

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Little Dog Under the Waggon

'Come, wife,' said good old Farmer Gray,  
'Put on your things, 'tis market day—  
And we'll be off to the nearest town,  
There and back ere the sun goes down.  
Spot? No, we'll leave old Spot behind.'  
But Spot he barked and Spot he whined,  
And soon made up his doggy mind  
To follow under the waggon.

Away they went at a good round pace,  
And joy came into the farmer's face:  
'Poor Spot,' said he, 'did want to come,  
But I'm awful glad he's left at home;  
He'll guard the barn, and guard the cot,  
And keep the cattle out of the lot.'  
'I'm not so sure of that,' thought Spot,  
The little dog under the waggon.

The farmer all his produce sold,  
And got his pay in yellow gold,  
Then started homeward after dark,  
Home through the lonely forest. Hark!  
A robber springs from behind a tree—  
'Your money or else your life,' says he;  
The moon was up, but he didn't see  
The little dog under the waggon.

Spot ne'er barked and Spot ne'er whined,  
But quickly caught the thief behind;  
He dragged him down in the mire and dirt,  
He tore his coat and tore his shirt,  
Then he held him fast on the miry ground;  
The robber uttered not a sound  
While his hands and feet the farmer bound  
And tumbled him into his waggon.

So Spot he saved the farmer's life,  
The farmer's money, the farmer's wife;  
And now, a hero grand and gay,  
A silver collar he wears to-day;  
Among his friends, among his foes,  
And everywhere his master goes,  
He follows on his horny toes,  
The little dog under the waggon.

—'Waif.'

## Summer Days.

(By Ernest Gilmore, in the 'Christian Intelligencer'.)

Mrs. Duncan was going to the seashore by the doctor's orders. She had not been well for a long time and the doctor had said she must have rest and a change as well as sea air. This was all right as far as Mrs. Duncan was concerned, but to Kathryn, the only child, the prospect was rather dark. Of course, she wanted her mother to get well, but she wanted, also, to be with her while she was getting well. She had never been parted from her mother, even for one night. Ever since she could remember she had gone with her mother wherever the latter went. She could have gone now if things at home had been more favorable. But the trouble was they were not so. Her grandmother had come to live with them and she was old and feeble. Her little motherless cousin was staying with them, too, while the latter's father was abroad on a long business trip.

'Oh, mamma!' exclaimed Kathryn, when she was told that her mother was to go to the seashore for two months, and she was to look after things at home. 'Why can't I go with you? What is there for me to look after at home? Peggy can see to everything, can't she? I don't see what I can do to help her.'

'I wasn't thinking of Peggy, my dear, when I spoke of your "looking after things at home," for I knew—to my great relief—that she is a capable and faithful servant and will do all that she is required to do. But you know her failings, one of which is that she is liable to let her temper get the better of her occasionally.'

'Yes, I know. Well, I hope Peggy will not have any of her tantrums while you are gone. I don't know what might happen with you not here to pour oil—as you always do—on the troubled waters. I couldn't and wouldn't.'

Mrs. Duncan smiled.

'Oh, yes, my dear,' she said, 'I'd trust you

to pour on the oil if it should be necessary. As I said before, however, it was not Peggy whom I had in mind when I spoke of your "looking after things." Perhaps I should have said, looking after the comfort of our dear folks at home. There are many little services that grandma needs and will not ask for. There will be only you to do these. Your little cousin Helen will need you, too. She is a poor little motherless child, and—as I've petted her considerably—I suppose she'll miss me.'

'Of course she'll miss you—we all will. How can I help that?'

'Your own heart will tell you how. Then there is your father—he'll depend on you while I'm gone.'

'Why should papa depend on me?' questioned Kathryn, wonderingly, 'he's all right.' Mrs. Duncan smiled again.

'A father always needs his daughter,' was all she said.

The morning of Mrs. Duncan's departure for the seashore was an exceedingly blue one in the household. It was Monday. Peggy, having a good-sized washing on hand, looked as she felt, unusually glum. Grandma felt lonesome and neglected, but tried her best to be patient and cheerful. She made up her bed as best she could. Peggy usually turned the mattress for her, but it had not occurred to her this busy morning to do so, consequently it was left unturned, grandma not being strong enough for that kind of work. After the bed was made, grandma dusted her room carefully. She always did that 'six days out of seven' and enjoyed it. It was easy work and satisfactory, for—as she had often said to herself—'when it was done, it was done.' The 'hair combing,' however, did not please her. She tried her best 'to get it right,' but failed to do so on account of the lameness of her hands and arms. She was so weary after her hair was arranged that she was obliged to sit down awhile and rest before going on with other little necessary touches toward personal neatness. When, at last, she was 'ready' (as she told herself with some relief) she looked into her mirror. Her poor hands had not done their work well, although they had done the best they could. Her hair looked rough and was one-sided, the small breastpin she always wore was crooked, and her lace collar was wrong side out. She sighed involuntarily, but, knowing it could do her no good to do her work over, made no attempt. She sat down in her rocking chair near the window with her work—the crocheting of a pink fleecy shawl. She had to lay it down quite frequently on account of the weakness and the stiffness of her arms. From her seat at the window she could see Kathryn swaying back and forth in a hammock under the trees. She was reading a book.

'Kathryn misses her mother,' was grandma's mental comment. 'I'm thinking we all miss Lucy; it doesn't seem like the same house without her.'

The morning passed away. Everyone in the house had been lonesome and everyone had kept the fact to themselves, grandma in her room, Kathryn in her attempt to read, little Helen in her restless wandering in and out of the house, even Peggy at her washing.

At noon Kathryn happened to be in her room for a few moments. The door between her own room and her grandmother's was slightly ajar. She heard her little cousin Helen come into grandma's room.

'Oh, the little girl exclaimed rather wearily. 'It's awful lonesome without Aunt Lucy, isn't it, grandma?'

'Yes, dear,' was the response, 'it is lonesome without her. I think the best thing you and I can do is to cheer each other. Where have you been all morning?'

Kathryn heard a long sigh from her small cousin as she said, 'I've been upstairs and downstairs and all over. I was in the kitchen awhile, but I didn't stay there long because Peggy was so busy that I guess she didn't want me around. I tried to make a dress for my dollie, but I couldn't get it right.'

'Why didn't you ask Kathryn to help you?'

'O-o-h! I wanted to ask her, but she was reading all morning and I didn't like to trouble her.'

'Well,' was grandma's gentle and comfort-

ing answer, 'perhaps I can help with your dollie's dress. Bring it here after luncheon and let's see what we can do together.'

Kathryn couldn't help hearing the conversation and her conscience smote her.

'Your breastpin isn't on straight,' exclaimed Helen, 'and your collar is inside out. Who fixed you up?'

'I rather think I wasn't "fixed"—as you call it. My hands are so stiff and lame this morning that they seem to be all thumbs. Does my hair look very bad?'

'Not very,' was Helen's answer, 'it doesn't seem just right, somehow. I didn't know exactly what's the matter with it, but I'm going to smooth it a little and I'll arrange your collar.'

Kathryn suddenly felt a great longing to smooth the silvery hair of her grandmother, but she would not interfere with Helen's ministry.

'Oh it's too bad that I've been so selfish all morning,' she said to herself remorsefully, 'and after all that mamma said, too, about caring for our home folks. I've been just thinking of myself alone since mamma took the early train. What would she say if she knew?'

## II.

Peggy was ringing the chimes in the dining room—it was lunch time. It occurred to Kathryn that there were several things that she should have done for Peggy on Monday morning—her mother always did these things on busy mornings, as they kept but one servant. She was sorry that she had been so thoughtless. Grandma and little Helen were standing beside their chairs at the table when she reached it. She kissed them both as she passed them to take her place where her mother usually sat, at the latter's request. She made no apology in words for her morning's neglect, but, 'actions speak louder than words,' you know. After luncheon was over she said to her grandmother, whose daily custom it was to lie down awhile:

'Grandma, if you'll ring your bell when you've had your nap, I'll come upstairs after you, and we'll have "Afternoon Tea" in the yard.'

'Thank you, my dear,' was the pleased response, 'I'll ring it.'

'How would you like to have me visit you this afternoon?' Kathryn asked of little Helen after the old lady had gone to her room. 'What do you mean?' the child asked wonderingly.

Kathryn laughed.

'I mean—supposing you play keep house under the maple tree. I'll be the dressmaker and will come and sew for your dolls. How would you like that?'

Helen's little face brightened.

'Oh, I'd love it,' she said.

'Then I'll be on hand at two o'clock promptly. Get your dolls and pieces ready. I'm going to see if I can do anything for Peggy now.'

Kathryn, although tardy in her offer to 'lift a hand' for Peggy, found several things she could do for her, all of which services were gratefully received. She dusted the dining room and the sitting room, wiped the silver and glass from luncheon, beat the eggs for a cake that Peggy was about to bake and peeled some apples that she wanted to stew. From the time Kathryn began to help until she finished, the temperature steadily rose in Peggy's face until it fairly glowed, after which she burst out in this way:

'You're mighty good to me, Miss Kathryn, an' I'll not forget it—that I won't—even if I am a cross old thing.'

'You ain't a cross old thing,' was the comforting answer, 'and I like to help you. I only wish I'd thought of it early this morning when mamma went away.'

By the time Kathryn was through helping Peggy it was about time to meet her engagement under the maple tree. Helen, who had been there some time and had arranged it in the manner of a sitting room, her three dolls sitting or standing around, laughed aloud when she saw her cousin Kathryn come from the house, dancing all the way to the sewing chair, which the child had ready for her, hav-