

## WHY MARGERY'S DAY WAS SPOILED.

A tiny sunbeam strayed through the shutter, and, glinting on Margery's fast-closed eyes, awoke her. Not too soon, either, for, just as she was gathering together her scattered wits, there came a quick knock on the door.

"Time to get up. Fly along, Margie; we start at nine, sharp!"

"All right, Dick, I'll be ready." She was on her feet now and running to the window to make sure it was really a fine day. Then there was a great splashing of water, and rustling into clothes, and Margery, her striped flannel skirt and blazer trimly adjusted, her sailor hat at just the right angle over her curly hair, her waterproof and extra jacket strapped compactly together, ran down stairs to find herself first at the breakfast table. But in a moment they all trooped in. Nat attired in his freshest tennis flannels, Dick, by way of contrast, in his oldest and most disreputable garments, both engaged in a lively skirmish as to the superior merits of his own style of costume.

"You'll ruin those white trousers, sure as fate!"

"They're cleanable," drawled Nat. "At least I'll look respectable" (witheringly) "when I get to one of the most fashionable hotels in the Adirondacks."

"Well, I believe in comfort," retorted Dick. "It'll be muddy, and I'm going for fun, not looks."

"Evidently," Nat said.

"Stop squabbling, boys, and hurry a bit," uncle Ned interposed at this juncture.

Margery finished first, and went to the piazza to reconnoitre. Could those clouds mean rain? Where was the carry-waggon?

"There go the boats!" uncle Ned said, as he joined her.

On a waggon standing near was a high, broad framework, on either side of which two boats were resting; two others were lifted in above these as Margery looked. Then the one horse started, jogging along, the queerly-mounted boats looking like huge blue wings, as the waggon turned off into the woods.

"Oh, uncle Ned, this is what I've longed for ever since my only lake trip three years ago!" Margery said, with a contented sigh.

"My dear Martha, what are you going to do with all that luggage?"

Mrs. Rainsford looked aggrieved.

"Why, it's the least I can get along with. My jacket, my fur cape, and my mackintosh are in the shawl-strap; if it rains I'll need my umbrella, if not my parasol—I can't bear an umbrella in sunshine, as you know, Edward; in the bag are bottles of things we may need, camphor, cologne and so on, a night-dress in case we should be detained—I'd advise you all to take things for overnight—and in the basket are crackers and fruit—I may feel faint. I suppose the guides can carry our things."

"They carry their boats. There's not a chance of spending the night there. You can surely leave some of those things behind."

"My dear Edward, I presume I can judge what is necessary for my own comfort. A man is usually willing to carry something for his wife."

Mr. Rainsford was silent, but Margery noted the firm compression of his lips.

"Hurrah! Here's the carry-waggon and only fifteen minutes late," cried Dick. "Goodness! aunt Martha, are you going to take all those things?"

"Now, Martha, get in here," uncle Ned interposed, hastily, "and Janie, you with

her, and Nat—three on a seat. The guides must have the back seat. Up with you, Margery; here Nellie and Sue. Now, Dick, are all the traps in? You and I'll go in front with the driver."

The big four-seated waggon jolted away, over the sandy road and into the long shady stretch of green woods, skirting the lake for a few rods, and then off for the nearly three-mile drive, under the clustering maples and birches, past the fragrant balsams and spruces, with the witch-hopple bushes, the thickly-growing brakes and ferns almost brushing the wheels as they lumbered through the muddy road. At intervals, the long piercingly-sweet call of the brown thrush, or the thrill of his hermit brother reached their ears; and once, the jarring note of an early-come blue jay was heard.

It was a merry party, chatting, laughing at Dick's jokes, looking forward eagerly to the day's trip,—all except Nellie, who openly declared that she wished she wasn't going, there was nothing she disliked more than those cranky little boats.

"Nonsense, Nell, you shall go in the boat with me, and I'll preserve your life."

"Indeed, my life will be better preserved by not going in the boat with you, Dick," retorted his cousin, laughing.

As the waggon took an abrupt turn to

having already, to Dick's wicked delight, splashed his immaculate flannels. The third boat was in position, when there was a slight exclamation from the remaining guide.

"What's to pay?" queried Dick.

The man bent down, looking disconsolately at his boat. "Hole in her," he said, pointing.

"What a shame!" cried the girls in chorus.

"See that little root, miss?" He pointed to where a tiny stump showed under the boat, one end of which he lifted in his hand from the ground. The sharply pointed end had gone through the thin wood like a needle. "I'll have to turn back. She'll leak and won't be safe."

"But what can we do?" cried Margery.

"Sorry, miss, but it can't be helped."

"I'll go back in the carry-waggon. I'm glad of it!" exclaimed Nellie.

"But you're only one. Two will have to stay," said Margery, a little sharply.

"Can't you send back for another boat?"

"It'd take more'n an hour, and boats is mostly taken just at this season."

"I will go back with Nellie," Janie offered. Janie was always unselfish, and both Dick and Margery knew how she had been anticipating the day's excursion.

Margery had a sharp, short struggle with

someone he thought the day would be "Just nuts!"

"It takes away half the pleasure not to have Dick," continued Janie, almost crying. "Now Nellie was glad to go back."

"Too bad there wasn't another in the party who felt the same," said Margery, with a little uncomfortable laugh.

"Where are the others?" greeted them, as they landed on the opposite shore. The mishap was soon explained, and Margery was not made happier by her uncle's comment.

"I'd rather have stayed home myself than have Dick miss this. He'd counted on a lot of views here for the prize competition in his Camera Club. His lens is so fine, and he made sure of the novel views being in his favor. Didn't you know that, Margery?"

"I'd forgotten, sir," Margery hung her head and felt herself grow crimson.

Here aunt Martha made a diversion. "Edward, will you carry my bag, and the wraps? I can't possibly climb that hill and carry anything. I can manage the umbrella and parasol, but Nat, you—why he's gone! Well, Margery, perhaps you'll take the lunch basket."

The steep woodland path that lay before them did not make Margery anxious for additional luggage, but she took the big basket, wondering how "anyone could be as selfish and inconsiderate as aunt Martha," then reflected that perhaps she herself had not much to boast of on that score.

The three guides had fitted the pieces of wood known as "yokes" into their boats, and, raising the light crafts, had reversed them over their heads, the semi-circular opening in the yokes fitting around their necks. They walked off in the narrow path, looking like some new specimens of long-legged, gigantic beetles. The others followed, panting, up the hill, Mrs. Rainsford calling for assistance, now from one, now from another, finally announcing that she guessed Janie had better take her parasol, young people wouldn't mind, of course. Sue and Janie kept near Margery as they trudged briskly over the narrow, bush-bordered path, thickly strewn with last year's leaves, now wet and slippery in spots.

The sunshine flickered here and there through the branches; the tree tops rustled softly in the breeze that the travellers could not feel in their sheltered way; bright scarlet bunch-berries carpeted the ground, the tufts of the metallic blue clintonia grew here and there, while, springing amid mosses and ferns, lurked the wax-white Indian pipe.

"Isn't it lovely?" cried Sue. "No wonder you raved over it, Margery. Don't you enjoy it now more than the first time you came?"

"There's the next lake, girls," was Margery's response.

"Well, I miss Dick," declared Mrs. Rainsford; "he's the life of any party, and I'd miss anyone less than I do him." Aunt Martha was one who never allowed her politeness to overcome her candor.

Over the next lake the three boats glided, to disembark at another woodland carry, its leafy vista stretching before them with a promise of fresh enchantment. But the lovely woods had lost their charm, the restful variety of alternate boat rides and walking was lost on Margery. Constant references to Dick came from all the party, and Margery would gladly have changed places with him had it been possible. They rowed over two more lakes and the intervening carries of a few rods



"THE MAN BENT DOWN, LOOKING DISCONSOLATELY AT HIS BOAT. 'HOLE IN HER,' HE SAID, POINTING."

the left, they saw the boat waggon making its slow way, just ahead of them.

"There's the lake—that's Little Clear. Isn't it nuts?" which was Dick's highest term of admiration.

One boat was already in place on the shore, the guide seated astride the pointed bow, holding it steady for his passengers.

Along its length tiptoed Mrs. Rainsford, armed with her parasol, her umbrella, and her bag, while her husband stood with her other belongings, ready to stow them in after she should be settled, which was a work requiring time on her part, and patience on the part of others.

"Is there any danger of rain before we get across this pond, guide?" she inquired.

"No rain to-day, ma'am," the guide returned.

"Well, you guides aren't infallible. I guess you'd better hand me my shawl-strap, Edward; I'll get my waterproof ready. The sun's under a cloud now."

"But look at its size, my dear."

"Nevertheless, it's well to be prepared," And the parasol was unstrapped, the mackintosh produced, and the bundle done up again, only to be opened once more so that her jacket might be convenient if its owner were chilly. At last Mr. Rainsford was seated, the guide pushed off his boat, springing lightly on its bow, where he knelt a moment, then swung himself to his seat and was off.

Sue and Nat were the next to start, Nat

herself. She alone of the party had taken this trip before. "All the more reason why I want to take it again," she said inwardly, and hardened her heart.

Nellie had clambered into the waggon, looking happier than she had all the morning; Janie started to follow her, but Dick, after a glance at his sister, laid his hand on her arm. "No, ma'am," he said, decidedly. "I'll go back. I'll have another chance to go, maybe, and you shan't be disappointed, Janie."

"Whoever's coming, hurry up," called Margery.

"No, Dick, I won't let you, remonstrated Janie. But Dick lifted the girl from the waggon step and deposited her on the ground, hastily got in the seat by his other cousin and calling out, "I'm a spoiled child, aunt Martha says, so I must be indulged," touched the horses with the whip and the waggon lumbered off.

"You take the end seat, Janie, it's more comfortable," Margery was trying to soothe her wounded conscience by some small concessions. "Now isn't this charming? See how beautifully the trees grow down to the water's edge, and everything is so still, as if we were the only people in the world."

"I can't bear to have Dick give up for me," said Janie. "He was looking forward so to this."

Margery tried to forget that it was only yesterday she had heard her brother telling