

# Just a Little Girl

By  
*Alice  
Ashworth*

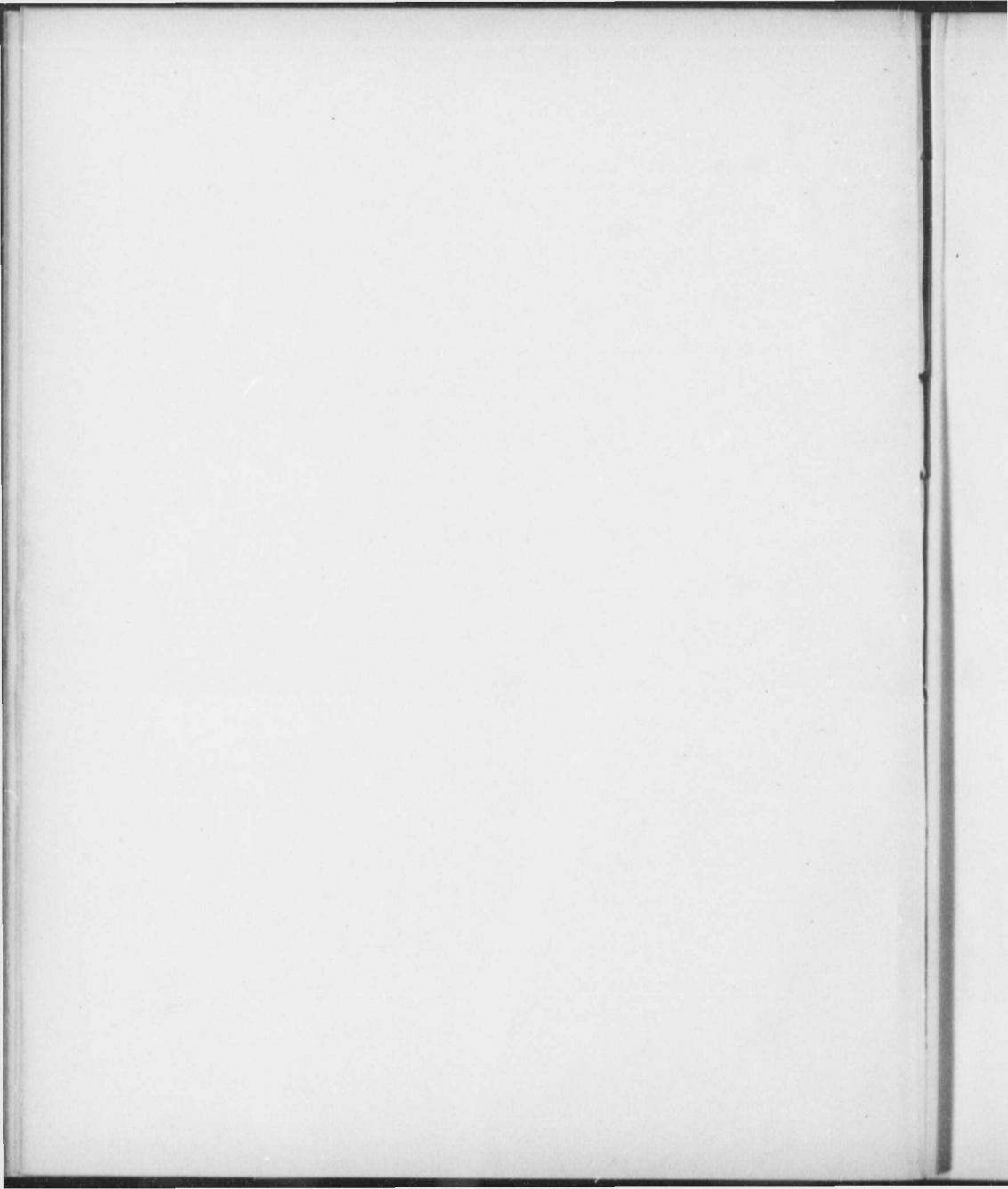


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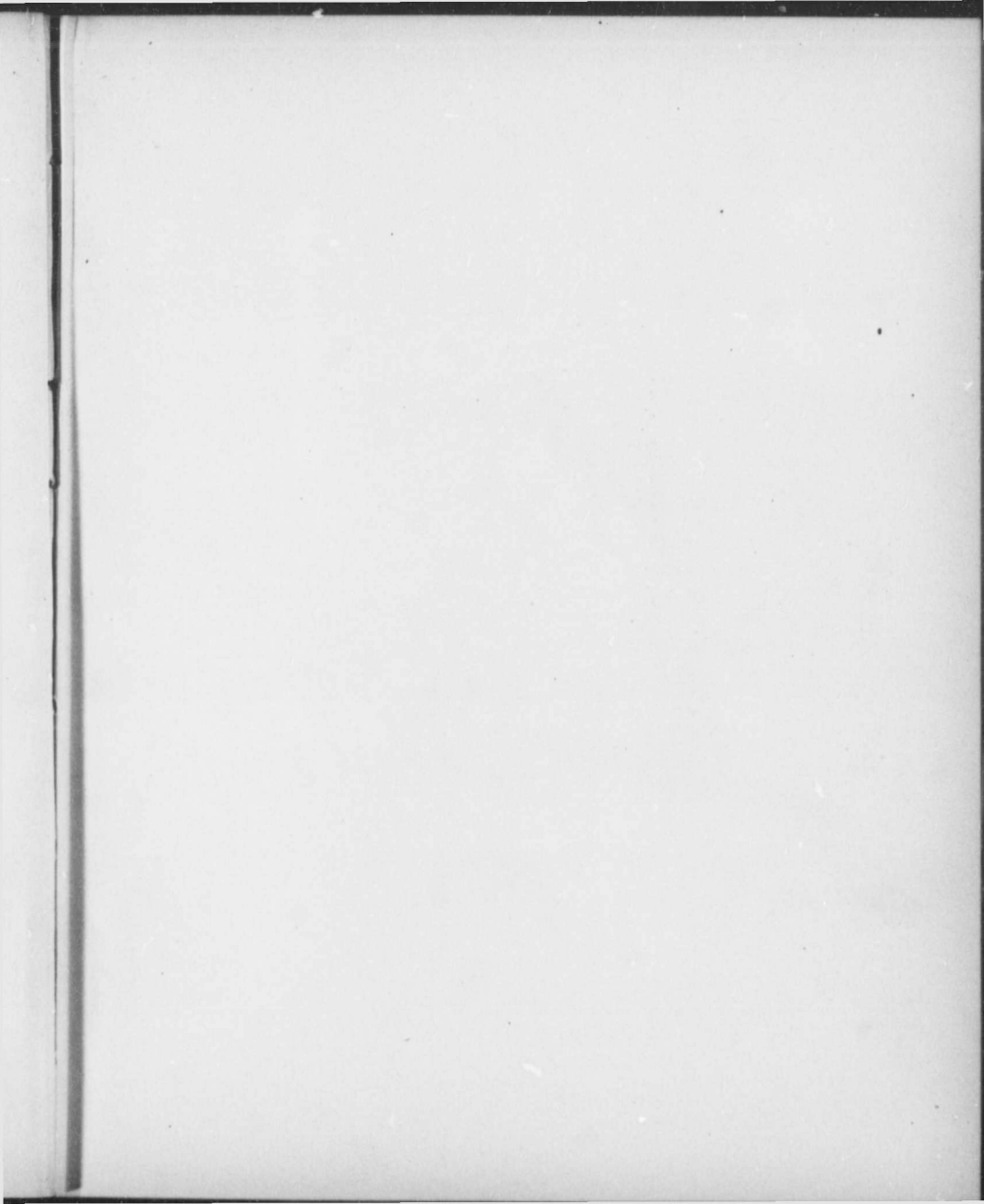
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JUST A LITTLE GIRL









SOMETIMES SHE SAT ON THE FLOOR AND PLAYED WITH HIM—*Page 13*

# JUST A LITTLE GIRL

*STORIES ABOUT GRACIE*

BY

ALICE ASHWORTH

(*Ms C, R, Townley*)

*With Illustrations by*

ETHEL PALIN

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## GREETING

This is a book that tells of Grace,  
A little girl I knew,  
Her father and her mother dear,  
Her baby brother, too;

And what they said, and what they did,  
And how they worked and played;  
And all about the little cake  
That she and Annie made.

It tells how Gracie was so good  
She made her mother glad,  
And then about some other days  
When she was rather bad.

It tells how at Aunt Minnie's farm  
She spent a happy day,  
And rode the horse, and fed the chicks,  
And saw men making hay.

And how with mother she played store,  
And visiting, and games.  
It tells about her pussy-cat,  
Her dollies, and their names.

Now read the stories. You will find,  
As through the book you go,  
That she was "just a little girl"  
Like many that you know.

ALICE ASHWORTH.

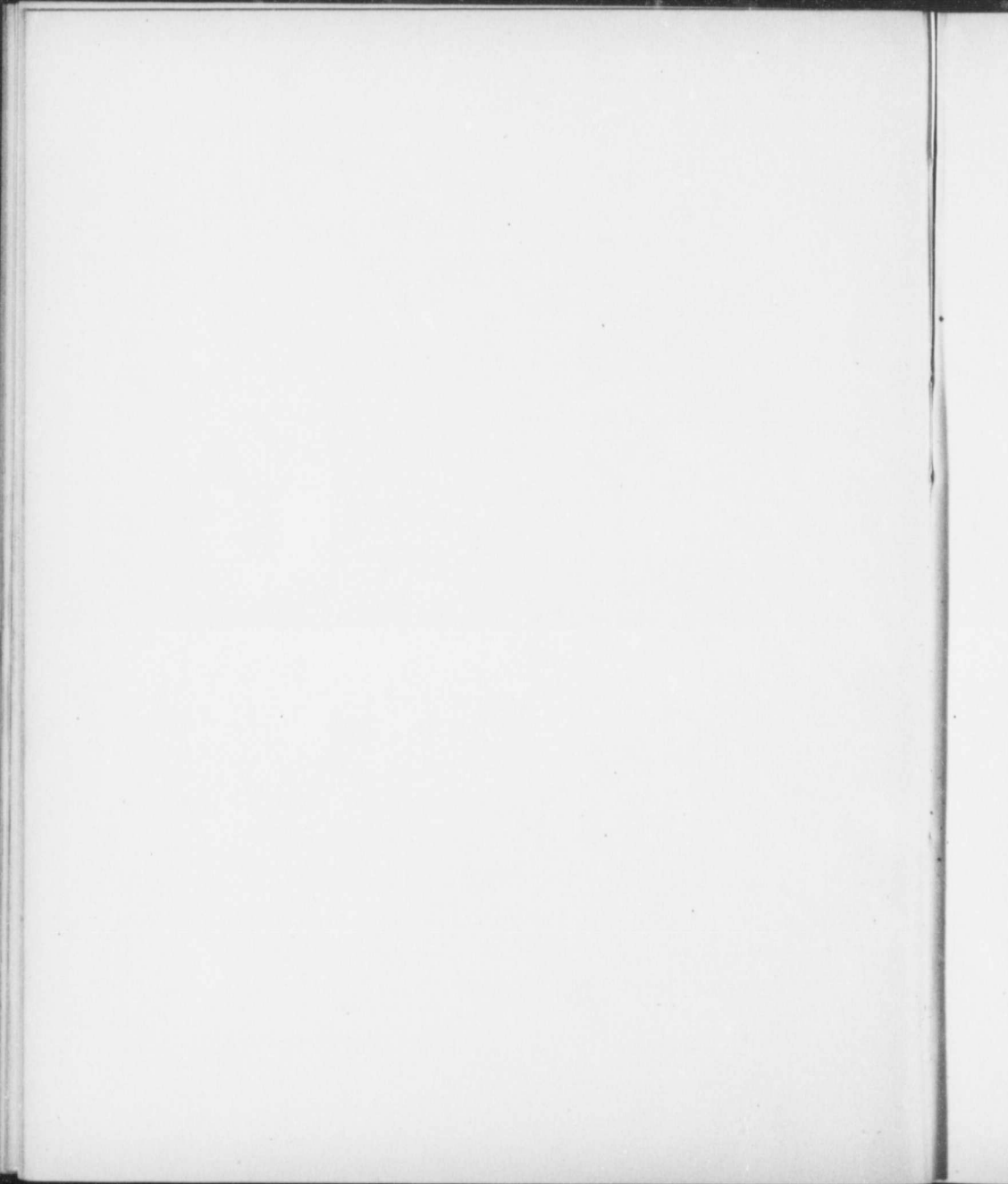
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## JUST A LITTLE GIRL

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### ABOUT GRACIE AND HER HOME

**E**MMMA GRACE was her name. They called her Gracie. When she was a good girl her mother would tell her she was a little help and comfort. Sometimes she was tiresome and naughty. Then her mother would sigh and say: "Dear me, child, why do you give me so much trouble?" But nearly all the time she was a dear, good little girl, and was happy and proud to be useful to her mother.

There were so many things she could do to help, though she was only a little more than four years old. She could play with the baby, and keep him from crying when mother was too busy to take him up and nurse him. She could pick up all the threads and little bits that fell on the floor

when her mother was sewing, and make the room nice and tidy. She could dust the chairs and the legs of the table. She could dry the dishes and put away the spoons. She could run errands and help set the table, and do a great many more very useful things.

Her father went to business every morning, and did not come back until evening.

When it was nearly time for him to come home, Gracie would stand at the window and watch for him. When she saw him coming she would call out: "Mother, here is father, here is dear father!" then she would run to the door to meet him and he would lift her up and kiss her and sometimes give her a ride round the room on his shoulders. She would pretend he was a horse, and say: "Get up there! Get up!" to make him go fast. Then the baby would stretch out his arms and shout to be taken, and father would put her down and hold him until supper was ready.

After supper Gracie would run and get him his slippers and bring him the newspaper to read. Often he would take her on his knee and talk to her while the baby was being put to bed. He would ask her what she had been doing all day, and if she had been a good girl. Sometimes he would tell her a story. Then it would be time for her to kiss him good-night and go to bed.

Her mother was a dear, darling mother. Gracie would often hug her tight, tight round the neck, and kiss her and tell her so. She knew lovely hymns and songs, and used to sing at night till the baby and Gracie went to sleep. Gracie slept in a little bed of her own in her mother's room.

They had a cat at their house. A box was in one corner of the sitting-room where all Gracie's playthings were kept. She did not go to school yet, but next year she was to begin.

## ABOUT THE BABY

THE baby was a darling. He was seven months old, and the prettiest and most knowing baby boy, for his age, that Gracie, or her father, or her mother had ever seen. He had two teeth. His hair was beginning to grow nicely. Mother used to brush it every day after his bath; she said she was not sure yet, but she thought it was going to be curly. His eyes were blue. His mouth was so pretty, with two little white teeth showing when he laughed. His dear little legs were fat and dimpled, and he would kick and kick, and laugh, and crow, and scarcely keep still enough for mother to put his clothes on.

He was strong, too. He would catch Gracie's finger and hold it so tightly that she could scarcely pull it away from him.

And he knew her. Sometimes when he

was crying a little, and did not like having his clothes fastened, mother would say to him: "Where is Gracie? See Gracie!"

Then he would stop crying, and would look at her, and he would laugh when she clapped her hands for him.

If she stood in front of him and held out her arms and said: "Will you come to me, baby? Come to Gracie, baby," he would put out his arms and jump, and want to go so much, that mother said she scarcely could hold him.

But he was too heavy for her to hold or carry. Mother was afraid he might fall, or be hurt, so Gracie played with him only in his cot or his carriage. Sometimes she sat on the floor with her back to the wall, and nursed him that way.

He never cried when he was having his bath. He liked the water. He would kick, and splash, and slap the water, till sometimes the floor was wet all around. He would cry when they took him out.

Once, when mother was lifting him out,

he knocked his tin bath right over, and all the water went on the floor.

“Oh! Baby! Baby!” said Gracie. “See what he did! Wasn’t he a naughty boy to do that, mother?”

But the baby only laughed and said “Goo, goo,” just as if he were trying to say: “I’m good, good,” and tried to put his little fist into his mouth.

Mother laughed too, and said: “We must not be cross with him, dear. Little babies do not know any better than to do things like that. They do not mean to be naughty.”

## ABOUT GRACIE'S DOLLS

AS GRACIE had no brothers or sisters about her own age, she often had to play alone. The baby was too young to know how to play games with her. He could not walk about, nor talk, nor understand how to pretend things. Sometimes another little girl would come to play, and sometimes her mother would play with her, but usually she had to play by herself.

She liked the other little girl to come, but she liked best when her mother played with her. Her mother could think of new things to do, and if they had the old games she knew just how Gracie liked them played. Mother never wanted to play some different way that she liked better herself, nor got cross because she could not have the best doll all the time.

Gracie had two dolls. One she had had

for a long time, and it was a good deal worn out. Its feet were off. One arm hung loose. Its nose was broken off flat, because once it fell on its face. There were only holes where its eyes used to be. It was a nice doll though, and Gracie was fond of it. Its name was Ellinora Alice, and it used to be able to cry. That was before the thing in its stomach that you hit to make it sound went wrong and would not work any more. Gracie loved her dear old Ellinora Alice. Sometimes she thought her nicer than the new doll.

Santa Claus brought her the new doll last Christmas. This doll's name was Eva. She was a beautiful doll, and was not broken at all yet.

Her hair was yellow and curly, and she had a lovely pink dress. All her petticoats were trimmed with lace. She had little boots like the baby wore, and a white lace bonnet, tied with pink ribbon strings. Her clothes were made so that you could take them off and put them on again. She



could not open and shut her eyes like Ellinora Alice used to be able to do, but she was a very pretty, pretty doll. Gracie did not play with Eva every day. She played with her when she had visitors, and sometimes when she had been a very good girl.

One day another little girl was playing with Gracie, and they had the two dolls out nursing them. The other little girl had Eva, and Gracie had Ellinora Alice. By and by Gracie thought she would like to have Eva herself, but the other little girl would not give her to Gracie. She wanted to keep the best doll herself, instead of changing for Ellinora Alice.

Gracie said she *must* change, it was her turn to have Eva. And the little girl said she wouldn't. Then Gracie cried and slapped the other little girl, and pulled the doll away from her.

Then the other little girl cried and slapped Gracie back, and said she would never come to play with her again.

Mother came into the room just then to see what was the matter. She scolded Gracie, and said she was very naughty and selfish to treat her little friend that way. Then she took Eva and put her away, and would not let either of them have her to play with any more that day.

### GRACIE'S LITTLE PIE

ONE day mother was making pies, and Gracie was watching her. She liked to see her mother cooking, and to see the lovely cakes and pies taken out of the oven, smelling so delicious.

"I wish you would let me make a pie, mother," said she. "I think I could. Aunt Minnie gave me a little rolling-pin a long time ago, and I have never used it."

"Well, you have been such a good girl all morning, that you may run and get it if you like," said her mother, "and I will let you try to make a pie for yourself."

Mother tied one of her own aprons round Gracie's neck to keep her dress clean, and put up her sleeves. Then she gave her a bit of paste off the large piece, and Gracie began to roll it out.

It did not roll quite as easily as she ex-

pected. Sometimes it stuck to the board. Then it would stick to the rolling-pin. But mother showed her how to scatter flour so that it would not be so sticky.

It was hard work she found. She got some flour on herself, and her hands were all over dough, but her mother helped her a little, and sliced the apple for her. By and by she had a beautiful pie made in a little tin plate.

They put it in the oven and baked it. When they took it out Gracie did feel proud of it. It looked so nice.

First she thought she would like to taste it at once. Then she said: "No, I'll keep it for father to surprise him." So they put it away till supper-time.

When Gracie saw her father coming she ran to meet him.

As soon as she had kissed him she said: "Father, you don't know what there is for supper! There is something to surprise you. Don't you tell him mother, don't you tell him!"

“What can it be?” said her father wondering. And he began to guess all sorts of things. He wanted to find out, but she would not tell him.

When they sat down to the table he looked all around. At first he did not notice the little pie.

“Now, what is it to surprise me, I wonder?” said he. Gracie waited, and said nothing; but she was so afraid he might not see it.

“Why, what is that beside your plate?” said mother.

Then he saw Gracie's pie.

“Well, well!” said he, “this little apple pie looks good. I wonder who made it! Did you make it, mother? It is perhaps the nicest looking pie I think I ever saw.”

Gracie was so pleased she hardly could keep quiet.

“I didn't make it,” said mother. “Taste it, and see if you like it.”

So he tasted it. Then he smacked his lips and took another taste.

"My! This is delicious! So sweet and nice. You bought it from the baker, I suppose, as mother did not make it. I hope he has more like it, that we can get to-morrow!"

Gracie was laughing, and laughing, she was so pleased.

"I made it," she said.

"Well, well!" Her father *was* surprised. He had never thought of her being able to make a pie. He could scarcely believe it at first, till mother said: "Yes, indeed, Gracie made it herself!"

It was large enough for each of them to have a piece to taste. Father said he really believed that Gracie would soon be as good a cook as her mother.

## THE MORNING GRACIE CRIED

ONE morning Gracie was cross and fretful when she woke up. She cried and said she could not dress herself.

Her mother was busy with the baby, and told her just to pull her stockings on, and that she would help her with the rest of her clothes in a few minutes.

But Gracie said: "No, I don't know how" (and you know she *did* know how, only she was bad-tempered and naughty). And by and by when she did try to put one stocking on, she was careless. She did not begin rightly, and the heel came on top of her foot. Then she said: "There now, I told you I couldn't do it." And she threw her other stocking away, and lay down and cried, and cried, and cried.

"Now, now! Stop this noise at once!" said her mother. "The baby does not know what to think of you! See how

good he is, laughing and crowing there. Sit up and be good, and I'll help you now."

But Gracie still lay there, and roared and cried. She didn't sit up. She wouldn't even hold her feet steady while her mother put on her stockings and shoes.

Her mother tried to coax her to be good. She said: "Hurry now; stand up and let us get your clothes on, and go and have some nice porridge and milk for breakfast. If you are not dressed quickly perhaps the pussy-cat will get it, and eat it all up. That would be funny, wouldn't it?"

But Gracie wouldn't laugh. She still was a bad girl and wouldn't even put her arms in when mother tried to dress her.

Of course her mother could not allow this bad behavior. She quickly pulled off Gracie's shoes and stockings, and put her right into bed again, and covered her up.

"Very well," said mother, "this naughty girl may stay in bed all day! She is not





KITTY REALLY HAD JUMPED UP ON GRACIE'S  
CHAIR—*Page 27*



my little girl. My little girl has gone away. Come, baby, we will go and have our breakfast." And she picked up the baby and turned to go away and shut the door.

Then Gracie stopped crying, and jumped up quickly, and said: "O mother! I *am* your little girl. I will be good now. Please may I get up and be dressed?"

Her mother forgave her and let her have her clothes on and come to breakfast. But she said that next time such a thing happened she really would make Gracie stay in bed till dinner-time.

And do you know, when they got there, the kitty really had jumped up on Gracie's chair, and was looking at her porridge.

"O mother, do you think she took any?" asked Gracie.

"No, I think she was only looking at it," said her mother. "But it is a good thing you were not a few minutes later, or it might have been all gone. It would have served you right for being so naughty."

ABOUT WHEN MOTHER WAS A  
LITTLE GIRL

ONE day Gracie burned herself on the stove. "Oh! oh!" she cried when she touched it, and she ran sobbing to her mother. Her thumb and two of her fingers were burnt, and they hurt her dreadfully.

Her mother was so sorry for her. She quickly put some cotton wool on the poor little fingers, to keep them from blistering. Outside of that she put a handkerchief. So that Gracie's hand was all tied up in a little bundle.

It still hurt her, and she kept crying. Her mother took her on her lap and nursed her, and kissed it better, and then it was not quite so painful. Then she talked to Gracie, to try to make her forget her

pain. "I'll tell you a story if you like," said she. "What shall it be about?"

"Tell me about when you were a little girl," said Gracie, and she stopped crying to listen. So her mother began:

"Once, when I was a little girl just about as old as you are, I went to visit my grandmother. She lived in the country. It was a great treat for me to go there. She was so kind, and it was such a nice place.

"There was a garden, with roses and lilies, and all kinds of lovely flowers in it. There were apple trees, and peach trees, and plum trees that had fruit growing on them."

"And did your grandmother let you eat things?" asked Gracie.

"Yes, indeed, she did. When the fruit was ripe, she allowed me to eat all I wished."

"That was nice," said Gracie. "What else was there?"

"There was a horse they sometimes gave

me a ride on, and a cow, and chickens, and ducks. They had a grey kitten, that I used to feed with milk every morning, and the dearest, fat, playful little puppy you ever saw. He would jump, and bark, and run away with things in his mouth, and shake, and shake them for fun."

"But he never bit you?" said Gracie.

"Oh, no. It was all in play. But sometimes he ran away with my hat, or tore my dress. My grandmother told me I must take care, and not let him spoil things. I tried to obey her, but I used to forget.

"Well, one day I had on a nice clean dress, and a pair of new sandal shoes, and my best hat—for I was going for a walk with my auntie by and by.

"It had rained the day before, and there was a puddle. I thought what fun it would be to sail a little boat I had in this puddle while I was waiting. I intended to be very, very careful, and not get myself dirty.

"So I got the boat and sailed it for a



I'LL TELL YOU A STORY—*Page 29*





while. Then it floated beyond my reach. I wanted it, so what did I do but take off my new shoes and lay them on the grass. Then I waded right into the water. I thought I would get the boat, then I would put my shoes on again, and nobody would ever know. Wasn't I naughty?"

"Yes," said Gracie, but she laughed to think of mother in the puddle.

"Well, what do you suppose happened? The puppy was there. While I was in the puddle he picked up the shoes and ran off with them. I called out, 'Here, sir! Here, sir! Come back!' but away he went as fast as he could run. He shook them, and shook them, and then lay down and began to chew them. I tried to run after him, and my hat fell into the water. I tried to pick it up, and down I went myself. I rolled over and over, and oh, dear! oh, dear! I was a wet, muddy, dirty little girl, when they came to see what I was crying about. I was sitting in the middle of the puddle, looking like a little drowned rat."

Gracie laughed. "And what did they do?" she asked.

"They took my shoes away from the puppy, and took all my wet clothes off, and washed me, and put me to bed. I had a good scolding, and you may be sure there was no nice walk for me that day."

Gracie wanted to hear more about it, but her hand was better by then, and mother said that was all the story she could tell her to-day.

### THE DAY GRACIE MINDED THE BABY

ONE morning Gracie's mother had washing to do; some of the baby's clothes and Gracie's best dress.

Nearly every day the baby went to sleep after having his bath, but this morning he would not shut his eyes.

Mother put him in his carriage and gave him his bottle. She covered him up, thinking he would drop off to sleep. But no! There he was, wide-awake, after he had finished, and he wanted to be taken up and nursed.

Mother said: "No, no, you must go to sleep." Then she hushed him for a little while, and Gracie was very quiet. They thought he was fast asleep at last, and were leaving the room, when he opened his eyes wide, and turned and looked after them.

“Oh, you little fox!” cried mother, “making us believe you were fast asleep.” Then she said:

“You will have to mind him, Gracie, while I go on with my work.”

She set him up in his carriage, and brought the carriage near where she was working, so that he and Gracie could see what she was doing, and that she could watch them, too.

The baby was good for a long time. Then he began to be a little cross. Gracie was tired of playing with him and keeping him amused.

“Why don’t you play with him nicely?” said mother. “Clap your hands for him, and show him things.”

“I’m tired of doing it,” said Gracie crossly. “I won’t play with him any more. He’s a bad baby! And he caught hold of my hair and pulled it just now. Stop that now!” she shouted, as the baby made another little catch at her hair. (The poor little fellow didn’t know it hurt her—he

only meant it in play.) Then naughty Gracie gave his dear, little, fat hands a slap.

He was so frightened and heartbroken, that he began to cry and cry, and sob and sob.

Gracie was very sorry the moment she did it, and *so* ashamed of herself.

Mother came and took the baby in her arms, and kissed and comforted him. She was angry with Gracie and scolded her well.

“You are a naughty, cruel little sister, to strike your poor baby brother. He didn’t mean to hurt you! This is a strange way to act when I am so busy, and you might be such a helpful little woman. I am ashamed of you! What will father say when I tell him?”

Then Gracie began to cry bitterly. She didn’t want her father to know. He would be so sorry to hear how bad-tempered she had been.

“Please don’t tell father,” she begged.  
“Please don’t tell father. Let me mind

the baby again, and I will be kind and loving, and do my very best."

So mother forgave her, and put baby in his carriage once more. She promised she would not tell father.

And do you know, Gracie was such a good little nurse, and moved the carriage and sang to the baby so nicely, that in five minutes she had him fast asleep.

Mother was so pleased with her that she praised her and said:

"You are my own good little girl. Now, if you like to get all your doll's clothes, I will let you wash them yourself in this basin."

So Gracie took off all Ellinora Alice's clothes and brought them. Mother tied a towel around her to keep her dry, and gave her some warm water and soap. Gracie washed the things nice and clean, and hung them up to dry. When they were dry she ironed them with her own little iron, and they looked fresh and lovely.

## HOW MOTHER AND GRACIE PLAYED STORE

IT WAS raining, and Gracie could not go out to play. She made pictures, and played with her dolls, and cut out pretty paper things with blunt-pointed scissors, as her mother showed her. She looked at her picture-book, and played with her spools, till she was tired of them all.

“Oh, I wish that nasty old rain would stop!” said she.

“But the rain is good for the trees, and the grass, and all the dear little plants that are growing,” said her mother. “By and by it will be fine again, and you can go out. If you like I will play store with you for a while.”

“Oh, good, good!” cried Gracie. She always liked her mother to play, too. “Will

you keep store, and shall I be Mrs. Mullins and go to buy from you, or shall I have the store and you come and buy things from me?"

"I had better be the storekeeper," said mother. "Then I can sit here on the sofa with your little table in front of me for a counter, and go on with my sewing."

So they did that way, and mother was Mr. Johnson, who kept a grocery-store.

Then Gracie went away to the other end of the room, and came back, and said:

"Good morning, Mr. Johnson."

"Why, how do you do, Mrs. Mullins," said her mother. "You have not been in for a long time. I hope you are quite well. What can I do for you to-day, Ma'am?"

"I want to buy a pound of butter. Have you some good butter?"

"Yes, Mrs. Mullins, I have very good butter to-day. Will one pound be enough?"

"Yes," Gracie said, "one pound will be enough."



"Here it is," said mother, pretending to give it to her. "Now what next?"

"Give me fifty cents' worth of sugar and a pound of coffee. The coffee must be good, as the last was not very nice."

"That was too bad. I think this is very good coffee, and I hope you will like it. Will there be anything else?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Johnson; that will be all to-day, I think. How much will that be?"

"One dollar, please, Mrs. Mullins."

"Here it is," said Gracie, pretending to give her mother some money.

"Thank you, Mrs. Mullins. Shall I send the parcels home?"

"Yes, please, Mr. Johnson, because they are too heavy for me to carry. And be sure to send them soon."

"I'll send them at once, Mrs. Mullins."

Then Gracie stood a minute. "Good-bye, Mr. Johnson," she said.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Mullins; much obliged."

Gracie pretended to go home then. In

a few minutes she came back again and bought a lot more things.

They played that way for a long time. Then she said to her mother:

“Now, you be the druggist, and I’ll come and get some medicine—because my baby is sick, and my little boy has a dreadful toothache, and my poor husband broke his leg.”

So then her mother had some glass jars and little bottles beside her, and kept a drug-store. Gracie was Mrs. Smith. She came and bought pills, and powders, and bottles of medicine, and a new feeding bottle for her baby, and all sorts of things. They had great fun.

They were still playing store when father came home. Then they had to stop, for it was time to have supper.

THE DAY THEY PLAYED VISITOR

“MOTHER, will you play visiting?”  
said Gracie one afternoon.

“Yes, dear,” said her mother. “You may wear this long, blue skirt of mine; we will tuck it up in front, and leave a train behind.”

“Oh, that will be nice! Please fix my hair, too, and let me have a pretty hat.”

So mother fastened Gracie’s hair up with hairpins like ladies wear it, and let her have a hat with pretty pink flowers and white lace on it.

“I like this nice hat,” said Gracie. “And I can hold my train up like you do when I walk.” And Gracie walked up and down proudly two or three times.

“Now let us play you are Mrs. Wilson and I am Mrs. Brown come to visit you.”

So mother sat down and Gracie came and pretended to ring a door-bell.

"O Mrs. Brown, is that you? How do you do?" said her mother. "Come right in; I am so glad to see you. Sit down on this chair. Are you quite well?"

"Yes, thank you, Mrs. Wilson," said Gracie.

"And how is Mr. Brown?"

"He is not very well. He had to have the doctor yesterday."

"Dear me! I am sorry to hear that. I hope he will be better soon. Is the baby quite well?"

"Yes," said Gracie. "She has two teeth now. How is your baby, Mrs. Wilson?"

"Very well, thank you, Mrs. Brown. He is asleep just now."

They talked a little while longer, then Gracie said:

"Well, I think I must go home now."

"Stay and take tea with me, Mrs. Brown," said mother.

"No, thank you, Mrs. Wilson, not today. I must take some medicine home for my husband. Good-bye, Mrs. Wilson."

"Good-bye, Mrs. Brown. Come to see me again soon."

Then Gracie went away. In a minute she came back again for another visit.

"Why, how do you do, Mrs. Brown! I am so pleased to see you!" said her mother. "How is Mr. Brown to-day?"

"He is better now, thank you, Mrs. Wilson, but the baby is very sick. We had to rub her chest last night, and put a flannel on her throat."

"Well, well! She must have a bad cold. I hope she will soon be well." Then they talked a long time about different things. "But take off your hat, Mrs. Brown, and stay all afternoon," said mother.

"No, thank you, Mrs. Wilson, my baby might cry. I must go home now. Good-bye."

The next time Gracie came she had her doll in her arms.

"This is my baby, Mrs. Wilson," she said. "She is better to-day, and I brought her to see you."

"What a beautiful baby you have, Mrs. Brown, and she is so nicely dressed! How old is she?"

"Six months," said Gracie, "and she has four teeth to-day, and is beginning to talk."

"Well, well, Mrs. Brown! Why, what a wonderful baby!"

They played for ever so long, and Gracie was still dressed up when her father came home.

"Who is this strange lady?" he said, when he saw Gracie.

"This is Mrs. Brown, who has come to visit me," said mother.

"Oh, indeed!" said he. "How do you do? But where is my own little girl? This is a grown-up lady."

"I will get her," said Gracie. Then she ran away and took off the long skirt and hat, and came running back. "Here she is, father," she said.

And her father said: "Why, so it *is* you!" And he picked her up in his arms and kissed her.

## THE DAY THEY MADE THE CAKE

ANNIE came to play with Gracie one afternoon.

“Mother, may Annie and I have a tea party?” asked Gracie.

“Yes, my dear,” said mother. “Get out your set of dishes, and the little table father made you, and we will find something nice for tea.”

So Gracie and Annie spread a small, white cloth, and put the plates, and cups, and saucers on the table. They set a place for each doll and one for the cat, as well as places for themselves. The dolls they pretended were named Mrs. Perkins and Mrs. Smith.

“What may we have to eat, mother?” said Gracie, when all the dishes were on the table.

“How would you and Annie like to make a little cake for your own tea?”

“Oh! we would like it, we would like it,” they said quickly.

“Well, come into the kitchen with me, and I will show you how.”

Mother put big aprons on them to keep their dresses clean. She gave them one egg broken into a dish. Then she put in a little milk, some sugar, and butter, and flour, and a handful of currants.

Gracie mixed it with a spoon till her hand was tired. Then Annie did so, too. Then mother said it was ready to bake, and she thought it would be very nice. She put it in a buttered tin, and then in the oven.

The girls took off their big aprons, and went back to play till it was cooked.

Soon mother said: “Come and look at your cake. It is baked, and it does look good.”

They ran in to see the cake. It was on the kitchen table, cooling; and it looked





MOTHER PUT BIG APRONS ON THEM—Page 48



lovely. They could smell how delicious it was.

“Here is some fruit in a little dish,” said mother, “and a plate of bread and butter, and a small pitcher of milk. We will cut the cake, and you may sit down now, and eat it, and drink your tea.”

The girls thought that cake one of the best they had ever eaten. And indeed it was very good, mother said, as she ate her piece.

“Will you have some cake, Mrs. Perkins? Do take a bit, Mrs. Smith,” said Gracie to her dolls. But they only sat there, and did not eat anything.

They had to put Miss Kitty away. She would not stay on her chair, but jumped up on the table. She tried to drink all the milk, and licked the bread and butter.

“You are a greedy old thing, Miss Kitty,” said Gracie. “You do not eat nicely, so go away. I will not ask you to my party next time.”

They had such a pleasant tea party!

They did not eat all the cake. There was some left for father. He said: "Did Annie and Gracie really make this delicious cake themselves? May I have another piece?"

And Gracie and Annie were pleased and proud girls, for father could hardly believe they had made such a good cake themselves.

HOW ANNIE AND GRACIE PLAYED  
DOCTOR

ANNIE was playing with Gracie on another day. She had her own doll with her. It was a little girl baby doll, dressed in a long, white dress.

"Now, you sit there, Annie, and hold your baby, and be Mrs. Brown," said Gracie, "and I will come to see you."

Then she went away a minute. Mother gave her a small shawl to dress up in, and she came back. She was Mrs. Smith.

"How do you do, Mrs. Brown? I came to see how your baby is."

"My baby is very sick, Mrs. Smith. She is crying all the time. Don't you hear her? Hush now! hush, poor baby!"

"Did you give her any medicine?" said Gracie. "You ought to send for the doctor. Shall I go and get him?"

"Yes, please, Mrs. Smith. I wish you would."

"I'll go for him now. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, Mrs. Smith. Tell him that he must come quickly, for my baby is very sick."

Gracie went, and put on her father's hat, and found a walking-stick, and came again.

"I am the doctor," she said. "Mrs. Smith told me to come."

"How do you do, doctor? Can you make my baby better?"

"Oh, yes, here is some medicine for her, and give her some nice milk, and she will be better in the morning."

They played that way some time, then Gracie said: "Now, I will be a sick lady, and you be the doctor come to see me."

So she lay down on the lounge, and was covered up, and Annie was the doctor.

"How are you to-day, Mrs. Smith? Let me see your tongue."

Gracie put out her tongue.



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The doctor shook her head.

"Dear me! It is a very bad tongue. Here is some medicine. You must take a spoonful every day. I will come to-morrow. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, doctor," said Gracie.

Then the doctor came back once more.

"And how are you now, Mrs. Smith?"

"I am much better to-day," said Gracie.

"My pain is gone."

"Did you take the medicine?"

"Yes, I took it all."

"Well, you may get up now. Good-bye."

Then they wanted mother to be sick, and give her medicine.

"No, no," said mother, "I think you have played doctor long enough. Here is an orange and a cookie for each of you. That will be a change from all this nasty medicine you have been taking. And by the time you have eaten them, it will be time for Annie to go home."

THE DAY THEY WENT TO THE  
COUNTRY

ONE day mother, and Gracie, and the baby went to visit Aunt Minnie.

Aunt Minnie lived in the country, so they went in the cars on the railroad.

Gracie sat near the window, so that she could look out.

They flew along very fast. At first there were only houses and people to look at, but by and by they came to fields. Gracie saw horses, and cows, and sheep in the fields. She saw trees, and grass, and flowers growing. There were birds, and bees, and butterflies flying about, and she saw men making hay in the meadows.

It was nearly dinner-time when they came to Aunt Minnie's home.

She was very glad to see them. She said the baby had grown ever so much

since she had seen him, and that Gracie was such a big girl she scarcely would have known her.

At dinner they had peas and new potatoes out of Aunt Minnie's garden. Then they had berries and sugar, and thick, delicious cream. Aunt Minnie kept a cow, and had all the milk and cream she could use.

They went to the field, after dinner, to look at the cow. She was a brown cow, with horns. She said, "Moo, moo," dreadfully loud, but mother said she would not hurt Gracie, so she went up to her and patted her. The cow was eating grass.

There was a horse, too. They put Gracie on his back and gave her a ride. She liked it so much she did not want to get off again. But Aunt Minnie said, "Come and see the chickens now." Then they went to where the hens were.

There was one mother-hen that had ten little, yellow chickens. They were the dearest little things you ever saw. The

hen kept saying, "Cluck, cluck," and they all ran after her. Gracie fed them with some grain out of a tin. She threw it on the ground, and they came and picked it up.

There were three white ducks. Gracie saw them swimming in the water. She wanted them to come to her, and they only said, "Quack, quack," and swam away.

"Let us go into the garden now," said Aunt Minnie. "You may pick some berries to eat, and get a bunch of flowers to take home."

It was a beautiful garden. There were sweet-smelling flowers of many kinds. They were pink, and blue, and white, and red, and every other pretty color. Then there were carrots, and turnips, and potatoes growing. There were berries, and a peach tree with peaches on it.

When Gracie had eaten all the fruit she wished, and picked some flowers, it was time to go home.

“O mother,” said Gracie that night when she was going to bed, “I wish we could go and see Aunt Minnie every day. But I would like father with us, too.”

“Perhaps if you are a very good girl,” said father, “I will take you all to the country some day soon, for a holiday, and we will stay for a week.”

