

face that looked at her from the mirror was sweet and untroubled.

The next day a letter went to Jennie Barnes containing a hearty appreciation of the invitation tendered, and an honest reason for its refusal. In the same mail sped on to Jonas Parks another letter which, when it was opened, made that good man's kindly face beam for joy.

'Grandpa,' said Eunice the day following, as she turned the key in the lock of her trunk just packed, 'I think I understand better what you meant by saying it was not wise to depend too much on circumstances for one's happiness. I thought at one time that nothing but a trip to Washington could bring me happiness, but I've been so happy since I decided to go to Uncle Jonas'. I've thought of so many things to do for Aunt Sabina I can hardly wait to get there.'

'Ah, child, you are on the right track now. The New Year will surely bring you what you make of it, dearie.'

A Responsible Boy.

There were six children, though Aleck was pretty well grown. He will never forget that afternoon, no matter how long he lives. He was left in charge of the little people—his sisters, Alice, Margaret, and Baby Eleanor, and two cousins, Morris and Harriet. The cousins, with their parents, were visiting at Aleck's home, and on this day the grown people went out driving.

'Aleck is entirely responsible,' Mr. Gilchrist, the host said. 'He is to be trusted anywhere. The children will be quite safe.'

'I'm sorry it's Maggie's afternoon out,' Mrs. Gilchrist, the hostess, said. 'Still, it'll not matter, the children are so fond of Aleck. Better keep them in the play-room, my son; you can manage them easier.'

The playroom was in the third story, and especially safe because it had a latticed window, too high for short legs to reach by climbing.

They were very merry. Never such a brain as Aleck's to get up new plays or concoct delightful stories. The baby crowed, and Harriet, the mischievous four-year-old cousin, danced and pranced because she couldn't sit still. It was at the most breathless point of

a story—'The fairy stood poised on a lily leaf, and Maisie trembled lest she should be turned into a wicked old woman'—that a sound of a door softly closing made them look around, and Morris exclaimed, 'Harriet's gone!'

'Run out and get her!' Aleck started up. But the key was turned outside, and Harriet's bubbling voice called: 'I've runned away! I've runned away! I'll never turn back!'

'Come back! come back!' Aleck shouted. For answer came her merry, defiant laugh, and the patter of feet down the stairs.

'Never mind, Aleck,' said Morris, 'she'll not fall. She goes up and down stairs by herself at home.' But Aleck thought of another danger, to which falling down stairs was nothing. He could not trust himself to speak of it; he must keep cool and not frighten the children. At the extremity of their grounds ran a gorge, a hundred feet deep. There was a stone wall a few yards this side of it, but there was a stile in the middle. If Harriet could go up and down stairs, what was to hinder her climbing over the stile? Suppose—the thought was too horrible!

'Morris, we must get the door open,' Aleck said. 'You help me push.' Together they pushed, setting their feet firm. The door was strong, and the lock held. Something else must be tried, but what? Catching the window ledge, Aleck swung himself up, opened the lattice, and looked down. A gutter ran below at a perilous distance. Three feet from it was the projecting corner of a piazza. If he could reach that, it would be easy to 'shin' down a post.

He dropped back into the playroom. The little girls thought it was a new game, but Morris saw that Harriet's mischief meant serious business. He looked at Aleek with a sort of awe. The latter was thinking. 'There's nothing to answer the purpose, except this rug the children are sitting on. Mother values it, but she wouldn't stop a minute in this case.

'Alice, move over here,' and take baby on your lap.' He had a jack-knife in his pocket, and, with Morris holding one end, he deliberately cut the rug into lengths, hooking them together by slits made far enough from the ends so they would hold. The window had a heavy catch, and to this he hung the improvised rope ladder. Before slinging it outside he called cheerily:

'Be good girlyes. Brother's going down

Jack's beanstalk. Take care of them Morris.'

It was certainly perilous. If the rug gave way, he would roll over the gutter and at least break some bones. But Aleck took no counsel with his fears—he thought of Harriet and the gorge. ‘Here goes!’ It was frightful to swing out so far, past the width of the gutter. He started with too great a swing. ‘Keep cool, old fellow!’ Stopping his descent, he let himself swing back to the side of the house, then carefully went down. Joy! The rug held, and his feet touched the gutter.

Look up, and not down, my boy! To jump three feet isn't much, but what if there is a gap of twenty feet below you? It was all that, for there was a high basement. Aleck jumped, and landed safe on the piazza roof. Down the post! and down the steps with a rush! Then a run till the wall was in sight.

There was Missy, perched on the top of the stile. If he called or ran she would be sure to skip down the other side; and then—danger quickens wit. Aleck dropped on his hands and knees, and 'bow-wow'd' loud and clear. If anything delighted Harriet, it was to ride on Aleck's back when he played dog. She heard, and turned her pretty head. 'Me want to wide! Me want to wide!' and down she scrambled.

'I thought you wouldn't mind the rug, Mother,' Aleck was saying, a little later.

'Mind about the rug!' Mrs. Gilchrist exclaimed. 'I'm too proud a mother to mind if you'd spoiled twenty rugs!'—The 'Morning Star.'

A Thought for the New Year.

Just to be tender; just to be true;
Just to be glad the whole day through!
Just to be merciful, just to be mild;
Just to be trustful as a child;
Just to be gentle and kind and sweet;
Just to be helpful with willing feet.
Just to be cheery when things go wrong;
Just to drive sadness away with a song.
Whether the hour is dark or bright,
Just to be loyal to God and right.
Just to believe that God knows best;
Just in His promises ever to rest;
Just to let love be our daily key—
This is God's will for you and for me.
—British Weekly.

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