

# The Mill on the Floss

By George Eliot.

## Book First — BOY AND GIRL (IV. Instalment.)

"Yes, but I forgot—and I couldn't help it, indeed, Tom. I'm so very sorry," said Maggie, while the tears rushed fast.

"You're a naughty girl," said Tom severely, "and I'm sorry I bought you the fish-line. I don't love you."

"Oh, Tom, it's very cruel," sobbed Maggie. "I'd forgive you, if you forgot anything—I wouldn't mind what you did—I'd forgive you and love you."

"Yes, you're as silly—but I never do forget things—I don't."

"Oh, please forgive me, Tom; my heart will break," said Maggie, shaking with sobs, clinging to Tom's arm, and laying her wet cheek on his shoulder.

Tom shook her off, and stopped again, saying in a peremptory tone, "Now, Maggie, you just listen. Aren't I a good brother to you?"

"Ye-ye-es," sobbed Maggie, her chin rising and falling convulsively.

"Didn't I think about your fish-line all this quarter, and mean to buy it, and saved my money for purpose, and wouldn't go halves in the toffee, and Spouncer fought me because I wouldn't?"

"Ye-ye-es... and I... lo-lo-love you so, Tom."

"But you're a naughty girl. Last holidays you liked the paint off my lounge-box, and the holidays before that you let the boat drag my fish-line down when I'd set you to watch it, and you pushed your head through my kite, all for nothing."

"But I didn't mean," said Maggie; "I couldn't help it."

"Yes, you could," said Tom, "if you'd minded what you were doing. And you're a naughty girl, and you shan't go fishing with me to-morrow."

With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie towards the mill, meaning to greet Luke there, and complain to him of Harry.

Maggie stood motionless, except from her sobs, for a minute or two; then she turned round and ran into the house, and up to her attic, where she sat on the floor, and laid her head against the worn-ester shelf, with a crushing sense of misery. Tom was come home, and she had thought how happy she should be—and now he was cruel to her. What use was anything, if Tom didn't love her? Oh, he was very cruel! Hadn't she wanted to give him the money, and said how very sorry she was? She knew she was naughty to her mother, but she had never been naughty to Tom—had never meant to be naughty to him.

"Oh, he is cruel!" Maggie sobbed aloud, finding a wretched pleasure in the hollow resonance that came through the long empty space of the attic. She never thought of beating or grinding her

Fetish; she was too miserable to be angry.

These bitter sorrows of childhood! when sorrow is all new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the days and weeks, and the space from summer to summer seems measureless.

Maggie soon thought she had been hours in the attic, and it must be tea-time, and they were all having their tea, and not thinking of her. Well, then, she would stay up there and starve herself—hide herself behind the tub, and stay there all night; and then they would all be frightened, and Tom would be sorry. Thus Maggie thought in the pride of her heart, as she crept behind the tub; but presently she began to cry again at the idea that they didn't mind her being there.

If she went down again to Tom now—would he forgive her?—perhaps her father would be there, and he would take her part. But then she wanted Tom to forgive her because he loved her, not because his father told him. No, she would never go down if Tom didn't come to fetch her. This resolution lasted in great intensity for five dark minutes behind the tub; but then the need of being loved, the strongest need in poor Maggie's nature, began to wrestle with her pride, and soon threw it.

She crept from behind her tub into the twilight of the long attic, but just then she heard a quick footstep on the stairs.

Tom had been too much interested in his talk with Luke, in going the round of the premises, walking in and out where he pleased, and whittling sticks without any particular reason, except that he didn't whittle sticks at school, to think of Maggie and the effect his anger had produced on her. He meant to punish her, and that business having been performed, he occupied himself with other matters, like a practical person.

But when he had been called into tea, his father said, "Why, where's the little wench?" and Mrs. Tulliver, almost at the same moment, said, "Where's your little sister?"—both of them having supposed that Maggie and Tom had been together all the afternoon.

"I don't know," said Tom. "He didn't want to 'tell' of Maggie, though he was angry with her; for Tom Tulliver was a lad of honour."

"What! hasn't she been playing with you all this while?" said the father. "She'd been thinking of nothing but your coming home."

"I haven't seen her this two hours," says Tom, commencing on the plum-cake.

"Goodness heart! she's got drowned!" exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver, rising from her seat and running to the window. "How could you let her do so?" she added, as became a fearful woman, accusing she didn't know whom of she didn't know what.

"Nay, nay, she's none drowned," said Mr. Tulliver. "You've been naughty to her, I doubt, Tom?"

"I don't say that, Maggie—here, eat a bit of cake."

Maggie's sobs began to subside, and she put out her mouth for the cake and bit a piece; and then Tom bit a piece, just for company, and they sat together and nibbled each other's cheeks and noses and noses together, while they ate, with a humiliating resemblance to two friendly ponies.

"Come along, Maggie, and have tea," said Tom; and when there was no more cake except what was downstairs.

So ended the sorrows of this day, and the next morning Maggie was teasing with her own fishing-rod in one hand and a handle of the basket in the other, stepping always, by a peculiar gift, in the sunlight, places and looking farily radiant from inside her beaver-helmet because Tom was good to her. She had told Tom, however, that she should like to put the worms on the hook for her, all though she accepted his word when he assured her that worms couldn't feel (it was Tom's private opinion that it didn't much matter if they did). He knew all about worms,

"I'm sure I haven't, father," said Tom indignantly. "I think she's in the house."

"Perhaps up in that attic," said Mrs. Tulliver, "sitting and talking to herself, and forgetting all about meal-time."

"You go and fetch her down, Tom," said Mr. Tulliver, rather sharply, his permissiveness or his fatherly fondness for Maggie making him suspect that she had been hard upon "the little wench," else she would never have left his side. "And be good to her, do you hear? Else I'll let you know better."

Tom never disobeyed his father; for Mr. Tulliver was a peremptory man, and, as he said, would never let anybody get hold of his whip-hand; but he went out rather sullenly, carrying this piece of plum-cake, and not intending to retrieve Maggie's punishment, which was no more than she deserved. Tom was only thirteen, and had no decided views in grammar and arithmetic, regarding them for the most part as open questions, but he was particularly clear and positive on one point—namely, that he would punish everybody who disobeyed it; why, he wouldn't have minded being punished himself, if he deserved it; but then, he never did disobey it.

It was Tom's step, then, that Maggie heard on the stairs, when her head of love had tripped over her pride, and she was going down with her swollen eyes and dishevelled hair to beg for pity.

At least her father would stroke her head and say, "Never mind, my dear. It is a wonderful matter, this need of love—the hunger of the heart—as peremptory as that other hunger by which Nature forces us to submit to the yoke, and change the face of the world."

But she knew Tom's step, and her heart began to beat violently with the sudden shock of love. He only stood still at the top of the stairs and said, "Maggie, you're to come down." But she rushed to him and flung round his neck, sobbing, "Oh, Tom, please forgive me—I can't help it—I will always be good—always remember things—do-love-me—please, like Tom!"

We learn to restrain ourselves as we get older. We keep apart when we have quarrelled, express ourselves in well-bred phrases, and in this way preserve a dignified alienation, showing much firmness on one side, and swallowing much grief on the other. We no longer approximate in our behaviour; the mere inactivity of the lower animals; but combat ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilized society. Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his and kiss his cheek in a manner, sobbing way; and there were tender fibres in the lad that had them need to answer to Maggie's feeling; so that he believed with a weakness quite inconsistent with his resolution to punish her as much as she deserved. He actually began to kiss her in return, and say—

"Don't cry, then, Maggie—here, eat a bit of cake."

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and fish, and those things; and what birds were mischievous, and how padocks opened, and which way the handles of the gates were to be lifted. Maggie thought this sort of knowledge was very wonderful—much more difficult than remembering what was in the books; and she was rather in awe of Tom's superiority, for he was the only person who called her knowledge "stuff," and did not feel surprised at her cleverness. Tom, indeed, was of opinion that Maggie was a silly little thing; all girls were silly—they couldn't throw a stone so as to hit anything, couldn't do anything with a pocket-knife, and were frightened at frogs. Still he was very fond of his sister, and meant always to take care of her, make her his housekeeper, and punish her when she did wrong.

They were on their way to the Round Pool—that wonderful pool, which the floods had made a long while ago—no one knew how deep it was; and it was mysterious, too, that it should be almost a perfect round, framed in with willows and tall reeds, so that the water was only to be seen when you got close to the brink. The sight of the old favorite spot always heightened Tom's good-humour, and he spoke to Maggie in the most amiable whistles, as he opened the precious basket, and prepared their tackle. He threw her line for her, and put the rod into her hand. Maggie thought it probable that the small fish would come to her hook, and the large ones to Tom's. But she had forgotten all about the fish, and was looking dreamily at the glassy water, when Tom said, in a loud whisper, "Look, look, Maggie!" and came running to prevent her from snatching her line away.

Maggie was frightened lest she had been doing something wrong, as usual, but presently Tom drew out her line and brought a large tench leaping on the grass.

Tom was excited.

"Oh, Maggie, you little duck! Empty the basket."

Maggie was not conscious of unusual merit, but it was enough that Tom called her Maggie, and was pleased with her. There was nothing to mar her delight in the whistles and the dreamy silences, when she listened to the light dipping sounds of the rising fish, and the gentle rustling, as if the willows and the reeds and the water had their happy whisperings also. Maggie thought it would make a very nice heaven to sit by the pool in the way, and never be scolded. She never knew she had had a bite till Tom told her; but she liked fishing very much.

It was one of their happy mornings. They trotted along and sat down together with no thought that life would ever change much for them; they would only get bigger and not go to school, and it would always be like the holidays; they would always live together and be fond of each other. And the mill with its booming—the great great chestnut tree under which they played at houses—their own little river, the Ripple, where the banks seemed like home, and Tom was always seeing the water-rats; while Maggie gathered the purple plummy tops of the reeds, which she forgot and dropped afterwards—above all, the great Floss, along which they wandered with a sense of travel, to see the running spring-tide, the awful figure, come up like a hungry monster, or to see the Great Ash which had once wailed and groaned like a man—these things would always be just the same to them. Tom

thought people were at a disadvantage who lived on any other spot of the globe; and Maggie, when she read about Christiana passing "the river over which there is no bridge," always saw the Floss between the green pastures by the Great Ash.

Life did change for Tom and Maggie; and yet they were not wrong in believing that the thoughts and loves of these first years would always make part of their lives. We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it—if it were not the earth where the same flowers come up again every spring that we used to gather with our tiny fingers as we sat lipping to ourselves on the grass—the same hips and haws on the autumn hedgerows—the same red-breasts, because they did not haffn to the precious crops. What novelty is worth that sweet monofony, where everything is known, and loved because it is known?

The wood I walk in on this mild May day, with the young yellow-brown foliage of the oaks between me and the blue sky, the white star-flowers and the blue-eyed speedwell and the ground ivy at my feet—what grove of topic palms, what strange ferns or splendid broad-petalled blossoms, could ever thrill such deep and delicate fibres within me as this home scene? These familiar flowers, these well-remembered bird-notes, this sky, with its fitful brightness; these furrowed and grassy fields, each with a sort of personality given to it by the capricious hedgerows—such things as these are the mother tongue of our imagination, the language that is laden with all the subtle inextricable associations the fleeting hours of our childhood left behind them. Our delight in the sunshine on the deep-bladed grass to-day might be no more than the faint perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and the grass in the far-off years which still live in us, and transform our perception into love.

(To be continued.)

## AN INCENTIVE TO THRIFT.

Whatever the original motive that leads to Victory Loan subscriptions, it is generally agreed that the worker who keeps his payments up for any length of time becomes enthusiastic at being an investor, and often changes over from a half-unwilling purchaser or one moved solely by patriotism into a most assiduous saver.

Of course, there are some men in all walks of life who are jealous and envious of those who are thrifty and successful. Even the workman who gets ahead enough to buy his own home often has to encounter the ill-concealed suspicions and criticisms of his fellows.

"There is a wonderful psychology in these Victory Loan subscriptions," said one of the shrewdest and most intelligent factory superintendents recently. "As soon as a man has paid up enough so that he feels it has some really substantial value he becomes eager to increase and add to it."

"After he has saved one thousand dollars he becomes a business man. There is a very thin line between success and failure, so thin that one can step across it."

## WOMAN'S WORLD

### Training Little Children

Simple, Home-Made, Indestructible Scrap-Books are the Most Satisfactory for the Little Folk

By Mrs. Jess Sweetzer Sheaffer.

We have been intensely interested in watching our little daughters with her first books. In addition to their educational value, they are a source of great pleasure and have grown to be her daily companions. When she was about fourteen months old she was given her first book, a small linen one containing pictures of animals. These we would call by name as we pointed them out to her, and as they became familiar she would point them out herself. After she had learned to talk, she could say the names also. Linen books containing pictures of objects in colors were next given the child and when she had become acquainted with these group pictures were added to the collection.

### A Low-Cost Thanksgiving Dinner

When Turkey and Goose are Beyond the Pocketbook

In our house getting Thanksgiving dinner is like organizing a close corporation. Mother takes half the stock; we girls divide the remainder among ourselves. Each makes out a menu and then the big dinner is planned, taking the best ideas from each one.

We couldn't afford a turkey. The first menu suggested roast Belgian hare with celery; the second a crown roast of pork with apple sauce; the third a leg of mutton stuffed with oysters; the fourth a shoulder of lamb with mint jelly. We couldn't get the hare from our dealer, and pork was higher than turkey. Lamb was too expensive; so we finally decided on the leg of mutton, and it turned out to be the least expensive of all the things which had been suggested.

We wanted to have an oyster and celery stuffing, but we couldn't get fresh oysters. After consultation about this we substituted half a pound of mushrooms, used more celery than we had first planned, and the result was a delicious celery and mushroom stuffing of which everyone wanted "some more."

The rest of the dinner we planned around our turkey substitute. We decided to begin with a spicy bouillon made from the bones and ends of the mutton, with a little beef meat and some herbs added in order to give the stimulating flavor. For an entree we had three good suggestions: First, to make mashed potatoes, either sweet or white, into large balls, then saute them, scoop a teaspoonful out of the top and replace with green peas; second, to make patty shells from rice and serve a flaked and creamed fish in it; third, to make cases out of bread which had been cut in thick slices, the center removed with a cruller cutter, the bread toasted and then filled with creamed asparagus tips. This last idea was the one we finally selected.

For the vegetables we had an endless selection, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, onions, spinach, salsify, corn, tomatoes and egg-plant. Since the dinner as a whole was "heavy" we thought that two vegetables with some of mother's Indian relish and the cranberries would be plenty. We wanted Brussels sprouts until we found out the price. Then we decided on cauliflower, and mother made a delicious corn pudding from the corn which she herself had canned last summer.

Since we had begun the dinner with a bouillon instead of a fruit compote, we decided to have a fruit salad which we made from canned pineapple and olives cut into rings.

We had quite an argument about the dessert. Mother insisted that with such a heavy dinner pie should not be served, but a fruit pudding, as fig or date, would be

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