

left Miss Wilder with the idea that he thought the joke was at her expense. She determined to give notice at once, and leave at the end of her month.

Wally went upstairs and turned his unaccustomed feet into the nursery. He hesitated before he opened the door, but no sounds of repentant jobs met his ear, so he went in. Isabelle, the picture of alert interest, sat up in bed and eyed him.

"Have you come to punish me?" she asked.

"Something like that."

"Go ahead," said she.

He sat down on the edge of her bed and looked at her. Max was right; she was no prize beauty, with her baby face like an old woman's, with her nondescript features, her short brown hair. But her eyes were disturbing—big dusky, wise eyes, with no effect of childishness.

"Look here, Isabelle, why do you act like this?" That was regular parent-talk, so she made no answer.

"Here you are, four years old, and you can't behave at your own party," he continued.

"I hate parties."

"Well, but you have to have parties."

"Why?"

"Oh, all children do."

"Nasty things! I hate 'em all, except Patsy."

"Hate those nice little girls?"

"Yes!"—hotly.

"And those handsome boys?"

"Yes. They're ugly. Patsy is handsome."

"Why are you so crazy about this Patsy?"