

"Shall you, Guy dear? I didn't know you had a birthday so soon. We shall have to think how we keep it."

His eyes brightened at the thought.

"Shall I have a treat? We used to have birthday treats once. I can remember some of them. But last Maudie-birthday mother was ill, and we were poor, and so we didn't do anything. I was wondering whether anything nice would happen on Wednesday."

"We will see if we cannot make something nice happen. What would you like to do, Guy?"

He paused and looked hard at me; a host of ideas seemed crowding the busy little brain.

"There are such lots of things," he answered eagerly. "Only there is one thing that makes it difficult to settle on anything, you see?"

"Why? What is the difficulty?"

"Well, don't you see that if settled on the thing I like best now I mightn't care a bit for when I was all different? And that would be a pity. Miss Sea-Gull, I hope you will like me when I am somebody else. It would be a great disadvantage if I were to turn into a nasty, horrid little boy."

His bright little face took an expression of such genuine anxiety that I could not help laughing.

"Well, Guy dear, I do not think you need be afraid of that. You have not quite understood the book right. What it means is that we change very, very gradually, so that in about seven years—"

"Oh, but listen, Miss Sea-Gull!"

"No, Guy, I want you to listen," I replied, with unwonted firmness, and tried to make him understand the nature of the gradual change always passing on in our body, and to rid his mind of the notion that it was all done in a single night. He did listen with keen interest and intelligence, and ended by being quite relieved, although he was a little disappointed at the thought of losing the prestige which his sudden transformation was going to produce, as he supposed, upon his friends and acquaintance.

"I thought it would be such fun going round to Mrs. Marks and the fishymen, and seeing if they knew me, and puzzling them all; and if I turned into a man at once it would have been quite fun. But I think I'm rather glad on the whole, because now we can make my birthday plan quite nicely, and I shan't want to change it when the day comes."

"And we must think about your birthday present, too, Guy. What do you think you would like best for that?"

"Oh, I don't know; there are such lots of things," he answered with a big sigh. "There's a 'lectric machine—I want that awfully for all my inventions. I don't seem to get on with them, and I expect it's because they all want electricity to finish them off. Then there's that big kite in Randall's window—I should awfully like that. And then a pony—I do want a pony ever so much. I always feel as if I could invent ever such a lot of things if I could go galloping all over the country on a pony."

I think it's the wind coming against your face and whispering in your ears. It makes me feel as if I had such a lot of beautiful ideas."

"Well, Guy, I think we must wait about the poney till Brother Reginald comes, and we know what he is going to do with you. You can go on learning to ride on old Billy, and we will see about something else for you when we are more settled. You shall have the kite to go on with, and we will think about the machine and poney by and by."

"Oh, thank you. I shall have a jolly birthday. I must run and tell Maudie. You are a nice old thing, Miss Sea-Gull!"

(To be Continued.)

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