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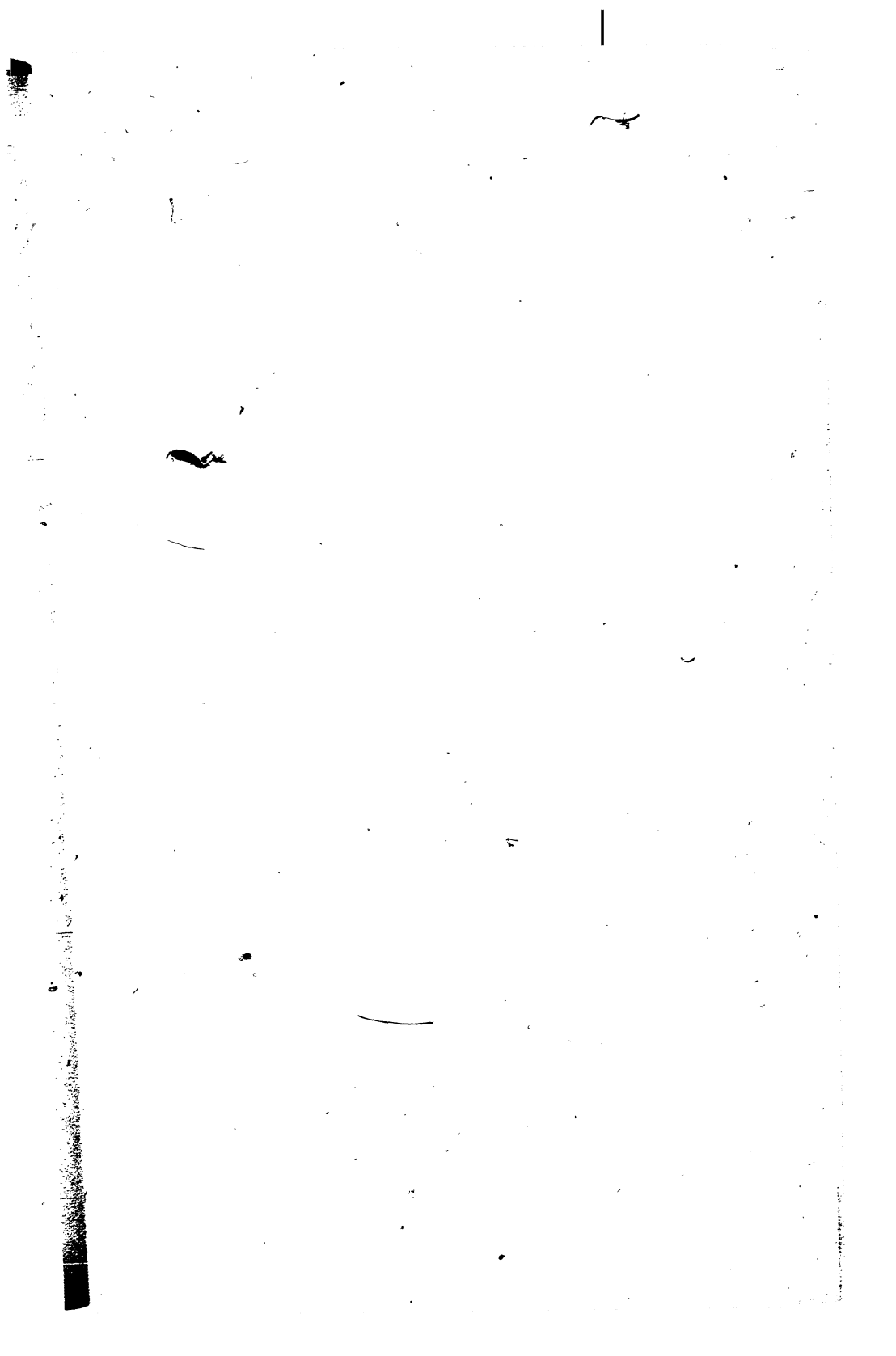
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ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM

BY
ANNIE HOWELLS FRÉCHETTE



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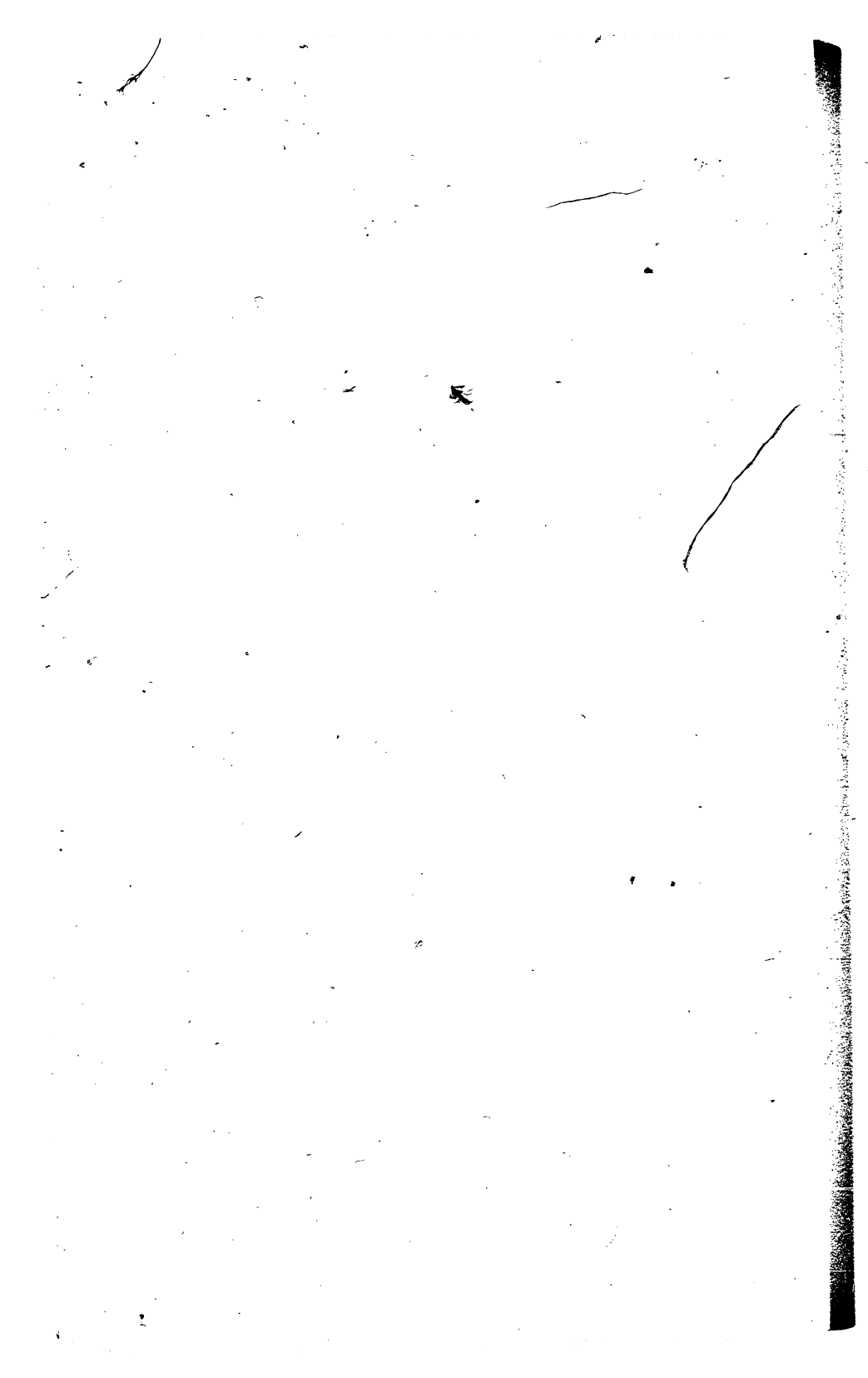
To the Memory

Of my dear father and sister Victoria

and

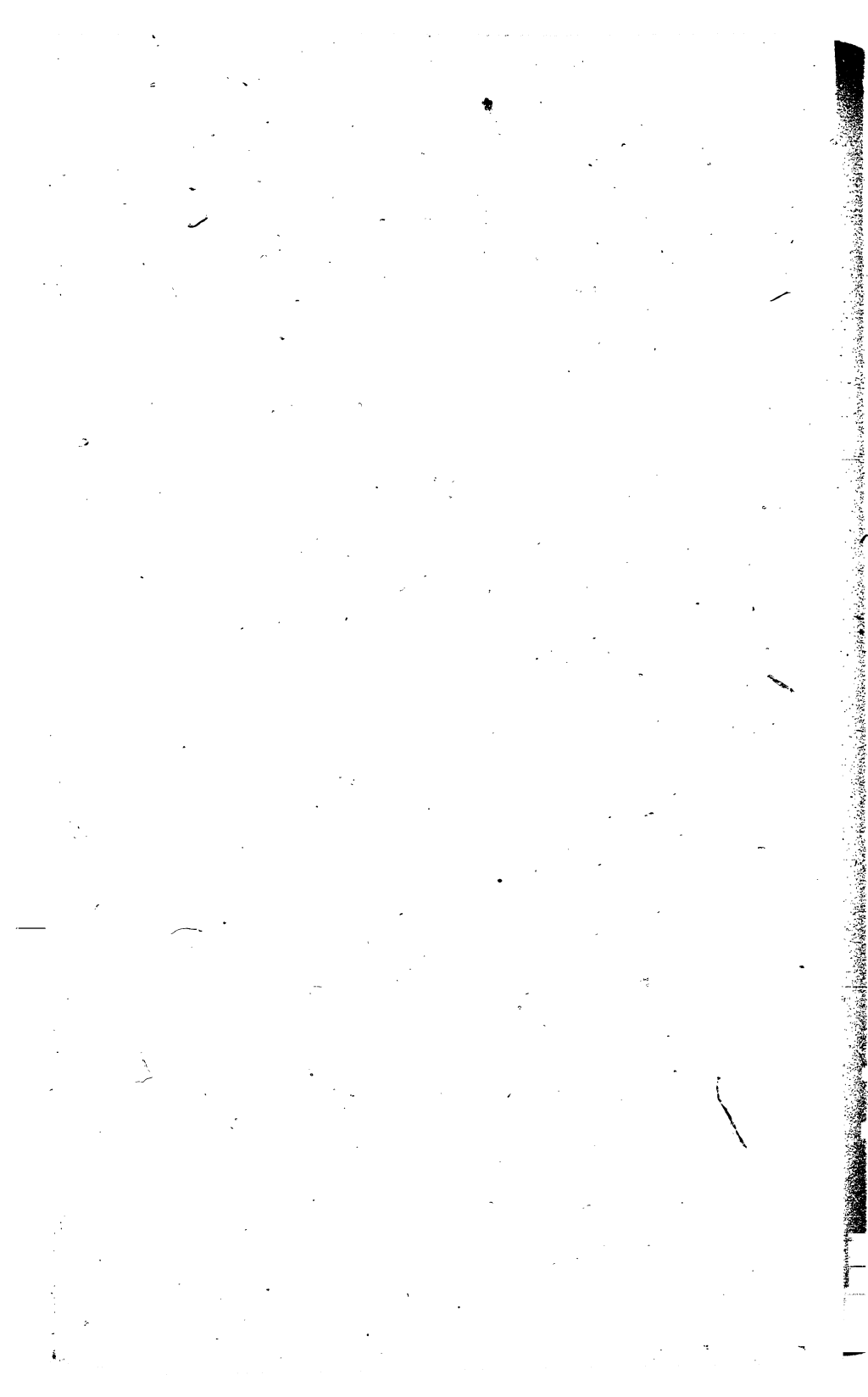
To my cherished sister Aurelia

*The one left of the loving three who made
us so happy on "Grandfather's Farm"*



CONTENTS

JUNO	7
"BINGO WAS HIS NAME"	29
LILY AND LUPINE	57



JUNO



ON GRANDFATHER'S FARM

JUNO



was quite in keeping with the rest of her woes that she had been named Juno; it was one of the many indignities that had been heaped upon her. The name was always said over with a laugh or a jeer whenever any one first saw

poor Juno; there was so little that was goddess-like about her.

When mamma first saw her, Juno looked around the corner of the barn at her with a pair of soft, big, good-natured eyes, which shone under a bulging, bull-like forehead, for Juno was a calf. And a more forlorn and uncared-for calf never

scampered over a Virginia farm—and that is saying a great deal.

The two children and their mamma had come from their Northern home to spend some months with their grandfather on a lovely old farm in Virginia. A happier little couple it would have been hard to find anywhere, full of fancies and theories about the wonders of country life, and always ready to leap from small facts to broad conclusions. They had names, but little use was made of them, as their family used those they had found for each other, and they were still spoken of as "Sister" and "Brother." Sister was seven, and had enjoyed the good things of this life a year and a half longer than Brother, and was therefore accepted by him as an authority on most subjects, though she kindly let him know the most about blacksmithing, coopering, and similar trades which they had found in the neighborhood.

Mamma, the children, and Aunt Sie

had gone to the pasture to look at the pretty Jersey calves, which crowded about and let them stroke their glossy sides.

"But that is not a Jersey," said mamma, pointing to the shaggy, half-grown black heifer which came shyly up to them, ready to be either petted or chased away.

"Oh, no; that is only Juno," was the answer, quickly followed by a wail as Aunt Sie caught sight of a rose-branch dangling from the calf's tail. "Juno, you wretched beast, you have been in the garden again!"

Juno could not deny it, and only gave a gruff, though not a saucy, "b-a-a-h!" and galloped away to the farther end of the pasture.

"Is she, like the Juno of old, fond of 'dittany, poppies, and lilies'?" asked mamma.

"She is fond of everything that can be eaten, from warm mush-and-milk down to arctic overshoes," was the reply. "To be sure, her appetite has its reason

for being, for I don't think that poor Juno has ever seen the time when her stomach was really full. When she was a little calf, the black woman we had to look after the cows said that calves needed very little care, so she was brought up by that rule. Then when these little pets"—patting the Jerseys—"came along, we had a well-trained Scotch lassie who would have gone without her own supper rather than have let them go without theirs. But it was too late for Juno to profit by this, for with Scotch thrift she said Juno was too old to be treated like 'the wee bit calves,' and she chased the poor animal out of the calf-pen.

"Then poor Juno tried to pretend she was a cow, and slipped into the cow-yard when the bran-mash was passed around. But this was looked upon as little less than robbery by the Scotch girl, and Juno was driven out for a 'thieving beastie, trying to tak' fra' the poor coos what they needed to keep up their milk wi'.' So,



you see, Juno has not always had a bed of roses to rest on, though she has just come off one."

As they turned to go back to the house, Sister and Brother, who had been drinking in the story of Juno, begged to stay and have a romp with the pretty, fawnlike calves about them. They were popped through the bars by Aunt Sie, and allowed to peel off shoes and stockings by mamma, and left to caper the morning away on the tender green grass.



When they came in at noon, warm and tired, they were followed at a short distance by Juno. We were rather touched by this, and put it down to fondness for them. Its real cause came out that night, when the small people were being put to bed. Then Sister and Brother did not seem ready to enter the land of dreams

until they had freed their souls by a confession. It began with:

“Good-night, mamma.”

“Good-night, and pleasant dreams.”

“Are you going downstairs at once, mamma?”

“Yes; good-night again.”

“Just wait a minute, please,” and a hurried talk was held in a whisper, of which mamma caught, “No, you tell, Sister; you’re the oldest.” “No, you tell, Brother, you make things sound so well, you know.” “Ah, no, Sister, you.” Then mamma brought it to a crisis by asking what they wished to tell.

“We wanted to know what stealing is.”

“Why, it’s taking what does not belong to you.”

“Well, is all stealing very bad?” asked Sister, sitting up in bed.

“Yes, is it all very bad?” echoed Brother who, being merely a kind of shadow to Sister, also sat up. “Would

you call taking grandfather's things stealing?"

"Of course."

"Oh-h!" looking uneasily at each other.

"Why do you ask?"

"We didn't know—we thought—we— Brother, you explain," and Sister lay back on her pillow in despair. He came boldly out: "You see, mamma, we felt sorry for poor Juno, and Sister said to me, 'Let's make a party for Juno'; and I said, 'Say we do'; and Sister and I went to the barn, and Juno, she walked after us, so nice and polite, mamma, and we put her into Jim's stall, and gave her some oats and corn with some salt sprinkled on it, and we found some meal, and made her some porridge in a bucket, and we set it outside, 'cause Sister said it would cook in the sun, but Juno didn't wait for it to cook. She just gobbled it up, and she was so glad!" and his eyes sparkled at the memory. "If she hadn't

been quite so greedy, though, she'd have had it better, for we were going to trim the bucket with sweet-potato vines."

"To make it look like salad," explained Sister.

"Surely, surely, you would not have taken vines from grandfather's hot-bed! If you had, he'd have been sorry that I brought you to visit him. About Juno's party—you'll have to tell him in the morning, and ask him to excuse you."

"D'you think he'll be very mad?" they asked solemnly. "Won't you just mention it to him when you go downstairs now? You know him so well."

The next morning there was a session in the library, with closed doors. But mamma fancied there was not a terrible scene, for when she had "just mentioned it" to grandfather the night before, he shut one eye and shook with silent laughter. When the door opened, and the three came out, there was still a severe air hanging about grandfather,

while the babies looked as if their little souls had been swept and set in order for the day. As they parted, grandfather said, "But, remember, as a punishment you are to take care of Juno and keep her out of mischief while you are here; and," tapping his left palm with his right forefinger, "she is not to have a taste of sweet-potato vines."

"No, indeed, dear grandfather."

Nothing could be easier than to promise to keep Juno out of mischief, but they soon found it a very hard promise to keep. She was large enough to jump out of the calf-pen, and small enough to squirm through the pasture fence. She got into the chicken-yard, and galloped around, scaring the hens off their nests, and almost throwing the old turkey gobbler into a fit by bellowing whenever he gave vent to his just wrath by gobbling. She led the Jersey calves into the wheat-fields of the next farm (and made no end of trouble for her owner), took

them for a stroll along the railroad track, and only brought them back when night and hunger drove them home, and when all the tired men and boys on the farm had gone to look for them. Her innocent air, as she came over the brow of some old earthworks, with the calvés at her heels, seemed to say, "But for me these young creatures might never have found their way home."

After this last prank Juno was given up to final disgrace by all but her two little friends. She was made to wear a poke, and her usual calfish joy was so overcast by gloom that she only had spirit enough left to gnaw the bark off the young trees in her pen. Her friends hated the poke as much as she did; and if we all had not been deep in our own affairs, we might have seen that a revolution was brewing.

Juno looked forlornly out from her prison pen, and Sister and Brother ran in wild freedom over the farm, for they were

free to take their lunch and be gone all day, only they were told to begin their homeward march when the whistle from the five o'clock express shrieked through the valley.

One morning a very large lunch was asked for, and there was much flitting in and out of the barn before they, with their little express wagon, went out of sight through the vineyard toward the woods.

The sweet spring day wore away, and all were sitting under the china-tree, enjoying the delicious change from afternoon heat to the coolness of evening, when grandfather suddenly rose, looked about him, and asked: "Where are the children? It is time they were at home."

The golden glow of coming sunset, which had seemed so beautiful but that moment to their mamma, turned to a cold gray mist as she rose quickly and looked toward the spot where the two loved little forms and the squeaking express wagon had disappeared so many hours before.

"They ought to be here," said she. "It's after six o'clock. They never failed to obey the whistle before."

"Oh, well," grandfather said, "they've not heard it to-day. They may be hunting arrow-heads, or have found some new wonder, or are down on the low grounds gathering cresses, and think it's only noon. However, as it is getting late enough for them to be at home, I'll walk down that way and get them."

"And I'll go to the pasture; they may be playing with Juno," said Aunt Sie.

"And I'll run across to Mrs. Brown's; perhaps Sol Brown has coaxed them over there," said Aunt Leashie.

"Well, I'll go on the upper porch and have a look over the farm, and if I don't see them, I'll take a run through the vineyard; they often hunt for arrow-heads there," and, as she spoke, the mother tried to believe she didn't feel cold around the heart.

Each started off willingly, for there are

times when it is a greater relief to frightened people to part company than to stay together.

When she reached the porch, which gave a view of the lovely landscape for miles around, she saw nothing but grandfather entering the woods in the hollow, Aunt Sie hastening to the pasture, and Aunt Leashie taking the shortest cut to Mrs. Brown's. The clear air seemed to ring, and yet to be horribly silent. There came the boys up from the cornfield, each riding a mule. Perhaps in another moment she would see a yellow head bobbing up and down behind. But no, the children were not enjoying a mule ride; they were nowhere to be seen. She hurried downstairs to question the boys as they passed, who, in reply, told her that they had not seen the children that day. She made a quick search of the chicken-coop and hay-loft before running about the vineyard on the hillside. Once or twice she was sure she heard them, but

when she stopped to listen, she found that it was only the boys talking at the well as they watered their mules. At last she went back to the house and waited.

One after another the others came in; when the last arrived alone, at seven o'clock, she broke down and cried.

"There, there, don't be frightened," said her father; "nothing can have happened; there isn't a dangerous place on the farm. But I'll start the boys out, for I feel anxious to get the little ones in before it grows damp. And it just occurs to me that they may be at the blacksmith's; I'll step across and see," and he stepped off with a briskness that would have done credit to a man twenty-five years younger.

The aunties and mother by this time felt the need of company, and went in a group to the darkening woods, where they shouted as loudly as their broken voices would allow. At one place the

pasture touched the woods, and here they found that the bars were down; and when they looked at the cows waiting at the milking-shed, Juno, who of late had been much with the children, was not with them.

“Juno is out, and they are probably trying to drive her home,” said Aunt Sie. “The dear little souls!”

“The little angels!” sobbed Aunt Leashie.

“The dear, care-worn little creatures! Oh, that miserable beast, I never want to see her again,” wailed their mamma, who little knew how glad the sight of Juno would make her.

A little farther on they found the prints of small, bare feet, half covered by hoof-marks.

“They have been here, but where are they now?”

Ah, yes, where?

It was dark in the woods. Outside, the full moon looked down on the lone-



some, empty fields. They could not bear to look at it, for wasn't there "the man in the moon" with whom those blessed lost babies believed themselves on such friendly terms? Oh, if he loved them as well as they believed he did, would he, ah, would he, please keep an eye on them, and guide them safely back?

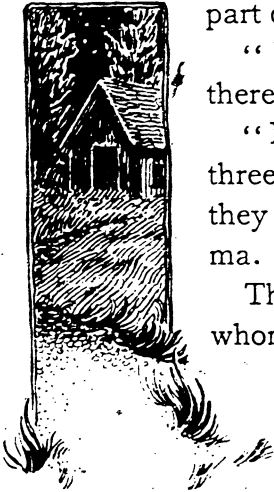
The horror of the dark woods was too much for the three wretched women, and they kept on its edge, like the whip-poor-wills which now and then broke the awesome silence.

Presently they came in sight of a tumble-down old cabin which had formed part of the "quarters" in slavery times.

"Do you suppose they could be there?"

"No, I'm afraid not; they believe the three bears live in it, so I don't think they would venture in," answered mamma.

The memory of the dear little ones, whom she now feared she would never



again see, crushed her. She sank down, and her face was bowed.

“Oh, my darlings, my darlings!”

“B-a-a-h!”

Her sisters clutched her and dragged her to her feet.

“It is, it is Juno!”

Once more the silence was broken by that voice—sweeter now to them than any trill of mocking-bird or prima donna. This time it took on an inquiring tone.

“B-a-a-h?”

“She’s in the cabin!” they all exclaimed.

The moon was shining brightly upon the square opening which had been the window; and framed in it, against the inner darkness, they saw the head of Juno.

“Don’t let us hope too much; they may not be with her. It would kill me not to find them now,” quavered mamma, as they hurried forward.

• In a moment they were at the door,

and a glad shout pierced the still evening and reached poor grandfather, as he stood "completely whipped out," as he afterward said, not knowing which way to turn next.

The cabin was divided into two rooms, and in the outer one gleamed the light clothing of two little sleepers. The suddenness with which they were snatched from sleep caused a wail from Brother: "It's the bears, Sister; it's the three bears come home." And the hugs to which they were treated quite carried out the bear idea.

It seemed as if the tears ought to have stopped, but they did not, only now they were what the children called "fun tears," because they came from laughing.

Questions were asked and the answers were not even waited for. The sleepy little ones were rather vague, but it was learned on the way home (when mamma kindly let the aunts carry their precious ones, while she led Juno by the

poke), that feeling that Juno was not happy with her poke, and not well treated, they had decided to take her and live in the cabin, which, after much watching from a safe distance, they had decided was not the home of the bears. They had taken a load of meal for her and a good lunch for themselves; and they had meant to live on strawberries and water. They were "terribly tired." They had worked hard all day gathering moss to make themselves a bed. After putting Juno into her room, they had lain down to try their bed, and had gone to sleep before dark. They were quite willing to go home, especially Brother, who had his own opinion about whip-poor-wills.

Grandfather met them when half-way to the house, and as he took them both into loving arms he was greeted with, "You will take off poor Juno's poke, won't you, dear grandfather?"

Juno was urged to eat when she got home, and although she had fed high all

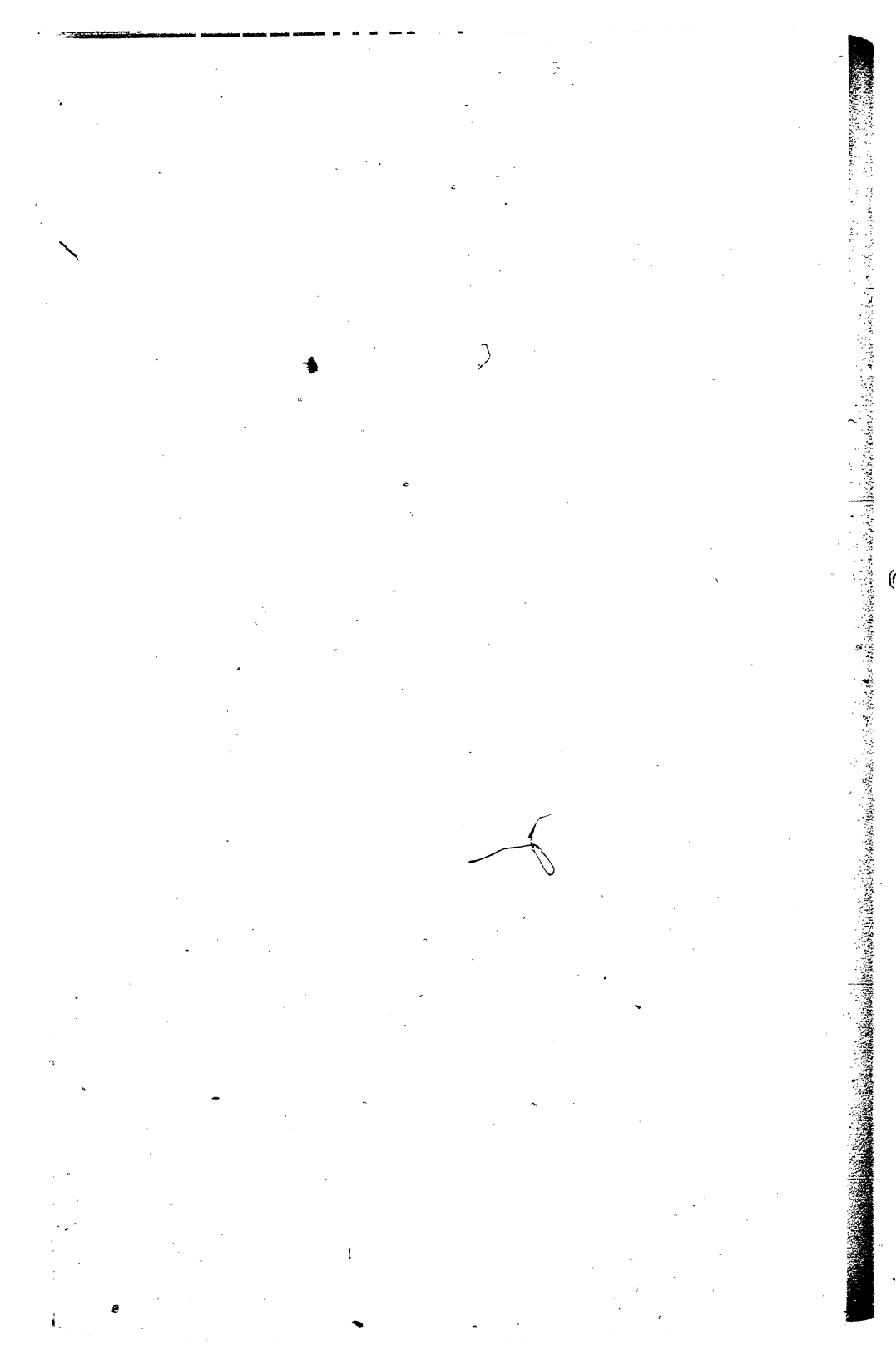
day, she consented to worry down a little warm bran mash.

Juno has ceased to be a calf, and we now tenderly speak of her as the "Sacred Cow."

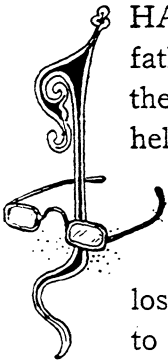


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“BINGO WAS HIS NAME”




“ BINGO WAS HIS NAME ”



HAVE been thinking," said grandfather, as he slowly clicked together the bows of the spectacles which he held in his hand, "that a dog would be great fun for the children, and a protection as well. I don't think they would ever get lost if they had a good, trusty dog to follow them about."

"Oh, there is no doubt that a dog would be a perfect joy to them," replied mamma, at whom he had looked. "But wouldn't a dog be a great trouble to you?"

"No—no very great trouble, and besides, even if he were, I want the children to enjoy their visit to fullness. I'll speak to Randolph and have him hunt up a dog for me."



“Why, no, father, don't do that; there is Joey Vale. If any one in Virginia can find you just what you want, Joey can. Randolph would be sure to bring some starved hound,—what Sister calls a scanty dog,—with a view to borrowing it to ‘hunt ol' har'’ with,” said Aunt Sie.


“Joey Vale's collie has had pups lately, we might get one and train it,” said Aunt Leashie. She hated dogs, but loved her small relatives to that degree that she was ready to love their dog, if so doing would add to their happiness.

“Yes, I suppose Joey would be the right man to call upon. Can you girls manage to see him?”

“I might take the children and go over to-morrow,” said Aunt Sie, who never found herself at a loss to “manage” to give others pleasure.

So it was settled.

The children were asleep upstairs. Each morning was a joyful awakening



to them, but the morning which followed this talk was happy beyond any that had ever dawned. At an early hour, Aunt Sie—dear Aunt Sie, who made even a dull day bright—came into their room just as they were waking. But she made believe to think them still asleep, and began at once talking to mamma:

"I'd like to go over to Mrs. Vale's this morning, if I had some one to drive Charley for me. But the boys are busy in the corn fields, and really I don't feel like going alone with that frisky steed. I wonder if I could get one of the children—or both—to go with me. I would feel quite safe if I had Sister to drive, and Brother to look after the buggy in case any of the bolts came loose or some strap should unbuckle."

"Sister! did you hear that? Wake up—wake up," whispered Brother.

Mamma answered doubtingly: "Possibly you might persuade them to go."

"Of course we'll go!" came in a

chorus, as the two scrambled out of bed.

“Why, are you awake? And how good of you to be willing to go! I was afraid you might want to stay at home—and study, perhaps,” said Aunt Sie, in great surprise, catching them both in her arms.

“And what are we to go to Joey Vale’s for?”

“Grandfather wants me to see Joey on business. You can ask him when you go downstairs.”

It did not take long for them to dress and run downstairs, where they called loudly in search of grandfather. At last they spied him coming from an early visit to the fields, and running to meet him, each took a hand, and dancing along beside him, begged to know why they were to go to see Joey Vale.

“I want you to go and get me a dog.”

“A what?” unable to believe their ears.

"Yes, a dog. I hear that he has some for sale, and I thought if you two would go over and take a look at them, it would save me a trip."

They looked at grandfather; then dropping his hand, they seized each other's, and began what they called a "joyful dance," which was liting up and down and squealing. To have simply a visit to Joey Vale would have seemed to them the top of happiness, for the admiration which they felt for him was unbounded. He was thirteen years old—"a perfectly e-normous boy, half as tall as papa," was their description as given to their mother after their first sight of him. And besides his weight of years, his acquirements were such as to command an awed respect. He had found Mistress Judy and her little pigs after all the men and boys on the place had hunted for her in vain, and they had heard grandfather say that he had more sense than all the crew put together. And long ago Aunt

Sie had told them that a guinea hen that could hide her nest so that Joey could not find it, would be sharp even for a guinea hen. And then the flutter-wheels and weather-cocks that he could make! They felt much better acquainted with him when he was not around than when he was, and they spoke of him in his absence as "Joey," while in his presence they usually just coughed instead; and they secretly marveled at the ease with which their grandfather and aunts carried themselves toward him.

And to buy a dog from a boy like that!

Just as they finished breakfast, Charley was driven up to the door. Brother took a careful look at all the bolts and running-gear and put a stout rope into the buggy; for he and sister had decided to tie the dog behind and let him trot home.

To one looking on, Charley was ~~not~~ a beast to cause fear in the most timid breast. But the feat of driving him was

made greater by a belief of the small people that it was only superior skill which kept him from galloping off at break-neck speed. He was twenty-four years old, but as his grassy pathway through life had been well strewn with oats and corn, he was still sleek and fat, and shone like a ripe chestnut. He knew his own mind about the amount of labor that should be required of a horse of his age, and he cared little what others thought. Nothing but a fly could cause him to alter the dignified pace which he usually took.

After much talk they set forth. Sister held the reins, Brother the whip, and Aunt Sie sat between the two, and received into each ear a steady flow of talk.

"Now," said Brother, "I think as Sister gets to drive, I ought to be the one to pick out the road."

"I think that would be only fair," answered Aunt Sie, "if you can find the way."

“To be sure I can find it,” and Brother stood up and pointed with the whip. “After you get through the woods you turn into another road, and that takes you to the road that runs along the top of the world—over there. D’ye see it?”

Sister nudged Aunt Sie with her sharp little elbow and whispered, “The top of the world! as if all roads weren’t on top of the world!” Then aloud she asked, “Brother, what shape is the world?”

“I know; it’s round.”

“But does it seem round? It didn’t use to, to me, when I was your age.” Sister always put Brother a good year and a half behind her in wisdom.

“How did it use to seem to you, Sister?” Brother asked meekly, not wishing to commit himself.

“It seemed like a high, level bluff, that you could have jumped off of into the ocean.”

“Yes, that’s the way it used to seem

to me—only I used to think you could jump off into a river. I didn't used to know about oceans."

"Brother," said Sister sternly, "you have always known about oceans."

"I mean I didn't use to know when I was a young chap, and wore long dresses, and stayed in my crib."

"Now, Aunt Sie, I don't like that habit Brother has of getting out of things, and I wish you'd forbid it. As if any one expected him to know about the world when he was a goo-goo and stayed in his crib."

"Oh! but Brother knew a great many things, even when he was only a goo-goo."

Starting from this poor Aunt Sie was kept busy with stories of their infancy until they reached the Vale farm. The fierce barking of a collie brought Mrs. Vale to the door, and Joey came from behind the house, where he was chopping wood.

Aunt Sie told their errand, after a little chat with Mrs. Vale, and Joey was at once sent to the kennel and soon returned with three squirming, big-headed pups in his arms, jealously followed by their mother.

"How small they are!" said Aunt Sie.

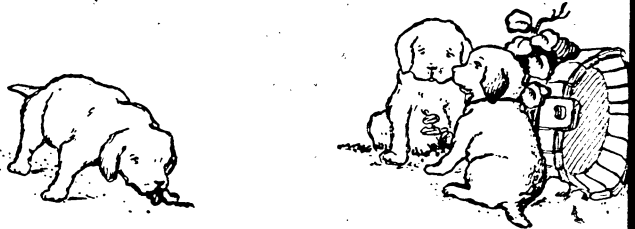
"They'll grow fast, and they're just about weaned now," Joey told her.

"Oh! I dare say they'll grow. They are not just what I wanted—still—What do you think of them, children?"

"They're just lovely!" answered Sister, stroking them.

"Will they always stand that way—like stools?" asked Brother uneasily, as Joey put one down upon its widely spreading legs.

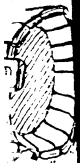
He felt ashamed when Joey laughed and explained that the legs would soon stiffen into good shape. That wise young man also pointed out the "twa een, on



each side of the head," which showed them to be high-bred collies, and told of so many clever things their mother could do, that Aunt Sie closed the bargain, and was promised that the pup should reach the farm that evening.

As they turned toward home Brother cast a sad glance at the stout rope which lay useless in the buggy. He had pictured to himself the noble animal—very like those he had seen in pictures of Alpine snow-storms—which was to have trotted home at the end of it. He would have held the rope kindly but firmly—in a manner to let the dog know that, while a master's kindness might always be depended upon, a boy's authority must be obeyed too. Still, Brother had the happy way of coming upon blessings, no matter how events turned, and finally said with a faint sigh:

"It's much better for Joey to bring him; he can explain to the pup's mother, and besides, if we had tied him to the



buggy,"—a pause in order to think of some good reason,—“Juno might have chased after us, and hooked him.”

“I think we won't let him associate much with Juno, she's so bad,” replied Sister. In her heart she dearly loved Juno; still, since the day they were lost, she had assumed rather a condemning tone in speaking of her.

“Certainly, the less he has to do with Juno the better dog he will be,” Aunt Sie agreed.

“Yes, but poor Juno is very young, you know, for a cow—of course, she is a rather old calf; I don't think she really meant to be bad that day,” faithful Brother could not help saying.

The afternoon was spent in fitting up, for the use of the new dog, grand rooms in a large box.

The windows of the dining room gave a view of the road, and during the evening meal two pairs of eyes watched it

constantly. At last a glad shout of "There he comes!" rose from Brother, and a hasty run was made to the porch by all.

"He hasn't got it!" wailed Sister.

"He—hasn't—got it!" echoed Brother.

"Where is the pup, Joey?" called grandfather, as the boy came within speaking distance.

"He's here, sir," was the cheery answer.

"He's there, Sister. Oh, goody!"

"But I don't see him."

Joey patted a long bulge which showed itself on one side of his jacket. As he stopped the bulge was seen to move up, and a moment later a silky head thrust itself out at the collar.

"It's a good way to carry a pup, and besides I had to slip away from the mother," said Joey, as he unbuttoned his jacket.

Grandfather took the pup and held him



up for all to look at. "There isn't much of him, is there, Joey?"

"Not yet, sir. But he's healthy and strong," and Joey told off the various marks of a fine dog which the small beast bore.

"Well, well, you know more about that than I do, and I'll take your word for it all. Here, children, get Joey to show you how to feed him and put him to bed. He's your dog, and you'll have to see that he's properly brought up. Come, Brother, take hold of him."

Brother took him by the nape of the neck, which caused Sister to dance wildly from one foot to the other. "Don't carry him in that way—oh, you cruel boy! See how meek it makes him look, with his little paws curled down and his tail curled up—oh, oh, put him into my apron!"

Here the late owner stopped her, saying that dogs preferred to be carried in that way, and the three went away around the house.

Six weeks passed, and six weeks make a great change in the size of a pup, and in his nature too. During that time he had been named, and "Bingo was his name." His legs had stiffened up; and now, instead of hanging on to a step by his chin, and whining when he wished to go higher, or rolling over and over with a series of yelps when he tried to go down, he could thump up and downstairs at a fine rate. He had tried various means by which to make himself good friends with Aunt Leashie, the worst of which was to rouse her suddenly from her morning dreams by leaping upon her bed and frolicking over it until its snowy whiteness was starred with tracks of red clay. He had chased every turkey, chicken, and duck on the place; and he had insulted Pooley, the cat, over and over again by barking at her and trying to drive her out of the library. At first she had not thought it worth while to notice him, she despised him so, but one day he went a

little too far; he pawed her tail and squeaked around her until she, who had been respected in the house for years, felt that he might be taking her contempt for fear. On that day she laid her ears back until her head looked quite round, made a straight line of her mouth, and stared unblinkingly at him for several seconds; then, with lightning swiftness, gave him a stinging blow on one ear first, and then on the other, and forever settled her rights. Bingo backed off with loud howls, and never stopped until safely hidden under the sofa, from which refuge he complained loudly to his pitying young friends; and he gave himself invalid manners for some time afterward.

But, while he was growing, his training was kept up. He was taught to carry grandfather's cane, and although it usually took the whole family to get it again, so thoroughly did he enter into the duty, still it was thought to look well to see a little dog so willing to make himself use-

ful. Then he could play hide-and-seek probably more beautifully than any dog of his age ever played it before. Aunt Sie would sit down upon the grass, and cause him to hide his eyes by holding him with all her strength, until the children, snugly hidden behind the great rose-bushes, would shout "Re-ad-y!" when, with the warning, "Ready or not, you must be caught," she would let him go, and he would tear madly off in search of them. The sight would prove too much for the small hiders, and they would betray themselves by giggles, whereat Bingo would pounce upon them and chew them joyously, until panting and breathless, they would reach the safe goal of dear Aunt Sie's arms.

In spite of not meaning to, Sister and Brother had not been able to resist taking Bingo to see Juno, and many a gay frolic the four friends had together. There were, it is true, sham battles, in which Juno seemed on the point of hooking

Bingo, and Bingo seemed on the point of biting Juno's legs; but these exciting little plays only raised the spirits of the four, and put them into the humor for a dash down the long, sloping pasture, at the lower end of which they usually landed in something of a heap.

But it was after a trip to Richmond, where they saw a goat-cart drawn by two goats, that the crowning effort of Bingo's life was attempted.

"We'll train Bingo to draw the express," said Brother that night, as he and Sister were talking over the glories of the day.

"Do you think he is strong enough?"

"Dogs are very strong."

"If only Pooley wasn't so crabbed with him, we might have a span," said Sister.

"Or if Joey would lend us one of the pups."

"O-h!"

"We'll ask grandfather to lend us

Charley, to-morrow, and we'll drive over and hire one of Joey's pups, and we'll train them to trot together. Won't we, zip!"

And the little heads settled down upon their pillows, full of beautiful plans which, it is to be hoped, were carried out in dreamland, for the next day came in a downpour of rain which forbade a trip to Joey Vale's.

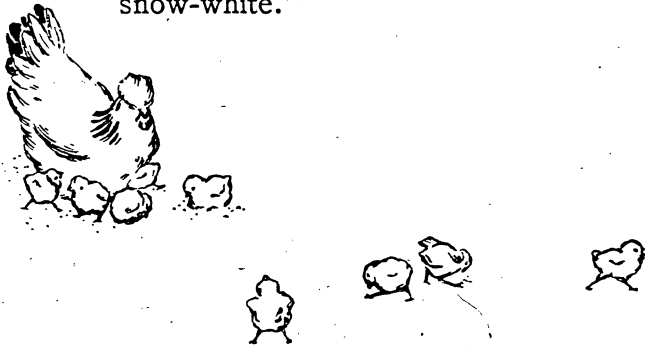
But about ten o'clock they went out of sight in the direction of the big barn, under a wide umbrella, with Bingo soberly trotting at their bare little heels. After much counsel they had decided to use their idle time to make a harness for Bingo. A rainy morning, and a big, clean barn, are not bad together, and the little brother and sister were soon cozily settled in the back seat of the family carriage, while Bingo lay sleeping in the front. They were very busy with their harness making, and their fingers and tongues kept time. Now and then Bingo

was roused to be measured, but the steady rain on the roof speedily lulled him to sleep again.

At the farther end of the barn, and joined to it, was an open shed under which the fowls could gather out of the rain, and through the open door the two little workers could hear the remarks that the poultry seemed to be making about the weather. Chief in the group was the stately turkey-gobbler, "Mr. Cornelius," who, as usual, was strutting and swelling to the point of bursting.

"He's a fine fellow," said Brother, after watching him awhile in silent admiration.

"He'd be much nicer if only he were a swan," said Sister; "then we could harness him to a small boat and have him take us around the carp pond. What a lovely swan he'd make; only his neck ought to be longer and he ought to be snow-white."



“Sister!” cried Brother, standing up, “Sister, I’ve got it. I’ve thought of something. It’s much better that he’s a turkey.”



At noon the clouds broke away and the sun shone out. Grandfather, who had been having a long, quiet morning in the library, looked up as the warm ray fell across his book.

“Where are those blessed children keeping themselves all this time?” he asked of his daughters, who sat near the porch door enjoying one of their never-ending talks.



“Oh, they and the faithful Bingo are down at the barn. They have——”

“Excuse me, Miss Sie, fur comin’ in with my muddy feet, but I jes’ want to ask de boss if he ’lows de chillun to ’buse Mr. Co’nelius?” broke in Randolph, coming excitedly to the door.



“Abuse Mr. Cornelius! Of course I



don't. What in the world are they doing to him?" asked grandfather, rising hastily to his feet.

"Dey's dun gone an' hitched him to de spress wagon, 'long with Bingo," and Randolph's sternness melted into a broad grin, which showed that deep down in his heart there hid some enjoyment of the fact.

"Cornelius and Bingo hitched into the express wagon! The boy must be crazy," and grandfather marched across the porch. His daughters followed and saw a procession making its way toward the house.

With ducks, geese, and chickens all about, each loudly adding to the noise, came the express wagon. Beside it, with stately air, walked Sister, with flower-trimmed head and wand. Behind, giving a helping hand to the wagon and holding the reins of his unruly team, puffed Brother; while harnessed to the car came Dignity and Impudence—Mr. Cornelius and Bingo. Poor Mr. Cornelius! Peg-

asus chained to a plow must have been gay compared to him. His legs were hobbled, the better to control his speed, and his rounded body was bound in a queerly-made harness. That he felt the insult of his position showed in every feather. His breast bulged, his wings tried to drag upon the ground, his "night-cap" hung far over his beak, and his wattles shaded from a bluish white to a wrathful red. From time to time he uttered what must have been something terrible in turkey language, and made sidewise leaps at the joyous pup, who flopped and capered and gave vent to his pleasure by pawing him in a friendly way with his great muddy feet.

Brother was quite flushed with the work of pushing and urging, when he looked up and saw his family coming to meet them.

"They'll—go—better—after—while—grandfather. I have to boost—Mr. Cornelius a good deal; he doesn't under—

stand yet. Sister's the Fairy—Queen and—this is her chariot," he said, between puffs.

Sister waved her wand grandly.

Grandfather had come out ready to scold them soundly if he found them in mischief, and mamma had meant to help him. But the absence of any meaning to be naughty—their perfect good faith—made them feel helpless, and they looked about for something to blame. Bingo, with his open look, at once seemed suitable.

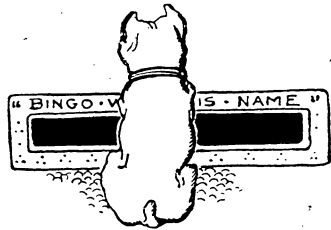
"I had hoped that Bingo would keep them out of mischief," sighed mamma forlornly.

Aunt Sie began in this same sad manner: "I thought he would be a guard to them——"

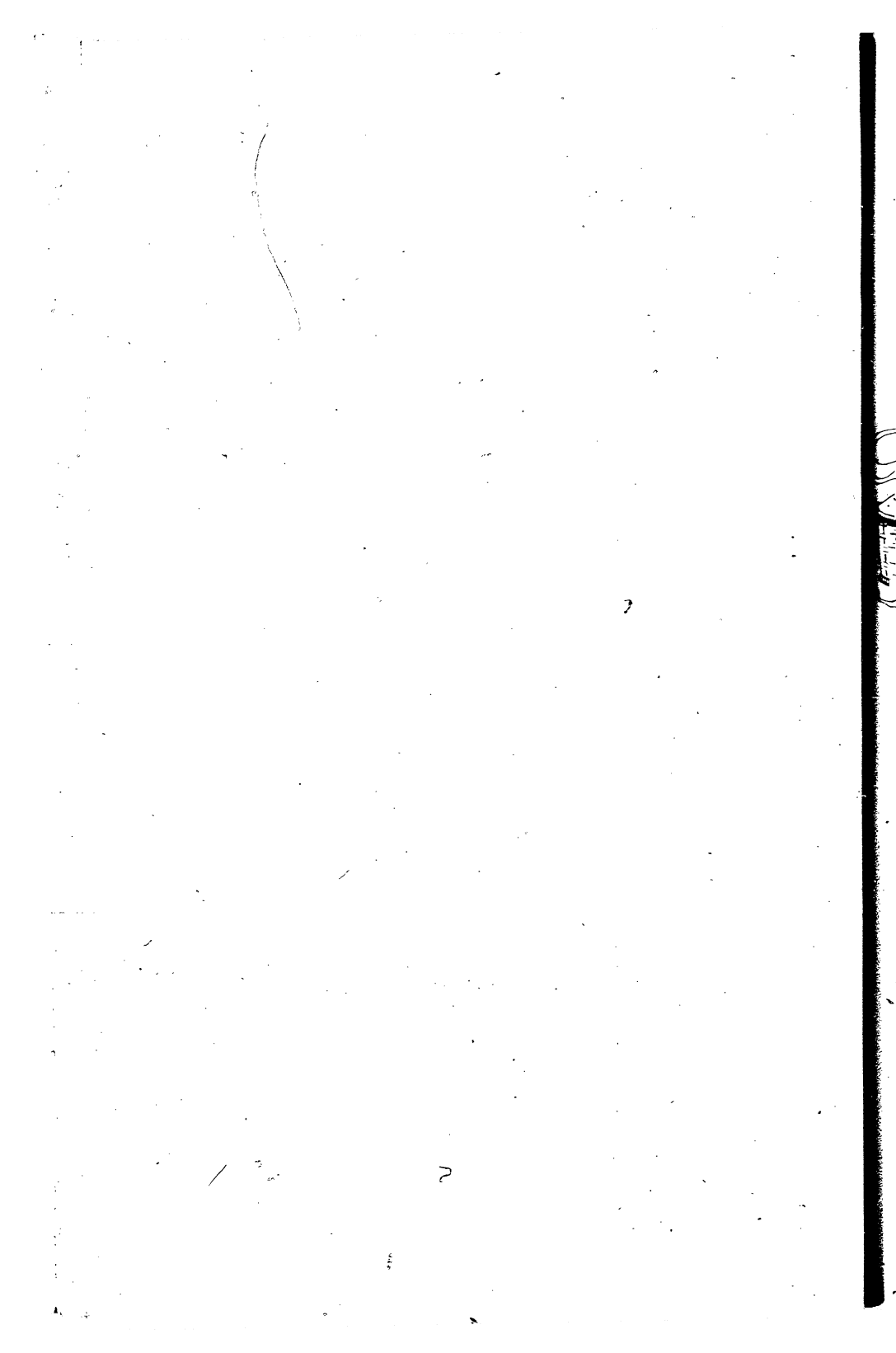
"And a comfort to father in his old age as well," added Aunt Leashie.

Grandfather began in a rather high key through trying to keep from laughing: "Children, I am more pained than I can say to see you ill-treat a poor bird."

Sister's wand dropped in perfect amazement. "Have we been bad, grandfather?" and Brother stood up very straight, while his eyes and mouth shaped themselves into a very large and solemn "O," before he said contritely, "We did not know it was bad, grandfather!"



LILY AND LUPINE



LILY AND LUPINE



to-morrow is a fine day I will drive up to the mines and see about coal for next winter, and attend to some business I have near there," said grandfather to his assembled family, as they sat under the Pride of China trees watching the moon rise.

"We might cut a tree down, grandfather, and then you wouldn't have to buy coal," said Brother, who usually felt that the talk was for himself chiefly. "If you would have Randolph chop it down, Sister and I could cut the branches off and haul it home with Juno; she's a sort of ox, you know. Or we could cut it into tiny little pieces and bring it home on our express wagon."

"Brother!" said Sister severely, for she did not like him to make wild plans

even to so near a relative as a grandfather. "It would take us a year to bring a tree from the woods." Besides, a pleasant thought had arisen in her mind at her grandfather's words. It was scarcely likely that if he went to the mines he would drive all that long way without a soul to speak to.

"Sister is right!" answered grandfather. "It would take you two many a long summer day to cut up a tree and then drag it first down hill, then across the vineyard, and then up hill to the house. Besides, I have no trees to spare. So we shall have to go and buy coal."

"We, Brother!" whispered Sister.

"Cobbin," grandfather went on, dropping back into the use of mamma's nickname when she was a girl, "has never been to the mines and I think she would enjoy the drive."

"Y—es," murmured a light duet, in which was an undertone of disappointment.

"Don't you want mamma to go? Don't you think she would enjoy it?" asked grandfather, as he drew into his arms the two little figures which had stolen up, one on each side of him.

"Y—es, oh yes, she'd be sure to enjoy it. Any one would. Yes, we want her to go, don't we, Brother?"

"Yes, of course we do; we want mamma to have a good time, and it must be very nice to drive to a coal mine," Brother said quickly.

"I suppose you'll take old Charley," came from Sister.

"I have not decided. I may take young Charley and Selim." (Here grandfather felt quick nudges passed behind his back.)

"If you take the span," began Aunt Leashie, "why might we not all go, and make a day of it? We are a lazy set anyhow since Cobbin came, and it would be quite as well to waste our time in driving about the country as in any other way."

"You are a very sensible young woman," said Aunt Sie, "and I approve of all you say."

"It would be jolly," agreed mamma.

"But how would we all go?" asked grandfather.

"In the farm wagon. You and Cobbin, who is our honored guest, on the spring seat, Leashie and I on kitchen chairs behind you, and the babies on stools behind us. We would go off in old Virginia fashion. We could take along a coffee-pot and a basket of bread and butter, and have lunch in the woods. That is, we could do all this, only maybe the babies are too stuck up to go in a farm wagon and sit on stools."

"Aunt Sie, Aunt Sie! You know we're not too stuck up; you know we just hate stuck-up children," and the two flew at her and kissed and pounded her in the fullness of their joy.

"Well, I don't know what to do with such an unstylish set of 'wimen folks,'"

said grandfather, as if taken by surprise at the turn his plan had taken, though in truth he was not surprised at all, and was generally ready for anything. Indeed he was an ideal grandfather. He and Father Time had long ago come to an agreement with each other. He was not to watch Father Time too closely nor try to get too much out of him, and Father Time was letting his sands glide very slowly and gently through his fingers upon the pathway over which the dear old feet walked. In short, grandfather was taking life easy and enjoying the well-earned sweetness of his ripened years. So, with his pleasant laugh he agreed to the plan if the babies would go at once to bed, so they might be up next morning bright and early, ready for the journey.

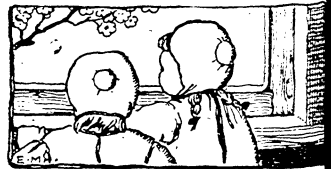
The next morning at daybreak mamma dreamed that her two children had turned into mocking-birds, and had perched high up on a branch of the great cherry



tree which grew just outside her window. They were singing at the top of their voices; and just as they flung themselves into the air—after the manner of mocking-birds in the ecstasy of their song—she opened her eyes with a start and saw two little white figures sitting in the window, with the green dewy branches behind them, twittering together softly about their expected journey. She closed her eyes without speaking and turned over to take her beauty nap. When she woke again, the children were gone. Nothing was left of them but two night-gowns lying in rings by the window. Down below, in the garden, she could hear their voices, and without looking out she knew just how they were bobbing about in the strawberry “patch” gathering berries for breakfast.

“Where are you going, Randolph?” she heard them call, as the farm wagon rumbled past toward the high-road.

“G’wine to len’ de fahm wagon to



Mistah Nellis. Yo' grandpa dun tol' me to car' it ovah to him."

"Can grandfather have forgotten about the mines, do you think, Sister?"

"Maybe Randolph is just making it up. You know he often makes excuses to get over to the Nellis place. We'll go this very minute and tell him." But when found, grandfather would tell them very little. He did say that he had loaned the wagon, but hinted that there were in the land other things to ride in.

"You are going to take the carriage, maybe?"

"But maybe I'm not going to do anything of the kind. It is too rough a road for the carriage; besides, I want to dig up some fine fringe bushes which I know grow up that way," he had answered, enjoying their puzzle.

After breakfast they stood watching a most tempting lunch being put into a big basket, when the sound of wheels caused them to fly to the door.

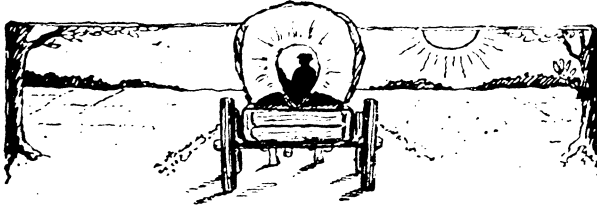


“Oh, grandfather, mamma! Oh, Aunt Sie, Aunt Leashie! Come, come. Don't wait a minute!” called two shrill voices.

Up the drive rolled a stately, canvas-topped wagon, with Randolph's shining black face in its snowy setting.

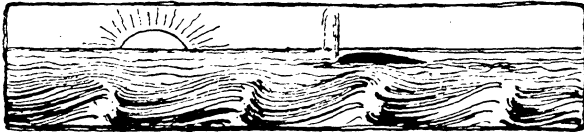
“Now I understand,” was all Brother could say.

Ever since they had come to Virginia they had from time to time seen these old-fashioned wagons making their way along the road which led to Richmond, and many were the questions they had asked about them. Their grandfather had told them a delightful story of how he had taken a journey of several weeks in just such a wagon when he was a little boy. This story had caused them to look upon the children of fifty or sixty years ago with feelings of liveliest envy. And now to think they were going in one themselves! If only they were going to cross a mountain range! But even with



only a day's journey before them they were blessed beyond any children of their acquaintance. Wouldn't they tell about it, when they went back home? And wouldn't it make that miserable whale, which two little girls had seen while crossing the ocean, and had talked about ever since, seem a pitiably small fish? Humph, rather.

"Well, well," called grandfather,



"hurry up those baskets and stools and chairs, and get them into the wagon; we must be off before it gets too hot. Randolph, bring a big armful of hay to throw into the wagon, and don't forget a good feed of oats. Where's Brother? Oh, looking over the running-gear of course. Trot off to the tool house and get the monkey-wrench; and Sister, you bring the spade from the garden."

Away flew the happy little ones on their errands, and Brother, impressed by the size of the wagon in which the journey was to be taken, brought, besides the wrench, a ball of twine, a hammer, and a strap.

"They may be useful, you know, in case anything breaks."

"Yes, indeed; it is well to be prepared for everything when one starts on a journey. Now then, Brother, I see that we won't get off before noon, if we don't take matters in hand, and that pretty briskly too."

"And the sun's getting high, isn't it, grandfather?" blinking up at the sun. "Sister, you carry out the little basket; I'll take the big one." And Brother's chubby face glowed with virtue and exercise.

At last everything and everybody was ready for the start. Even Aunt Leashie, who at the last moment was missing, came out from the strip of woods which



lay between the home farm and its neighbor, carrying in her hand a covered basket, and Brother and Sister felt that if they could only lift the lid they would find some of Mrs. Brown's delicious wax cherries heaped there.

"Now then, is this party ready?" asked grandfather, as he gathered up the reins and looked around. "Are you there, Brother? Count Sister and see if she is there." And the wheels began to turn.

Oh, the delight of being in a moving tent that the little girl and boy nestling in the sweet-smelling hay felt as they watched from beneath the canvas the farmhouse growing smaller in the distance. Suddenly Sister sprang to her feet.

"Oh, please stop, grandfather, please stop. Bingo is following us. Do let me get the poor darling."

The "poor darling" was indeed fol-



lowing as fast as his short, fat legs could carry him, and soon overtook the wagon, which had been brought to a standstill. His widely staring eyes and excited manner seemed to say, "A little more and I would have missed you. That foolish Randolph tried to shut me into the barn; but I escaped just in the nick of time, and here I am."

Brother scrambled out, and with much puffing, and many timid yelps from Bingo, lifted him up to Sister, who took him with tender and comforting words, while grandfather was heard to murmur something about having "hoped to get off without the beast."

After this they moved noiselessly on for a mile or more over the sandy country road, and then they turned off into the woods, or rather forest of pine of twenty years' growth that had sprung up on each side of the road, and had taken possession of the land. The children saw their grandfather pointing out to their mother

the old corn rows which could be easily traced between the trees, where the corn had once waved high in well-tilled fields before the war. They turned their eyes upward to trace the height of the trees, and the plumey-green branches seemed to swing and toss against the blue sky. War was a terrible thing to think of, that sweet summer morning, in a wood scented with dittany, honeysuckles, and grape hyacinths.

It was a relief to them when, after a little time, grandfather began to sing in his pleasant old voice softly, as to himself:

“Let us go, lassie, go,
To the braes o’ Balqinther
Where the blae berries grow.
Mang the bonnie Highland heather.”

Ah, that was a song to sing driving through the woods on such a day. They leaned out at the back end of the wagon and watched the thin grass rise up from beneath the wheels, and saw with dismay

that they crossed a long and crooked mole hill.

Presently the country grew broken and rough, and they halted at the foot of a long, steep hill, and grandfather said they had better walk while he drove to the top.

"It seems just as if we were in the Highlands that grandfather has been singing about," said Brother as he and Sister let themselves drop softly from the back of the wagon.

"Yes, and Bingo is a collie dog, and his mother came from Scotland with Joey Vale's family, so that makes it just like the Highlands."

Bingo whimpered a good deal as he was being taken from the wagon, but his timidity left quickly enough when he found himself on solid ground, and he tore off in fine style after the children as they trotted up hill in advance of the others. Again and again he would rattle off into the bushes which grew along the

narrow road, to bark at birds, and when scolded by his young owners, came back with such a rush as to almost upset them.

"We must not let Bingo be so much with Randolph," said Sister; "for he says it is not wicked for dogs to bark at birds, and Bingo listens and believes everything Randolph says, and of course it gives him bad habits."

"Yes, and he says it is dog's nature to catch 'ole hars,' and that we'll spoil Bingo if we scold him when he digs for moles; and that he's going to teach him to go coonin' next winter."

Brother and Sister often had long talks with Randolph on the kitchen porch in the evenings, and while they did not agree to his ideas on the moral training of Bingo, they took without demur his way of speaking certain words which were new to them, and they would have stoutly argued that "ole hars" and "old hares" were quite different animals.

As they neared the top of the hill they

noticed some people running wildly about a field on the edge of which stood a cabin. Bingo barked loudly and saucily at them.

“There now; he probably thinks they are after an ‘ole har.’ You see, Brother, you’ll have to be strict with him.”

“Bingo!” thundered Brother in what he hoped Sister would think a very strict voice; “those people are just playing hide-and-seek.”

“No, grown-up people don’t play hide-and-seek. I think they are hunting guinea hens’ nests. Now when we get to the top of this hill let’s take hands and run down the other side.”

“Oh, yes, let’s.”

At the top they paused a moment to rest. Then Brother marked a line in the dust with his toes, and each planting a right foot upon this starting point they chanted together in a loud voice:

“One—two—three,
The bum-bull bee!

The rooster crows,
And away he goes!"

and sped away.

"Oh dear," wailed mamma as she and the aunties came upon the scene just as the race started; "I do wish they would not run so. ' They will trip and break their necks. Oh! there they go, all in a heap."

Sure enough, half-way down the hill they had come upon something over which they had pitched. Mamma and the aunties quickened their steps, reaching the spot just as the two were getting upon their feet, gazing with faces full of wonder and grimed with dust at the object which had stopped the race. For once they had nothing to say. It was no wonder that words failed them for the moment. There, in the dust, crying lustily at his rude awakening, lay a yellow-haired baby. Only for a moment did they stand speechless gazing at it. Then they were upon their knees beside it.

“Oh, you darling, darling baby! Go 'way, Bingo, you awful beast. At last, at last we've found a baby. It's fallen out of some stork's nest,” glancing up at the tall pines. “Look around, Brother dear, there may be more of them in the grass.”

“Don't cry, baby dear, we'll be good to you; we won't hurt you. We are not robbers or gypsies, even if we do seem so big to you. And this is our little dog; he's just a silly pup, and he doesn't know any better than to bark,” added Brother, as he helped Sister, who was trying to get the baby upon its fat little legs. Then catching sight of grandfather, whose wagon had just reached the brow of the hill, he made a trumpet of his hands and shouted through it:

“We—found—a—ba—by. We—think — it — fell — out — of — a — stork's — nest.”

Now the aunties and mamma reached them, and together and by turns all tried

to show to the wailing child their friendliness. Grandfather came up quickly, and tying the horses by the roadside, joined the group.

“Well, this is a find!”

“And we’ve so often hunted for babies, and could never find one, and here, when we wasn’t looking at all, we ran right over one,” explained Brother.

“And what are you going to do with it, now you have found it?”

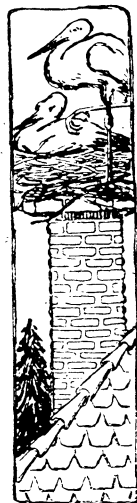
“Grandfather!” cried Sister, as she sat back amazed; “we’ll take it home, of course!”

“It belongs to us; we found it. Indeed, indeed we’re not just pretending, grandfather,” Brother said quickly.

“But what will its father and mother say to that?”

The children grew sober and looked at each other. They had never once thought of a father and mother for their treasure.

“But if it hasn’t any, if we can’t find its parents, then we may keep it, mayn’t



we? It could sleep with us and we'd take all the care of it," said Brother.

"I suppose we would have to keep it then. But come, Brother, look along the road and see if we can find its footprints, so we will know from which direction it came." This was business, and Brother started at once on this important task, leaving Sister cooing over the baby, who at last smiled and nestled up to her. It was not many moments until a shout came:

"I've found its tracks. The toes are pointing down hill."

"Then we will have to take it up hill. We'll go to that cabin we saw just now; maybe the people who live there will know something about it."

"Please let Brother and me lead the sweet darling. Oh, if only we can't find its parents!"

With one of its hot fat hands held by each of its adorers, the baby stepped willingly off up hill, even feeling enough at its ease to make loud "wow-wows"

at Bingo, who trotted ahead. The party stopped in front of the cabin. Door and windows were open wide, and the people were still hurrying about the field.

“Hi, hi, there!” shouted grandfather.

A man in the field glanced toward them.

“What are you looking for?”

No answer.

“We’ve found a child asleep in the road. Can you tell us anything about it?”

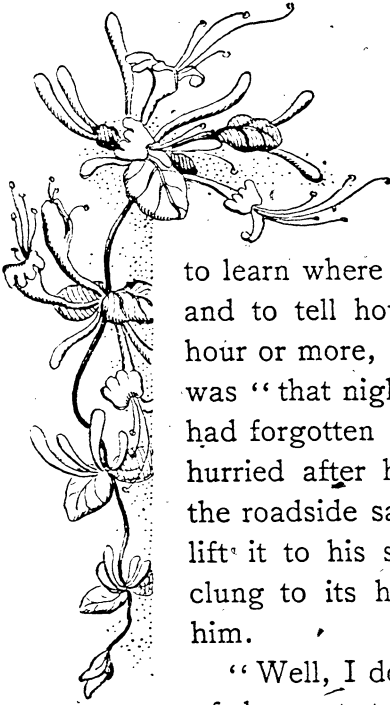
At this the man called “Mary, Mary!” and with one bound cleared the fence and came running along the road.

“Dad—dad—dad!” began the baby, bobbing up and down at sight of him.

A woman scuttled under the fence.

“Oh, Bill, have you found him? My baby, my baby!”

“We found him, ma’am,” the children said quickly; but she took no notice of them, snatched up the baby, and covering it with kisses ran weeping toward the house. Her husband stayed behind



to learn where the baby had been found; and to tell how it had been lost for an hour or more, and that the poor mother was "that nigh crazy about it" that she had forgotten to thank them. Then he hurried after his wife, and the group at the roadside saw him take the baby and lift it to his shoulder while the mother clung to its hand as she walked beside him.

"Well, I don't think it was very polite of her not to say, 'Thank you, children,'" sighed Brother.

"Still I think she was glad," Sister owned. "If only she had offered to lend it to us for a few days, it would have been polite of her."

They walked rather sadly back to the wagon and were tired enough to climb in willingly. Even the active Bingo fell upon the hay and slept heavily until they reached the mines.

It was a busy day, what with finding

babies, and looking down abandoned shafts, and watching the creaking loads of coal come slowly out from the mouths of dark, damp pits, and keeping Bingo out of harm's way. Then too, there were children at the manager's house with whom Sister and Brother made friends, and from whom they were loth to part as the afternoon drew to an end.

The drive home through the sunny woods, rosy with bright azaleas and sweet with honeysuckle, they will never forget. A glade among the oaks especially pleased them. Under the wide-spreading trees lay great granite rocks, which looked in the evening light like a herd of sleeping elephants.

As they drove slowly up the hill past the scene of their morning's adventure, Brother whispered softly:

"Ah, wasn't it a pity that it had a father and mother!"

At the door of the cabin stood the man, and they could see he was watching

for them. At sight of them, he hurried out after having said something to his wife, whom they could see moving about within.

Grandfather stopped the horses to say that he hoped the baby was none the worse for its trudge, and while he and the young farmer were talking, the woman came out with a basket in one hand, and a dish in the other. She came smiling up to the wagon and set the basket in between the children, then passing around to the front "allowed"¹ that after their long drive they would be hungry, and handed in a plate of warm buttered biscuits. She said that the baby was sound asleep; and she hoped that the ladies would drive up some day and see her. As with thanks and farewells they started again she called to the children:

"Don't open the basket till you get home. There is a present in it from the baby."

¹"Allowed" is the Virginian's expression for "assumed."

“What can it be?” they wondered again and again as they listened to soft stirs within, and tried to peer through the chinks.

“It is alive, whatever it is,” said Brother after a long and careful listening; “for I can hear breathing. And I think it is a Shetland pony colt,” and he beamed with bright fancies.

“Oh, Brother, what a goose you are! As if a Shetland pony colt—even a colt—could be carried in a basket by a woman,” and Sister laughed from her wisdom. “It is much more likely to be a dear little pig—or a rabbit. I almost hope it is not a rabbit—though they are so perfectly lovely—for it would make me so miserable to see the dear wee thing carried about by its ears.”

“It is the only way to carry rabbits,” with an air of manly hard-heartedness.

“Maybe it is; but I would always carry them in my apron.”

“Ho, yes; but boys don’t have aprons.

But if it would make you just perfectly shudder to see me take it by the ears, I could carry it inside my waist, the way Joey Vale carries pups," said Brother trying to suit her as far as possible.

"No, no; it would have to get used to it, and for that very reason I hope it is not a rabbit."

Brother once more put his ear to a chink and listened long and silently, then with a shout of joy, "It's pid-juns, Sister. It's pid-juns!"

"Are you sure, Brother? Don't say it if you're only guessing. All my life I have wanted pidjuns! Can you see 'them? are they snow white?"

"They sound like snow-white ones," after another long listening.

"Oh, Brother!"

He was right. When the happy and eventful drive ended at the farmhouse door, the basket was gingerly carried in by the two, and Bingo was firmly shut out—although he was full of curiosity—the

cover was removed before all the family, and the happy children saw a pair of pretty meek doves. One was snow-white, the other a soft bluish grey.

“That is a very good shape for the baby to have taken,” said grandfather.

“Oh, yes,” said Sister, looking up from the birds. “We’ll pretend we found two babies and that they turned into doves. Won’t we, Brother?”

“Let’s. And, Sister, really and truly, I would rather have doves than babies. The Nellis boys say that their baby just yells some days, and our doves will never yell. They are just as lovely and good as flowers. Say we name them Lily and—and——”

“And Lupine,” said Sister, clapping her hands.



THE . END .