

# BOYS AND GIRLS

## Number Ten.

A clerk in the messenger office turned from the telephone, and called, 'Number Ten.'

'Yes, sir,' and the boy known by this number went at once to the desk.

'A messenger is wanted immediately at 275 Grand Avenue. Here, I've written it on this card. There was no name given; but the address is sufficient, I suppose. Don't waste a moment; there seems to be need of great haste.'

'All right, sir.'

With these words the boy was off. Down the street he hurried until he reached Grand Avenue. Here he turned, and a few blocks more brought him to the number on the card. When he rang the bell, no one came. Then he ran again, and still the door remained closed. A third time he tried it, and with no better result.

'But I must get in,' he thought. 'I wonder if they don't hear the bell, or what is the matter. They must be shut up in a room where the sound doesn't reach them; so I shall have to keep on trying until it does.'

The next time he pushed the button as hard as he could, and in a moment or two the door flew open, and an angry-looking woman appeared.

'What do you want?' she demanded. 'What do you mean by keeping on ringing a person's bell in that style? Don't you know you're not wanted when no one comes to the door?'

'I am the messenger boy that was 'phoned for,' Number Ten said quietly in return.

'A messenger boy,' the woman repeated; 'we have not sent for any messenger boy.'

'Excuse me, but are you sure?' he asked politely; 'the call was urgent, they said, and I was sent in great haste.'

'Quite sure,' the woman answered in a stiff tone; 'I am the only person in the house at present, and I should be likely to know if I sent for a messenger boy.'

'Certainly, and pardon me for troubling you,' and Number Ten was off before any more could be said.

What should he do now? he wondered. There had been some mistake about the address; that was evident. After a moment's thought he decided to return to the office and see whether he could learn anything further in regard to the call. But there they knew no more about it than he did. The word had come over the telephone to send some one immediately to 275 Grand Avenue. Or so it had been understood. Many were the conjectures as to what the right address might be, but at last those in authority decided that it would be impossible to find out any more about it until the call came again; and, as it was time for lunch, Number Ten was excused.

He made a start, but at the door he hesitated.

'Mr. Wright,' he said to the superintendent, 'would you mind if I didn't go to lunch yet, but tried to find the place?'

'Not hungry, eh?'

'Yes, I am hungry; but I don't like to give up.'

'Do as you please, Number Ten; and, if you find the place, let us know.'

There was great doubt in the superintendent's tone, and the boy realized it.

'It does seem impossible, but I want to try,' he said. 'I shouldn't feel right if I didn't.'

Then he hurried out of the office and down the street again. At the corner he paused. 'What address could it have been that sounded like 275 Grand Avenue?' he asked himself. To begin with, it must have been Grand Avenue, for he knew of no other avenue that sounded like it. The mistake was probably in the number.

'275'.

He repeated it several times, looking

that maybe the person said, "Send to 75 Grand Avenue" instead of 275. I remembered, also, that the houses in that neighborhood were inhabited by a better class of people, who would be more likely to send for a messenger than they would be in the two hundreds, where there are far poorer people. Anyway, I went to No. 75 Grand Avenue. A girl is visiting there, who was taken very sick last night, and they wanted me to go for her mother, who lives way up out of town where there are no telephones. There was nobody in the house who could be spared to go, and they said they didn't want to frighten the mo-



"I FOUND THE PLACE!"

more and more puzzled. Then suddenly his face brightened with a new idea.

'Yes, that might be it,' he decided; 'at any rate, I'm going to try'; and he hailed the next car that came along, and was soon being taken rapidly down-town.

About two o'clock that afternoon he appeared at the office with triumph written not only on his face, but in every movement of his strong young body.

'Well?' came expectantly from Mr. Wright, for he saw that the boy had a success to tell about.

And there was a glad ring in Number Ten's voice when he answered,

'I found the place!'

'You did? You deserve great credit. Tell me how you managed it.'

'Well, Mr. Wright, I thought and I ought; and all at once it came to me

ther with a telegram. Besides, she was a nervous lady who never travelled alone, and they wanted me to bring her there. They were so glad to see me, too. I explained how I came to be delayed, and of course had to tell how I studied out the message, and they were as grateful as could be.'

'And you took the mother there?'

'Yes, sir.'

'And now you're half-starved?'

'Something like that,' the boy admitted with a laugh.

'Well, you've earned your lunch to-day,' Mr. Wright said when Number Ten was about to start for home; 'and don't hurry—take plenty of time over it.'

When Number Ten had gone, the superintendent turned to the clerks who were near, and remarked: