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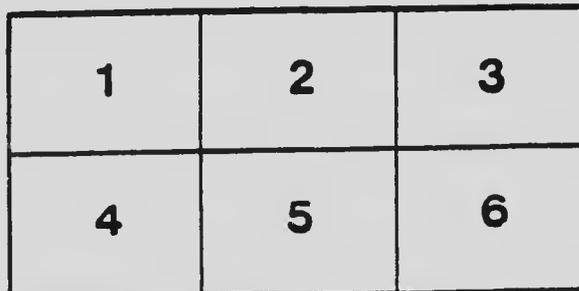
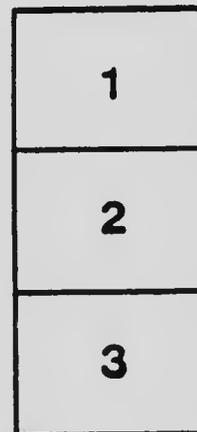
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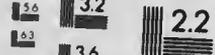
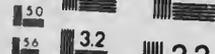
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EMMY LOU'S ROAD TO GRACE



GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN



EMMY LOU'S ROAD TO GRACE



I

**OUT OF GOD'S BLESSING INTO
THE WARM SUN**







G.A. HARKER.

"'Its name,' said Miss Eustasia severely, 'is the Highland Fling.'"

[PAGE 152]

EMMY LOU'S ROAD TO GRACE

BEING A LITTLE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

BY
GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN

AUTHOR OF "SELINA," "EMMY LOU," ETC.

*What danger is the pilgrim in!
How many are his foes!
How many ways there are to sin
No living mortal knows.*

—THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

TORONTO
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Printed in the United States of America

TO
THAT HOSTAGE GIVEN TO THE FUTURE
THE AMERICAN CHILD



PREFACE

SOME years ago a collection of short stories under the title, "Emmy Lou: Her Book And Heart," was offered to the American public as a plea for and a defense of the child as affected by the then prevailing stupidity of the public schools.

The present series of stories is written to show that the same conditions which in the school make for confusion in the child's mind, exist in the home, in the Sunday school and in all its earlier points of contact with life; the child who presents itself at six or even at five, to the school and teacher, being already well on the way in the school of life, and its habits of mind established.

It is the contention of these new stories that the child comes single-minded to the experience of life. That it brings to this experience a fundamental, if limited, conception of ethics, justice, consistency and obligation. That it is the possessor of an innate conscience that teaches it to differentiate

Preface

between right and wrong, and that the failure to find an agreement between ethics and experience confronts the child long before its entrance at school.

Not only do its conceptions fail to square with life as it finds it, but the practices and habits of the persons it looks up to fail to square with what these elders claim for life. Further, the child meets with an innate stupidity on the part of its elders that school cannot surpass, a stupidity which assumes knowledge on the child's part that it cannot possibly have.

These conditions make for confusion in the child's mind, and a consequent impairment of its reasoning faculties, before it presents itself to the school.

Given the very young child struggling to evolve its working rule out of nebulae, how do its elders aid it? The isolated fact without background or connection, the generalization with no regard to its particular application, the specific rule that will not fit the general case—these too often are its portion, resulting in lack of perspective, no sense of proportion, and no grasp of values. The child's conceptions of the cardinal virtues, the moral law, the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Christ,

Preface

the human relation, are true, garbled, or false, in accordance with the interpreting of its elders.

The child thus has been in the training of the home, the neighborhood, and the Sunday school, for approximately four, three, and two years respectively, before it comes to the school of letters.

One of the intelligences thrashing out the problems of the school today, says:

“Education begins at the age of two or sooner, whether the parent wills it or not. The home influence from two to six, for good or ill in determining the mental no less than the moral status, is the most permanent thing in the child’s life. Even at the age of five, the difficulty for the teacher in making a beginning, lies in the fact that the beginning already has been made.”

In the original stories portraying the workings of the schoolroom on the mind of the child, the physically normal, mentally sound but slow type was used, in the child called Emmy Lou, and in now seeking to show that the conditions making for more or less permanent confusion in the child’s mind antedate the schoolroom, it has seemed wise to make use of the same child in the same environment.



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I

OUT OF GOD'S BLESSING INTO THE WARM SUN

FOR a day or two after Emmy Lou, four years old, came to live with her uncle and her aunties, or in fact until she discovered Izzy who lived next door and Sister who lived in the alley, Aunt Cordelia's hands were full. But it was Emmy Lou's heart that was full.

Along with other things which had made up life, such as Papa, and her own little white bed, and her own little red chair, and her own window with its sill looking out upon her own yard, and Mary the cook in Mary's own kitchen, and Georgie the little neighbor boy next door—along with these things, she wanted Mamma.

Not only because she was Mamma, all-wise,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

all-final, all-decreeing, but because, being Mamma and her edicts therefore supreme, she had bade her little daughter never to forget to say her prayers.

Not that Emmy Lou *had* forgotten to say them. Not she! It was that when she went to say them she had forgotten what she was to say. A terrifying and unlooked-for contingency.

Two days before, Papa had put his Emmy Lou into the arms of Aunt Cordelia at the railroad station of the city where she and Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise and Uncle Charlie lived. They had come to the train to get her. As he did so, Mamma, for whose sake the trip south was being made in search of health, though Emmy Lou did not know this, smiled and tried to look brave.

Emmy Lou's new little scarlet coat with its triple capes was martial, and also her new little scarlet Napoleon hat, three-cornered with

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

a cockade, and Papa hastened to assume that the little person within this exterior was martial also.

"Emmy Lou is a plucky soul and will not willingly try you, Cordelia," he told his sister-in-law.

"Emmy Lou is a faithful soul and has *promised* not to try you," said Mamma.

"Kiss Mamma and kiss me," said Papa.

"And say your prayers every night at Aunt Cordelia's knee," said Mamma.

"Pshaw," said Uncle Charlie, the brother of Mamma and the aunties, and wheeling about and whipping out his handkerchief he blew his nose violently.

"Brother!" said Aunt Katie reproachfully. Aunt Katie was younger than Mamma and almost as pretty.

"Brother Charlie!" said Aunt Louise who was the youngest of them all, even more reproachfully.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"Shall I send her to Sunday school at our church, or at your church?" said Aunt Cordelia, plump and comfortable, and next to Uncle Charlie in the family succession. For Papa's church was different, though Emmy Lou did not know this either—and when Mamma had elected to go with him there had been feeling.

"So she finds God's blessing, Sister Cordelia, what does it matter?" said Mamma a little piteously. "And she'll say her prayer every night and every morning to you?"

On reaching home, Aunt Cordelia spoke decidedly. "Precious baby! We'll give her her supper and put her right into her little bed. She's worn out with the strangeness of it all."

Aunt Cordelia was right. Emmy Lou was worn out and more, she was bewildered and terrified with the strangeness of it all. But though her flaxen head, shorn now of its brave

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three-cornered hat, fell forward well-nigh into her supper before more than a beginning was made, and though when carried upstairs by Uncle Charlie she yielded passively to Aunt Cordelia and Aunt Katie undressing her, too oblivious, as they deemed her, to be cognizant of where she was, they reckoned without knowing their Emmy Lou.

Her head came through the opening of the little gown slipped on her.

"Shall I say it now?" she asked.

"Her prayer. She hasn't forgotten, precious baby," said Aunt Cordelia and sat down. Aunt Katie who had been picking up little garments, melted into the shadows beyond the play and the flicker of the fire in the grate, and Emmy Lou, steadied by the hand of Aunt Cordelia, went down upon her knees.

For there are rules. Just as inevitably as there are rites. And since life is hedged about

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with rites, as varying in their nature as in their purpose, and each according to its purpose at once inviolate and invincible, it is for an Emmy Lou to concern herself with remembering their rules.

As when she goes out on the sidewalk to play "I-spy" with Georgie, the masterful little boy from next door, and his friends. Whereupon and unvaryingly follows the rite. The rule being that all stand in a row, and while the moving finger points along the line, words cabalistic and potent in their spell cryptically and irrevocably search out the quaking heart of the one who is "It."

So in the kitchen. The rule being that Mary, who is young and pretty and learning to cook under Mamma's tutelage, shall chant earnestly over the crock as she mixes, words which again are talismanic and potent in their spell, as "one of butter, two of sugar, three of flour, four eggs," or Mary's cake infallibly

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

will fall in the oven, stable affair as the oven grating seems to be.

And again at meals, rite of a higher class, solemn and mysterious. When Emmy Lou must bow her head and shut her eyes—what would happen if she basely peeked she hasn't an idea—after which, Papa's "blessing" as it is called, having been enunciated according to rule, she may now reach out with rapidity and touch tumbler or spoon or biscuit.

So with prayer, highest rite of all, most solemn and most mysterious. Prayer being that potency of the impelling word again by which Something known as God is to be propitiated, and one protected from the fearful if dimly sensed terrors of the dark when one comes awake in the night.

Emmy Lou's Mamma, hitherto the never-failing refuge from all that threatened, haven of encircling sheltering arms and brooding tender eyes, provided this protection for her

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Emmy Lou before she went away and left her. And more. She gave Emmy Lou to understand that somewhere, if one grasped it aright, was a person tenderly in league with Mamma in loving Emmy Lou, and in desiring to comfort her and protect her. A person named Jesus. He was to be reached through prayer too, and, like God in this also, through Sunday school, this being a place around the corner where one went with Georgie, the little boy from next door.

These things being made clear, no wonder that Mamma bade her Emmy Lou not to fail to go to Sunday school, and never to forget to say her prayers!

And no wonder that Emmy Lou quite earnestly knew the rules for her prayers. That it hurt her knees to get down upon them had nothing to do with the case. The point with which one has to do is that she does get down on them. And being there, as now, steadied to

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

that position by the hand of Aunt Cordelia, she shuts her eyes, as taught by Mamma, though with no idea as to why, and folds her hands, as taught by Mamma, with no understanding as to why, and lowers her head, as taught by Mamma, on Aunt Cordelia's knee. And the rules being now all complied with, she prays.

But Emmy Lou did not pray.

"Yes?" from Aunt Cordelia.

But still Emmy Lou failed to pray. Instead her head lifted, and her eyes, opening, showed themselves to be dilated by apprehension. "Mamma starts it when it won't come," she faltered.

Aunt Cordelia endeavored to start it. "Now I lay me . . ." she said with easy conviction.

Emmy Lou, baby person, never had heard of it. Terror crept into the eyes lifted to Aunt Cordelia, as well as apprehension.

"Our Father . . ." said Aunt Katie, com-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

ing forward from the shadows. Emmy Lou's attention seemed caught for the moment and held.

". . . which art in Heaven," said Aunt Katie.

Emmy Lou shook her head. She never had heard of that either, though for a moment it appeared as if she thought she had. A tear rolled down.

"Go to bed and it will come to you tomorrow," from Aunt Cordelia.

"Say it in the morning instead," from Aunt Katie.

But Emmy Lou shook her head, and clung to Aunt Cordelia's knees when they would lift her up.

Aunt Cordelia was worn out, herself. One does not say good-bye to a loved sister, and assume the care of a chubby, clinging baby such as this one, without tax. "Whatever is to be done about it?" she said to Aunt

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

Katie despairingly. Then to Emmy Lou, "Isn't there anything you know that will do?"

There are varying rites, differing in their nature as in their purpose, but each according to its purpose inviolate and invincible.

"I know Georgie's count out?" said Emmy Lou. "Eeny, meeny, miny, mo? Will that do?"

But Aunt Cordelia, however sorely tempted, could not bring herself, honest soul, to agree that it would. Nor yet Aunt Katie.

Aunt Louise came tipping in and joined them.

"I know Mary's cake count," said Emmy Lou. "'One of butter, two of sugar, three of flour, four eggs.' Will that do?"

Not even Aunt Louise could agree that it would.

Uncle Charlie came tipping in.

"I know Papa's blessing," said Emmy Lou.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

“We thank Thee, Lord, for this provision of Thy bounty . . . ?”

“The very thing,” said Uncle Charlie heartily. “Set her up on her knees again, Cordelia, and let her say it.”

And Papa's blessing had served now, night and morning, since, though it was evident to those about her that Emmy Lou was both dubious and uneasy.

The processes of the mind of an Emmy Lou, however, if slow, are sound, if we know their premises. There was yet another way by which God could be propitiated, and Jesus, who desired to love her and protect her, reached. On the morning of her third day with her aunts, she inquired about this.

“When is Sunday school?”

They told her. “Today is Saturday. Sunday school is tomorrow.”

She took this in. “Will I go to Sunday school?”

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

"Certainly you will go."

She took this in also. So far it was reassuring, and she moved to the next point, though nobody connected the two inquiries.

"There's a little boy next door?"

"Yes," from Aunt Katie, "a little boy with dark and lovely eyes."

"A sweet and gentle little boy," from Aunt Cordelia.

"A little boy named Izzy," from Aunt Louise.

Emmy Lou, looking from auntie to auntie as each spoke, sighed deeply. The rules in life, as she knew it, were holding good. As, for example, was not Aunt Cordelia here for Mamma? And Uncle Charlie for Papa? And the substitute little white bed for her little bed? And the substitute little armchair where-in she was sitting at the moment, for her chair?

To be sure the details varied. Hitherto the cook in the kitchen had been Mary, pink-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

cheeked and pretty. Whereas now the cook in the kitchen not only is round and rolling and colored and named Aunt M'randy, but there is a house-boy in the kitchen, too, whose name is Bob. The stabilizing fact remains, however, that there is a cook, and there is a kitchen.

And now there is a little boy next door. *For you to go to Sunday school with the little boy next door*, holding tight to his hand, while his Mamma at his door, and your Mamma at your door, watch you down the street. That he lords it over you, edicting each thing you shall or shall not do along the way, is according to immutable ruling also, as Georgie makes clear, on the incontrovertible grounds that you are the *littler*.

He has been to Sunday school too, before you ever heard of it, as he lets you know, and glories in his easy knowledge of the same. And whereas you, on your very first Sunday,

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

get there to learn that Cain killed Mabel, and are visibly terrified at the fate of Mabel, according to Georgie it is a mild event and nothing to what Sunday school has to offer at its best.

He knows the comportment of the place, too, and at the proper moment drags Emmy Lou to her knees with her face crushed to the wooden bench beside his own. And later he upbraids her that she fails in the fervor with which he and everybody else, including the lady who told Emmy Lou she was glad to see her, pour forth a hum of words. When he finds she does not know these words his scorn is blighting. Though when she asks him to teach them to her, it develops that he, the mighty one, only knows a word here and there to come in loud on himself.

For a moment, the other night, Emmy Lou had fancied Aunt Katie was saying these words used at Sunday school, but how could

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

she be sure, seeing that she did not know them herself?

And now there was a little boy next door here! And Emmy Lou arose, her aunties having gone about their Saturday morning affairs, and seeking her little sacque with its scalloped edge, which she pulled on, and her little round hat which she carried by its elastic, went forth into the warm comfort of the Indian Summer morning to find him.

He was at his gate! The rule again! Georgie was ever to be found even so at his gate. Emmy Lou was shy, but not when she knew what she had to do, and why. Opening her gate and going out, paling by paling she went along past her house and her yard, to the little boy at the gate of his house and his yard. When he saw her coming he even came to meet her.

As her aunties had said, he was a dark-eyed and lovely little boy. When she reached him

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and put out her hand to his, he took it and led her back to his gate with him. His name, she remembered, was Izzy.

"Sunday school is tomorrow?" she said, looking up at Izzy.

"Sunday school?" said Izzy.

"Where Cain killed Mabel?"

Izzy's dark eyes lit. He was a gentle and kindly little boy. Emmy Lou felt she would love Izzy. "We call it 'Temple.' But it is today. My Mamma told me to walk ahead and she would catch up with me."

"Today?"

Surely. With such visible proofs of it upon Izzy. Do little boys wear velvet suits with spotless collar and flamboyant tie but for occasions such as Sunday school? Aunties and even Mammams know less about Sunday school than the Georgies and Izzys, who are authorities since they are the ones who go. Emmy Lou put on her little hat even to the elas-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

tic. Then her hand went into Izzy's again.

"I thought it was tomorrow?"

Izzy's face was alight as he took in her meaning. She was going with *him*. His face was alight as he led her along.

"It's 'round the corner?" she asked.

"'Round two corners," said Izzy. "How did you know?"

A golden dome crowned this Sunday school, and wide steps led high to great doors. They waited at their foot, Izzy and Emmy Lou, a dark-eyed little boy in a velvet suit, and a blue-eyed little girl in a gingham dress and scalloped sacque, while others went up and in, old men, young men, old women, young women, little boys, little girls. Waited until Izzy's Mamma arrived and found him.

She was dark-eyed and lovely too. She listened while he explained. Did a shadow, as of patient sadness, cross her face?

"The little girl does not understand, Israel,

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little son," she said. "Hold her hand carefully, and take her back to her own gate. I will wait for you here."

Emmy Lou, bewildered as she was led along, endeavored to understand.

"It isn't Sunday school?" she asked Izzy.

His face was no longer alight, only gentle and, like his mother's, patient. "Not yours. I thought it was. Mine and my mother's and my father's."

Little girls left at their own gates, little girls who have come to live at their aunties' home, go around by the side way to the kitchen door. Emmy Lou had learned that already. If anyone had missed her there was no evidence of it. Aunt M'randy, just emerging from this kitchen door, a coal-bucket heaped with ashes in her hand, as Emmy Lou arrived there, paused in her rolling gait, and invited her to go.

Where? Emmy Lou in her little sacque and

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

her round hat hadn't an idea, but seeing that she was expected to accept, took Aunt M'randy's unoccupied hand and went.

And so it was that she found Sister. For Aunt M'randy was going down the length of the back yard, a nice yard with a tree and a bush and what, palpably in a milder hour had been flowers in a border, to the alley-gate to empty the ashes. And beyond this alley gate, outside which stood the barrel they were seeking, in the alley itself, with the cottage shanties of the alley world for background, stood Sister! One knew she was Sister because Aunt M'randy called her so.

Sister was small and brown and solid. Small enough to be *littler* than Emmy Lou. Her face was serious and her eyes in their setting of generous white followed one wonderingly.

Littler than Emmy Lou! The rule in life was extending itself. Hitherto she, Emmy Lou, had been that littler one, and hers the eyes

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

to follow wonderingly, and the effect of meeting one thus littler than oneself is to experience strange joys, palpably and patently peculiar to being the larger.

Emmy Lou dropped the hand of Aunt M'randy and went out into the alley and straight to Sister.

Nor did Sister seem surprised at this, but when Emmy Lou reached her and paused, sidled closer, and her little brown hand crept into Emmy Lou's white one and clung there. Whereupon the white one, finding itself the bigger, closed on the brown one and Emmy Lou led Sister in through the alley gate, past Aunt M'randy, and up through the yard with its tree and its bush and its whilom flower border.

More! There was a depression in the pavement leading up to the house, a depression all of the depth of about three of Emmy Lou's fingers. Whereat she stopped, and putting her

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

arms about Sister, solid for all she was a baby thing, with straining and accession of pink in the face, lifted her over! And the joy of it was great! Emmy Lou never had met one *littler* than herself before!

That evening at dusk, Aunt Louise came in, brisk and animated. Her news was for Aunt Cordelia and Aunt Katie, though certainly Emmy Lou had a right to be interested.

"I met Molly Wright, the teacher of the infant class at Sunday school," she said, "and I stopped and told her that in the morning you would send Emmy Lou around to her class. That our house-boy would bring her."

Aunt Cordelia had her ready the next morning aforetime, red coat with triple capes, martial hat and all, ready indeed before Bob, the house-boy, had finished his breakfast.

The day was warm and sleepily sunny and smiling.

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

"You may go outside and wait for Bob at the gate if you like," Aunt Cordelia told Emmy Lou.

But Emmy Lou had no idea of waiting at any gate. Indecision with her was largely a matter of not knowing what she was expected to do. She knew in this case. By the time Bob was ready and out looking for her, she had been down through the alley gate and back, bringing by the hand that person *littler* than herself, Sister. Had led her through the front gate and along to the next gate where Izzy was standing.

Bob afterward explained his part vociferously if lamely. But as Aunt M'randy said, that was Bob.

"There they wuz, the three uv 'em, strung erlong by the han's an' waitin' foh me. Seem lak there warn't no call foh me to say nothin' tell we got there."

"And then?" from Aunt Cordelia, while

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Aunt M'randy sniffed with skepticism.

"When we come to the infant class door roun' on the side street like you tol' me, there wuz a colored boy I know, drivin' a kerridge, an' he called me. An' I tol' the chil'ren to wait while I spoke to him. When I turned roun' ag'in I saw 'em goin' in th'ough the doah. An' I come home."

Emmy Lou in truth led them in. Give her something that she knew to do, and she could do it. Holding to the rule, Izzy was due to be there because he was the larger, and Sister, laconic little Sister, solid and brown, was due to be there because, in the former likeness of Emmy Lou, she was the *littler*.

One's place at Sunday school in company with Georgie, has been the front bench. The rule holds good, and Emmy Lou led the way to the front bench now, where she and Izzy lifted Sister to a place, then took their own places either side of her. If the rest of the



“When I turned roum’ ag’in I saw ‘em goin’ in th’ough
the doah.”

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

infant class already assembled were absorbed in these movements, Emmy Lou did not notice it, in that she was absorbed in them herself.

Miss Mollie Wright came in next, breezy and brisk and a minute late, and in consequence full of zeal and business.

Hitherto the rule has never varied. As Emmy Lou knew Sunday school, the lady teacher now says, "Good morning, children." And these say, "Good morning," in return.

But the rule varied now. Miss Mollie Wright coming around to the front before the assembled class on its several benches, stopped, looked, then full of sureness and business came to Izzy and Emmy Lou and Sister, and took Izzy by the hand.

"I doubt if your mother and father would like it, Izzy," she said. "I think you had better run home again. And this little girl next to you doesn't belong here either." Miss Mol-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

lie Wright was lifting Sister down. "I think she had better run along as you go." And in the very nicest way she started Izzy and Sister toward the door. "What?" turning back to the third little figure in a martial coat with triple capes and a martial hat. "Why, are you going, too?"

Aunt Cordelia explained to Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise and Uncle Charlie afterward. "M'randy saw them when they reached home and passed her kitchen window going back through the yard, and came and told me, and she and I went down to the alley gate after them."

"What were they doing?" asked Aunt Louise.

Aunt Cordelia answered as one completely exasperated and outdone. "Sitting right down on the ground there in the alley, in their Sunday clothes, watching M'lissy, on her doorstep, comb Letty's hair."

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

True! Around M'lissy, the mother of Sister, brown herself and kindly, with teeth that flashed white with the smile of her there in the sun, and Letty, the even *littler* sister of Sister, firm planted on the lowest step, between M'lissy's knees.

And bliss unspeakable as Izzy and Sister and Emmy Lou in a circle on the ground around the doorstep watched. For Letty's head, by means of the comb in M'lissy's hand, was being criss-crossed by partings into sections, bi-sections, and quarter-sections, and such hair as was integral to each wrapped with string in semblance of a plait, plait after plait succeeding one another over Letty's head. The while M'lissy sang in a mounting, joyful chant, interrupted by Letty's outcry now and then beneath the vigor of the ministration.

"Ow-w, Mammy!"

The chant would hold itself momentarily for a reply.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"Shet up," M'lissy would say.

Which would be too much even for laconic Sister who from her place on the ground between Izzy and Emmy Lou would defend Letty. "When Mammy wrops yer h'ar, she wrops hard."

After which the combing and the wrapping and the chanting would go on again, M'lissy's voice rising and falling in quaverings and minors:

"Come to Jesus, come to Jesus,
Come to Jesus just now,
Ju-u-st no-o-w co-o-me to-o Jesus,
Come to Jesus ju-u-st now."

Mamma's friend! In league with her in loving Emmy Lou and desiring to comfort her and protect her! Found not where she had looked for Him at all but here with M'lissy in the alley!

That night, according to rule, as Emmy

Out of God's Blessing Into the Warm Sun

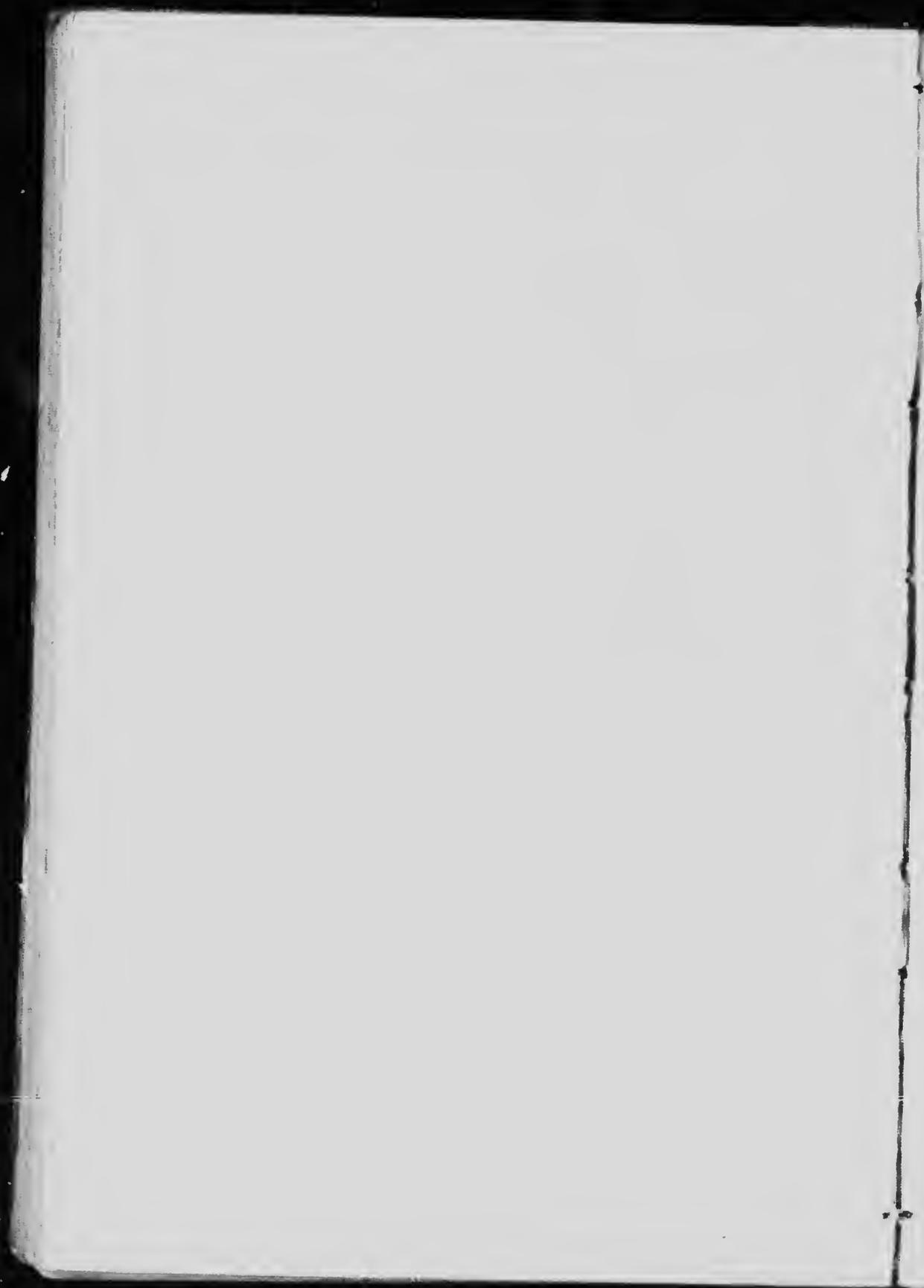
Lou's head came through the opening of the gown slipped over it, she said:

"Shall I say it now? Papa's blessing?"

And Aunt Cordelia, according to rule, sitting down and steadying Emmy Lou to her knees, waited.

What should have brought it back, Emmy Lou's own little prayer as taught her by Mamma? She only knew that it came of itself, and that while her heart heaved and her breath came hard, she stopped in the midst of Papa's blessing, "We thank Thee, Lord, for this provision of Thy bounty,——" sobbed, caught herself, opened her eyes and looked mutely at Aunt Cordelia, closed them and said:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee."



II

SHADES OF THE PRISON HOUSE



II

SHADES OF THE PRISON HOUSE

PAPA taking Mamma south, wherever that may be, in search of health, whatever that may be, carried a rough and wrinkled Father Bear satchel. Mamma, pretty Mamma, taken south in search of health, carried a soft and smooth Mother Bear satchel. And since not only do journeys demand satchels but analogies must be made complete, Emmy Lou left on the way in the keeping of her uncle and her aunties was made happy by a Baby Bear *papier-maché* satchel, clamps, straps and all. A satchel into which a nightgown could be coaxed, her nightgown, since satchels demand gowns, not to mention a pewter tea set put in on her own initiative, provided she folded and

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

refolded the gown with zeal before essaying the attempt.

After Emmy Lou's establishment in the new household, Aunt Cordelia proposed that the satchel go to the attic where trunks and satchels off duty belong. But Emmy Lou would not hear to this. "Mamma's coming by for me as she goes home, and I want it down here so I can have it ready."

"And she gets it ready at least once a day," Aunt Cordelia told Uncle Charlie. "If she doesn't wear her gowns out trying to put them in it, she will the satchel. However, since she heard that her mother lived in this house when she was a little girl named Emily, I've had no further trouble with her, that is, trouble of a kind. How does one go about a child's religious training, Charlie?"

But to Emmy Lou, Aunt Cordelia knew all about God and heaven. At her bidding she learned a hymn, a pretty text, another prayer.

Shades of the Prison House

"For we must learn a little more about God and Heaven every day along the way," Aunt Cordelia said.

With Emmy Lou at bedtime in her lap, a blanket wrapped about her gown, the fire flickering, Aunt Cordelia, to help her get to sleep, sang about Heaven.

"Thy gardens and thy goodly walks
Continually are green,
Where grow such sweet and pleasant flowers
As nowhere else are seen—"

"Asleep?" from Aunt Cordelia. "No?"

Emmy Lou in Aunt Cordelia's lap was amazed to hear these things. "Thy gardens and Thy goodly walks!" Hitherto she had been afraid of heaven! And afraid of God!

Aunt Cordelia hearing about it was shocked. Truly shocked and no less dismayed at how to remedy it, if Emmy Lou had but known it.

"Afraid of God? Why, Emmy Lou! He

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

is our Father to go to, just as you run to meet Papa." Aunt Cordelia, gaining heart, took fresh courage. "God is everybody's Father, just as Heaven is our home."

The Aunt Cordelias may generalize, but the Emmy Lous will particularize.

"Izzy's father? And Sister's father? And Minnie's?"

Israel Judah lived next door, little colored Sister lived in the alley, and Minnie lived with the lady next door to Izzy.

"Their Father, and yours and mine and everyone's. Don't you think you can go to sleep now?"

Emmy Lou was positive she could not. God, of whom she had been afraid, is our Father!

Next door to Emmy Lou, at Izzy's, lives an old, old man. His brows are white and his beard falls on his breast. He smiles on Emmy Lou when she goes to his knee to speak to him, but he draws Izzy to him and kisses him.

Shades of the Prison House

Aunt Katie calls him beautiful. Uncle Charlie calls him a glorious old patriarch. But Izzy's Mamma calls him *father*.

And suddenly to Emmy Lou, there in Aunt Cordelia's lap, God is a Person! He paces his goodly walks, as Papa does the flagging from the gate to the house with Emmy Lou running to meet him. God paces his walks between his sweet and pleasant flowers and his brows are white and his beard falls on his breast. Will he smile on Emmy Lou? And on Izzy and Sister and Minnie? Or will he draw them to him and kiss them?

"And at last she went to sleep," Aunt Cordelia, coming downstairs, told Uncle Charlie.

Straight from the breakfast table the next morning, Emmy Lou went and brought her cloak.

"Izzy will be waiting for me at his gate," she told Aunt Cordelia. The custom being for

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

the two meeting at Izzy's gate then to go to the alley hunting Sister.

Aunt Katie came downstairs just here, looking for Emmy Lou.

"Do you know where my scissors are? I can't find mine or any others."

Emmy Lou has a way of hunting scissors for herself and Sister to cut out pictures, but is quite sure this time that she is not culpable.

"I ain't had nary pair," she assured Aunt Katie.

Aunt Katie, apparently forgetting the scissors, swept round on Aunt Cordelia who was just leaving the breakfast table.

"There!" she said accusingly.

"There!" echoed Aunt Louise, still in the dining-room, too. "We told you she would be picking up such things in the alley!"

"Emmy Lou," expostulated Aunt Cordelia, "you didn't mean to say, 'I ain't had nary

Shades of the Prison House

pair.' You know better. Think hard and see if you can't say it right."

Emmy Lou, the cloak she had brought half on, thought hard. "I ain't had ary pair," she said.

Aunt Katie spoke positively. "I don't think you ought to let her play so much with Sister. Louise and I have said so right along."

Not play with Sister! Emmy Lou was astounded. She loved Sister, smaller than herself! She turned to Aunt Cordelia for corroboration.

Aunt Cordelia was troubled. "Come to me, Emmy Lou, and let me put your cloak on you, and tie your hood. If she were going to be here all the time it would be different," this to Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise. Then to Emmy Lou, "Suppose today you stay next door and play with Izzy?"

Emmy Lou was amazed. "And Minnie?" she asked. "Mayn't I play with Minnie?"

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"She means the little girl who works for Mrs. Noble," explained Aunt Cordelia quietly.

"Mrs. Noble is from over the river," said Aunt Louise in tones which, however one may wonder what the river has to do with it, disqualify this lady at once. "She speaks of the child as a little hired girl."

"Emmy Lou," said Aunt Katie, "remember that this side of the Ohio we have servants, not hired girls."

"But she must not call the little girl a servant, Katie," said Aunt Cordelia. "I won't have her hurting the child's feelings, whatever she is."

"I call her Minnie," said Emmy Lou, bewildered.

"Certainly you do," said Aunt Cordelia, and kissed her.

Aunt Louise defended Aunt Katie. "While the child is hardly to be held responsible, she

Shades of the Prison House

has ways, as well as Sister, we certainly do not want Emmy Lou to imitate."

Ways? Minnie? Marvelous, inexhaustible Minnie? Certainly she has ways, ways that draw one, that hold one. Were Aunt Louise and Aunt Katie casting doubts on Minnie? As they had on Sister? Emmy Lou in cloak and hood looked to Aunt Cordelia for corroboration.

Aunt Cordelia looked worried, "Just as she is beginning to be a little happier, I wish, Louise, you and Katie could let the child alone."

"But Minnie?" Emmy Lou wanted to know.

"Yes, I suppose so. Run along out, now, and play."

A sunny winter day it was as Emmy Lou went, a day to rejoice in, could one at four put the feelings into thought, except that Izzy at his gate in his stout coat and his fur cap is only mildly glad to see her. Izzy is

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

six years old. Usually kind, and as patient to catch her point as to help her to his, just now he is engrossed with looking down the street.

Without turning, he does, however, confide in her. "Minnie has just gone by to the grocery!"

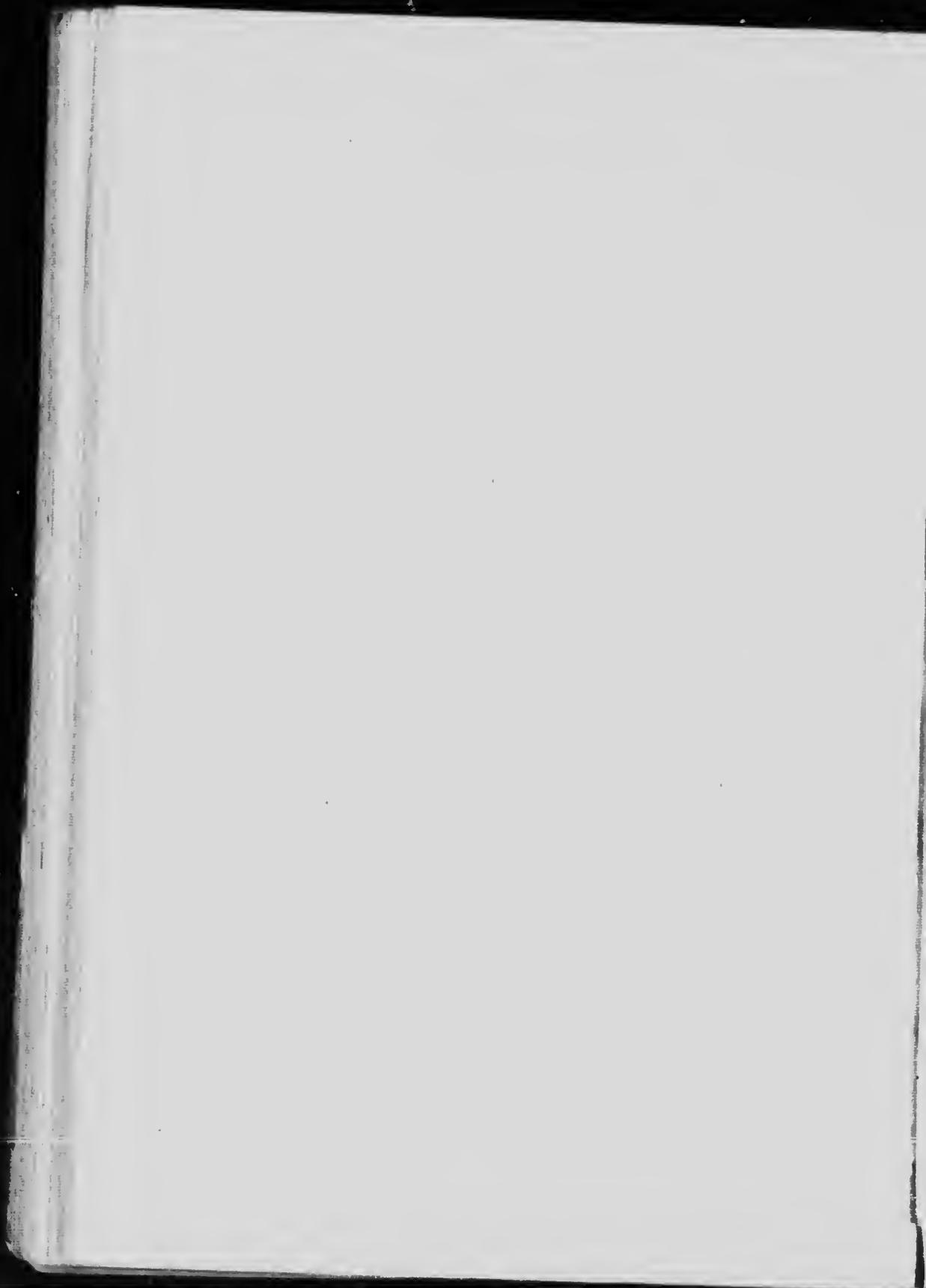
If Emmy Lou had been disposed to be hurt, she understood now! Minnie having gone by to the grocery would be *back!*

They have known her to speak to now for a week. She stopped one day at Izzy's gate when he and Emmy Lou and Sister were standing there. Her plaits were tied with bits of calico and there was a smudge on her wrist; under her arm was a paper bag and in her hand a bucket. She swept the three of them, Izzy, Emmy Lou, and Sister, up and down with her eyes.

"You go to synagogue," she told Izzy. "An' your mother's gone away sick an' left you,"



"'Po' white,' she said."



Shades of the Prison House

she said to Emmy Lou. Then she turned to Sister.

“Nigger,” she said.

But Sister was what she afterward explained as “ready for her.” She had met Minnie before, so it proved, and M’lissy, her mother, had her ready if she ever met her again. For all she was a little thing, Sister swept Minnie up and down with *her* eyes.

“Po’ white,” she said.

Which, while meaningless to some—Emmy Lou and Izzy for example—brought the angry red to Minnie’s cheek.

This was a week ago. Since then Minnie had come out on the pavement twice and joined Emmy Lou and Izzy at play.

Wonderful Minnie! At once instigator and leader, arbiter and propounder. Why? Because she knew. Knew what? Knew everything. About the devil who would come right up out of the ground if you stamped three

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

times and said his name. Though from what Emmy Lou had heard about him at Sunday school, and Izzy knew from some boys down at the corner, one wondered that any would incur the risk by doing either.

And Minnie knew about gypsies who steal little boys and girls out of their beds! Izzy is six, and Emmy Lou is four, and Minnie is ten going on eleven; can it be wondered that they looked up to her?

She speaks darkly about herself. She has brothers and sisters better off than she is, somewhere, who don't want to speak to her when she meets them on the street!

And she speaks darkly about the lady she lives with whom she calls Mis' Snoble. "When Lisa Schmit from the grocery came to play with mè, she sho'd her off with the broom," she said.

Only yesterday she appeared at her gate for a brief moment to say she could not come out

Shades of the Prison House

and play. "Mis' Snoble's feelin' right up to the mark today; we're goin' to beat rugs an' wash winders."

But this morning as she pauses on her way home from the grocery, her communication to Izzy and Emmy Lou at Izzy's gate is of different import. "Mis' Snoble's not feelin' up to the mark today. Come in with me an' ask her an' maybe she'll let me come an' play."

Go in with Minnie! To Mrs. Noble! Emmy Lou's hand went into Izzy's, as she for one gazed at Minnie appalled!

Yet Minnie's face is eager and her eyes implore. Her plaits are tied with calico, and her face behind its eagerness is thin. Izzy looses Emmy Lou's hand, even as she draws it away, and, behold, his hand now is in one of Minnie's, and Emmy Lou's is in the other. They are going with her to ask Mrs. Noble.

Through Minnie's gate, around by the side pavement, in at the kitchen door, through a

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

hall and to another door. Mrs. Noble has not appeared yet with her broom to shoo them away, but she might!

Minnie pushed this door open and led the way in—wonderful, brave Minnie!—but Izzy and Emmy Lou paused in the doorway.

Mrs. Noble, spare and upright in her chair, crocheting, looked up. Her eyes, having swept up and down Minnie, traveled on to Emmy Lou and Izzy, then returned coldly, as it were, to her work.

“Kitchen’s red up,” from Minnie eagerly and hopefully in what one supposed must be the language of over the river; “been to the grocery, an’ the sink’s clean.”

If Mrs. Noble heard this she was above betraying it.

“Fire’s laid in the stove, but not lit.”

Never a sign.

“Potatoes peeled an’ in the saucepan wait-in’.”

Shades of the Prison House

Mrs. Noble looked up. "One half-hour, or maybe three-quarters till I call."

And they were gone, Minnie first like a flash, Izzy next, no loiterer in the house of Mrs. Noble himself if he could help it and only the slower-paced because somebody had to wait for Emmy Lou.

More wonderful day than it had been earlier, sunnier and less frosty. Minnie, whose wrap is disturbingly nearer a sacque than a coat in its scant nature, takes her place on the horse-block at the curb before Izzy's house, and he and Emmy Lou take places either side of her.

Minnie, wonderful Minnie, ten years old and over, knows it all. What, for instance? Everything, anything. Such as this matter she brings up now of brothers and sisters. They are a bad lot. She says so. A sort to stop at nothing even to passing a poorer sister without knowing her on the street! As she went to the grocery with her bucket and oil-can just

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

now, her brother passed *her* on the street. Minnie heard once of a man. When she takes this tone the time has come to draw closer. ". . . O'Rouke was this man's name. He was rich and g-r-rand. So grand *he* didn't know *his* own brothers when he met them on the street. An' his brothers made up their minds they would go to his house an' hide theirselves an' watch him when he counted his money. It was a g-r-rand house. Over the mantelpiece was a picture of his dead mother. Over the piano was a picture of his dead father. Over the what-not was a picture of his wife. Over the sofa was a picture of hisself. An' his four brothers came to hide theirselves an' watch him count his money. The room was dark in all the corners. An' one brother clumb up on the mantelpiece an' hid hisself behind the picture of his mother, an' cut holes th'ough the eyes so his eyes r-o-olling could look th'ough. An' the next brother clumb up on the piano an' hid his-

Shades of the Prison House

self behind the picture of his father an' cut holes th'ough the eyes so his eyes r-o-olling could look th'ough. An' the next brother clum' up on the what-not an' hid hissself behind the picture of the wife an'——”

Sister appeared around the side of Izzy's house and came through the gate. Even though her finger *was* in her mouth, when she saw Minnie she looked provocative.

“Go on with the brothers, Minnie,” begged Izzy.

“Go on, Minnie,” begged Emmy Lou.

But Minnie had no idea of resuming the brothers. Nobody, it would seem, could look provocative with impunity at her!

“Nigger,” she said to Sister.

But M'lissy, the mother of Sister, had her ready again. Did she send her around here for the purpose?”

“Po' white,” said Sister, taking her finger out of her mouth. “An' worsen. My mammy

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

said to tell you so. You're a *n'orphan*."

The solid ground of the accustomed gave way. Confusion followed. Minnie, hitherto the ready, the able, having sprung up to meet Sister's onslaught, whatever it was to be, sank back on the horse-block, and hiding her face in her arms, cried, and more, at touch of the quickly solicitous arms of Izzy and Emmy Lou about her, she sobbed.

Whereupon Emmy Lou arose, Emmy Lou in her stout little coat and her hood and her mittens; and looking about her on the ground, found a switch full seven inches long, and with it drove Sister, little Sister, away, quite away. Had not Emmy Lou's own aunties cast the initial doubt on Sister anyway?

Then she came back to the horse-block. "What's a *n'orphan*, Minnie?" Izzy was asking.

Emmy Lou wanted to know this very thing. "It's livin' with Mis' Snoble an' wearin' her

Shades of the Prison House

shoes when they're too big for you," sobbed Minnie. " 'Tain't as if anybody would be one if they could help theirselves."

"What makes you a n'orphan, then, Minnie, if you don't want to be one?" from Izzy.

"You're a n'orphan when *your mother goes to Heaven an' leaves you an' forgets you,*" bitterly.

Heaven? God paces his goodly walks there, between his sweet and pleasant flowers. But would your mother *leave you to go there? And going, forget you?*

A window went up and Izzy's mamma appeared.

"Israel," she called, "run in to the porch and give grandpa his cane and help him start into the house. It's growing chill."

Minnie on the horse-block flung up her head and wiped away the tears. "That old man again!" she said.

Did Minnie have ways? Ways that Aunt

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Katie and Aunt Louise did not want their Emmy Lou to imitate? Was this one of her ways?

For Izzy's grandpa of whom Minnie spoke disparagingly was he of the white brows and the flowing beard. On days such as this they helped him to the porch where he sat bundled in a chair in the sun, his cane beside him.

Except when this cane was not, which was the trouble as Minnie saw it. For Izzy's grandpa was forever letting his cane slide to the floor, yet could not get up, or down, or about, without it.

Izzy ran in now. He was affectionate and dutiful. Aunt Cordelia said so. And having put the cane in his grandfather's hand, though not without several efforts at keeping it there, at which his grandfather, slowly—Oh, so slowly this morning!—and with trembling effort, drew him to him and kissed him, he came back.

"Why *did* your mother go to Heaven and

Shades of the Prison House

leave you and forget you, Minnie?" he asked.

"Heaven's a better place than this, if what they tell about it's true," bitterly. "*I ain't blamin' her for goin', myself.*"

"Izzy," came the call in a few moments again. "Did you tell grandpa to come in?"

Izzy went running, for when he turned to look, the cane had slipped from his grandfather's hand again and rolled to the foot of the steps, and his head above the snowy beard was fallen on his breast. Nor would he in this world lift it again, though none of the three grasped this.

Aunt Cordelia was decided at the breakfast table the next morning.

"They will not want you next door with Izzy today," she told Emmy Lou.

"Mayn't he come here?"

"I doubt if his mother will want him to come today."

The day following, however, Aunt Cordelia

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

and Aunt Katie went next door from the breakfast table and when they came back they brought Izzy with them, not *for a while*, but *for the day*. His dark eyes were troubled and his cheeks were pale. He was kindly and affectionate. Aunt Cordelia said so.

And Aunt Cordelia agreed that after dinner Bob could ask Mrs. Noble to let Minnie come over.

"How can you, Sister Cordelia?" expostulated Aunt Louise. "A little servant girl!"

Bob came back with Minnie. "For a nour," she said as she arrived. "I can stay until the pork-house whistle blows for four."

She waited until Aunt Cordelia, having settled them in the sunny back room, went out the door.

"What's happened to your gran'pa?" then she said to Izzy. Did she say it not as if she did not know, but as if she did?

Shades of the Prison House

"He's gone to sleep," said Izzy. "He won't be sick or tired any more."

"Sleep?" from Minnie. "Haven't they told you yet? We watched 'em start, Bob and I, before we came in."

Start? Start where? Izzy's eyes, already troubled, were big and startled now. "Where's grandpa going? Where's my grandpa going?"

Did Minnie in some way imply that she knew more than she meant to tell? "To Heaven," virtuously. "I've told you about it. That's why he won't be sick or tired any more. You ought to be glad. Here!" with quick change in tone. "Where you going? What's the matter with you now? You can't keep him back if you try!"

But Izzy was gone. Nor when Minnie, who was nothing but a little servant girl after all, for Aunt Louise said so, ran after him, did he pause; only called back as he hurried down

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

the stairs. He was a dutiful little boy, Aunt Cordelia said so.

"If Grandpa has to go he'll need his cane. He can't get anywhere without his cane."

Emmy Lou, coming in through the kitchen from play, a week later, met Uncle Charlie in the hall just arriving by the front door.

He neither spoke to her nor saw her as he overtook her on the lowest stair, but pushed by and hurried up.

Emmy Lou's heart swelled. It was not like Uncle Charlie. She clambered the curving flight after him. He had gone ahead into Aunt Cordelia's room and she, on her way there herself, trudged after.

What did it mean? Why did it frighten her? Aunt Katie, Aunt Louise, weeping? Uncle Charlie now beside the fireplace, bowed against its shelf? This bit of yellow paper at his feet on the floor?

Shades of the Prison House

Aunt Cordelia, weeping herself, would know. "What is it?" faltered Emmy Lou.

Aunt Cordelia knew and held out her arms to the call. No evasions now; truth for Emmy Lou.

"Mamma will not be back. She has gone ahead to Heaven. Come to Aunt Cordelia and let her comfort you, precious baby."

But Emmy Lou, still in her coat and hat, did not come; she did not pause to dally. She hurried past the various hands outstretched to stay her, to her own little room adjoining.

Complete her *papier-maché* satchel was, even to its clamps and straps, sitting beside her bed ready, her satchel which would hold a gown, and other treasure such as pewter dishes could she stop for such now. She dragged at a drawer of her own bureau.

"What in the world——?" from Aunt Cordelia, who had followed.

"What are you doing——?" from Aunt

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Katie and Aunt Louise, who had followed Aunt Cordelia.

Emmy Lou knew exactly what she was doing. Izzy had known too when he went hurrying after. Minnie in her time, had she known, might have gone hurrying too. A nightgown, at her pull, trailed from the open drawer.

Yet what was there in the faces about her to disturb her? To make her loose her hold on the gown, look from one to the other of them and falter? Uncle Charlie, too, had come into the room now.

Were they casting doubts again? As they cast them on Sister who until then had in truth been a little sister? As they cast them on Minnie who until then had been neither hired girl nor servant, but Minnie? Emmy Lou turned to Aunt Cordelia for corroboration.

Even as she looked, she knew. We must learn a little more each day along the way, even as Aunt Cordelia had said.

Shades of the Prison House

The nightgown trailing from her hand fell limply. The satchel, relinquished, rolled along the floor. Those goodly walks receded, their sweet and pleasant flowers drooped their listless heads. Emmy Lou, nearing five years old, was a step further from heaven.

"How shall we teach a little child?" said Aunt Cordelia, weeping.

"How indeed?" said Uncle Charlie.

III

A FEW STRONG INSTINCTS AND
A FEW PLAIN RULES



III

A FEW STRONG INSTINCTS AND A FEW PLAIN RULES

EVERY exigency in life save one, for an Emmy Lou at six, seemingly is provided for by rules or admonition, the one which sometimes is overlooked being lack of understanding.

“Take heed that thou no murder do,” was the new clause of the Commandments In Verse, she had recited at Sunday school only yesterday.

“The way of the transgressor is hard,” said Dr. Angell from his pulpit to her down in the pew between Uncle Charlie and Aunt Cordelia an hour later. Or she took it that he was saying it to her. For while one frequently

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

fails to follow the words in this thing of admonition, there is no mistaking the manner. When she came into church with Uncle Charlie and Aunt Cordelia, in her white piqué coat and her leghorn hat, Dr. Angell had met her in the aisle and seemed glad to see her, even to patting her cheek, but once he was in his pulpit he shook an admonishing finger at her and thundered.

Nor did Emmy Lou, a big girl now for all she still was pink-cheeked and chubby, lack for admonitions at home from Aunt Cordelia and Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise above stairs, and Aunt M'randy in the kitchen below—a world of aunts, in this respect, it might have seemed, had Emmy Lou, faithful to those she deemed faithful to her, been one to think such things.

Admonitions vary. Aunt Cordelia and Aunt M'randy drew theirs from the heart, so to put it. "When you mind what I say, you

A Few Strong Instincts

are a good little girl. When you do not mind what I say, you are a bad little girl," said Aunt Cordelia.

"When I tell you to go on upstairs outer my way, I want you to go. When I tell you to take your fingers outen thet dough, I want you to take 'em out," said Aunt M'randy. Admonitions put in this way are entirely comprehensible. There is no getting away from understanding mandates such as these.

Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise drew their admonitions from a small, battered book given to them when they were little for their guidance and known as "Songs for the Little Ones at Home."

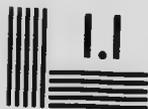
"O that it were my chief delight
To do the thing I ought;
Then let me try with all my might,
To mind what I am taught,"

said Aunt Katie.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"O dear me, Emma, how is this?
Your hands are very dirty, Miss;
I don't expect such hands to see
When you come in to dine with me,"

said Aunt Louise.

Nor did Emmy Lou suspect that it was because their advice did not come from the heart it reduced her to gloom; that Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise delighted in it not because it was advice, but because it did reduce her to gloom; that Aunt Katie, who was twenty-two, and Aunt Louise, who was twenty, did it to tease?

Bob, the house-boy, too, had his line of ethics for her. And while he went to Sunday school, and to what he called Lodge, and had what he termed fun'ral insurance, observances all entitling him to standing, he pointed his warnings with dim survivals from an older, darker lore which someone wiser than Bob or Emmy Lou might have recognized as hoo-doo. Not that Bob or Emmy Lou either knew



"They begun to peak, an' then to pine. And still they
wouldn't mind."



A Few Strong Instincts

this. Nor yet did Emmy Lou grasp that he to whom she was told to go for company a dozen times a day when the others wanted to get rid of her used the same to get rid of her himself. On the contrary, her faith in him being what it was, his warnings sank deep, the dire fates of his examples being guaranty for that. Moreover his examples came close home.

The little girl who wouldn't go play when they wanted to get rid of her. The little boy who would stay out visiting so late they had to send the house-boy after him. The little girl who wouldn't go 'long when told to go, but would hang around the kitchen. Treated as a class by Bob, a class, so his gloomy headshakings would imply, peculiarly fitting to his present company, their fates were largely similar.

"They begun to peak, an' then to pine. An' still they wouldn't mind. Thar ha'r drapped out in the comb. An' still they wouldn't mind.

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Thar nails come loose. An' still they wouldn't mind. Thar teeth drapped out. But it wuz too late. When they tried to mind *they couldn't mind!*"

· And while his audience might chafe beneath the almost too personal tone of these remarks, she dared not question them. Examples dire as Bob's were vouched for every day. Only the Noahs were saved in the ark. Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt. The bear came out of the woods and ate the naughty children. Aunt Cordelia and Sunday school alike said so. The wicked sisters of Cinderella were driven out of the palace. Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise said so. The disobedient little mermaid was turned into foam. The little girl down at the corner, named Maud, who owned the book, said so.

These things all considered, perhaps it came to be a matter of too many and cumulative admonishings with Emmy Lou. Nature will

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revolt at too steady a diet perhaps even of admonitions. Or it may be that even an Emmy Lou in time rebels, when elders so persistently refuse to recognize that there is another, an Emmy Lou's side, to most affairs.

For at six the peripatetic instinct has awakened and the urge within is to move on. Where? How does an Emmy Lou know? Anywhere so that the cloying performances of outgrown baby ways are behind her.

Many whom she knew in the receded stages of five years old, and four, have moved on or away before this. Izzy who lived next door. Minnie who lived next to Izzy. Lisa Schmit whose father had the grocery at the corner but now has one at a corner farther away.

And others have moved into Emmy Lou's present ken. Mr. Dawkins has the grocery at the corner now, and his little girl is Maud, guarantor for the mermaid, and his big girl is Sarah, and his little boy is Albert Eddie.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

The peripatetic instinct impelling, Emmy Lou goes to see them as often as Aunt Cordelia will permit.

There is fascination in going if one could but convey this to Aunt Cordelia in words. Any can live in houses; indeed most people do; or in Emmy Lou's time did; but only the few live over a grocery.

It argues these different. Mr. Schmit was German. Mr. Dawkins is English. At Emmy Lou's, the teakettle, a vague part in family affairs, boils on the stove, but at Maud's, the teakettle, a family affair, boils on the "hob," which is between the grate. And more, the father and mother of Maud and Albert Eddie not only have crossed that vague something, home of the little mermaid, the ocean, but their mother has all but seen the Queen.

"You know the Queen?" the two had asked Emmy Lou anxiously.

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And she had said yes. And she did know her. Knew her from long association and by heart. She sat in her parlor at the bottom of the page, eating bread and honey, while the maid and the blackbird were at the top of the next page.

"Tell her about it," Maud and Albert Eddie then had urged Sarah, their elder sister, "about when mother all but saw the Queen?"

Sarah complied. "'Now hurry along home with your brother in the perambulator while I stop at the shop,' mother's mother said to her. Mother was twelve years old. But she didn't hurry. She stopped to watch every one else all at once hurrying and running, and so when she reached the corner the Queen, for the Queen it was, had gone by."

"If she had minded her mother——" from Albert Eddie.

"And hurried on home with the perambulator——" from Maud. Proof not only of a

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worthy attitude on their part towards the admonition of the tale, but of an evident comprehension of what a perambulator was.

But Aunt Cordelia, not always a free agent, was no longer permitting so much visiting.

"You are letting her actually live on the street," said Aunt Katie.

"With any sort of children," supplemented Aunt Louise.

Undoubtedly Aunt Cordelia came the nearest to understanding there is another side to these affairs. "Sometimes I think she's lonesome," she said.

"Those children who are all the day,
Allowed to wander out,
And only waste their time in play,
Or running wild about——"

said Aunt Katie. Aunt Louise finished it:

"Who do not any school attend,
But trifle as they will,

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Are almost certain in the end,
To come to something ill."

And while it almost would seem that Aunt Cordelia was being admonished too, and from the little book, in the light of what followed, it appeared that Aunt Katie, Aunt Louise, and the little book were right.

The day in question started wrong. In the act of getting out of bed, life seemed a heavy and a listless thing. If Emmy Lou, less pink-cheeked than usual if any had chanced to notice, but full as chubby, ever had felt this way before, she would have told Aunt Cordelia that her head ached. But if the head never has ached before?

Her attention was distracted here. Somehow, and she, startled, let her tongue pass over the row of her teeth. Milk teeth, the name who knew the term would have called them. There is much, however, that an Emmy Lou, the small person in a household of elders, is sure

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

posed to know that she does not, knowledge coming not by nature but through understanding.

Then, reassured, her attention came back to the affairs of the moment, the chief of these being that life is a heavy and listless affair and the labyrinthine windings of stockings more than ever fretting in effect upon the temper. And after stockings come garments, ending with the pink calico dress apportioned to the day, and succeeding garments come buttons. Aunt Katie in the next room was cheerful.

"I love to see a little girl
Rise with the lark so bright,
Bathe, comb and dress with cheerful face——"

One was in no mood whatever for the little book, and showed it. Aunt Louise in the next room too, possibly grasped this.

"Why is Sarah standing there
Leaning down upon a chair,

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With such an angry lip and brow,
I wonder what's the matter now?"

Aunt Cordelia was struggling with the buttons. "Let me alone, both of you. Sometimes I think you are half responsible."

The outrages of the day went on at breakfast. Emmy Lou's once prized highchair, a tight fit now, and which, could she have had her own way, would have been repudiated some time ago, was in itself provocative. She climbed into it stonily.

Bob placed a saucer before her. If she ever had suffered the qualms of an uneasy stomach before, she would have known and told Aunt Cordelia.

"I don't want my oatmeal," said Emmy Lou.

"You must eat it before you can have anything else," said Aunt Cordelia.

"I don't want anything else."

"She's fretful," said Aunt Katie.

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"She's cross," said Aunt Louise.

"I am coming to think you are right, Louise," said Aunt Cordelia. "What she needs is to be at school with other children. School opens the day after tomorrow, and I'll start her."

"This baby?" from Uncle Charlie incredulously, his gaze seeking Emmy Lou in her highchair.

"Look at that oatmeal still untouched," from Aunt Cordelia. "Charlie, *she is getting so she doesn't want to mind!*"

The outrages went on during the morning. Emmy Lou did not know what to do with herself, whereas Aunt Cordelia had a great deal to do with herself. "You little hindering thing!" by and by from that person with exasperation. "Go on out and talk with Bob. He's cleaning knives on the kitchen doorstep."

But Bob, occupied with his board and bath-

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brick and piece of raw potato, had no idea of talking with her. He talked to himself.

"Seems like I done forgot how it went, 'bout that li'l boy whut would stan' roun' listenin'. Some'n' like 'bout that li'l girl whut wouldn't go about her bus'ness——"

Gathering up his knives and board, he went in to set his table. Turning around by and by he found her behind him in the pantry. He talked to himself some more.

"Reckon is I done forgot how it went? 'Bout that li'l girl got shet up in the pantry after they tol' her to keep out? She knowed ef she coughed they'd hear an' come an' fin' her thar. An' she hed to cough. An' she wouldn't cough. An' she hed to. An' she wouldn't. An' she hed to. An' she DID. But it wuz too late. The pieces of her wuz ev'ey whar, even to the next spring when they wuz house-cleanin', an' foun' her knuckle-bone on the fur top shelf. Looks lak to me, some-

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body else is gettin' ready for a good lesson. Better watch out."

The final outrage was yet to come. At the close of dinner Emmy Lou came round to Aunt Cordelia's chair. Aunt Cordelia was worn out. She had never known her Emmy Lou to behave as she had in the last day or so.

"Now don't come asking me again," she said, forestalling the issue. "I've gone over the matter with you several times before today. You cannot go play with anybody. No, not with Maud at the corner or anybody else." Then to Uncle Charlie, shaking his head over this unwonted friction as he rose to start back down town: "They tell me there is whooping-cough around everywhere, Charlie." Then to Emmy Lou: "Now try and be a good girl for the rest of the day, Aunt Cordelia will have her hands full. It is Bob's afternoon out. Try and be Aunt Cordelia's precious baby."

But Emmy Lou, her tongue traveling the

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row of her teeth anew, didn't propose to be anybody's precious baby. She was a big girl, now, almost six years old, and wanted it recognized that she was. And she didn't feel good in the least, but like being quite the reverse for the rest of the day.

This was at two o'clock. At three Aunt Cordelia's own Emmy Lou, the pink calico upon her person and a straw hat upon her head, turned the knob of the front door. Having obeyed thus far in life, she was about to disobey.

The front door, its knob requiring both hands and her tiptoes, whereas the kitchen door would have been open. But Aunt M'randy was in the kitchen.

As it chanced, Bob was leaving by the kitchen door, and coming around by the side pavement as Emmy Lou came down the steps, they met. His idea seemed to be that she was tagging after him, an injury in itself when

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

she divined it. He was of the same mind evidently when a moment later she was still beside him outside the gate.

He paused and addressed the air disparagingly before he went. "Looks like to me I'll have to bresh up my ricollection 'bout that li'l girl whut would come outside her own gate after she was tole not to come. Spoilin' for one good iesson, thet li'l girl wuz, an' 'pears like to me she got it. Better watch out." And Bob was gone, up the street, whereas it was the definite intention of the other person at that gate to go down the street.

Mr. Dawkins' grocery fronted on the main street while his housedoor opened on the side-street. A few moments later a small figure in a familiar pink dress and straw hat reached this side door, and, pausing long enough for her tongue to pass uneasily along the row of her teeth, opened it upon a flight of stairs and went in.

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Five o'clock it was and after when Mr. Dawkins' eldest daughter Sarah, followed by Maud and Albert Eddie, came down these steps propelling a visitor in a pink dress and straw hat, a visitor known from the Dawkins' viewpoint as that little girl from up the street in the white house that get their groceries from Schmit.

Perhaps this fact explained Sarah's small patience with this person who in herself would seem to invite it. She not only was pale, and her lips pressed with unnatural while miserable firmness together, but her eyes, uplifted when Sarah most undeniably shook her, were anguished.

"If you'd open your mouth and speak," said Sarah with even indication of shaking her again.

A stout gentleman coming along the side street which led from a car-line crossed over hastily.

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"Here, here! And what for?" Uncle Charlie asked with spirit.

Sarah looked up at him. With her long, tidy plaits and her tidy person she conveyed the impression that she was to be depended on. Maud looked up at him. With her small tidy plaits and her tidy person she conveyed the impression that she was to be depended on, too.

Albert Eddie looked up. Mr. Dawkins was to be congratulated on his family. There was dependability in every warm freckle of Albert Eddie's face.

Emmy Lou, Uncle Charlie's own Emmy Lou, had been looking up the while, anguished. She was a reliable person in general herself, or Uncle Charlie always had found her so.

"If she'd open her mouth and speak," said Sarah. "Half an hour ago by the clock it was, she gave a sound, and I turned, and here she was like this."

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“Sister was telling us a story——” from Albert Eddie.

“The story of naughty Harryminta——” from Maud.

“No use your trying, sir,” from Sarah. “I’ve been trying for half an hour. We’re taking her home.”

“Excellent idea.” He took Emmy Lou’s little hands. “So you won’t tell Uncle Charlie either?”

Evidently she would not, though it was with visible increase of anguish that she indicated this by a shake of her head.

“We’ll walk along,” said Sarah. “I’ve my part of supper to get, but we’ll feel better ourselves to see her home.”

They walked along.

“I was talking to them peaceful as might be——” from Sarah again.

“Sister was telling us a story——” from Albert Eddie.

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"The story of naughty Harryminta——" from Maud.

Was it a sound here from Uncle Charlie's Emmy Lou, or the twitch of her hand in his, which betrayed some access to her woe?

"And what was the story?" asked Uncle Charlie. It might afford a clue.

Maud volunteered it. "The little girl's mother said to her, 'Don't.' And her name was Harryminta. And when she got back from doing what she was told not to do, her mother was waiting for her at the door. 'Whose little girl is this?' And Harryminta said, 'Why, it's your little girl.' But her mother shook her head. 'Not my little girl at all. *My little girl is a good little girl.*' And shut the door."

"Talk about your coincidence," said Uncle Charlie afterward. "Talk about your Nemesis and such!"

For as the group came along the street—the Dawkins family, Uncle Charlie, and Emmy

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Lou—and turned in at the gate, Aunt Cordelia flung the front door open. Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise were behind her. They had really just missed Emmy Lou.

“Whose little girl is this?” said Aunt Cordelia, severely. But not going as far as the mother of Araminta she did not shut the door. Instead, Sarah explained.

“Half an hour ago by the clock—” Sarah began.

They led her into the hall, and Aunt Cordelia lifted her up on the marble slab of the pier table. Aunt Cordelia’s admonitions and mandates came from the heart. “Open your mouth and speak out and tell me what’s the matter?”

Emmy Lou opened her mouth, and in the act, though visibly against her stoutest endeavor even to an alarming accession of pink to her face, ominously and unmistakably—whooped; the same followed on her part by

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the full horror of comprehension, and then by a wail.

For with that whoop the worst had happened. As with the little boys and girls in Bob's dire category of naughty little boys and girls, her sin had found her out indeed.

"I'm coming to pieces," wailed their terrified Emmy Lou, "because I didn't mind."

And according to her understanding she was, since after her vain endeavor for half an hour by Sarah's clock to hold it in place with tongue and lips, in her palm lay a tooth, the first she had shed or known she had to shed, knowledge coming not by nature but through understanding.

Aunt Cordelia did not carry out her program the day school opened. There was whooping-cough at her house, and a day or so after there was whooping-cough at Mr. Dawkins'.

"He is very indignant about it," Aunt Cor-

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delia told Uncle Charlie. "He stopped me as I came by this morning from my marketing. He said it wasn't even as though we were customers."

"Which is the best we can be after this, I'm sure you will agree," said Uncle Charlie.

Just here in the conversation, Emmy Lou, miserable and stuffy in a pink sacque over her habitual garb because Aunt Cordelia most emphatically insisted, whooped.

"Those *good* little girls, Marianne and Maria, Were happy and well as *good* girls could desire—"

said Aunt Louise.

Aunt Cordelia, approaching with a bottle and spoon as she did after every cough, shook her head. "Little girls who mind are good little girls," she said.

"Emmy Lou is learning to be a good little girl while she is shut up in the house sick," said Aunt Katie. "She knows all of her Com-

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mandments In Verse for Sunday school now. Let Aunt Cordelia wipe the cough-syrup off your mouth and say them for Uncle Charlie before he goes."

Emmy Lou learning to be a good little girl said them obediently.

"Thou shalt have no more gods but me;
Before no idol bow thy knee.
Take not the name of God in vain,
Nor dare the Sabbath day profane.
Give both thy parents honor due,
Take heed that thou no murder do.
Abstain from deeds and words unclean,
Nor steal though thou art poor and mean;
Nor make a willful lie nor love it,
What is thy neighbor's, dare not covet."

Aunt Cordelia, Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise looked pleased. Emmy Lou had said the verses without stumbling. Uncle Charlie looked doubtful. "Five words with understanding rather than ten thousand in an unknown tongue? How about it, Cordelia?"

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But Bob, bringing Emmy Lou's dinner upstairs to her on a tray, had the last disturbing word. "Been tryin' to ricollect how it went, 'bout thet li'l girl kep' her tongue outer the place whar her tooth drapped out, so's a new tooth would grow in."



IV

THE TRIBUNAL OF CONSCIENCE



IV

THE TRIBUNAL OF CONSCIENCE

UNCLE CHARLIE took six blue tickets from his pocket and set them on the dining-room mantel. His ownership of a newspaper was the explanation for this liberality of supply to those who could put the two things together.

"I wonder," said he, "if anybody in this room ever heard of the circus?"

Emmy Lou could not get down from her place at the dinner-table fast enough. She hurried to the kitchen. She had heard of the circus from Bob the house-boy, who had a circus bill!

Bills, as a rule, are small affairs measurable in inches; bits of paper which reduce Aunt

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Cordelia to figurings with a lead pencil, short replies, and low spirits.

But a circus bill, pink and pictorial, is measurable in feet. As Bob spread his on the kitchen table yesterday and again this morning, it fell either side well on the way to the floor. Its wonders, inexplicable where he, spelling out the text, forebore to explain, or explicable where he did if one knew no better than he, were measurable only by the limits of the mind to take them in. If Emmy Lou, who started to school last fall three weeks late owing to a popular prejudice against whooping-cough, had caught up as Aunt Cordelia easily assumed she would, or "caught on," in the words of Uncle Charlie, she might have been spelling out some of the wonders of the circus bill for herself.

Bob's finger had paused beneath a lady in myriad billowing skirts poised mid-air between a horse and a hoop such as Emmy Lou spent

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hours trying to trundle on the sidewalk. "She's jumpin' th'ough the hoop, but thet ain't nothin'. Heah in the other picture she's jumpin' th'ough six."

Emmy Lou, hurrying to the kitchen now and finding Bob about to start in with the soup, borrowed the bill and hurried back with it to the dining-room and Uncle Charlie's side.

"This one's an elephant" she explained, her finger, even as Bob's, pointing to the picture. "He picks little children up and puts them in his trunk."

"I see you know, though some do call it his howdah," said Uncle Charlie. "And no doubt about the lions and the tigers, the giraffe and the zebra as well?" regretfully. "Even the lemonade?"

"Lemonade?"

"Pink. And peanuts." Uncle Charlie motioned to Bob to put his soup down and have done with it, as it were. "Also Nella, The

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Child Equestrienne in Her Triumphal Entry—here she is. And Zephine, the Wingless Wonder, in Her Flight Through the Air——”

“Am I going to the circus?” from Emmy Lou.

“That’s what I hoped,” from Uncle Charlie, handing back the bill and turning to his soup. “But of course if there is room for doubt about it——”

The very next day Emmy Lou came hurrying home from Sunday school. She had the Dawkins, Sarah, the conscientious elder sister, Maud, and Albert Eddie, for company as far as the grocery at the corner. Since Aunt Cordelia had learned they were English, apparent explanation for those who understood, they had been persuaded to go to St. Simeon’s Sunday school too.

Sunday school was to have a—Emmy Lou in her Sunday dress and her Sunday hat, hurrying on from the corner by herself, tried to

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straighten this out before reaching home and reporting it. What was it Sunday school was to have? In Uncle Charlie's study—a small back room somewhat battered and dingy but, as he claimed in its defense, his own—was a picture of a stout little man propelled in a wheelbarrow by some other men.

Emmy Lou had discovered that Uncle Charlie loved the little man and prized the picture. When she asked who he was and where he was going in the wheelbarrow, Uncle Charlie said it was *Mr. Pickwick* going to a *picnic*. Or, and here was the trouble, was it *Mr. Picnic* going to a *pickwick*? It depended on this what Sunday school was to have.

Uncle Charlie, hat and cane in hand, waiting in the hall for Aunt Cordelia to start to church, straightened out the matter. *Mr. Pickwick* was going to a *picnic*. It then followed that Emmy Lou, in general a brief person, had such a store of information about the picnic she

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was moved to share it with Uncle Charlie. This common interest about the circus and their recurring conversations about it were drawing them together, anyhow. Her data about the picnic on the whole was menacing in its character. As, for example:

It was to be in Mr. Denby's grove. He charged too much for it, but St. Simeon's could not do any better. If you went too far away from the swings and the benches the mamma of some little pigs would chase you.

Further. You cannot go to St. Simeon's picnic, or, indeed, to any picnic without a basket! Emmy Lou had endeavored to find out what sort of a basket and Sarah had cut her short with the brief reply, "A picnic basket."

And, finally, "Albert Eddie wishes he'd never started to St. Simeon's. Sarah says he has to go to the picnic and he wants to go to the circus!"

Aunt Cordelia arriving in full church ar-

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ray caught this last. "I've been meaning to speak about it myself. I find the circus is here for the one day only and that the day for St. Simeon's picnic."

Emmy Lou received this as applying to the Dawkins only. The information her inquiries had enabled her to get together led her personally to disparage picnics.

"Albert Eddie says Sarah made him wash dishes at the last picnic he went to. And she makes him carry baskets. That if he'd wash dishes for 'em at the circus and carry water, they'd let him in."

"Sarah, Maud, Albert Eddie, you, me, and one ticket to spare; such was my idea," said Uncle Charlie, he and Aunt Cordelia preparing to start. "The only thing we've ever given the Dawkins up to date is the whooping-cough. Picnic or circus, duty or pleasure, we'll have to put it to them which they want it to be."

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Aunt Cordelia, even at the risk of being late to church, stopped short. She didn't see the matter in any such fashion at all! "Emmy Lou will prefer to go to her own Sunday school picnic too, I hope," decidedly. "How you distract and bother the child, Charlie!"

"I bother Emmy Lou? She and I are as near good friends as people get to be. We respect each other's honesty and go our own ways. I am going to leave the tickets where I put them yesterday. I planned to take her and the Dawkins to the circus. You and she can fight it out." He proceeded through the open doorway to the stone steps.

"In that case," from Aunt Cordelia as she followed him, "since you seem to put me in the wrong, I leave it to her own conscience. She is seven years old, a big girl going to school and Sunday school, and ought to know right from wrong." And the two were gone.

Conscience! Familiar shibboleth to the sev-

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enth age of little girls! Stern front behind which Aunt Cordelia these days hides her kindly features.

Somewhere beyond the neighborhood where Emmy Lou lived with Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie, was the roundhouse and the yards of a railroad. Or so Aunt Cordelia explained. The roundhouse bell, rung every hour by the watchman on his rounds, made far-off melancholy tolling through the night.

The sins at seven, the chubby, endeavoring Emmy Lou's sins, her cloak on the coat-closet floor instead of the closet peg, mucilage on Aunt Katie's rug where a paper outspread before pasting began would have saved it—sins such as these have no prod to reminder more poignant than this melancholy tolling of the roundhouse bell in the night.

“It is an uneasy conscience,” Aunt Cordelia invariably claimed when Emmy Lou, waking, came begging for permission to get in her bed.

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"If your conscience was all that it should be, you'd be asleep."

Yet did Aunt Cordelia, as a rule, leave those matters to Emmy Lou's conscience which she thought she did? Did Emmy Lou three out of four Sundays find herself remaining at church rather than on her road home because she herself wanted to stay? Or taking off her new dress on reaching home because she wanted to get into the older one?

Or, rather, did she find her baffled if unsuspecting self, coerced and bewildered, doing these and other things in the name of choice when the doing was not through choice at all?

Aunt Cordelia was going to leave the decision between the circus and the picnic to Emmy Lou, too, because she said she was. Nor did Aunt Cordelia, honest soul, or Emmy Lou, unquestioning and trusting one, dream but that she did.

"I'll see Sarah Dawkins," said Aunt Cor-

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delia to Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise the very next morning, "and arrange with her to look after Emmy Lou at the picnic. We'll use the small hamper for her basket. She can take enough for herself and them. Bob can take her and it around to the church corner where the chartered street cars are to be waiting, and put her in Sarah's charge there. I can't see, Katie, why you oppose a cake with eustard filling for the basket."

"It's messy," said Aunt Katie, "both to take and to eat."

"But if she likes it best?" from Aunt Cordelia.

It was the first thing come to Emmy Lou's hearing lending appeal to the picnic; or light on the purpose of the baskets.

Uncle Charlie arriving for dinner out-matched it, however, by another appeal. "I saw a new circus bill on the fence of the vacant lot as I came by. A yellow bill."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Emmy Lou hurried right down there from the dinner-table. Nella, the Child Equestrienne, was kissing her hand right to Emmy Lou from her horse's back. And the elephant, abandoning his customary dark business of putting little children in his trunk, with unexpected geniality was sitting on a stool before a table drinking tea.

And the next day Bob outmatched this. He had been to the grocery to see about chickens for the picnic to which Emmy Lou ought to want to go.

"There's a Flyin' Dutchman on the outside, an' side-shows too. I seen about it on a bill the other side of the grocery. A green bill."

Emmy Lou hurried down there. She didn't see anything that she could identify as a Flyin' Dutchman, perhaps because she was hazy as to what a Dutchman was. But Zephine, swinging by her *teeth*, was just leaping into space.

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"I think I will let her wear her sprigged muslin," said Aunt Cordelia at supper that night. "A good many grown persons go in the afternoon."

"Their excuse being to take the children——" from Uncle Charlie easily.

"I am not talking of the circus, Charlie, and you know I am not," from Aunt Cordelia sharply.

"She has decided then?"

"She certainly ought to have decided. There never should have been any doubt. I'll put in some little tarts, Katie; all children like tarts."

Had Emmy Lou decided? She heard it assumed that she had. Why, then, with this sense of frustration and bewilderment was she swallowing at tears?

"I certainly feel I may say Emmy Lou has decided," repeated Aunt Cordelia. "I'm sure, Katie, tarts are just the thing."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"I'll never believe it," said Uncle Charlie, emphatically, nor was he referring to the carts.

Did he refuse to be party to any such idea?

"I would not be surprised," said he to Emmy Lou the next evening, "if we hear the circus rumbling by in the night. Our street is the one they usually take from the railroad yards to the circus-grounds. I put six tickets on the mantelpiece where at the most we will need only five. Suppose I take one and see what I can do with it?"

"Emmy Lou has no idea of going to her own Sunday school picnic, and Aunt Cordelia. "I wish, Charlie, you would be still about your tickets and the circus."

"They are not my tickets. They are going to stay right here. I merely was to go with Emmy Lou on one of them. They are her tickets to do with as she wants and to take whom she pleases."

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Though the circus did go by in the night, according to report next morning, Emmy Lou failed to hear it. Nor did the melancholy of the tolling bell disturb her. Aunt Cordelia said this was because she was going to her Sunday school picnic as she should, and had a quiet conscience.

"I come roun' by the circus as I come to work," Bob said in the pantry where Aunt Cordelia and he packed the basket with Emmy Lou for spectator. "Gittin' them wagons with the lookin'-glass sides ready for the parade. Thet ol' elephant come swinging erlong like he owned the y'earth. Mr. Charlie gimme a ticket las' night to go."

Which reminded Emmy Lou. Even though she was going to the picnic, there was comfort in the thought those tickets yet on the mantelpiece were hers. She went into the dining-room and pushed a chair to the hearth. The sprigged muslin she was to wear had a pocket,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

and later when this dress was put on the tickets which were her own were in the pocket.

If one never has been to a picnic the only premises to go on are those given you.

"You haven't a thing to do but stay with Maud and Albert Eddie, and mind Sarah," said Aunt Cordelia as she put Emmy Lou's hat on her head and its elastic under her chin, "except, of course, to look after your basket. There is pink icing on the little cakes and a good tablecloth that I don't want anything to happen to under the beaten biscuits at the bottom. There is ham and there's tongue and there's chicken."

"I have to look after the basket," Emmy Lou told Sarah as she and the Dawkins with the rest of St. Simeon's Sunday school were put aboard the excursion cars.

"Of course you do," said Sarah approvingly. "We all do. It's right here. And," with the heartiness of one distributing largesse in priv-

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ileges, the meanwhile settling her three charges in their places, "when we get off the car Albert Eddie shall carry it."

Emmy Lou had a seat between Albert Eddie and Maud. Beyond Albert Eddie were three little boys in knickerbockers, blouses, and straw hats, as gloomy in face as he.

"Not only *let* him carry water for the elephant but gave him a *ticket* for doing it," the nearest one was saying to the other three. "Had it with him when he got back. I saw it myself. He lemme take it in my hand. A *blue* ticket."

"Right past the circus grounds, tents and all," from the second little boy as their car came in sight of the beflagged tent city. "I'll betcher they're gettin' ready for the parade right now!"

Four glittering, turbaned beings appeared around a tent, each leading a plumed and caparisoned horse to a place before a gilded

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

and high-throned edifice. "Didn't I tell you they were?" bitterly. A band crashed.

The heads of St. Simeon's Sunday school, regardless of danger, craned out as one. The more venturesome left their seats.

St. Simeon's chartered cars rolled inexorably by. Heads came in. The venturesome returned to their places.

"What is there to a picnic anyhow?" from the third little boy. "Nothin' at all but what you eat."

Albert Eddie staggered under the weight of the basket when in time the car stopped on the track along the dusty road outside Mr. Denby's grove. But then one out of every two persons descending from the several cars was similarly staggering under the weight of a basket.

Sarah and Maud, with Emmy Lou led by either hand between them, followed Albert Eddie with their own. After which, St. Simeon's,

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having brought all baskets to a common center beneath a tree in the neighborhood of the ice-water barrel, went off and left them.

"I'm going with a little girl who asked me," Maud told Sarah. "We won't go too far or the mother of the little pigs will chase us."

"Albert Eddie, I told the ladies that you would get the wood for a fire so we can put the coffee on," said Sarah. "When you come back from that you can take the bucket and bring us the ice-water from the barrel for the lemonade."

Sarah's glance came next to Emmy Lou, no mixer in the world of Sunday school at best, as Sarah before this had observed. Sarah frowned perturbedly. Some are picnickers by intuition, for example Maud and the little girl gone off together; others come to it through endeavor. It was seven-year-old Emmy Lou's first picnic, and she in her sprigged muslin stood looking to Sarah.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Sarah was a manager, but having yet to manage for Emmy Lou her frown was perturbed. Then her face cleared. She fetched a flat if a trifle over-mossy stone and put it down on the outskirts of the baskets grouped beneath the sheltering tree, and near the ice-water barrel. "There, now! You can sit down here and look after the baskets till I get back," she told Emmy Lou and was gone.

There is virtue in coming to a picnic. Aunt Cordelia plainly gave one to understand so.

"Why don't you go play with the others, little girl?" asked a lady who was tying on a gingham apron as she hurried by. "Go over to the swings and see-saws."

But Emmy Lou, no picnicker by intuition, nor as yet by any other mode of arrival, was grateful that she had to stay with the baskets, and, had the lady paused long enough for a reply, could say so.

Was there virtue in coming to the picnic

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for Albert Eddie too? Emmy Lou on her stone under the tree guarding baskets saw him come back with his load of firewood. She saw him next carrying the bucket of water from the barrel.

And here some ladies approaching the baskets beside Emmy Lou beneath the tree, and casting appraising eyes over the outlay, began to help themselves to the same! To this basket, and that basket, and carry them away! One even approached and laid hands on Emmy Lou's own! It took courage to speak, but she found it.

"It's mine," from Emmy Lou.

"And just the very nicest looking one I have seen," said the lady heartily after raising the lid and probing into the contents. "Anyone would be glad to say it was hers," and went off with it! St. Simeon's with a commendable sense of fellowship made a common feast from its picnic baskets at long tables for all, but

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Emmy Lou did not know this. She only saw her cake with the custard filling, her cakes with the pink icing, her tarts, her ham and tongue, her chicken and biscuits and tablecloth borne off from her with a coolness astounding and appalling.

Virtue is hers who dully endures a picnic. Emmy Lou, coming out of her stun and daze and seeing some little boys approaching, the ice-water barrel being a general Mecca, swallowed hard that, did they notice her, they might not see how near she was to crying. Three little boys in knickerbockers, blouses, and straw hats were, still with their common air of being more than justifiably aggrieved.

They noticed her and at the abrupt halt of one, all stopped.

"We saw her on the car," he said. "*What's she got?*"

For Emmy Lou's hand some time since had

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brought forth for comfort from her pocket the blue tickets which were her own. That hand closed on them at the question now. She'd just seen her basket go!

"*Are* they circus tickets? Sure? Lemme see them? Aw, what you scared of, lettin' me see 'em in my hand?"

Emmy Lou did not know just what. The ways of a picnic and those attending were new to her, but what she had learned discouraged confidence. Her hand and the tickets in it went behind her

"Whe d she get 'em?" the boy asked now of Albert Eddie, arriving with his bucket for more water.

He set the bucket down by the barrel and joined the group.

"Do you s'pose they are really hers?" was the query put to him as he got there.

Emmy Lou knew Albert Eddie, had known him for a long time as time is measured at

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

seven years. He looked after her on the way to and from Sunday school even though he did it at Sarah's bidding, whereas Maud forgot her. Moreover, he had not wanted to come to the picnic, and, bond firmly established between them, neither had she. She surrendered her tickets into his hands to be inspected. She even credentialed them. The others had doubted them! "They're mine. My Uncle Charlie said so. To take anybody I wanted to take if I hadn't had to come here!"

Her tickets! Five by actual count and actual touch! To do what she pleased with! This plump little girl with the elastic of her hat under her chin, sitting alone at the picnic on a stone!

The conversation in the group became choric and to some extent Delphic, Emmy Lou, with her eyes on the tickets in Albert Eddie's hands, alone excluded.

"Aw, we could!"

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"Follow the track!"

"Could she do it?"

" 'Tain't so far she couldn't if we start now."

Four little boys, nearing nine, Albert Eddie, Logan, John, and Wharton, made Machiavelian through longing, turned to this little girl on her stone and made court to her as they knew how.

"Aw, you ask her! You know her!" from Logan to Albert Eddie.

Albert Eddie cleared his throat. He'd carried the basket. He'd carried the wood. He'd carried the water. He was bitter to desperate lengths, indeed, and in the rebound no good and obedient little boy at all but one gloriously afloat on seas of dire and reckless abandon.

"We'll take you to the circus, these boys and me, and let you see everything, if you want us to," with a *diablerie* of cunning so appalling and so convicting in its readiness he knew he must falter if he stopped to consider it.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"'Tain't as if we hadn't been before, every one of us," from Logan, with that yet greater cunning of the practiced and the artist, indifference; "but we wouldn't mind taking you."

"I been twice," from Wharton mightily.

"I been once, last year," from Albert Eddie.

"I been twice in *one* year," from John, "here at home and when I went to visit my grandmother."

"I been twice to one show," from Logan, eclipsing them all. "One day with one uncle, and the next day with another!"

And Emmy Lou never had been at all! The tickets, most cunning play of all, had been put back in her own hand.

"Old clown he threw his hat up, turned a handspring, and come up and caught it on his head," from Wharton. "We'll show you the clown."

"—rode one horse standing and driving five and kissed her hand every time she came by—"

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Logan, forgetting his cue and his cunning, was saying to Albert Eddie and John.

“—picks out the letters, that dog does, and spells his own name—” John, forgetting his cue and his cunning, was saying to Albert Eddie and Logan.

Emmy Lou moved on her stone.

“—rolls in a big keg, that elephant does, and turns it up and sits down on it. We’ll show you the elephant too,” Wharton, faithful to his cue, was saying to her.

Emmy Lou stood up. She handed the tickets to whoever might be to take charge of them. She put her hand in Albert Eddie’s. “I didn’t want to come to the picnic and not go to the circus,” she said.

They were grateful and solicitous little boys. They hurried her unduly, perhaps, in getting her out of the grounds, but once upon the safer territory of road beside the track they were mindful of her.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"I'll take her by one hand," said Logan to Albert Eddie, "and you keep hold of her by the other hand, because she knows you."

Whatever that hot, dusty, shadeless, that appalling stretch of country road meant to Emmy Lou, she never afterward referred to it. But then there were reasons making silence more natural on her part.

Yet she saw the circus! Emmy Lou saw the circus! Come what might, she had that!

What that they arrived at the circus entrance dinnerless, dust-laden, and, but for a stop along the way at a pump and trough, thirsty!

What that the man sitting at the mouth of the passage between canvas walls, to whom the tickets were handed, eyed them, four unattended little boys taking marked care of one little girl in their midst—since he let them by and in!

Sawdust, orange-peel, flaring gas jets, camel, lions, big pussy-tiger, Oh, glorious and

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unmatchable blend of circus aroma! Oh, vast circling sweep and reach of seats and faces, with four little boys guarding one little girl in their midst, wandering along looking for places!

Oh, blare of brass, Oh, fanfare of trumpets, Oh, triumphant entry of all hitherto but dimly sensed and hauntingly visioned, color, pageant, rhythm, triumph, glory, heretofore lost as they came, but now palpable, tangible, and existent!

Oh, pitiful, a bit terrifying, white-faced clown! The butt, the mock, the bear-all! Emmy Lou does not laugh at the clown! Because she pities him and is sorry for him, her heart goes out to him instead! And she trembles for Nella as her horse urged by the snapping, menacing whip sweeps by faster and even faster—and she cries out when at the crash of the kettle-drums, Zephine leaps——

“But I didn’t see the elephant like I did the

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

lions and the camel and the tiger," she tells Logan and Albert Eddie and the others. Nor had she. The elephant had gone to take his place in the triumphal entry when Emmy Lou and her four cicerones, in their progress through the animal tent before the program, reached his roped-in inclosure.

And so they made their way back to him through the surging crowd as they went out, four solicitous little boys conducting Emmy Lou. Made their way as near as might be, then pushed her through the row of spectators in front of them to the rope.

"He picks little children up and puts them in his trunk," she was saying as one fascinated by the very awfulness of that she dwelt on, as they squeezed her through.

Why should that monstrous bulk of elephant have trumpeted just then—as Emmy Lou emerged at the rope—have flung his trunk out in all the lordly condescension of a mighty

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one willing to stoop, in the accustomed quest of peanuts?

Aunt Louise, returning from a futile trip to the church corner to meet Emmy Lou, had just explained that the picnic had not returned, being delayed, so rumor said, by the search for five missing children, when Bob walked in bringing a dust-laden Emmy Lou.

"Came on her at the circus?" from Aunt Cordelia incredulously.

"In the animal tent roun' there whar thet elephunt is," Bob diagramed.

Emmy Lou's face, bearing marks of recent agitation, showed agitation anew.

"Good work," from Uncle Charlie, just arrived himself. "Who was with her?"

"Some li'l boys, she says. She warn't with nobody when I come on her runnin' f'om thet elephunt toward me without knowin' it, an' screamin'."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Emmy Lou's agitation broke into speech mingled with tears. "He picks little children up and puts them in his trunk. And he tried to pick up me!"

Along in the night Emmy Lou awaking found that she wanted a drink. These warm June nights the water bottle and tumbler sat on the sill of the open window in Aunt Cordelia's room, which meant that Emmy Lou must get out of bed and patter in there to them.

Reaching the window—was Emmy Lou in her nightgown and her bare feet really there and awake or in her bed in reality and direly dreaming?

Was it so or not so, this looming, swinging, menacing bulk, palpably after her again, approaching adown the silent, dusky street?

Seven years old and a little, little girl, Emmy

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Lou fled to Aunt Cordelia's bedside and tugged at her arm to get her awake.

Aunt Cordelia, taking her into her bed, soothed her, her hand massaging up and down back, shoulders, little thighs, comfortingly enough, even the while she scolds. She takes it without question that Emmy Lou has been dreaming.

"It is what comes of being a naughty little girl again. We never sleep well when our conscience is uneasy."

Emmy Lou lay close. Conscience! Aunt Cordelia said so!

Nor did Aunt Cordelia dream, nor Emmy Lou suspect, that the monstrous, looming shape padding along the silent street beyond the open window with its broad sill was the circus elephant making his way to the railroad yard and his traveling car, the yard where the roundhouse bell even now made melancholy tolling in the night.

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LIONS IN THE PATH



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LIONS IN THE PATH

EMMY LOU came home at close of her first day in the Second Reader. "I sit with Hattie," she said.

"Who is she?" asked Aunt Katie.

"Where does she come from?" added Aunt Louise.

Emmy Lou was perplexed. Who is Hattie? In her pink-sprigged dress with her plaits tied behind her either ear? Breathing briskness and conviction? Why, Hattie is *Hattie*. But how convey this to Aunt Katie?

And where does she come from? How does Emmy Lou know? Or how is she expected to know? The population of school, in common with the parallel world of Sunday school, has

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

no background other than school itself, but assembling out of the unknown and segregated into Primer Class, First Reader, Second Reader, even as Sunday school is segregated into Infant Class, Big Room, and Bible Class, performs its functions and disperses. Where, then, does Hattie come from?

"She came out of the cloakroom, and she asked me to sit with her."

Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise laughed. They have laughed at Emmy Lou before in this sense and so have others. She has said "Madam and Eve" happily and unsuspectingly all these years until Aunt Katie discovered it and not only laughed but *told*, and Aunt Louise, in whose person and carriage Emmy Lou takes pride, was a "blunette" until she found it out and laughed and told.

A little boy at school as long ago as last year laughed and told a boy named Billy who Emmy Lou had believed was her friend: "Ho,

Lions in the Path

Teacher told her to wait there for the present, and she thinks it's a present." And at Sunday school a little girl laughed and told: "She thinks her nickel, that nickel in her hand, is going up to God."

In consequence of these betrayals of a heart too faithfully shown and a confidence too earnestly given, Emmy Lou is cautious now, laughter having become a lion in the path and ridicule a bear in the bush.

A picture hangs above Aunt Cordelia's mantelpiece. It has been there ever since Emmy Lou came to make her home with her aunties, but she was seven years old when she asked about it.

"Where is the man going?" she said then to Aunt Cordelia. "What will the lions do to him?"

"He is going *right onward*. The lions in his path will turn him aside if they can."

"Correct," said Unele Charlie overhearing.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"But the lions can't turn the trick. See the man's sword? And his buckler? The sword of his courage, and the buckler of the truth."

"Who is the man?" Emmy Lou wanted to know.

"The anxious pilgrim of all time," said Uncle Charlie.

But Aunt Cordelia, taking Emmy Lou on her lap, explained. "The man is any one of us—you, me, Uncle Charlie, your little friends Maud and Albert Eddie down at the corner, everybody. If we meet our lions as we should, with courage and the truth, they, nor anything, can prevent our going right onward."

"Oh, let the pilgrims, let the pilgrims then,
Be vigilant and quit themselves like men!"

said Uncle Charlie.

And now laughter has become a lion in Emmy Lou's path. Will Hattie, her new friend, laugh at her? One can refrain from showing

Lions in the Path

one's heart to Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise, but in the world of school Emmy Lou needs a friend.

Omniscience at home is strangely wanting about this world of school, perhaps because Emmy Lou's aunties in their days went to establishments such as Mr. Parson's Select Academy, where the pupil is the thing, and school and teachers even a bit unduly glad to have and hold her, whereas Emmy Lou at her school has not found herself in the least the thing.

In saying she was to sit with Hattie she was implying that she was grateful indeed for the overture, whereas Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise, taking it the other way, ask who Hattie is and where she comes from.

Aunt Katie said more: "We must find out something about her. Suppose you try?"

But Emmy Lou in one short day has divined all she needs to know, though she does not know how to tell this to Aunt Katie. Hat-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

tie is Hattie, life a foe to be overcome, this world the lists, and Hattie the challenged, her colors lowered or surrendered never, though the lance of her spirit be shivered seventy times seven and her helmet of conviction splintered.

And Emmy Lou?—who, as complement to this divination, loves Hattie?—Emmy Lou, what with over-anxious debate, what with caution, what with weight of evidence and its considering, is the anxious pilgrim of all time, lions in the path and bears in the bush.

Hurrying off to school the next morning to resume the grateful business of sharing a desk with this new friend, Emmy Lou found Hattie waiting for her at the gate even as she had said she would be, and life today, even as life yesterday from the initial moment of acquaintance with Hattie, became crowded at once, even jostled and elbowed with happening and information.

As the two took their places in the line form-

Lions in the Path

ing at the sound of the school-bell, a little girl pushed in ahead of them where there was no place until she by crowding made one. But she did not care for that and showed it, her curls, which shone like Aunt Cordelia's copper hot-water jug, tossing themselves, and her skirts flaunting.

Hattie explained this. "She asked me to sit with her, that's why she's crowding us now. Her name is Sally Carter. But I choose, I don't take my friends." Her voice lowered and one gathered that following was an accusation, even an indictment. "She's the richest little girl in the class and wants you to know it. And she is an Episcopalian, too."

Emmy Lou felt anxious. Would Hattie laugh? "I don't know what an Episcopalian is."

But she seemed to regard the admission as commendable. "Sally's church gave an entertainment and called it for the orphans' fund,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

and she did the Highland Fling on the stage."

Emmy Lou had no idea what the Highland Fling was, either, but the line had reached the entrance doorway beyond which speech is forbidden. Except for this, must she have said she did not know? Or might she refrain from committing herself?

For there are different ways of meeting your lions. Emmy Lou knew two ways. Last year at school a little girl stood up in the aisle for no reason but a disposition to do so. Promptly and sharp came the rap of a pencil on the teacher's desk.

Lion in the path of the little girl! Lion of reprimand! But the little girl threw dust in the lion's eyes. "Oh, didn't the bell ring for everyone to stand?" she inquired. And sat down.

There is another way. Emmy Lou walked in on her friends the Dawkins one day, over the grocery at the corner, to find Albert Eddie

Lions in the Path

in trouble. Possibly more than any person of Emmy Lou's acquaintance, he seemed an anxious pilgrim of all time too.

"Stand right where you are," Sarah his big sister was saying to him. "You've had something in your mouth again that you shouldn't. Don't tell me. Can't I smell it now I try?"

Albert Eddie was sniffing, which with a little boy is the first step on the road to crying. But he met his lion.

"It's cigars off the catalpa tree," he wept, and went on into the next room and to bed even as Sarah had forewarned him.

And so, as soon as Emmy Lou is free to speak, she must tell Hattie that she does not know what the Highland Fling is? Alas, that in the exigencies of sharing a desk with this person and incidentally fulfilling the functions of the Second Reader she forgot to do so!

At the school gate at the close of the day

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Hattie said, "Come go to the corner with me, and I'll show you where I live."

Go with Hattie? Her friend and more, her monitor and protector? Who the day through had steered her by the Charybdis of otherwise certain mistake, and past the Scylla of otherwise inevitable blunder? Go with her at her asking? Did rescued squire follow his protecting knight in fealty of gratitude? Did faithful *Sancho* fall in at heel at his *Quixote's* bidding? Emmy Lou, who always went hurrying home because she was bidden so to do, faced around today and went the other way.

Hattie lived in a brick house in a yard. Pausing at her gate she made a proposition. "If you could go to my Sunday school I can come by and get you."

"I go to Sunday school," said Emmy Lou. Hattie was regretful but acquiescent. "Of course, if you go. I didn't know. I'll walk

Lions in the Path

back with you and see where you live. I'm Presbyterian. What are you?"

Having no idea what Presbyterian was, how could Emmy Lou say in kind what she was?

A little girl just arrived at a neighboring gate, an *habitué* of the Second Reader also, though Emmy Lou did not know her, joined Hattie and Emmy Lou as they passed. Hattie knew her and, such is the open sesame of one achieved friend, Emmy Lou found that she was to be considered as knowing her also. Her name was Sadie.

"I've just told her I'm Presbyterian," Hattie explained.

"I'm Methodist," said Sadie. "That's my church across the street."

Methodist is Sadie's church, and Presbyterian then is Hattie's? The names in both cases being abbreviated without doubt, and in seemlier phrase, St. Methodist and St. Presbyterian? Emmy Lou is on ground entirely famil-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

iar to her now, and she shifts her school-bag and her lunch-basket relievedly, for while the pilgrim must not fail to say she does not know when she does not, yet surely she may take advantage of a knowledge gained through finding out?

"I go to St. Simeon's P. E. Church," she stated. "It's 'round on Plum Street."

"What sort o' church is that?" said Hattie.

"It's a stone church with a vine," said Emmy Lou, nor even under questioning could she give further information.

Reversing the idea of Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise, Hattie would seem to be gradually finding out who and what Emmy Lou is? Friendship evidently must rest upon declared foundations. Emmy Lou goes to Sunday school and her church is on Plum Street. So far so good. But one and yet another lion faced, another and another spring up.

"Have you taken the pledge?" asks Hattie.

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Emmy Lou in her time has taken the measles and also the chicken-pox, and more latterly the whooping-cough. And also given it. But the pledge? Has she taken it, and failed to recall it? And is it desirable or undesirable that she should have taken it?

"I've taken it," says Sadie in a tone that leaves no doubt that one should have taken it.

While the pilgrim must scorn to throw dust in the eyes through evasion, may she not hope for advantage through finding out again? Or must she definitely draw her sword and face this lion by saying that she does not know?

Bob, the house-boy, sent to hunt her, is the instrument of her respite. He brought up before the advancing group. Time was when he would have said, "Reckon you is done forgot whut happened to thet li'l girl whut didn't come straight home like she was tol'." But Emmy Lou is a big girl and Bob acknowledges it. "Reckon you is done forgot whut happens

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about dessert for them that don't come on time to get it."

The implication dismaying even Hattie and Sadie, they took leave of Emmy Lou hastily.

"You can tell us about your pledge another time," Hattie called. "Maybe we will come around to see you this afternoon to get better acquainted."

Despite Bob's implication, Aunt Cordelia had saved some dessert for Emmy Lou. By diligent application to her dinner she even caught up with the others and thus achieved time for an inquiry. Was it on her mind that Hattie and Sadie might come around this afternoon?

"What's the pledge?"

"Which variety?" from Uncle Charlie. "It might be a toast."

"Or a pawn," said Aunt Louise.

"Or a surety," said Aunt Katie.

Lions in the Path

"And also an earnest," from Uncle Charlie.
"Take your choice."

"Now stop mystifying her," said Aunt Cordelia. "There is altogether too much of it. I won't allow it. A pledge, Emmy Lou, such as you probably are thinking about, is a promise. I daresay some of the little boys you know have taken one. I hear it's quite the thing. Now, hurry. That's why I sent Bob after you. Dancing school has been changed from Saturday to Friday afternoon, and you have only half an hour to dress and get there. Aunt Katie is going with you."

"But," dismayed, "two little girls said maybe they would come to see me."

"Well, I'm sorry. I will see them for you if they come. Now, hurry."

And Emmy Lou accordingly hurried. For while the claims of school are all very well in Aunt Cordelia's regard, the claims of church, as Emmy Lou understands these claims, are

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

imperative. And, moreover, while school centers itself and its activities within five days and its own four walls, St. Simeon's is the center of a clustering and revolving seven-day system.

On Monday Aunt Cordelia herself takes Emmy Lou to old Mrs. Angell's sewing class for the little girls of the Sunday school at the rectory next door to the church. On Thursday Aunt Louise takes her to the singing class for the children of the Sunday school at the organist's, across the street from the church. And her aunties share among them the duty of getting her twice a week to dancing school, taught by Miss Eustasia, the niece of Dr. Angell, at her home next door on the other side of St. Simeon's. The Church assembles its youthful populace here in force as Emmy Lou grasps it, old Mr. Pelot, who taught Miss Eustasia herself in her day and the mammas and papas of St. Simeon's in their day too, wield-

Lions in the Path

ing a bow and violin and being her assistant.

Dancing school! Emmy Lou, hurrying, is getting ready. School among schools, secular, sewing, singing, or Sunday, of endeavor, effort, and anxious perturbation! Aunt Cordelia does her best to help Emmy Lou along. She takes her in the parlor from time to time, after dinner, after supper, and, sitting down to the piano, strikes the chords. Aunt Cordelia's playing has a tinkling, running touch, and her tunes have an old-fashioned sound.

"*One, two, three, start now—*" Aunt Cordelia says. "Why didn't you start when I said? *Katie*, go away from the door, you and *Louise* both. You have laughed at her dancing, and she can't do a thing while you are here."

Then again to the endeavor. *One, two, three, one, two three*, alike the chant and hope and stay of dancing. Emmy Lou starts right; she is sure that her right foot leads out on time;

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but the difficulty is, the while she pantingly counts, to bring up the left foot on the moment.

Uncle Charlie stops in the parlor doorway while he lights a cigar before returning downtown. "We might think the left foot was faithful to the Church and only the right given over to the World, but that Eustasia plys her art in the shadow of St. Simeon's."

One foot to the Church and the other to the World? What does Uncle Charlie mean? Are aspersions to be cast on dancing by other than its victims? Or can it be that Uncle Charlie, too, like Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise, is laughing at her?

But today Emmy Lou and Aunt Katie go hurrying off to dancing school, Emmy Lou in her Sunday dress devoted to St. Simeon's functions, carrying her slippers in their bag.

Miss Eustasia's house is old and shabby.

Lions in the Path

She lives here with her mother who is Dr. Angell's sister, a lady who crosses her hands resignedly and says to the mammas and visitors at dancing school, "Eustasia was not brought up to this; Eustasia was raised with a right to the best."

Aunt Katie and Emmy Lou hurry in the front door. Miss Eustasia in the long parlor on one side of the hall is hurrying here and hurrying there, a little frown of bother and of earnestness between her brows, marshalling some classes into line, whirling others about face to face in couples. And old Mr. Pelot, tall and thin, with a grand manner and an arched nose, is rapping with his bow on the mantel and calling for order. Mammas and visitors are in place along the wall, and Dr. Angell, who sometimes, as now, comes over from the rectory to look on, beams and takes off his glasses and rubs them, and, putting them on, beams again.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

All of which is as it should be, as Emmy Lou understands it; and Miss Eustasia, born and baptized, brought up and confirmed, as it were, in the church next door, had to have something to do. And St. Simeon's, gathering its children together, offered her this, and at the same time provided for Mr. Pelot, who, being on everybody's mind in his old age, also had to have something to do.

And St. Simeon's did itself proud. As Aunt Katie and Emmy Lou came in, its Infant Class, as Emmy Lou from long association knew it, was out on the floor taking its first position, while St. Simeon's Big Room, resolved into skirts, sashes, and curls, or neat shoes, smooth stockings, knickerbockers, jackets, broad collars, and ties, was waiting its turn to flutter lightly to places, or, bowing stiffly, go into duty stoutly. After which its Bible Class, now standing about in confidential pairs, would go through their new figure

Lions in the Path

in the cotillion sedately. Or so it was that Emmy Lou coming in in her Sunday dress and her slippers understood it.

"Just in time," said Miss Eustasia to her briefly. "Get into line."

The Infant Class withdrawing to get its breath, Emmy Lou finds herself between Logan and Wharton in a newly forming line stretching across the room. She is glad, because they are her friends, having gone with her on occasion to the circus, and she can ask them about the pledge.

To each nature of school its vernacular: rudiments and digits, head and foot, medals and deportment, to the secular; bias and hem, whipping and backstitch, to the sewing; chorus and refrain, louder please, now softer, to the singing; sponsors, catechism, texts, to the Sunday; and Miss Eustasia now is speaking to the class in the vernacular of the dancing school.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"No, no, no," in discouragement of all attempts at conversation. "Eyes in front, everybody, on me, and take the first position. Now, right hand on right hip, so. Left hand lifted above left shoulder, so. Right foot out, heel first——"

"What do you call it?" from Logan, desperate with his efforts. "Have we had it before? What's its name?"

"Its name," said Miss Eustasia severely, "is the Highland Fling."

Emmy Lou found a moment before dispersal to interview Logan and Wharton. "What's the pledge? Have you taken it?"

"No, I haven't," said Logan, not so much curt as embittered, so one gathered, by his share in the afternoon.

Wharton was more explicit. "We don't have pledges at our Sunday school."

Emmy Lou knew another little boy, Albert Eddie. She went down to the corner the next

Lions in the Path

morning to see him. If the truth be told, she still preferred the snugness of life over a grocery to a house in a yard.

Mrs. Dawkins, on what she called a pinch, went down in the grocery and helped. She was there this Saturday morning, and Maud with her. Sarah in the kitchen upstairs was mixing the Saturday baking in a crock, and Albert Eddie, being punished, was in a corner on a stool.

Politeness dictating that the person in dur-
ance be ignored, under these circumstances
Emmy Lou immediately addressed herself to
Sarah.

“What’s the pledge? Do you know any-
body who’s taken it?”

Sarah brought Albert Eddie right into it,
stool, corner, and all. “Albert Eddie can tell
you for he’s just taken one. He’s been a bad
boy again, and it wasn’t catalpa cigars this
time either. And after he’s been warned. I’ve

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made him promise now. Albert Eddie, turn round here and say your pledge."

Monday morning found Emmy Lou at the school gate betimes. "I've got my pledge now," she told Hattie and Sadie eagerly, as together they arrived.

"Of course you have," from Hattie commendingly, "I knew you must have taken one. Say yours."

Emmy Lou said hers:

"I'll never use tobacc, no,
It is a filthy weed,
I'll never put it in my mouth——"

She stopped. As could be seen in the horrified faces of Hattie and Sadie, something was wrong.

"They taught you that at your Sunday school?" from Hattie.

"You, a little girl——?" from Sadie.

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Whereupon the pilgrim, the pilgrim Emmy Lou, saw it all, saw that she had but endeavored to throw dust into eyes, beginning with her own.

"I didn't get my pledge at Sunday school, I got it from a little boy. I asked him and he taught it to me. We don't have pledges at my Sunday school."

"We went to see you on Friday like we said, and you were out," said Hattie severely.

"They changed the day and I had to go," from Emmy Lou. "I was at dancing school."

"Dancing school? Your Sunday school doesn't have pledges and you go to dancing school? Your church lets you go? Like Sally Carter's? And you didn't tell us?"

"My church might give up pledges if it had to," said Sadie, "but its foot is down on dancing."

Yet Hattie would be fair. "Your minister

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knows? What sort of dancing? What did you dance on Friday?"

"Our minister was there. It is the Sunday school that dances. We danced the Highland Fling."

The school bell rang.

"Well," said Hattie as she turned to go, "I'm Presbyterian."

Sadie bore witness as she turned to follow. "And I'm Methodist."

Emmy Lou lifted her buckler and drew her sword. Never dust in the eyes again. For she knew now what she was over and above being a St. Simeonite, having asked Aunt Cordelia. In this company it bore not only the odium of disapproval and the hall-mark of condemnation, but from the qualifying term applied to it by Aunt Cordelia would seem to merit both.

"I'm a low church Episcopalian," said Emmy Lou, the pilgrim, stoutly if wretchedly.

Lions in the Path

When Emmy Lou reached home that day Aunt Katie brought up an old matter. "Aunt Cordelia rather likes the looks of the little girl named Hattie who came here. So I suppose it is all right for you to go on sitting with her. What have you found out about her?"

What Emmy Lou would have liked to find out was, would Hattie go on sitting with her? But how make these things clear to Aunt Katie?

"Charlie," said Aunt Cordelia to her brother that night, "what on earth do children mean? Emmy Lou as she was getting ready for bed asked me why Hattie's church and Sadie's church have the pledge and hers has the Highland Fling? It isn't possible that she has confused dancing and Sunday school?"

Uncle Charlie stared at his sister, then his shout rang to heaven.



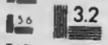
VI

**THE IMPERFECT OFFICES
OF PRAYER**



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VI

THE IMPERFECT OFFICES OF PRAYER

RECRUITING Sunday occurred at Emmy Lou's Sunday school the winter she was eight. The change to this nature of thing was sudden. Hitherto when Hattie, her best friend, who was Presbyterian, spoke of Rally Day, or Sadie, her next best friend, who was Methodist, spoke of Canvassing Day, Emmy Lou of St. Simeon's refrained from dwelling on Septuagesima, or Sexagesima, or Quinquagesima Sunday, as the case might be, for fear it appear to savor of the elect. As, of course, if one has been brought up in St. Simeon's, and by Aunt Cordelia, one has begun to feel it does.

Hattie and Sadie, on the contrary, full of

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the business and zeal of Rally Day and Canvassing Sunday, looked with pity on Emmy Lou and St. Simeon's, and at thought of Quinquagesima and such kindred Sundays shook their heads. Which is as it should be, too.

For, while there is one common world of everyday school in the firmament of the week, drawing the Emmy Lous and Hatties and Sadies into the fold of its common enterprise and common fellowship, there are varying worlds in the firmament of Sundays, withdrawing the Emmy Lous and Hatties and Sadies into the differing folds of rival enterprises, Hattie to the First Presbyterian Church North, Sadie to the Second Avenue M. E. Church South, and Emmy Lou with no status or bias as to pole at all, if we except polemics, to St. Simeon's P. E.

And each one within her fold is so convinced her fold is the only fold, it is her part to make all others feel this. Which is as it should be,

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too. And, as Hattie pointed out when Sadie got worsted in being made to feel it and cried, is only the measure of each one's proper Christian zeal!

And Hattie, being full of data about her Rally Day, and Sadie, being full of grace from her Canvassing Day, were equipped at seemingly every point for making another feel it. Whereas when Sadie asked Emmy Lou what Quinquagesima or fifty days before Easter had to do with saving souls, and Hattie asked her to spell it, Quinquagesima not only died on her lips but she and it seemed indefensibly and reprehensibly in the wrong. Which Emmy Lou endeavored to remember was but a measure of Christian zeal again.

And now St. Simeon's, awakening to its needs in such zeal, was to have, not a Rally nor yet a Canvassing, but a Recruiting Sunday. For every Sunday school with any zeal whatever has a nomenclature of its own and looks

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with pity and contumely on the nomenclature of any other Sunday school. So that Emmy Lou heard with a shock of incredulity that what she knew as the Infant Class was spoken of by Hattie as the Primary, and by Sadie as the Beginners.

But this department of Sunday school, whatever its designation, belongs to the early stages of faith. Emmy Lou is in the Big Room, now, and here has heard about St. Simeon's Recruiting Sunday.

Mr. Glidden, the superintendent, announced it. He was a black-haired, slim, brisk young man. Emmy Lou knew him well. She liked Mr. Glidden. He came to see Aunt Louise, and admired her. Week days he was a young man who was going to do credit to his father and mother. Aunt Cordelia said so. Sundays, if he let his Christian zeal carry him too far, his betters at St. Simeon's would have to call him down. Uncle Charlie who was a warden

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at St. Simeon's said so, curtly, in a way most disturbing.

In announcing Recruiting Sunday, Mr. Glidden spoke with feeling. "In the business-run world of today," he told his Sunday school, "St. Simeon's must look at things in a business way. What with Rally Day and Canvassing Day in the other Sunday schools, St. Simeon's stands no chance. Emulation must be met with emulation. Let St. Simeon's get out and work. And while it works,"—Mr. Glidden colored; he was young—"let it not forget it shall be its Superintendent's earnest and also daily prayer that it be permitted to bring even the least of these into the fold."

Furthermore, there should be inducements. "For every new scholar brought in," said Mr. Glidden, "there shall be an emblazoned card. For every five emblazoned cards there shall be a prize. Cards and prizes I shall take pleasure in giving out of my own pocket."

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In the light of after events, as Emmy Lou grasped them, the weakness in the affair lay in Mr. Glidden's failure sufficiently to safeguard his prayer.

Emmy Lou had considerable data about prayer, gathered from her two friends, Hattie being given to data, and Sadie being given to prayer. As Hattie expounded prayer as exemplified through Sadie, one fact stands paramount. You should be specifically certain in both what you ask and how you ask it. For the answer can be an answer and yet be calamitous too. Hattie used the present distressing case with Sadie for her proof.

Sadie and her brother decided they needed a little sister, and would pray for one. They did pray, fervently and trustfully, being Methodists, as Hattie pointed out, night after night, each beside her or his little white bed. And each was answered. It was twin little sisters. Since when, Sadie was almost as good as

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lost to her two friends, through having to hold one little sister while her mother held the other.

"You've got to make what you want clear," Hattie argued. "They both prayed for a little sister at the same time. If they'd prayed, Sadie one night, and Anselm the next, or if they'd said it was the same little sister, they wouldn't 'a' had a double answer and so been oversupplied."

Sadie was torn with conflict over it herself. Her little sisters weren't justified to her yet, but she wasn't going to admit they might not still be, though the strain on her Christian zeal was great.

For at Sadie's Sunday school you did not get a prize for the new scholars you brought in on Canvassing Day. You got a prize when the next Canvassing Day came around, if they were still there. And Canvassing Day was nearly here again, and her scholars were failing her.

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"It's no easy thing to be a Methodist," she said in one of her moments of respite from a little sister, talking about it with pride through her gloom. "You work for all you get! When I could look my scholars up every week, and go by for 'em with Tom and the barouche when the weather was bad, I had them there for roll-call every Sunday. But now that I have to hold my little sisters and we haven't Tom or the barouche either because on account of my little sisters we can't afford them, they've backslid and dropped out."

Hattie had data as to that, too. "You needn't be so bitter about it, Sadie. I know you mean me! You went around and picked your scholars up anywhere you could find 'em, and I did too. It wasn't as if any one of 'em had a call to your Sunday school. Or as if they had a conviction. Except Mamie Sessums whose conviction took her away."

Sadie spoke even more bitterly. "You

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needn't count on Mamie. Because she had had a conviction that took her away from where she was, I counted on her the most of any of mine."

Hattie was positive. "But the conviction she has now took her away from yours. Her mother thinks there is too much about falling from grace at your Sunday school; she doesn't think it nice for little girls to hear so much about sin."

"She wouldn't have fallen from grace herself if I could have kept after her," from Sadie. "If I hadn't to hold my little sisters Mamie wouldn't be a backslider now. But my little sisters will be justified to me yet. I'm not going back on prayer."

It all emphasized the need of exceeding caution in prayer. Emmy Lou never had thought of it so. Time was, in fact, when, praying her "Gentle Jesus," at Aunt Cordelia's knee, she poured it out in Aunt Cordelia's lap, so to

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speak, and left it there. Not that Aunt Cordelia had not made her understand that prayer goes to God. But that Aunt Cordelia who attended to everything else for her would see about getting it there.

But that was when Emmy Lou was a baby thing, and God the nebulous center of a more nebulous setting, with the kindly and cheery aspect as well as the ivory beard of— Was it Dr. Angell, the rector of St. Simeon's? Or was there in the background of Emmy Lou's memory a yet more patriarchal face, reverent through benignity, with flowing ivory beard? A memory antedating her acquaintance with Dr. Angell? She was a big girl now, and God was not quite so nebulous nor quite so cheery. His ivory beard was longer, and in the midst of nebulae for support was a throne. But He yet could be depended on to be kindly. Aunt Cordelia was authority for that.

Her concept of prayer, too, had moved for-

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ward; prayer in her mind's eye now taking the form of lit'le white cocked-hat *billets-doux* winging out of the postbox of the heart, and, like so many white doves, speeding up to the blue of Heaven. If God was not too busy, or too bothered, as grown people sometimes are on trying days, she even could fancy Him smiling pleasantly, if absently, as grown-up people do, when the cocked-hat *billets-doux*, a sort of morning mail, were brought in to Him.

And so she was glad that Sadie was not going back on prayer, but was sure that her little sisters would be justified to her. Indeed, her heart had gone out to Sadie about it, and she had sent up *billets-doux* of her own, and would send more, that the little sisters should be justified to her.

But from this new point of view supplied by Hattie, the winging *billets-doux*, as in the mind's eye they sailed upward, seemed to droop

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a little, weighted with the need of exceeding caution in prayer. And in the light of this revelation God in His aspect changed once more, again gaining in ivory beard and in throne what He again lost in cheer.

Long ago Aunt Cordelia used to rock her to sleep with a hymn. Emmy Lou had thought she knew its words, "Behind a frowning providence, He hides a smiling face." Could she have reversed it? She had been known to do such things before. All this while had it been saying: "Behind a smiling providence, He hides a frowning face?"

At Emmy Lou's own home Aunt M'randy the cook, like Hattie, seemed to feel that prayer not sufficiently set around with safeguards and specifications could prove a boomerang. "Didn't I w'ar myse'f out with prayer to get rid er that no-account nigger house-boy Bob? To hev' thet prayer swing eroun' with this worse-account house-boy, Tom?"

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Tom had gone to Hattie's house from Sadie's where they no longer could afford to have him, but he had not stayed there. He didn't get along with the cook. From there he came to be house-boy for Aunt Cordelia where Bob couldn't get along with the cook. Tom's idea of his importance apparently was in the number of places he had lived, and his qualifications he summed up in a phrase: "I ca'ies my good-will with me to the pussons I wuks foh."

The morning after Recruiting Sunday had been announced at St. Simeon's Sunday school, Uncle Charlie spoke of it at the breakfast table. He didn't seem to think much of it, and referred to it by another name, calling it an innovation.

Aunt Louise, on the contrary, defended it. She was teaching in the Sunday school now. "If everyone would show the energy and progressiveness of Mr. Glidden since he took the

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Sunday school," she said with spirit, "St. Simeon's would soon look up."

"Glidden!" said Uncle Charlie. "Willie Glidden! Pshaw!"

"Why you speak of him in that tone I don't see, unless it is because you are determined to oppose every innovation he proposes."

"I oppose his innovations?" heatedly. "On the contrary I am in favor of giving him his way so he may hang himself in his innovations the sooner." And Uncle Charlie, getting up to go downtown, slammed the door.

Which would have been astounding, Uncle Charlie being jocular and not given to slamming doors, had it not to do with that one of the many worlds in the firmament of the Sundays, St. Simeon's. Emmy Lou was glad she understood these things better now. For persons altogether amiable in the affairs of the week-days to grow touchy and heated over the affairs of Sundays is only a measure of their

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Christian zeal. There was comfort and reassurance in the knowledge. Time was when it would have frightened her to have Uncle Charlie slam the door, and made her choke over her waffle, and sent her down from her chair and round to Aunt Cordelia for comfort and reassurance.

Aunt Louise, addressing herself to Aunt Cordelia in her place behind the coffeepot, still further defended Mr. Glidden.

"He is even waking dear old Dr. Angell a bit. Not that we don't love Dr. Angell as he is, of course," hastily, "but he does lack progressiveness."

"Which may be why some of us do love him," said Aunt Cordelia tartly. Aunt Cordelia! Pleasant soul! Who rarely was known to sacrifice good temper even to Christian zeal! Emmy Lou choked on her waffle despite all! "But don't draw me into it! I decline to take sides."

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"Which means, of course, that you've taken one," said Aunt Louise. "As if I could ever expect you to side with me against Brother Charlie."

"And if I do agree with Charlie, what then? To have the running of St. Simeon's passed over his head to Willie Glidden! The church our own grandfather gave the ground for! And he the senior warden who has run St. Simeon's his way for thirty faithful years!"

And Aunt Cordelia, getting up from behind the coffeepot and going toward the pantry to see about the ordering, broke forth into hymn, as was her way when ruffled. Emphatic hymn. And always the same hymn, too, Aunt Cordelia, like Uncle Charlie, objecting to innovations. Emmy Lou was long familiar with this hymn as barometer of Aunt Cordelia's state of being:

"Let the fiery, cloudy *pillow*,"

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sang Aunt Cordelia, flinging open the refrigerator door.

What it meant, a fiery, cloudy pillow, further than that Aunt Cordelia was outdone, was another thing. Emmy Lou always intended to ask, but the very fact that Aunt Cordelia only sang it when outdone prevented—that and the additional fact that when Aunt Cordelia was outdone Emmy Lou in distress of mind was undone.

Aunt Louise waited until Aunt Cordelia, who could be seen through the open doorway, straightened up from her inspection of the refrigerator. "Still," she said, "you won't object that I entered Emmy Lou's name at Sunday school yesterday as a recruiter? To try her best and get a prize?"

"I do object if there are tickets about it," emphatically. "You can take care of them for her if so. Willie Glidden has gone mad over tickets. What with her blue tickets for

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attendance one place in my bureau drawer and her pink tickets for texts in another place. I won't be bothered further."

Yet what were Sunday schools without tickets? Emmy Lou getting down from the breakfast table, her still unfinished waffle abandoned for all time now, was dumbfounded. The thing common to all Sunday schools was tickets. Though St. Simeon's under the accelerating progressiveness of Mr. Glidden had gone further, and whereas in ordinary your accumulated tickets for every sort of prowess on got you on the honor roll, a matter of name on a blackboard, Mr. Glidden had instituted what he called "a drawing card." At St. Simeon's, now, when your blue tickets for attendance numbered four—or five those months when the calendar played you false and ran another Sunday—you carried these back and got the Bible in Colors, a picture at a time. And, incidentally, a color at a time, too. Emmy

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my Lou had a gratifying start in these, last month having achieved a magenta Daniel facing magenta lions in a magenta den, and this month adding a blue David with a blue sword cutting off the head of a not unreasonably bluer Goliath.

Pink tickets grow more slowly. Aunt Cordelia said that she could see to it that Emmy Lou got to Sunday school, but she could only do her best about the texts.

And she did do her best, Emmy Lou felt that she did.

"Say the text over on the way as you go," Aunt Cordelia had said to her as she started only yesterday. "That way you won't forget it before you get there."

And she had said it on the way, and had said it in the class, too, when called on by Miss Emerine.

Aunt Cordelia, plump and pleasant soul, had ways of her own, and Emmy Lou in ways

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even beyond the plumpness was modeled on her. Aunt Cordelia said "were" as though it were spelled w-a-r-e, and Emmy Lou said it that way too.

"'And five ware wise, and five ware foolish,'" Emmy Lou told Miss Emerine.

"Five what?" Miss Emerine asked, which was unfortunate, this being what Emmy Lou had failed to remember.

It was Tom, the new house-boy, who really started Emmy Lou's recruiting for St. Simon's. Hearing Aunt Louise ask her what she was doing about looking up new scholars, he volunteered his help.

"There's a li'l girl up the street whar I wuked once is thinkin' about changin' her Sunday school. I'll tell her to come aroun' an' see you."

The little girl came around promptly. It was Mamie Sessums. Emmy Lou knew her at week-day school. Far from being without a

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conviction, as Hattie had claimed, she now had two.

"My mother says Tom don't do anything but try to have her change my Sunday school. He lived with us before he went to live at Sadie's. But she says she's very glad to have me stop Hattie's and go with you. She didn't send me there to have the minister go by our house every day and never come in. Sadie's minister never came to call on her when I went to that Sunday school either. Do you have tickets at your Sunday school?"

Tickets were vindicated. Emmy Lou hurried upstairs and came back with all her trophies of this nature. Mamie seemed impressed by the Bible in Colors.

"You get them a picture at a time," Emmy Lou explained. "The first one is Adam in buff."

"Buff?" said Mamie doubtfully.

"Buff," repeated Emmy Lou firmly, since

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it was so, and not to be helped because Mamie didn't seem to like it. "My Uncle Charlie says so."

But it was only lack of familiarity with buff on the part of Mamie. As a prize, it impressed her. "I'll meet you on your church steps on Recruiting Sunday," she said.

After Mamie left, Emmy Lou went around to see Hattie. "Don't let it make you feel bad, taking Mamie away from me," Hattie told her. "I never expected anything else. When it's not a call, nor even a conviction, they're like as not to fail you on the very doorstep."

Sadie, at her window holding a little sister, waved to Emmy Lou and Hattie on the sidewalk. It was hard Sadie couldn't be with her friends any more. Emmy Lou sent up a *billet-doux* that the little sisters might be justified to Sadie yet. Poor Sadie!

It was Tom who told Emmy Lou where to

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go for her next recruit. She had no idea it would be so easy. Sadie had worked hard for all she got but it didn't seem hard to Emmy Lou. "There's a li'l girl roun' on Plum Street where I wuked once, too. I'll speak to her, an' then you go roun' an' see her."

With Aunt Cordelia's permission, Emmy Lou went around. It proved that she knew this little girl at school, too. Her name was Sallie Carter. She was the richest little girl in the class and said so. Her curls shone like Aunt Cordelia's copper hot-water jug, and her skirts stood out and flaunted.

Sallie had convictions too. She had tried Sadie's Sunday school while her own church was being rebuilt, and she was just about through trying Hattie's.

"My mother thinks it's strange that Tom should be sending you after me too. Though he did live with us before he lived with any of you. She is surprised at some of the little

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girls who go to Sadie's Sunday school. And after she took me away they were the first little girls I met on the steps at Hattie's Sunday school. My mother says I'm a Carter on one side and a Cannon on the other, and everybody knows what that means. We're high church and you are low, but she's glad to have me go with you to St. Simeon's for a while and try it. Do you have tickets?"

Tickets and more, the Bible in Colors. Emmy Lou, explaining it, felt again she couldn't sufficiently uphold tickets to Aunt Cordelia.

The very next day Tom came to Aunt Cordelia and said if she would let Emmy Lou go with him to Mr. Schmit's when he went to get the ice, he knew of some other little girls who might be persuaded to go to her Sunday school. At Aunt Cordelia's word, Emmy Lou got her hat and joined Tom with his basket.

The accustomed place to get extra ice before Tom came was Mr. Dawkins' at the corner.

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But Tom wouldn't hear of going to Mr. Dawkins'. He argued about it until Aunt Cordelia gave in. He said he used to live with Mr. Schmit and drive his wagon.

Emmy Lou knew Mr. Schmit herself. Tom, after an inquiry at the counter, took her through the store to the back yard where he left her, a back yard full of boxes and crates and empty coops. Mr. Schmit's little girl Lisa was here with a baby brother in her arms, and another holding to her skirts, Yetta, her little sister, and Katie O'Brien from next door completing the group. Emmy Lou knew Lisa and Katie at school, too. Lisa's round cheeks were mottled and red, and the plaits hanging down her back were yellow. She did not seem overly glad to see Emmy Lou though she came forward.

"Well?" she said.

It made it hard to begin. And even after Emmy Lou had explained that she had come

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

to get them to go to Sunday school Lisa was unmoved.

"What do we want to go to Sunday school for? If we wanted to go to Sunday school we'd be going. We go to our grandfather's in the country now on Sundays. That way we get a ride in my papa's grocery wagon and we get to the country too."

"But if you would," urged Emmy Lou, "it would get me a prize."

"Sure I see," said Lisa. "I see that. But if Katie here and Yetta and me give up our ride out to my grandfather's, what do we get?"

"Oh!" said Emmy Lou, and hastened to set forth St. Simeon's largesse and system in tickets.

"What do we do to get the tickets?" asked Lisa. "We're Lutheran and Katie's Dominican. I don't know as we'd be allowed to. We wouldn't mind four Sundays and get a picture, would we, Katie?"

The Imperfect Offices of Prayer

Katie, whose hair was black and whose eyes were blue, agreed.

"Sure, we'd like a picture. But I don't know as they'd let me at home. They said I shouldn't go to no more Sunday schools. The little girl who was sassy to us and said they didn't want us there was at two Sunday schools we've been to now."

"Still," said Lisa, "we'd like a picture. Which one is your Sunday school?"

When Emmy Lou rejoined Tom, she was overjoyed. "And they'll meet me on the church steps too. All of 'em will meet me on the church steps, Mamie and Sally and Lisa and Yetta and Katie."

And now it was Recruiting Sunday. But the shortness of manner with which Aunt Cordelia tied Emmy Lou's hair-ribbons was not on account of this, Recruiting Sunday for her having taken its place among the minor evils. Late on Saturday evening she had lost Tom,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

a case again of the house-boy not getting on with the cook.

"After I wore myse'f out with prayer to git rid of that no-account Bob, to have the prayer swing aroun' with this worse-account Tom," was Aunt M'randy's explanation of the disagreement.

"They want me over at Sadie's house to-morrow, anyway," Tom said wit' 'eeling as he went. "'Count of their grandfather walkin' in on 'em f'om Kansas City sudden there's big doin's hurried up about the twins. They're goin' to have a barouche roun' f'om the livery stable too, an' they want me to drive."

Then Tom became darkly cryptic. "I tol' you when I come, I ca'ies my goodwill with me to the pussons I wuks foh."

And now it was Sunday morning and no house-boy. "Charlie," said Aunt Cordelia to this person, "I wish you'd walk around to the Sunday school door with Emmy Lou. She's

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never been so far alone. Louise is not ready, and she's to meet all those children on the church step where they'll be waiting for her, and thinks she ought to be early."

"Surely," said Uncle Charlie. "I'm glad to. I've an idea it's about time for Willie Glidden to be hanging himself in some of his innovations."

At the corner Uncle Charlie and Emmy Lou met Tom coming back towards Sadie's with the barouche from the livery stable. One felt Tom saw them, though he looked the other way.

At the second corner they met Sally Carter. Her curls shone like Aunt Cordelia's copper hot-water jug, and her skirts stood out and flaunted. She stopped when Emmy Lou stopped, but with reluctance, since it was palpable she was in a hurry.

"I've decided I didn't treat Sadie right. My name's still on her roll. Those little girls

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

my mother didn't want me to associate with the other Sunday schools were on your church steps, anyway, and she wouldn't want me to stay."

At the next corner they met Lisa and Yetta and Katie, scoured and braided and in their Sunday dresses. They didn't want to stop either, palpably being in even a greater hurry.

"As long as we're goin' to Sunday school we think we'll go back to the one we started from," said Lisa. "That sassy little girl our mothers said we shouldn't put up with was on your church steps anyhow, and was sassy to us some more."

At St. Simeon's itself they met Mamie. "I didn't want to wait, but I felt I ought to. I'm going back to Sadie's, and I'm late. Tom called to us here on the steps as he went by in the barouche, and said Sadie's little twin sisters were going to be baptized at her church right after Sunday school."

The Imperfect Offices of Prayer

"Which," said Uncle Charlie the while his Emmy Lou swallowed tears, "hangs Willie Glidden neatly in his own innovations."

When Sadie and Hattie and Emmy Lou met at school the next day, Sadie's eyes were bright and her face shone. Why not? As she pointed out, her little sisters were justified to her, her erring scholars were returned, her grandfather said he'd see to it that they *could* afford to have Tom back and the barouche too, and it all went to prove the efficacy of prayer.

It would seem to. That is, of Sadie's prayer. Emmy Lou could see that. She indeed had sent up *billets-doux* in Sadie's behalf herself. But it did not explain everything.

"Mr. Glidden at my Sunday school prayed too, that the least of these be brought into the fold."

Hattie forgot her own right to grievance in the joy of this additional data in support of her position. Had she not claimed that an

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

answer to prayer can be an answer and yet be calamitous too?

"Exactly," said Hattie. "The least of these into the fold.' But he didn't say which fold!"

Did not say which fold? To God who knows everything? For Mr. Glidden meant his fold. Hattie, then, was right?

The concepts of Emmy Lou, eight years old, a big girl now, moved on again. Behind a smiling providence God hides a frowning face. And those winging *billets-doux*, already weighted with caution and now heavy with doubt, in the mind's eye faltered, hung, and came fluttering, drifting, so many falling white doves, wings broken, down from the blue.

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VII

PINK TICKETS FOR TEXTS



VII

PINK TICKETS FOR TEXTS

THE walls of St. Simeon's conservatism had fallen. St. Simeon's, with its arches above, its pews below, their latched doors, as it were, symbolic, the Old Dispensation depicted in the window above its entrance doors, and St. Paul, the apostle of the personal revelation, smitten to his knees by light from Heaven, the figure of the window above its chancel. Modern progressiveness, the battering-ram in the hands of Willie Glidden, come up through the Sunday school himself but yesterday, had assailed the defenses of an older generation successfully.

Or so Uncle Charlie seemed to think as he repeated the news brought from Sunday

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

school by Aunt Louise and Emmy Lou. "Dr. Angell came into the Sunday school room this morning and offered a rector's prize for pin tickets earned for texts? Each child receiving a pink ticket for every Sunday throughout the year to be thus rewarded? Willie Glidden had goaded him to this."

Mr. Glidden had goaded the rector of St. Simeon's to other things which Emmy Lou, nearing nine years, had heard discussed at home.

"Popular heads to my sermons for the newspapers and the bulletin board?" it was reported that Dr. Angell had said indignantly. "Well, but Glidden wants notices in the papers or on the bulletin board either? For forty years I have sedulously refrained from being popular, and I'll not begin it now."

But he came to it, popular heads being furnished by him weekly, in a dazed pother at first, thinking himself doing it, but still doing it.

Pink Tickets for Texts

“Prizes to encourage the Sunday school?” so report said his comment was to this last proposition. “Pay the children of my church for doing their duty?”

But the report also said that he calmed down on grasping that the proposition centered about texts.

When Dr. Angell met the little people of his flock in the company of their elders he addressed them much after the same fashion. “A big girl, now!” or “Quite a little man!” he would say. “Old enough to be coming to church every Sunday and profiting by service and sermon.”

“Sermon,” said he, on occasion to a little boy who said he didn’t like sermons. “The sooner you realize and profit by the knowledge that life is one unending sermon, sirrah, the better for you ”

Dr. Angell had gathered his own sermons into a book, as Aunt Cordelia told proudly to

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

strangers, a stout volume bound in cloth, with a golden sun in a nimbus of rays stamped on the cover, entitled "Rays from the Sun of Righteousness."

And now, his attention caught and held by the word "text," since from his viewpoint every sermon its text, and possibly to every text its sermon, he was offering a rector's price for a year's quiver of pink tickets, these being the visible show of as many correctly recited texts.

"Will you have Emmy Lou try?" Aunt Louise said to Aunt Cordelia. "We in the Sunday school feel we should do all we can to support Mr. Glidden."

But Aunt Cordelia needed no urging from Aunt Louise. She did not feel that respect for the institutions introduced at St. Simeon's by Mr. Glidden that Aunt Louise felt, and did not hesitate to say so. But anything inaugurated by the rector of her church she did respect.

Pink Tickets for Texts

"If Dr. Angell is offering the prize, certainly Emmy Lou will try. A rector's, not a Willie Glidden prize, is a different thing. It will be something for her to esteem and value all her life. I am sorry it is for texts." Evidently the word had the same associations for Aunt Cordelia that it had for Dr. Angell. "I have trouble enough as it is in making her want to stay to church."

Aunt Louise explained. "The prizes are for the weekly texts heading the Sunday school lessons. They have no connection with church or the sermon."

"Well, maybe not," Aunt Cordelia conceded, "but if she is going to take a prize from Dr. Angell for texts, and I shall see to it that she does, it is no more than she ought to be willing to do, to listen cheerfully to his sermons. I have been too lenient in excusing her from church."

On this same Sunday afternoon Emmy Lou

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

went around to talk the matter over with Hattie, and found Sadie there.

Emmy Lou and Hattie had been estranged, their first misunderstanding, Emmy Lou, with St. Simeon's back of her, having taken one stand, and Hattie another.

Emmy Lou spoke of kneeling at her church to pray and standing to sing and Hattie corrected her. "Who ever heard of such a thing? You mean stand to pray and sit down to sing."

Emmy Lou didn't mean anything of the kind and said so.

Hattie faced her down. "Don't I go to church? Doesn't Sadie go?" turning to this person as referee. "Don't we know?"

Sadie was obliged to qualify her support. "We don't *stand* to pray, we lean our foreheads on the next pew."

Emmy Lou refused to be coerced. "I don't stand to pray, or lean forward either. I kneel down."

Pink Tickets for Texts

"Then," said Hattie, "it must be because you are what my father calls a bigoted Episcopalian, that you don't. Everybody else stands up or leans forward."

Emmy Lou had faced the chancel of her church for four years. "St. Paul doesn't. He's kneeling above our chancel."

"Then he must be a bigoted Episcopalian too," said Hattie with feeling, and went home.

But today Hattie and Sadie, if anything, were envious of Emmy Lou's opportunity. A rector's prize!

Hattie, to be sure, with the books of the Bible in her memory as were David's pebbles in his scrip, once had felled the giant, Contest, and won the banner for the girls over the boys at her Sunday school. For which act of prowess her teacher had rewarded her with a little gold pin.

And Sadie had a workbox, a little affair complete, scissors, thimble, and all, a recogni-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

tion of faithfulness at large, from her Sunday school teacher, the same delivered to her by the superintendent before the assembled Sunday school. And as she pointed out, the calling of her name and the walk up and down the aisle to receive the gift were no small part of the reward.

It did stagger them both that Emmy Lou should have to stay to church. "Still," argued Hattie, "it will be worth it, a rector's prize. Though why you don't say preacher!"

"Or minister," said Sadie.

"My brother once got a silver dollar for a prize that wasn't a dollar at all but a watch made to look like a dollar," said Hattie.

"But not from church," Sadie reminded her.

"No, from the President Dollar Watch Company for guessing the pictures of the presidents. But still it was a prize."

Sadie could supplement this. "My mamma

Pink Tickets for Texts

heard of a little girl who sold tickets for a picnic and won a locket on a chain."

Emmy Lou went home cheered. Aunt Cordelia had put the emphasis on the texts whereas Hattie and Sadie had put it on the prize.

"A silver dollar that wasn't a dollar but a watch, and a locket on a chain," said Uncle Charlie, overhearing her tell about it. "Well, well!"

A rector's prize should indeed be something worth the working for. Fifty-two pink tickets standing for fifty-two correctly recited texts, attendance at church for fifty-two Sundays.

For Aunt Cordelia was as good as her word. The next Sunday she and Uncle Charlie on their road to St. Simeon's met Emmy Lou returning from Sunday school. Hitherto on these weekly encounters it was a toss-up whether she should be allowed to proceed, or must return to church.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

With Emmy Lou, face and eyes uplifted to Aunt Cordelia, mutely interceding for herself, while Uncle Charlie articulately interceded for her, it was a stand-off whether or not she should be required to go. And when the worst happened and she must turn about and accompany Aunt Cordelia, the propinquity of Uncle Charlie in the pew beside her had helped her through. Until recently he had slipped smoothly rounded peppermints banded in red from his vest pocket to her, or, the supply running low, passed her his pencil and an envelope to amuse herself. But she was a big girl now and Aunt Cordelia no longer permitted these indulgences.

“Sermons in pencils too, perhaps, Cordelia,” Uncle Charlie pleaded, “and good in peppermints.”

But in vain. “Charlie!” Aunt Cordelia but remonstrated, shocked.

Nor was Emmy Lou to be excused today.

Pink Tickets for Texts

Aunt Cordelia, plump and comely in her furs and ample cloak and seemly bonnet, and Uncle Charlie in his top-coat, gray trousers, silk hat, and natty cane, brought up short on meeting her. Not that she, in a chinchilla coat suitable for the big girl she was, and a gray plush hat, with her hair tied with scarlet ribbons, had much hope herself.

"I see you have your pink ticket in your hand, a good beginning," said Aunt Cordelia. "I'm glad you walked to meet us. You can do so every Sunday; the change and relaxation will do you good. Now, Charlie, not a word. From now on, while she is trying for Dr. Angell's prize, she will go back with us to church."

Emmy Lou found herself there within a very few minutes, the parallelograms of pews about her filled with the assembled congregation, she in her place between Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

And at home, where she now would be had Aunt Cordelia relented, what? Her children doomed to sit in a wooden row against the baseboard until she arrived to release them. The new book, for Emmy Lou is reading now, left where one begins to divine that the white cat in reality is a beautiful lady. Also at home on Aunt Cordelia's table that Sunday institution never forgotten by Uncle Charlie, the box of candy, from whose serried layers Emmy Lou may take one piece in Aunt Cordelia's absence. Furthermore at home the realm of the kitchen with its rites of Sunday preparation, Aunt M'randy its priestess, and delectable odors and savory steam arising from its altar, the cooking-stove.

And in the stead for Emmy Lou a morning spent in church. Still she can settle down and think of the prize which as reward for all this faithfulness will be hers. Think of Hattie's gold pin, and Sadie's work-basket, of the sil-

Pink Tickets for Texts

ver dollar which in reality was a watch, and the locket on the chain.

Aunt Cordelia touches Emmy Lou, and, brought to herself, she stands up. Aunt Cordelia finds the place and hands her a prayer book. Church has begun.

Amid form without meaning, and symbol without clue, the mind of Emmy Lou wanders again, this time to that puzzle, the adult, no less impenetrable to the mind of nine than the shrouded mystery of ancient Egypt to the adult. For adults, Aunt Cordelia for one, here beside her in the pew, love to go to church. The proof? That they of their own volition, since the adult acts of himself, are here?

Aunt Cordelia touches Emmy Lou. She and Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie and the congregation of St. Simeon's, Hattie to the contrary, kneel down.

But the mind continues to wander. The adult is here because it wants to be here,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

whercas Emmy Lou is here because Aunt Cordelia says she must be. Her eyes, too, will travel ahead on the prayer book page to the amen. What amen? Any and all, since amens wherever occurring signify the end of the especial thing of the moment, whether said, sung or prayed. The thought sustaining one being that, amen succeeding amen, the final and valedictory one is bound to come in time.

“Get up for the Venite,” whispers Aunt Cordelia, and Emmy Lou who has lost herself on her knees gets up, pink with the defection. Not that the Venite has any significance to her which brings her to her feet, but that to find herself in the wrong situation at church, or anywhere, is embarrassing.

This pitfall of ritual is called the service, though it might be worse since the more service the less sermon. As nearly as Emmy Lou can grasp it, at Hattie's church, beyond a sparse

Pink Tickets for Texts

standing up to pray, and sitting down to sing, it is all sermon.

Aunt Cordelia has to speak to her by and by again: "Get up for the Jubilate," Emmy Lou having lost herself during the second lesson.

And yet? And yet? Can it be there is more in this business of church than an Emmy Lou suspects? The congregation now going down on its knees for that matter called the Litany, a tear presently splashes on the glove of Aunt Cordelia kneeling beside Emmy Lou, her head bowed above the big, cross-emblazoned prayer book that she always uses.

Aunt Katie and Aunt Louise wear white gloves or gray or brown as the ease may be, and feathers and flowers, and their dresses are varied and cheery. But Aunt Cordelia still wears black in memory of Emmy Lou's mother who went away when Emmy Lou was four. The tear falling on her black glove and sliding

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

off to the book makes a stain tinged with purple from the kid.

Then Emmy Lou remembers this is the anniversary of the day her mother went forever, and understands why the prayer book Aunt Cordelia's hand is open at the flyleaf bearing the name of its first owner, Emily Pope McLaurin.

Are we nearer our dead at church? Are we being nearer, are we comforted? For when Aunt Cordelia arises from her knees her face is happy.

"The four hundred and ninety-fourth hymn," she whispers. "Find the place. Then in refutation of Hattie, 'Stand up.'"

And Emmy Lou, finding the hymn for herself, stands up and with Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie and the congregation, sing heartily:

"The Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord——"

Pink Tickets for Texts

While the service thus drags its length along, the hymn which Emmy Lou both can find for herself and can sing heartily being the only oasis in the desert of her morning, there is worse ahead. Between two uprising peaks of the amens, one of which is reached with the close of the hymn, lies that valley of dry bones called the sermon.

Dr. Angell is beginning it now. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

This seems a reasonably clear and definite statement even to Emmy Lou, not quite nine and slow to follow. But no.

"The Psalmist was given to imagery, which is to say, was an Oriental," begins Dr. Angell. And so one goes down with him into the valley of dry bones.

The mind wanders anew. How can it help wandering? Albert Eddie Dawkins is across the church in a side pew with his big sister,

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Sarah. She has decided that he shall try for a rector's prize too. He is low in his mind about it, and said so to Emmy Lou coming out of Sunday school this morning.

Joe Kiffin made a proposition to him that he could not accept, Joe being the big boy who drove the wagon and delivered for the Dakins grocery.

"He said he would take me and another boy this morning to a place where we can get the honey locusts we want. A place where the ground is covered with 'em. But we both had to come to Sunday school and stay to church and Joe says we can't expect him to take us in the afternoon when it's the only afternoon he's got. You know honey locusts?"

Emmy Lou was compelled to admit that she did not.

"Well," a little anxiously, "I don't either. But if I and the other boy could have gone with Joe, I'd have found out."

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"With one pink ticket in hand, fifty-one yet to be achieved for texts."



Pink Tickets for Texts

The other boy was at church too. By turning her head the least bit Emmy Lou could see him. His name was Logan. But he wasn't trying for a prize. He said they might make him stay to church—"they" meaning the grown persons in the pew with him—but they couldn't make him try for pink tickets, or walk up an aisle to get a prize he mightn't want anyway.

Mightn't Logan want it? Was there any chance that Emmy Lou would not want hers? Fifty-two—no, fifty-one—Sundays now to come, and with one pink ticket in hand, fifty-one yet to be achieved for texts.

Dr. Angell is ending his sermon. ". . . and so it comes that the words of the Psalmist occurring in the liturgy of our service, are a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path." And he and his congregation come up out of the valley of dry bones.

And yet? And yet? Emmy Lou's eyes, fixed on Dr. Angell, are registering on the

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

retina of her mind for all time a figure which for her shall be a type, dominant in its attitude of beneficent authority, hands outspread above its people, rumpled hair white, beard white, robes white, a shaft of light from a common window into heaven shared with him by St. Paul, the bigoted Episcopalian, searching him out where he stands.

As void of meaning to her, these gettings up and these sittings down, these venites, jubiliates, and amens, as the purpose of Dr. Angell in his chancel. Yet who shall say at what moment Emmy Lou in her pew, struggling along in the darkness though she is, shall sense the symbol of the one, and behold in the other the office and the appointment?

And the adult who is here of self-actuated volition? The Aunt Cordelia ever in her place in the family pew? Emmy Lou's eyes turn to this person, and behold, her face is touched as by a light, too, and her eyes are shining.

Pink Tickets for Texts

"Get up," she whispers as she herself arises, "it is the benediction."

Uncle Charlie is jocular on his way home. "And what did you think of the sermon?" he asks Emmy Lou.

She does not know that he is jocular, nor that she too, unwittingly, is the same in her reply. "I thought I understood the text until Dr. Angell began to explain it, and then I lost it."

Fifty-one more Sundays, fifty-one more sermons, fifty-one more texts between Emmy Lou and her reward! The next Sunday and there would be fifty, and the next forty-nine!

As the weeks went by Emmy Lou discussed the prize with Aunt Cordelia, and incidentally with Uncle Charlie who overheard the conversations.

"When Albert Eddie's mamma won a prize for catechism in England where she lived when she was little, it was tea to take home to her

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

mother, and a flannel petticoat for her grandma, and she cried."

And again. "Sadie says it's an awful thing when your name is called, to get up and walk up the aisle, but Hattie says that you don't mind it so much if you keep thinking about the prize."

Papa came down once a month from his home city a hundred miles away, to stay over Sunday and see Emmy Lou. "I was going to propose," he said on one of these visits, "that the next time, you and Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie get on the train and come up to visit me. But it's no use, I see."

"Not until I get my prize," said Emmy Lou. "I have forty-one pink tickets in Aunt Cordelia's bureau drawer, and today will make forty-two."

"I am almost sorry I let her try," Aunt Cordelia told her brother-in-law and Uncle

Pink Tickets for Texts

Charlie. "She begins to study the text for the next Sunday as soon as she gets home on this."

Aunt Louise, as the allotted Sunday drew near, brought home news of a tiff between Dr. Angell and Mr. Glidden.

"Mr. Glidden told Dr. Angell today that he had been looking over a printed list of Sunday school prizes sent to superintendents, and had noticed some excellent suggestions. Dr. Angell was ruffled and said, 'If I'm fool enough to come to prizes, bribes for duty, I'm nevertheless still capable of providing them.' I'm afraid he is getting old."

"Old," retorted Uncle Charlie. "It's being goaded by Willie Glidden. Drive even a saint too far and he will show his manhood."

"Hattie's is a little pin," remarked Emmy Lou, even irrelevantly, "and Sadie's is a work-box, and that other little girl's was a locket on a chain."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

The morning of the fifty-third Sunday came. "I don't know which she is the more, proud, or alarmed, at thought of walking up the aisle this morning for her prize," said Aunt Cordelia after Emmy Lou left the breakfast table. "There are only three children who have come through successfully in the whole Sunday school, Charlie. A little girl named Puggy Western, according to Emmy Lou, she herself, and Albert Eddie Dawkins. Two of the three are thanks to Sarah and myself, if I do say it."

The moment was come. The Sunday school—Bible Class, Big Room, and Infant Class—was assembled. Mr. Glidden, with Dr. Angell beside him, had arisen.

"One at a time, Puggy Western, Emily Louise McLaurin, and Albert Edward Dawkins come forward and receive their prizes."

Pink Tickets for Texts

Puggy Western went up first, in a brand-new hat and coat for the occasion, and came back.

Emily Louise McLaurin went up next in a next-to-new coat and hat and dress, and came back.

Albert Edward Dawkins, in a new suit and his first high collar, went up and came back. A hymn, and Sunday school was over, and all ages and sizes crowded around the three to see their similar rewards.

When Aunt Cordelia and Uncle Charlie on their road to church met Emmy Lou this morning, her eyes, like her late accumulation of tickets, were pink. She to whom tears came hard and seldom had been crying.

"And how about the prize?" asked Uncle Charlie.

Emmy Lou, tears stoutly held back, handed it to him. He looked it over, opened it, read

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

her name in inscription within, then lifted his gaze to her.

"Well, I'll be doggoned!"

"Charlie!" from Aunt Cordelia.

"I surely will. The same to the other two?"

Emmy Lou nodded. There are times when one cannot trust oneself to speak.

And when Uncle Charlie handed back the volume stoutly bound in cloth, stamped with a golden sun in a nimbus of rays, and bearing for title, "Rays From the Sun of Righteousness," the nimbus surrounded, not a golden sun, but a silver dollar held in place by Uncle Charlie's thumb.

"A dollar that is only a dollar, and not a watch," he explained regretfully. "But somewhere in the week ahead we may be able to overtake a locket on a chain." Then to Aunt Cordelia, "I'll decide it this morning, Cordelia. Emmy Lou is excused for today from anything further in the nature of sermons."

Pink Tickets for Texts

The next Sunday Albert Eddie Dawkins was absent from Sunday school. He had run off, so his sister Maud explained, and could not be found.

Emmy Lou heard more about it later on from Albert Eddie himself. She also found out what a honey locust is, though she had had to wait a year to do so.

"I told Joe Kiffen if he'd take us to that honey locust place now, that he said he would last year, I'd stay away from Sunday school. And he did. And here's one for you."

Emmy Lou took the pod and bit into it. As solace and recompense she could have wished for something more delectable.

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VIII

STERN DAUGHTER OF THE
VOICE OF GOD

VIII

STERN DAUGHTER OF THE VOICE OF GOD

HATTIE's rule of life was simple, but severe. She set it forth for Emmy Lou. "Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and you have to draw the line between. And when you've chosen which side you're on, you have to stand by your colors."

She went on to diagram her meaning. "I heard my father tell my brothers what it means to stand by your colors. He said they couldn't be too careful in their associates. That now they've joined the League for the Right they must show their faith by their works. You and I can't associate with anyone who chooses the other side either. If Lisa Schmit will go to Sunday pienes, she's wrong, and you and

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

I have to show our colors and tell her so."

Emmy Lou hesitated at such consignment of Lisa to the limbo defined as wrong, but Hattie said she didn't dare hesitate. She even showed a disposition to take Emmy Lou's right of election into her keeping, saying if she felt this way about it she'd speak for her.

"No, we won't come into your game of prisoner's base," she told Lisa and Yetta at recess; "we're going to have a game of our own."

The contumely for the unfriendly act nevertheless fell on Emmy Lou who knew them best. "She's getting to be stuck up," Lisa said bitterly to her own group, with a jerk of her head toward Emmy Lou standing by Hattie. "She won't play with Yetta and me any more because our papa keeps a grocery."

"No such thing!" said Hattie. "She won't play with you because you go to picnics on Sunday."

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God

Was this true? Or was it because Hattie had told her she must not play with them because they went to picnics on Sunday?

Hattie called this bringing of Lisa and Yetta to judgment "drawing the line." It was a painful process to the rejected. Lisa went off with her face suffused and Yetta who followed her was crying.

Next followed the case of Mittie Heinz whose mamma kept a little shop for general notions, a stock that Emmy Lou never had been able to identify, often as she had been there to buy needles or thread or cambric for Aunt Cordelia.

Mittie read her storybook on the steps of the shop on Sunday and Hattie explained to her that this made it impossible to include her in a game of catcher.

"Right's right, and wrong's wrong," she said. "If we are going to draw the line we have to draw it."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"I read my books on Sunday," expostulated Emmy Lou, for Mittie's startled face showed surprise as she turned away, and her eyes looked reproach at Emmy Lou.

"But they are books you get out of your Sunday school library, and don't count anyway because you say you don't like them," from Hattie.

This lamentable and unhappy knowledge of good and evil was forced on Emmy Lou when in the ascending scale of years she simultaneously reached her ninth birthday, the Fourth Reader, and the estate of bridesmaid to Aunt Katie.

Life from this eminence appeared broad-spread and beautiful, and diversified by variant paths within the sweep of a far horizon until now never suspected. But Hattie, youthful Virgil to her youthful Dante, permitted personally conducted excursions only, and these along a somewhat monotonous because strait

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and narrow path—all other roads, whether devious or parallel, flower-bedecked or somber, ascending or descending, leading but to questionable ends.

The first travelers pointed out by Hattie as trudging these alien roads were Lisa, Yetta, and Mittie, as has been shown. The second group journeying on an upland, flowery way paralleling the strait and narrow path in general direction, at least, were Alice, Rosalie, and Amanthus. Charming names! Enchanting figures!

School opened early in September. Alice, Rosalie, and Amanthus, who were newcomers, were given desks across the aisle from Emmy Lou. Alice, seeing her earnestly scrubbing her desk each morning before school and arranging it for the day, laughed in her eyes. Amanthus, seeing her test her pen and try her ink for the coming ordeal of copybook, laughed in her dimple. And Rosalie, asking her what

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

she was hunting on the outspread page of her geography, laughed aloud when Emmy Lou replied that it was Timbuctoo, and that she could find it easier if she knew whether it was a country, or a mountain, or a river. On which they all came across the aisle and hugged her.

"You said in class that the plural of footnote was footnotes," said Rosalie.

"You said, when the teacher held you down about the spelling in your composition, that a dog didn't have fore-feet but four feet," said Amanthus.

"It's so funny and so dear," said Alice.

"What?" asked Emmy Lou.

"You," said Amanthus, and they all kissed her.

"Come and see us," said Rosalie; "we're your neighbors now. We've moved in the white house with the big yard on your square, and Alice, our cousin, and her mother have come to live with us. We've never been to a public

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school before. You live in a white house at the other end of the square. We saw you in the yard."

"I'll come this afternoon," said Emmy Lou, "and I'll bring Hattie. I'll get her now so she'll know you."

But Hattie declined to come. She shook her head decidedly. "They've light dispositions and I've not. My mamma said so about some other little girls I couldn't get along with. I don't want to come, and besides I'm not sure I want to know them."

Which would imply that light dispositions were undesirable apart from Hattie's inability to get along with them! Hattie could be most disturbing.

Towards noon a sudden shower fell, and the class was told to remain in its room for recess and eat its luncheons at its desks.

Across the aisle on the other side of Emmy Lou sat Charlotte Wright. She, too, had

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

shown every disposition to be friendly but Hattie discouraged this also. She leaned from her desk now. "Will you have a piece of my homemade hickory-nut candy?" She spoke with pride. "My namma let me make it myself on the grate."

On the grate? Why not in the kitchen on the stove? Still that was Charlotte's own affair. More showy than tidy in her dress, she seemed one of those detached and anxious little girls hunting for friends. The kindly impulse was to respond to overtures, Emmy Lou knowing a past where she had needed friends. And besides there was the candy. Hickory-nut candy does not have to look tidy to look good. She had a liberal lunch outspread on the napkin upon her desk, but she had no candy.

But Hattie leaving her desk and approaching, held her back. "No, she won't have any candy," she said, and gathering up Emmy

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Lou's lunch in the napkin and thus forcing her to follow, walked away.

Whereupon Rosalie and Amanthus, arising and going around to Charlotte, flung back their curls as they crowded into her desk, one on either side of her, and *asked* for a piece of her candy.

"I don't say it wasn't hard to do," said Hattie, flushed and even apologetic. "But I had to. She's not your kind, and she's not mine."

Yet Rosalie and Amanthus were sharing Charlotte's desk and her candy. Was she their kind?

Hattie's voice had dropped and was even awe-struck as she explained. "Charlotte's papa and her mamma don't live together. I heard my mother and my aunt say so. She and her mother live in a boarding house next to the confectionery."

In a boarding house? Charlotte through necessity making her candy on a grate, there-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

fore, and not in the kitchen! And proof indeed that she was not their kind, even to Emmy Lou, in a day when the home, however small, was the measure of standing and the rule!

Yet Alice has arisen and is looking across at Charlotte. Emmy Lou loves Alice. Light disposition or not, she is drawn to her. Her hair is a pale gold while the curls of her cousins are sunny, and her smile is in her reflective eyes while theirs is in lip and dimple. Of the three she loves Alice. Why? She has no idea why. Alice moves forward suddenly and going around to Charlotte leans to her and kisses her.

"Is Charlotte their kind?" Emmy Lou asks Hattie who also was watching.

"Ask them; they ought to know," tersely. "We can't afford to care, even if it does make us sorry. My father said people have to stand by their colors."

Later as school was dismissed and the class

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was filing out, Rosalie called to Emmy Lou, "If you will go by for Charlotte, she says she will come this afternoon, too."

Emmy Lou went home disturbed. Charlotte's father and mother did not live together, and because of this Charlotte was not their kind.

Marriage then is not a fixed and static fact? As day and night, winter and summer? Would she yet learn that the other family relations as brother and sister, parent and child, are subject to repudiation and readjustment, too?

Emmy Lou was just through serving as bridesmaid for Aunt Katie, in a filmy dress with a pink sash around what Uncle Charlie said was by common consent and courtesy her waist, whatever his meaning by this, and carrying a basket from which she earnestly scattered flowers up the aisle of St. Simeon's in the path of the bride, and incidentally in the

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

path of Mr. Reade, the bridegroom, and had supposed she now knew something about marriage.

The sanction of St. Simeon's was upon the bride, crowned with the veil and orange blossoms of her solemn dedication, or so the bridesmaid had understood it.

“Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speakes,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands!”

Such in substance was the bridesmaid's understanding of it, if not in just these words.

To be sure the occasion held its disappointment. The concentration of gifts upon the bride would argue that others shared with Emmy Lou a sense of the inadequacy of the bridegroom in his inglorious black clothes.

There was a steel engraving above the mantel in the dining-room called “The Cavalier's Wedding,” at which Emmy Lou glanced again

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God

today as she came in, and in which the bridegroom has a hat in his hand with a feather which sweeps the ground, and wears a worthy lace-trimmed coat.

At the dinner-table she repeated the news which had so dismayed and astounded her.

"There's a little girl in my class named Charlotte Wright whose papa and mamma don't live together."

"Dear, dear!" expostulated Aunt Cordelia, "I don't like you to be hearing such things."

This would seem to ratify Hattie's position.

"Then I mustn't play with her?"

"Why, Emmy Lou, what a thing for you to say!"

"Then I can play with her?"

"The simple code of yea, yea, and nay, nay," said Uncle Charlie.

"Charlie, be quiet." Then to Emmy Lou, "You mustn't pin me down so; I will have to know more about it."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"I fancy I know the case and the child," said Uncle Charlie. "The father worked on my paper for a while, a fine young fellow with a big chance to have made good." Then to Emmy Lou, "Uncle Charlie wants you to be as nice to the little girl as you know how, for the sake of the father who was that fine young fellow."

Emmy Lou was glad to get her bearings. Hattie would be glad to get them too. The status is fixed by a father and they could play with Charlotte. One further item troubled. "What are light dispositions?" she inquired.

"Leaven for the over-anxious ones," said Uncle Charlie. "If you meet any, pin to them."

Emmy Lou turned to Aunt Cordelia. "May I get Charlotte, then, and go to see Alice Pulteney and Rosalie and Amanthus Maynard? They've just moved on our square?"

"Agree, Cordelia, agree," urged Uncle

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Charlie as he arose from the table. "If we are to infer they have light dispositions, drive her to see Alice, Rosalie, and Amantus."

Emmy Lou started forth by and by. The shower of the morning was over and the September afternoon was fresh and clear. It was heartening to feel that she was standing by her colors, by Charlotte, and going to see her new friends.

The boarding house was unattractive and the vestibule where Emmy Lou stood to ring the bell embarrassed her by its ugliness. As Charlotte joined Emmy Lou at the door, her mother who had followed her bravely down the stairs called after her. She was almost as pretty as Aunt Katie, though she was in a draggled wrapper more showy than tidy, and she seemed fretful and disposed to blame Charlotte on general principles.

"Now do remember when it's time to come

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

home. Though why I should expect anybody to remember in order to save me——”

Rosalie and Alice and Amanthus were waiting at their gate and led them in, not to the house, but across the clipped lawn gleaming in the slanting light of the mid-afternoon, to a clump of shrubberies so old and hoary that beneath their branches was the spaciousness of a room. Here the ground was heaped with treasure, a lace scarf, some trailing skirts, a velvet cape, slippers with spangled rosettes, feathers, fans, what not?

“I am the goose-girl waiting until the prince comes,” said Amanthus.

“I am the beggar-maid waiting for the king,” said Rosalie.

“I am the forester's foster-daughter lost in the woods until the prince pursuing the milk-white doe finds her,” said Alice.

“Then in the twinkling of an eye our rags will be changed to splendor,” said Amanthus.

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"There is a skirt for everyone and a feather and a fan."



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"There is a skirt for everyone and a feather and a fan. Who will you be?" to Emmy Lou and Charlotte.

They were embarrassed. "I never heard of the goose-girl and the others," said Emmy Lou. Nor had Charlotte.

Dismay ensued and incredulous astonishment.

A lady came *scrolling* from the house across the lawn. She was tall and fair, and as she drew near one saw that her smile was in her quiet eyes. Emmy Lou felt promptly that she loved her.

"Mother," cried Alice.

"Cousin Adeline," cried Rosalie and Amantus.

"Emmy Lou and Charlotte never have heard of the goose-girl and the beggar-*maid*——"

"May we have the green and gold book that was yours when you were little, to lend them?"

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Alice's mother, who was Mrs. Pultene, smiled at the visitors. "And this is Emmy Lou? And this is Charlotte? Certainly you may get the book to lend them."

Emmy Lou felt that one not only did we to love Mrs. Pulteney but might go further and adore her.

It was agreed that Charlotte should take the book first. She kept it two days and brought it to Emmy Lou, her small, thin face alight. "I read it in school and got a bad mark, but I've finished it. It all came right for everybody."

She left an overlooked bookmark between the leaves at the story of the outcast little princess who went wandering into the world with her mother.

Emmy Lou in her turn finished the book. Charlotte got one thing out of it and she got another. For Charlotte it all came right. Emmy Lou entered its portals and the glory

Stern Daughter of the Voice of God

of understanding came upon her. Looking back from this land which is that within the sweep of the far horizon, to the old and baffling world left behind, all was made plain.

Even as Hattie drew a line between those who are right and those who are wrong, so a line is drawn between those who have entered this land of the imagination and those who are left behind. One knew now why Alice flits where others walk, why the hair of Amanthus gleams, why laughter dwells in the cheek of Rosalie, why the face of Charlotte is transfigured. And one realizes why she instinctively loves Mrs. Pulteney. It is because she owned the green and gold book when she was little!

Emmy Lou also felt that she understood at last why Mr. Reade made so poor a showing as a bridegroom. It is because while every goose-girl, beggar-maid, princess or queen may be and indeed is a bride, there is nothing

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

less than a prince sanctioned for bridegroom in any instance, by the green and gold book.

The glory of the green and gold book upon her, Emmy Lou went to Hattie. But she declined the loan of it, saying she didn't believe in fairy tales. She had not believed in Alice Rosalie, and Amanthus at first, either, though she had accepted them now.

Emmy Lou took this new worry home. "Hattie doesn't believe in fairy tales."

"She will," from Uncle Charlie confidently.

"When?"

"When she gets younger, with time, like us, or when she overtakes a light disposition looking for an owner. But I wouldn't be hard on her. Keep up heart and coax her along."

Hard on Hattie? Her best friend? Coax her along? When were she and Hattie apart?

At Thanksgiving, Mrs. Maynard, the mother of Amanthus and Rosalie, a close rival herself to Aunt Katie in prettiness, gave a

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party for her two little daughters, a party calling for white dresses and sashes and slippers.

"Hattie doesn't want to go, but I've coaxed her," Emmy Lou reported at home.

"Doesn't want to go?" from Aunt Cordelia.

"Why not?"

"She says she hasn't got a disposition for white dresses and slippers, she'd rather go to parties with candy-pulling and games."

Christmas came, with a Christmas Eve pantomime at the theater, which was given, so Uncle Charlie said, because so many of what he called the stock company were English.

Mrs. Pulteney gave a party to this pantomime for Alice and her friends, and though Uncle Charlie had asked Emmy Lou to go with him, in the face of this later invitation he withdrew his.

"You may give our tickets to Hattie and Sadie if they are not already going."

Hattie had to be coaxed again. She said

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

she didn't believe in theaters and felt she had to stand by her colors. Her papa who chanced along at the moment helped her decide. "There's such a thing as making a nuisance of your colors," he said, and took the tickets for her from Emmy Lou.

A dreadful thing happened at school the day before the Christmas holidays. A little girl got mad at Alice. "We've all known some thing about you and wouldn't tell it," she said while the group about the two stood aghast. "Your papa and your mamma don't live together, and that's why you live with Rosalie and Amanthus. And it's true because it was all in the paper."

Emmy Lou hurried home all but weeping and told it.

"Hush, my dear, hush," said Aunt Cordelia. "For the sake of Alice's brave mother we must forget it. I hoped you would not hear it."

Alice's brave mother? Now the status is

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fixed by a mother. Life is perplexing. One must explain to Hattie.

The Christmas pantomime! Emmy Lou had been to the theater before. Aunt Cordelia had taken her to see "Rip Van Winkle."

"Uncle Charlie wants you to be able to say you have seen certain of the great actors," she had said, but Emmy Lou did not grasp that she was seeing the actor until it was explained to her afterward. She had no idea that a great actor would be a poor, tottering old man, white-haired and ragged, who brought tears to the onlooker as he lifted his hand to his peering eyes, standing there bewildered upon the stage.

Aunt Louise took her to another play called "The Two Orphans." She understood this less. "The name on the program is *Henriette*. Why do they call it 'Onriette'? Is it a cold in their heads?" She was cross and spoke fretfully because she was bothered.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

But the pantomime! Christmas Eve, the theater brilliant with lights and garlands, evergreens wreathing the box wherein she sat in her new crimson dress with Alice, Rosalie, Amanthus, and Charlotte, and Mrs. Pultene just behind—fair and lovely Mrs. Pultene who, like the mother of Charlotte, did not live with her husband, though Emmy Lou is doing her best to forget it.

The lights go down, the curtain rises, the pantomime is beginning!

Can it be so? Palace and garden, an open market-place, the public fountain, the shops and dwellings of a town, and threading the space thus set about, a crowding, circling throng, jugglers, giants, dwarfs, fairies, a crutch-supported witch, a white-capped baker! It is the world of the green and gold book!

The goose-girl is here, about to put her teeth into an apple. The beggar-maid and her king are recognized. A princess and a prince, kiss-

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ing their finger-tips to the boxes, are the center of the stage.

No, *Harlequin* in his parti-colored clothes with his dagger, whoever *Harlequin* may be, is that center, causing the baker at a touch to take off his head and carry it under his arm, striking the apple from the lips of the goose-girl, tipping the crown from the head of the prince, twitching the scepter from the fingers of the princess.

Clownery? Buffoonery? *Grotesquerie*? Emmy Lou never suspects it if it be. Rather it is life, which with the same perversity baffles the single-hearted, bewilders the seeker, and juggles with and decapitates the ideas even as *Harlequin* dismembers the well-meaning and unoffending baker. With this difference, that in the world Emmy Lou is gazing on all will be made right before the end.

The play moves on. Who are these who now are the center of the scene? Emmy Lou has



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not met them before? Sad and lovely *Gabriella* at her wheel in her woodland cottage, in reality a princess stolen when in the cradle, and *Bertram* her husband, forester of the ignoble deeds, whose hands have wrung the white doe's neck in wantonness.

And who are these as the play moves on? *Florizel*, once high-hearted prince, forced to dig in the nether world for gold to replace that forever slipping through the unattended pocket of *Gonderiga* his wife, standing by, princess of the slovenly heart, who is no princess in truth at all, but a goose-girl changed in the cradle.

The play moves on to its close. The curtain falls, the lights come up, the pantomime is over.

Hattie and Sadie joined the box party at the door of the theater and all went home together on the street car. It was Christmas Eve

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and the shops and streets were alight and crowded. As the car reached the quieter sections the lights of the homes shone through the dusk.

Charlotte left the car at her corner which was reached first, to go home to her mother in the boarding house. Mrs. Pulteney and her group of three said good-bye at the next corner. At the third, Hattie, Sadie, and Emmy Lou got off together.

Hattie detained the others ere they could go their separate ways. Her voice was awed.

“Maybe Charlotte’s father was like *Florizel*, once high-hearted prince——”

Emmy Lou and Sadie gazed at Hattie. They caught the point. No wonder Hattie was awed.

“—and maybe Mrs. Pulteney is beautiful *Gabriella*——?”

That night after supper Emmy Lou paused

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before the picture of "The Cavalier's Wedding." She was far from satisfied with Aunt Katie's choice.

"Why did Mr. Reade wear those black clothes?" she asked.

"What are you talking about?" from Aunt Cordelia.

But Uncle Charlie seemed to comprehend in part, at least. "Those were the trappings and the suits of woe."

"Woe?"

"Certainly. He was the bridegroom."

Hattie came around the day after Christmas. Stern daughter of the voice of God in general, today she was hesitant. "If you haven't returned that book of fairy tales, I'll take it home and read it."

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SO BUILD WE UP THE BEING
THAT WE ARE



IX

SO BUILD WE UP THE BEING THAT WE ARE

AUNT CORDELIA stood behind Emmy Lou who was seated at the piano with "Selections From the Operas, for Beginners," open on the rack. She paused in her counting. "Now try it again by yourself. You have to keep time if you want harmony."

Harmony? The mind of the performer dwelt on the word as she started over again. What is harmony?

Aunt Cordelia relaxing her attention for the moment turned to speak to Uncle Charlie who was reading his paper by the droplight. "It's no easy thing to bring up a child, Charlie." As it happened, she was not referring to the practicing. "Louise thinks Emmy Lou ought to

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be confirmed. She says now that she is eleven years old she surely ought to know where she stands."

It is no easy thing to be the child brought up either, as Emmy Lou on the piano-stool could have rejoined. Life and Aunt Cordelia might perch her on the stool but, as events were proving, that did not make her a musician. Would going up the aisle of St. Simeon's to kneel at the rail, she had watched the confirmation class for some years now, make her——?

What was it supposed to make her? An Episcopalian? What is an Episcopalian? Did she want to be one? Or did she want to be what Papa is?

"Repeat, repeat," said Aunt Cordelia behind her. "Don't you see the dots at the end of the passage?"

Emmy Lou repeated, came to the end of her selection, and, to the relief of herself, at

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

least, got down. She was thinking about Papa.

She had gathered from somewhere that when Mamma after marriage left her church and went with Papa to his church, there was feeling.

Emmy Lou adored Papa. Aunt Cordelia had a brother and two sisters to go with her to St. Simeon's. Surely there should be someone to go with Papa? But where? What was he?

Emmy Lou had asked this question outright a good while ago. Papa was paying her a visit at the time. Unknown to her he had looked over her head at Aunt Cordelia and laid a finger on his lips. Considering the extent and the nature of his obligation to Aunt Cordelia, possibly his idea was there must be no more feeling, though Emmy Lou could not know this.

Having thus communicated with Aunt Cordelia, he answered the question. "Had my two

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grandfathers elected to be born on one side of the Tweed and not the other, I probably would have been an Episcopalian," he said.

"Tweedledee, in other words, instead of Tweedledum," said Uncle Charlie.

All of which meant that Papa was not an Episcopalian. What was he? Emmy Lou was eight years old then and eleven now, was still asking the question.

At bedtime Aunt Cordelia spoke again about confirmation. "Think it over for the rest of the week and then come tell me what you have decided."

Emmy Lou was glad to be alone in bed. At eleven there is need for constant adjustment and readjustment of the ideas and also for pondering. The relations of one little girl to Heaven and of Heaven to one little girl call for pondering. People assort themselves into Episcopalians, Methodists, and the like. Rebecca Steinau is a Jew, Katie O'Brien is a

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Dominican, Aunt M'randy in the kitchen is an Afro-American, her insurance paper entitling her to one first-class burial says so. Mr. Dawkins' brother is a Canadian; Maud and Albert Eddie say their father sometimes is sorry he's not a Canadian, too.

Is each of these assortments a religion? Or all the assortments religion? Has God a special feeling about having Emmy Lou an Episcopalian when Papa is something else? Is it not strange that He never, never speaks? In which case she could ask Him and He would tell her.

When Emmy Lou arrived at the grammar school the next morning, for she is thus far on the road of education now, Sadie and Hattie had something to tell her.

There is a pupil in the class this year named Lorelei Kitter. Emmy Lou has heard claimed by some that she can speak French by others that she speaks German. The fact

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

is self-evident that she speaks English. She is given to minding her own affairs and other ways seems sufficient to herself. Miss Amanda, the teacher, is pronouncedly cold to her; they do not seem to get along.

"Where is the Rio de la Plata River, and how does it flow?" Miss Amanda asked her in the class only yesterday.

Lorelei had hesitated a moment. She was plainly bothered.

"I thought *Rio* was river——?" she began and stopped. Miss Amanda's face was red.

"Go to your seat," she said.

For what? How had Lorelei offended? The class had no idea.

Miss Amanda had shown steady disapproval of Lorelei before this, and this morning Sadie and Hattie knew why.

"A girl in a class upstairs told us," said Sadie. "Her name is Sally White and she lives near Lorelei. She says Miss Amanda

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lives next door to Lorelei and they play the piano at Lorelei's house all day Sunday with the windows wide open."

"Tunes," Sadie went on to qualify. "It isn't even as if it were hymns."

"Or voluntaries," said Hattie. Voluntaries were permitted at Hattie's church before service and Sadie did not approve of them.

Sadie was continuing. "Sally said the neighbors sent word to the Ritters that it was a thing a Christian neighborhood couldn't and wouldn't put up with, but the Ritters go right on playing."

This was more painful to Emmy Lou than Sadie could know. Papa who comes to see her once a month keeps the piano open on Sunday, and plays what Sadie and Hattie differentiate as "tunes" as opposed to hymns and voluntaries, often as not dashing into what he explains to Uncle Charlie is this or that from this or that new opera.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

He plays at any and all times on Sunday, dropping his paper or magazine to stroll to the piano to pick and try, strum and hum, or jerking the stool into place, to fall into sustenance, and to Emmy Lou who herself is still counting aloud, breathless and incredible performance.

She is aware that Aunt Cordelia does not willingly consent to this use of the piano on Sunday, and she also is aware of a definite stand taken by Uncle Charlie in the matter, to which Aunt Cordelia reluctantly yields.

In the past Papa has been Papa, personality with no detail, accepted and adored, just as Aunt Cordelia has been and is Aunt Cordelia, supreme and undisputed. But now Papa's personality is beginning to have its details. He still is Papa, but he is more. He is tall and slight and has quick, clever hands, and impatient motions of the head, together with oddly regardful, considering, debating

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eyes, fixed on their object through rimmed eyeglasses.

Papa is "brilliant," vague term appropriated from Uncle Charlie who says so. If he were not a brilliant editor he would have been a brilliant musician. Uncle Charlie says this also.

And today at school Emmy Lou hears from Sadie that piano playing on Sunday is a thing a Christian neighborhood can't and won't put up with!

"Aren't the Ritters Christians?" she asked anxiously.

"How can they be when they play all day Sunday?" Sadie returned. "Lorelei told Sally that her father, Signor Ritter, was *Fra Diavolo* in an opera once. And Sally says they are proud of it and can't forget it. Every one of the family plays on some instrument and they take Sunday when they're all home to play *Fra Diavolo* till the neighbors can't

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

stand it. Sally asked Lorelei what *Fra Diavolo* means, and she said Brother Devil."

This again was information more painful to Emmy Lou than Sadie could know. Papa on his visits, while dressing in the mornings, or later when wandering about the house or running through the contents of some book picked up from the table, breaks into song, palpably familiar and favored song even if absently and disjointedly rendered. Emmy Lou has heard it often as not on Sunday. Uncle Charlie in speaking of it once said it was "in vogue"—another term appropriated by Emmy Lou—when Papa was a young man studying in Paris.

The song favored thus ended with up-flung and gayly defiant notes and words that said and resaid with emphatic and triumphant finality, "*Fra Diavolo*"! Though what the words meant Emmy Lou had no idea until now.

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"If the Ritters are not Christians, what are they?" she asked.

Sadie had information about this. "Sally says the neighbors say they are Bohemians."

Unfortunately Emmy Lou has heard this term before, though she had not grasped that it was a religion. Aunt Cordelia frequently worries over Papa.

"He's a regular Bohemian," she frets to Uncle Charlie.

Before school was dismissed on this same Friday, there were other worries for Emmy Lou. When in time she arrived home, full of chagrin, Papa was there for his usual visit and wanted to hear about the chagrin and its cause.

Words are given out in class at grammar school, as Papa knows, to be defined and illustrated by a sentence. One may be faithful to the meaning as construed from the dictionary, and lose out in class too.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"A girl in the class named Lorelei Ritte laughed at my sentence, and then the rest laughed too."

"What was the word?" inquired Papa.

"Concomitant."

"And what did you say?"

"'A thing that accompanies.' He played the concomitant to her song."

Uncle Charlie shouted, but Papa's laugh was a little rueful. "Poor little mole working in the dark. Will the light never break for her, Charlie, do you suppose?"

What did he mean, and why is he rueful? Is the trouble with her who would give all she is or hopes to be in adoring offering to Papa? Can he, even in the light of what she has heard today, be open to criticism? Certainly not. Papa may be a Bohemian, and a Bohemian may not be a Christian, but what he is that shall Emmy Lou be also.

To decide is to act. Papa went down town

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

after dinner with Uncle Charlie, and Emmy Lou took her place at the piano. Ordinarily she is loath to practice, going through the ordeal because Aunt Cordelia requires it. But today she goes about it as a practical matter with a definite purpose.

Papa brought her the "Selections From the Operas" some while back, with the remark that a little change from exercises to melody might introduce cheer into a melancholy business all around. But so far this had not been the result, "Selection No. 1—Sextette from Lucia," reducing her to tears, and "Selection No. 2—I Dreamt That I Dwelt in Marble Halls," doing almost as much for Aunt Cordelia.

But now that Emmy Lou had a purpose, the matter was different. There was a table of contents to the "Selections From the Operas," and a certain title there had caught her eye in the past. Seated on the piano-stool, lean-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

ing over the book on her lap, she passed her finger down the list.

Selection 13. She thought so. She found the page and replaced the open book upon the rack. *Fra Diavolo*. She set to work. What Papa is that will she be also.

She desisted by and by long enough to go and ask a question of Aunt Cordelia.

"If I were to be confirmed at St. Simon's could I practice my selections on Sunday?"

"Practice them on Sunday?" Aunt Cordelia had enough trouble getting her to practice on week-days to be outdone with the question. "Why do you ask such a thing? You know you could not."

That night Emmy Lou asked Papa a question a little falteringly: "Are you a Bohemian?"

"Instead, the veriest drudge you ever knew," he said. "There's too much on me, making a

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

living for us both, to be so glorious a thing."

Then what was Papa?

She went around to ask a question of Sadie the next morning. She had been to Sadie's church often enough to know that she liked to go. The prayers were long but the singing was frequent and hearty. No one need mark the time at Sadie's church, the singing marking its own time warmly and strongly until it seemed to swing and sway, and Sadie sang and Emmy Lou sang and everybody sang, and Emmy Lou for one wasn't sure she did not swing and sway too, and her heart was buoyant and warm. She loved the songs at Sadie's church; what matter if she did not know what they meant?

"Oh, there's honey in the Rock, my brother,
There's honey in the Rock for you,
Leave your sins for the blood to cover,
There is honey in the Rock for you, for you."

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

She could wish that Papa might be a Methodist. It hardly was likely, all things considered, but one could make sure.

"Would 'Selections From the Operas' be allowed by your church on Sunday?" she asked Sadie.

Sadie not only was horrified but, like Aunt Cordelia, was outdone. "Why, Emily Louise McLaurin, you know they would not be!" she said indignantly.

Emmy Lou had no such desire for Papa to be a Presbyterian. She had been with Hattie often enough to know that the emphasis is all on the sermon there. Hattie knew her feelings and when inviting her to go put the emphasis on the voluntary of which she was proud.

This very Saturday afternoon she came around full of information and enthusiasm. "Our soprano has done so well with her new teacher, he is going to play our organ tomorrow by request and she is going to sing a solo

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

during the collection. I want you to come from Sunday school and go."

She had other news. "I asked Lorelei Ritter yesterday after school if she was a Bohemian and she got mad. She said no, she wasn't, she was a Bavarian."

Aunt Louise spoke to Aunt Cordelia that night. "Emmy Lou must decide in the next day or two if she is going to enter the confirmation class this year; I have to report for her."

The next day was Sunday, and Emmy Lou heard Papa humming and singing in his room as he dressed, *Fra Diavolo* the burden of it.

The chimes at Sadie's church two squares away, were playing,

"How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill,
Who bring salvation on their tongues
And words of peace reveal!"

From afar the triple bells of St. Simeon's flung their call on the morning air. Nor

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Methodist nor yet Episcopalian would be singing *Fra Diavolo* on Sunday morning as he dressed. What was Papa?

What was he? As he and Emmy Lou went down the stairs together to breakfast, she caught his hand to her cheek in a sudden passion of adoring. What Papa was, she would be!

She hurried from Sunday school around to Hattie's church on Swayne Street. Hattie defended the absence of a bell by saying they didn't need a bell to tell them when to go to church; they knew and went.

It was a brick church, long built, and a trifle mossy as to its foundations, discreet in its architecture, and well-kept.

Hattie was waiting for Emmy Lou at the door. Her very hair-ribbons, a serviceable brown, exact and orderly, seemed to stand for steadiness and reliability in conviction.

What did Emmy Lou's blue hair-ribbons

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

stand for? Blue is true, and she would be true to whatever the conviction of Papa.

"The strange organist is going to play the voluntary too," Hattie explained. "It's almost time for him to begin. Hurry."

As they went in, she told another thing: "Lorelei and her mother are here, sitting in a back pew."

There were two points of cheer in the service at Hattie's church as Emmy Lou saw it, the voluntary and the collection. She had referred to this last as the offertory on a visit long ago, but never would make the mistake again, so sharply had Hattie corrected her.

Hardly were they settled in their places in the pew with Hattie's father and mother, when a large man with black hair and shaggy brows made his way to the organ in the loft behind the minister, and the voluntary began.

This the voluntary that along with hymns is advocated for Sundays? This that stole over

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

the keys hunting the melody, to find it here and lose it there, with a promise that baffled and a familiarity which eluded, to overtake at length and proffer it in high and challenging measure that said gayly and triumphant above the thunderous beat supporting it, all but words, *Fra Diavolo!*

Hattie's face was shining! And the face of her mother, of her father, and of the congregation around, radiated approval and satisfaction!

And in time the soprano of Hattie's church arose in the loft above the minister, supported by the choir. It was the collection.

It was more. It was "Selection No. 1—Sextette from Lucia"! Though the words did not say so!

Hattie, then, had not been blaming Lorelei but defending her? It was Sadie who disappointed of voluntaries and Lorelei?

Emmy Lou with heightened color, resolute

So Build We Up the Being That We Are

face, and blue bows, arrived at home. She went straight to Papa just returned from Uncle Charlie's office and strumming on the piano.

"You're a Presbyterian," she said.

"It sounds like an indictment," said Uncle Charlie. "But he will have to own up. Admit your guilt, Alec. How did you find it out?"

"Presbyterians play and sing 'Selections From the Operas' on Sunday, and so does he."

"You look ruffled, Alec," from Uncle Charlie. "But so does someone else. Your cheeks are hot," to Emmy Lou. "Something else is disturbing; out with it."

"The girl named Lorelei Ritter who laughed at me Friday in class was at church and spoke to me coming out."

"What did she say?"

"She said did I know it was her father who played the concomitant to the soprano's song?"

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

"Invite her round, and urge her to be friendly," begged Uncle Charlie when he stopped shouting. "We need her badly. Besides I'm sure I'd like to know her."

Aunt Cordelia came downstairs that night after seeing Emmy Lou to bed. "Whatever is to be done with the child? Has she talked to you, Alec? She says she can't be confirmed because she is going to be a Presbyterian. And then she cried bitterly. They stand up to pray and sit down to sing, she told me desperately. That if it was right—which it wasn't, of course,—she'd wish people didn't have to be Episcopalians or Bohemians or Presbyterians, but just Christians. I told her I thought we would drop the question of confirmation until next year."

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SO TRUTH BE IN THE FIELD



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SO TRUTH BE IN THE FIELD

A YEAR later Sarah, the sister of Albert Ed-
die Dawkins, saw him through the six weeks
of the confirmation class, up the aisle of St.
Simeon's and confirmed. The next day she
started to England to visit her mother's people
who had prospered.

"In a way I can feel he is safe now," she said
to Aunt Louise at Sunday school on the day
of his confirmation. "I wasn't easy about him
before, if he is my brother. If he'll only go
ahead now, he'll do."

Aunt Cordelia saw Emmy Lou through the
same class of preparation, up the aisle and
confirmed, and then came home and had a
hearty cry. She who always claimed she was

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

too busy seeing to meals, the house, and those within it, to give way!

"I am sure she is where her mother would have her," she said to Aunt Louise through her tears. "And her father would not hear of the alternative when I offered to discuss it. I only I can feel that in time she will be *what* her mother would have her!"

This seemed to put the odium on Emmy Lou in the event of failure. She would be thirteen years old in another month, her cheek-line was changing from round to oval, she was preparing for the high school, and her waist, according to Miss Anna Williams, the seamstress who made her confirmation dress, is coming round to be a waist.

She looked in distress at Aunt Cordelia who was drying her eyes in vain since the tears were continuing, and who seemed far from reassured that she will be what her mother would have her? There was nothing for it in the

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face of the implication but for Emmy Lou to throw herself into Aunt Cordelia's lap and cry too. After which the atmosphere cleared, the normal was resumed, and everybody felt better.

Sarah, who spoke with more flattering certainty about the future of Albert Eddie, wore her hair coiled on her head now, and her skirts were long. Capable, dependable, and to the point as ever, she was a young lady.

When Aunt Cordelia, accompanied by Emmy Lou, went to do her marketing the Saturday before Sarah left for England, her mother called her down to say good-bye.

"It's a long journey for you at eighteen, Sarah," said Aunt Cordelia, "and we will be glad when we hear you have reached its end safely."

"I can trust Sarah; I always could," said her mother. "If anything goes wrong she'll just have to remember what her grandmother, my mother, used to say to her when she was a

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

wee 'un, and prone to fret when matters snarled and she found she couldn't right 'em, 'When you get to wit's end you'll always find God lives there.' ”

Aunt Cordelia shook hands with Sarah, but Emily Louise, as many persons now called her, went up on her toes and kissed her.

“You must ask the prayers of the church for the preservation of all who travel by land and by water,” Aunt Cordelia said to Mrs. Dawkins, “and we ourselves must remember her in our prayers. We will miss you, Sarah, in the singing of the hymns on special days and Wednesday evenings when we haven't a choir. I'm glad you went to the organist and had those lessons. A fresh young voice, sweet and strong and sure, like yours, can give great comfort and pleasure.”

Hattie was a member of her church now, and Sadie of hers. Rosalie, Alice, and Amanthus were making ready for confirmation at St.

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Philip's which was high church. All had gone their ways, each to the portal of her own persuasion, as it were, and knocked and said, "I am informed that by this gate is the way thither."

And in answer the gate which is the way thither, according to the understanding of each, had opened and taken the suppliant in and closed behind her.

Which, then, is the gate? And which the way? Each and all so sure?

Time was, before the eyes of Emmy Lou were opened, when she supposed there was but one way. She even had pictured it, sweet and winding and always upward.

This was at a time when Sarah gathering Maud and Albert Eddie and Emmy Lou around her in the sitting-room above the grocery, about the hob, which is to say the grate, sang them hymns. It was from one of these hymns that Emmy Lou had pictured the way.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

By cool Siloam's shady rill
How fair the lily grows,
How sweet the breath beneath the hill
Of Sharon's dewy rose.

According to Sarah's hymns there were two
classes of travelers on this sweet and goodly
way.

Children of the Heavenly King,
As ye journey sweetly sing!

These Emmy Lou conceived of first. Later
she saw others of whom Sarah sang, less buoy-
ant, less tripping, but with upturned faces no
less expectant.

And laden souls by thousands meekly stealing
Kind Shepherd turn their weary steps to Thee.

Emmy Lou listening to Sarah's hymns even
saw these welcomed.

Angels of Jesus,
Angels of light,

So Truth Be in the Field

Singing to welcome
The pilgrims of the night.

But that was time ago. There is no one and common road whose dust as it nears Heaven is gold and its pavement stars. Each knocks at the portal of his own persuasion and says, "I am informed that by this gate is the way thither."

But Albert Eddie, having entered his portal, was in doubt. "What is it she wants me to do now I'm in?" he said to Emmy Lou, by "she" meaning Sarah, and by "in," the church of his adoption. His question began in a husky mutter of desperation and ended in a high treble of exasperation. Or was it merely that his voice was uncertain?

For to each age its phenomena, as inevitable as inexplicable. Albert Eddie's voice these days was undependable. Emmy Lou felt an uncharacteristic proneness to tears. Rosalie

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

said it would be wisdom teeth next for every body all round.

But if Albert Eddie seemed baffled and hazy as to what his duties were following confirmation, Aunt Louise left no doubt with Emmy Lou. The confirmation had been in May, and now a week later lawns were green and lilacs and snowballs in bloom.

"Now that you are a member of the church you can't begin too soon to take your place and do your part," Aunt Louise told her. "The lawn fête is Thursday night on the Goodwins' lawn. I am going to give you ten tickets to sell, and send ten by you to Albert Eddie since Sarah is not here to give them to him."

Emmy Lou took the tickets prepared to do the best she could. She had had experience with them before. It is only your friends who take them of you, as a necessity and a matter of course, a recognized and expected tax on friendship, as it were.

So Truth Be in the Field

Associates who are not intimates decline. One named Lettie Grierson, in declining Emmy Lou's tickets now, voiced it all.

"Why should I buy tickets from you? You never bought any from me."

Hattie took one and said she'd go home and get the money and bring it round.

When she arrived that afternoon she brought a message from home with the money. "Mamma says to tell you our church is going to have a lecture on the Holy Land on the twenty-fifth."

Sadie was present, having come to pay for her ticket. "Our Sunday school is going to have a boat excursion up the river in June. The tickets will be twenty-five cents," she told Emmy Lou.

Rosalie arrived a bit later with the money for her ticket. "Alice and Amanthus can't go. They went to Lettie Grierson's church concert last week and I didn't. I can go if

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

I may come and go with you from your house.

These three tickets thus disposed of, Emmy Lou's own, and the three taken by Uncle Charlie for the rest of the household made a fairly creditable showing.

Albert Eddie had less luck. Maud, his sister, so he explained, had been ahead of him and wherever he might have gone, she had been.

"Joe Kiffin, our driver, took one, though he won't go, and the other one I've sold is for myself."

He seemed worried. "I tried," he said. "I promised Sarah I'd try every time it was put up to me."

It was arranged that not only Rosalie but Hattie and Sadie should come and go with Emmy Lou. When they arrived, on the day about five o'clock, each had her ticket and her money.

A lawn fête for the church is no unmerciful

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nary matter. Your ticket only admits you to the lantern-hung grounds, which is enough for you to expect, and once within you have to buy your supper. That it is paid for and eaten largely by those whose homes have donated it has nothing to do with the matter, Aunt Cordelia having been notified that her contribution would be beaten biscuit, a freezer of ice-cream and chickens.

In this case there must be carfare also, the Goodwins and their lawn being half an hour's ride by street car from the center of things.

Aunt Cordelia came to the door with Emmy Lou to meet the three. "Go ahead," she said. "Louise is already there and will look after you. Eat your suppers when you prefer. Charlie and I will come later and bring you home."

The four found Albert Eddie at the corner waiting for the car. His hair was very, very smooth, and his Sunday suit was spiek and

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

span as if Sarah were home to see to it instead of well on her way to England, her rules and regulations evidently being of a nature to stand by one.

Perhaps it was an ordeal for Albert Eddie to have four girls descend on him, for he turned red and cleared his throat as though forced in declaring himself in maintaining his ground. Emmy Lou was his friend, and ignoring the others he addressed her.

"Maud went ahead with some friends of her own," he explained. "She said they wouldn't want me."

The obvious thing was to ask him to go with them. Had Emily Louise been speaking for herself alone, she would have done so, Albert Eddie being her friend and going to her Sunday school. On the other hand, his father kept a grocery at the corner just passed, and lived over it with his family. He wasn't the friend of her three companions and he didn't go

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their Sunday school. Emily Louise understood many things which Emmy Lou wot not of. Would they want him?

Verging on thirteen, one has heard this nature of thing and its distinctions discussed at home.

Aunt Louise objected to certain associates of Emily Louise not long ago. "It's why I am and always have been opposed to the public school for her. She picks up with every class and condition."

"And why I have opposed your opposition," returned Uncle Charlie, "since it is her best chance in life to know every class and condition."

"I'm sure I don't know why she should," Aunt Louise had said.

"An argument in itself in that you *don't* know," from Uncle Charlie.

Fortunately for Emily Louise in the present case of Albert Eddie, twelve verging on

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

thirteen was yet democratic. "We'll all go together," said Hattie as a matter of course and the others agreed.

Hattie, as ever, was marshal and spokesman. They boarded the car and sat down. "Fifty cents all around to begin with," she stated after fares were paid and the common wealth displayed. "Five cents put in for carfare. Forty-five cents left all around. Five cents to come home on, five cents to spend, and thirty-five cents for supper just makes it."

Church creeds and nomenclatures may vary but the laws of church fêtes and parties are the same. As the five left the car and approached the Goodwins' home, Whitney and Logan were patrolling the sidewalk outside the gate and the lantern-hung yard from whence arose the bustle and chatter of the lawn fête.

Logan wore a baker's cap and carried a tray hung from his neck and piled with his wares which a placard set thereamong proclaimed to

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"We haven't got a show against the girls . . . to sell anything."

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So Truth Be in the Field

be "Homemade Caramel Taffy, Five a Bag." Whitney was assisting Logan to dispose of his wares.

The two stopped the five. "We haven't a show against the girls on the inside to sell anything," they said. "Buy from us."

"Five cents for a bag all around and forty cents left, five cents to get home and thirty-five cents for supper," from Hattie the calculator, who liked to keep things clear.

Five bags were being exchanged for five cents all around when an elderly gentleman came along. Negotiations with the five being held up while he was pressed to buy candy, he brusquely replied that he had no change.

Neither had Logan or Whitney, business having been brisker than they admitted. But they did not let that deter them from cornering the gentleman into a showdown. Nor did a two-dollar bill, when produced, bother them.

Whitney had heard the financial status of

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

the five just outlined by Hattie, and did some creditable calculating himself. Like Hattie he was good at figures.

"You have five forties between you," he said. "You take the bill and let us have the change. You'll get it fixed all right when you get your suppers."

The party of five was loath but saw no way out of it. Held up, as it were, they reluctantly gave over their forty cents around and pinned their gazes anxiously on the two-dollar bill in the hand of the elderly gentleman.

He seemed no better pleased than they, showing indeed a degree of temper unbecoming under the circumstances and using language somewhat heated for a church fair.

"What in heaven's name do I want with caramel taffy without a tooth in my head that's my own?"

He thrust the bill at Albert Eddie who took it hastily, and the five moved on.

So Truth Be in the Field

"Who was it?" Sadie asked Emmy Lou and Albert Fiddie, since this was their lawn fête. "He's coming in the gate behind us. Do you know?"

Unfortunately they did. It seemed to detract from that cordiality of welcome they would prefer to associate with their lawn fête.

"It's Mr. Goodwin," Emily Louise told them. "It's his house and yard. He must just be getting home."

One's friends are loyal. Hattie covered the silence. "His wife must have said they could have it here before she asked him. I've known it to happen so before."

"We'll go get our suppers," said Albert Eddie anxiously. "That way we'll each get our carfare back and it'll be off our minds."

They found Emmy Lou's Aunt Louise under a grape-arbor, dishing ice-cream from a freezer into saucers on the ground around

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

it. A great many things are in order at a church fête that would not be tolerated at home.

"Go get your suppers," she said to the group. "I'm busy and will be; don't depend on me for anything."

The party of five took their places about a table a few moments after. Two of them were familiar figures in the Big Room at St. Simeon's Sunday school. The three young ladies who rushed up, tray in hand, to wait on them, were far, far older—eminent representatives of that superior caste of St. Simeon's Sunday school, the Bible Class.

It was a friendly rivalry that was on among the three, each waitress of the evening endeavoring in her earnings to outstrip and eclipse all other waitresses and so carry off the glory of the occasion. In the present instance the swiss apron and cap with the yellow ribbons won out, and the other two waitresses with-

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drew with laughter and recrimination of a vigorous nature, leaving the party of five overwhelmed by the notice from the surrounding tables and the publicity thus brought upon them.

The wearer of the swiss apron with the yellow ribbons was an arch and easy person, overwhelming her five charges further with offhand and jocose remarks indicative of condescension as she brought five suppers, substantials, lemonade, ice cream and cake, put them down, and, as it were, got through with it.

Even to the payment. And as Albert Eddie produced a two-dollar bill and she took it, she was easily, superlatively, meaningly arch as she said,

“We don’t give change at church fairs to gentlemen.”

Uncle Charlie, with Aunt Cordelia, taking the party home, paid everyone’s carfare but

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Albert Eddie's. When the time came for leaving he could not be found.

"We lost him right after supper," Hattie explained.

"As soon as he heard us say you were coming to get us," from Emmy Lou.

"He didn't eat any supper, just pretended to," from Sadie. "He was trying not to cry."

"Sadie!" from Rosalie.

"We never, never should tell it if he was," from Hattie.

"Logan and Whitney said he left early," said Rosalie, "that he told them he would have to walk home."

Uncle Charlie deposited the members of the party at their several homes and then, being the editor of a newspaper, went back downtown.

Emmy Lou, oftener than she could enumerate, had waked in the past to hear him on his return in the late, or, to be exact, the early

So Truth Be in the Field

hours, stop at Aunt Cordelia's door with news that the world would hear the next morning.

She waked at his return tonight. He did more than tap at Aunt Cordelia's door, he went in. Hearing Aunt Cordelia cry out at his words, Emmy Lou went hurriedly pattering in from her adjoining room. As she entered, the door on the opposite side of the room opened and Aunt Louise came in, slipping on her bedroom wrapper.

The light was on and Aunt Cordelia was sitting up in bed with tears running unrestrainedly down her face.

Uncle Charlie, about to explain to Aunt Louise, looked at Emmy Lou and hesitated.

"No, go on," Aunt Cordelia told him. "She is a big girl and must hear these things from now on with the rest of us."

Uncle Charlie, reflective for a moment, seemed to conclude she was right and went on.

"The ship on which Sarah Dawkins crossed

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

founded on the rocks off the Irish coast in a heavy sea this morning and went to pieces against the cliffs in the sight of shore. The dispatches report only three persons saved, and tell of a cook who went about with pots of coffee, and of a girl named Sarah Dawkins who gathered some children about her and whose voice could be clearly heard by those on shore in the lulls of the storm singing hymns to them to the end."

Something happened to Unele Charlie's voice. After finding it he went on. "I hurried right home. It's past twelve, Cordelia, but don't you think you had better dress and let me take you up to Mrs. Dawkins at once?"

Emmy Lou crept into Aunt Cordelia's bed as Unele Charlie went out and Aunt Cordelia got up and began to dress hastily.

Strange tremors were seizing Emmy Lou, but she must not weep, must not detain or distract Aunt Cordelia. She was a big girl and

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must hear and bear these things now with the rest.

"The child, the poor, poor child, alone on that great ship without kith or kin!" said Aunt Cordelia as she fastened her collar, still weeping. Then she came and kissed Emmy Lou.

"I may be gone some time. Stay where you are and I'll leave the light."

Did the tears come before or after Aunt Louise kissed and soothed her and then went back to bed? Emmy Lou rather thought they came after she was gone. And after the tumult of tears had spent themselves?

A picture arose in her mind, unbidden and unexpected, of Albert Eddie, hurt, mortified, and outraged, walking home block after block from the lawn fête because church fairs do not give any change.

"What is it she wants me to do now I'm in?" he had asked following his confirmation.

And what was it that Sarah did want of Al-

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

bert Eddie? Sarah who saw him confirmed and left next day? Sarah assembling the children on the ship and singing hymns to them to the end?

And suddenly Emmy Lou, twelve years old verging on thirteen, saw for the first time!

Sarah dependably mixing the Saturday baking in the crock, Sarah looking after her younger sister and brother as best she knew how, Sarah singing hymns to them sitting about the hob, which is the grate, was being made into that Sarah who could gather the children about her on the sinking ship and sing to them to the end. Not Sarah mixing the baking in the crock, but Sarah *dependably* mixing the baking in the crock. Herein came the light.

And all the while Emmy Lou had thought the digit on the slate in its day was the thing and later the copybook, and only yesterday the conjugation of the verb. Whereas Sarah

So Truth Be in the Field

now had shown her what nor home, nor school, nor Sunday school, nor confirmation class had made her see, that the faithfulness with which the digit is put on the slate, the script in the copybook, and the conjugation of the verb on the tablets of the mind, is the education and the thing!

This, then, is the gate? This the way that leads thither? The sweet and common road along which the children of the Heavenly King are journeying? Faithful little Sister from the alley of so long ago, gentle and loving Izzy of that same far-gone day, Hattie helping a schoolmate comrade over the hard places? This is the road whereon those older, laden souls are stealing? The road, if once gained by the pilgrim, whether he be Episcopalian, Bohemian, Presbyterian, or Afro-American, on which he will go straight onward. The path where, like bells at evening pealing, the voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea.

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Sea? Prayers of the church were asked that Sarah be preserved from the perils of land and water! And Sarah was lost!

Lost? Was Sarah lost?

"We'll miss your voice, so sweet and strong and true, in the hymns," Aunt Cordelia had told Sarah.

Would her voice be missed? Her voice singing to the children to the end? It came with a flash of sudden comprehension to Emmy Lou, lying there in Aunt Cordelia's big bed waiting for her return, that Sarah's voice would not be missed but heard forever, singing hymns to the end to those little children of the King.

"What does she want me to do now I'm in?" asked Albert Eddie. Sarah had answered him. Make himself ready for whatsoever part should be his.

"The child, the poor, poor child, alone on that great ship without kith or kin!" Aunt Cordelia had said, weeping.

So Truth Be in the Field

Was she thus alone? "When you get to wit's end you will always find God lives there," her grandmother had told her when she was a wee 'un. Had not Sarah given proof that when she got to wit's end God did live there?

Emmy Lou was weeping no longer. She lay still. A wonder and an awe suffused her. To the far horizon the landscape of life was irradiated. She was tranquil. The Silence had spoken at last.

Aunt Louise remarked to Aunt Cordelia a few days later, "Did I tell you that we made a hundred and fifty dollars at the lawn fête?"

"By fair means or foul?" asked Uncle Charlie, overhearing. "I must say, Louise, in the name of the church I stand for, I don't like your methods."

Perhaps Uncle Charlie and Emily Louise were seeing the same thing, Albert Eddie, hurt, mortified, and outraged, walking home in the

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

night because St. Simeon's lawn fête didn't give change to gentlemen.

Aunt Cordelia spoke after Emmy Lou went up to bed. "She brought home her report of the final examinations from school today. She got through!"

"By the skin of her teeth as usual?" from Uncle Charlie.

"Just that. She works so hard to so little end, Charlie. I don't understand it. But at least she is always faithful."

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Some said, John, print it; others said, Not so:
Some said, It might do good; others said, No.

—*The Pilgrim's Progress.*

