

what he should buy. Five cents would pay for a pencil, or a tablet, or some peanuts, or a sack of candy. He might even get a small cocoanut. Yes, that was what he must have—cocoanuts were so good!

But when he inquired at the store, he learned that all the small cocoanuts were gone. How disappointed he was! He didn't know until then how much he really wanted a cocoanut.

"You couldn't break one for me, could you?" he suggested.

But Mr. Andrews was not eager to sell half a cocoanut. And David was turning sadly away from the enticing brown nuts, when a thought came to him.

"You have fifty cents here. Why not borrow five cents of this, and buy the cocoanut? It wouldn't be really stealing, for you could give mama a good half of the nut."

Now David did not like the suggestion. He said to himself that he could not do such a thing; the fifty cents was all for Mrs. Eddy, and he must take it to her.

He started to open the door. Then Mr. Andrews called after him:

"Too bad you can't take one today, I've just opened a crate from Cuba."

Just from Cuba! Could he resist? He must have one, even if he had to take a part of the fifty cents. So he said, quickly:

"All right! May I have my pick?"

He turned over the contents of the box, and at last selected a fine-looking specimen, and handed over the half-dollar.

It was not until the change was put in his hand that he realized what he had done. Then how he hated himself!

He was turning sadly away, when he decided he must do his best to set things right.

"Mr. Andrews," he said, "it isn't right to go back on a trade, but I'm going to ask you to take back the nut and give me the very same fifty-cent piece I gave you."

"Why, surely!" was the answer. "Don't want a cocoanut after all, hey? Well, I was young once, so here's your money, and off you go to the candy shop, I guess?"

But David did not go to the candy-shop. He ran as fast as he could to Mrs. Eddy's home. But, fast as he went, he had time to think. "Thief! thief!" The word kept sounding in his ears. It was uncomfortable. He must do something to wipe out the awful thing he had almost done—the thing he had done; for didn't he

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take the five cents which was not his, even if he did afterward give it back?

When he saw Mrs. Eddy he decided what he would do. He would give her fifty-five cents. That would punish him for being a thief.

When he reached home, his mother asked him what he had bought with his nickel. He said he had bought nothing, and asked if he might keep still about what he had done with the money.

Wondering, his mother decided to let the matter rest. But a few days later, when Mrs. Eddy sent in her account, she was puzzled by the last item, "received fifty-five cents by your little boy David."

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A BUSY DAY.
 My papa has a little sign,
 Printed in black and gray;
 It's only just a single line:
 "This Is My Busy Day!"
 And sometimes when I creep to look,
 He's writing with a pen;
 Or quietly reading in a book—
 He calls that busy then!
 Why, when I'm busy I just race
 Downstairs, then, like as not,
 I fly back to the other place
 For something I forgot!
 Then I slide down the banisters,
 And from the porch I spring
 (Perhaps I tumble in the burrs),
 Then go and take a swing.
 And then I race Jack Smith to town,
 Or climb the garden wall;
 And though I'm sure to tumble down,
 Nobody minds a fall.
 But if I sat still in a chair,
 It wouldn't be my way
 To say with such important air:
 "This Is My Busy Day!"
 —Caroline Wells, in St. Nicholas.

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