue eyes, and black hair. The children almost shouted their thanks, and then ran off home as quickly as possible to show the treasure to Mamma, who promised to dress it when the paint was dry.

The first thing that little Nettie saw, when she awoke from her midday sleep, was a lovely wooden dollie in a white muslin dress and pale blue sash,

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sitting on the pillow; while two eager voices said;

"We got it for you our very own selves, Nettie, dear"

Dolly's Sea-Side Disaster.

When Hilda Barlow went with her parents and brothers and sisters down to Eastbourne for the summer holidays, Annabel Jane, the favourite and best-behaved of her nine dolls, went too.

The very first morning that Hilda appeared on the sea-shore she brought Annabel with her. It was low tide, and the clear rock-pools were full of lovely-coloured sea-anemones, and pink-and-white star-fishes, and queer little creatures with white thread-like legs. Among these Hilda had a grand hunt, and when tired of wandering

about she sat down to make sand-castles.

A long time she sat thus, getting more and more sleepy in the warm glare of the morning sun. Suddenly there was a wish! and she started up to find the tide coming in fast. She snatched at her pail and spade, and scampered up the beach, with her little sand-shoes wet through. But where, oh where was Annabel Jane? Ah, there she was floating about in the sea, face downwards! Alas! she had been quite forgotten by her little mistress.

Hilda was in great distress, and sobbed aloud. But soon a rosy-cheeked bare-legged boy came along; he had been busy sailing his boat. Catching sight of poor, drowning Dolly, he waded in and brought her safely ashore.

When telling the story afterwards of Dolly's narrow escape, Hilda used gravely to say, "She had a most dreadful fright, and she has been quite pale ever since."

But if you were to ask my opinion, I should say that the salt water did not agree with the paint on her rosy cheeks.

—Believers should not have a slavish dread of death, for where is the infant that fears to go asleep in his nurse's arms?—*Toplady.*

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