

THE WHISTLING MOTHER

brother, when at last he was ordered off to bed, and told him a lot of yarns and made him laugh like everything—which was rather a triumph, for I'd been afraid his eyes were a bit bleary.

When I came back everybody had cleared out except Mother. My heart came up in my throat for a minute, she looked so pretty and young and regularly splendid, there by the fire. I said to myself: "I don't believe I can stand a heart-to-heart talk—and not break. But I've got to go through with it—and I will, if it takes a leg!"

Well—I've always called her my whistling mother. It's a queer title, but it's hers in a peculiar way. She always could whistle like a blackbird. She never did it for exhibition; I don't mean that—I should say not—but she did do it for calls