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THE BOY AND THE BIRDSNEST.

"MARY, my love, all is ready; we must not be late for the train," said Mr. Miles as, in his traveling dress, he entered the room where sat his pale, weeping wife ready to start on the long, long journey which would only end in India. The gentleman looked flushed and excited; it was a painful mo-

ment for him, for he had to part from his sister and the one little boy whom he was leaving under her care. But Mr. Miles's chief anxiety was for his wife; for the trial, which was bitter to him, was almost heart-breaking to her. The carriage was at the door all packed, the last band-box and shawl had been put in; Eddy could hear the sound of the horses pawing the ground in their impatience to

start. But the clinging arms of his mother were round him; she held him close in her embrace as if she would press him into her heart, and the ruddy cheeks of the boy were wet with her falling tears.

"O Eddy—my child—God bless you!" she could hardly speak through her sobs.

"My love, we must not prolong this," said the husband, gently trying to draw her away. "Good-by, Lucy, good-by, my boy, you shall hear from us both from the seaport."

The father embraced his sister and his son, and then hurried his wife to the door. Eddy rushed after them through the hall, on to the steps, and Mrs. Miles, before entering the carriage, turned again to take her only son into her fond arms once more.

Never could Eddy forget that embrace—the fervent pressure of the lips, the heaving of his mother's bosom, the sound of his mother's sobs. Light-hearted boy as he was, Eddy never had realized what parting was till that time, though he had watched the preparations made for the voyage for weeks—the packing of these big black boxes that had almost blocked up the hall. Now he felt in a dream as he stood on the steps, and through tear-dimmed eyes saw the carriage driven off which held those who loved him so dearly. He caught a glimpse of his mother bending forward to have a last look of her boy before a turn in the road hid the carriage from view; and Eddy knew that long, long years must pass before he should see that sweet face again.

"Don't grieve so, dear Eddy," said Aunt Lucy, kindly laying her hand on his shoulder; "you and I must comfort each other."

But at that bitter moment Eddy was little disposed either to comfort any one or to receive comfort himself. His heart seemed rising into his throat; he could not utter a word. He rushed away into the woods behind the house, with a longing to be quite alone. He could scarcely think of anything but his mother; and the poor boy spent nearly an hour under a tree, recalling her looks, her parting words, and grieving over the recollection of how often his temper and his pride had given her sorrow. He felt, in the words of the touching lament:

"And now I recollect with pain
How many times I grieved her sore;
O if she would but come again
I think I would do so no more!

"How I would watch her gentle eye!
'Twould be my joy to do her will;
And she should never have to sigh
Again for my behaving ill!"

But boys of eight years of age are seldom long unhappy. Before an hour had passed, Eddy's thoughts were turned from the parting by his chancing to glance upward into the tree whose long green branches waved above him. Eddy espied there a pretty little nest, almost hidden by the foliage. Up jumped Eddy, eager for the prize; and in another minute he was climbing the tree like a squirrel. Soon he grasped and safely brought down