

LITTLE FOLKS

The Grandfather Rabbit.

How did it happen? They were the dearest friends, if Margery was rich and Nan poor. They were old enough to know better, besides—Nan nine, and Margery nine and a quarter!

But it did happen. Going home from school, four days before Easter, they stopped before the candy-store, which swallowed the most of their pennies.

'Oh!' Nan exclaimed. 'See all the white rabbits!'

'They're candy-boxes,' said Margery. 'See that biggest one! He's the grandfather of all the rest.'

Nan's affections were immediately centred on the grandfather rabbit. He was made of sugar, and he was dazzlingly white. He had long ears and pink, bright eyes. He sported a pink ribbon, which covered the place where his head unscrewed to let the candy in.

'He's sweet,' said Margery, 'I want him.'

'So do I,' said Nan.

'I'm going to have him,' said Margery.

'Mebbe I am,' said Nan.

'I'm going to buy him when I come back this noon; so!' said Margery.

'Then you'll be just awful mean,' Nan cried, tremulously.

'I've got a secret,' said Margery, 'and I ain't going to tell you. I'm going to tell Idella Miles.'

That was desperate! That was fearful! But, 'Wish you would!' Nan retorted. And she switched off alone.

She thought of nothing but the grandfather rabbit all the noon. How mean Margery was! When she went back to school she looked into the candy-store window, breathless. Had Margery — No! he sat there plump and jolly, in the midst of his numerous family. His price was marked on him—fifty cents.

She and Margery did not 'speak' that afternoon. At recess Margery played jackstones with Idella Miles. And after school Nan overheard Idella telling Katie Briggs some of the secrets that Margery had told her.

'She wants that big white candy rabbit down at the store,' she said, 'but her mother thinks she's spent too much for her already, for new things for Easter. Margery's going to have it, though; she's going to

take some of her own money out of the bank.'

Nan felt a little, defiant, naughty thrill of hope. And that evening she told her father about the grandfather rabbit.

'Rabbits are terribly destructive; they eat growing plants. You will have to pen him up,' he said, for he was a funny man; but he gave her a quarter.

Her brother Ed gave her five cents. Then her mother gave her ten for sweeping the front walk two mornings.

She and Margery had nothing to do with each other now. It was a real quarrel. And as to Margery's having the rabbit, she couldn't bear to think of that.

By Saturday she was highly anxious. But on Saturday afternoon the gas-collector patted her on the head and called her 'little gell,' and gave her ten cents.

Nan seized the old collar-box in which she had saved her money, and clapped her hat on wrong side before, and ran. Ran for the grandfather rabbit. He was gone. Gone! Nan flew into the store.

'Did Margery Gates buy the grand — the biggest rabbit?' she cried, with excited voice.

'Seems to me the little Gates girl did take the biggest one,' said the clerk.

All the way home Nan's hot tears splashed on the collar-box. Was her grief all for the loss of the grandfather rabbit? No. If anybody but Margery had bought him! But for Margery to have got him after all! It was heart-breaking. She burst into the sitting-room, sobbing.

'Margery Gates has gone and got the grandfather rabbit, just because I wanted him,' she wailed, 'and she's just as mean and horrid as she can be!'

'Anna!' said her mother, and Nan said no more. It was a serious affair when her mother called her Anna.

But she sat there and cried dimly till her mother lost patience and went upstairs. So that, when the door-bell rang, Nan, all tear-stained and tousled, had to answer it. It was a boy who left a box without any remarks.

In the box was something wrapped in tissue-paper. It was—why—it was—the grandfather rabbit!

The Grandfather Rabbit Gal 2.
Nan lifted him out, gasping. Tied into the ribbon round his neck, was a letter.

'Dear Nan,' it said, 'I baut him this morning, and I was sorry and ashamed when I baut him. I wisht I had not been mene. I love you just the same as ever. I want you to go to chersch with us to-morrow. There are going to be a lot of flours.

MARGERY.'

Margery never could spell.

Nan's lips trembled very much. She lifted the rabbit, and kissed him. He felt heavy. He was filled with chocolates. That was too much. Nan sat down and cried again, in a very different way. And when her mother came down, and read Margery's letter—well, the only dry eyes were the grandfather rabbit's shining pink ones.

Margery and her father and mother came for Nan in the carriage the next morning. A beautiful morning! Everybody was going to church decked with flowers. Margery wore some white roses, and she had red ones for Nan.

In the beautiful church Nan sat and gazed at the great lilies which filled the altar and made all the air delicious. She gazed and listened eagerly to the sweet music of the Easter hymn which the choir poured out.

And yet—the flowers and the music were not quite the best of it. The little girl thought of the grandfather rabbit; and Nan slipped her hand into Margery's, as they sat there. And they looked at each other.

'Oh, we shall never, never quarrel again!' was what their eyes said.—Emma A. Oppen, in 'Youth's Companion.'

'Thank Him.'

After one of the hard-fought battles of the war, a confederate chaplain was called hastily to see a dying soldier; taking his hand, he said, 'Well, my brother, what can I do for you?' He supposed of course the young fellow would want him to cry to God for help in his extremity; it was not so.

'Chaplain,' he said, 'I want you to cut a lock of hair for my mother; and then, chaplain, I want you to kneel down and return thanks to God for me.'

'For what?' asked the chaplain.