

HERMIT AND THE WISE LITTLE GIRL

Tale of an Orphan Who Visited a Lonely Man at the Seashore.

"Ugh!" said the Tabby Cat, "I hate this weather," and she sat under the steps of the Hermit's hut, where she was slightly sheltered from the cutting wind, and tucked her paws under her.

"If I could fly," said the Lame Gull, wistfully, "I should not mind the cold."

The Fiddler Crab scuttled up a sand hillock and gazed out over the gloomy sea.

"The cold doesn't hurt me any," he said, "but the poor old Hermit will suffer. He needs some one to take care of him, at his age."

"That's it," said the Tabby Cat, and the Lame Gull together. "He needs some one to take care of him."

Now the Hermit lived on a little point of land that extended far out into the sea, so that there was blue water to the north of it and blue water to the west of it and blue water to the east, but to the south there was just sand and little scrubby wind-beaten trees.

Every morning the Hermit went a-fishing, and the wind blew from the east and from the west, and from the north over the wide, cold sea, and shook the little hut where the Tabby Cat and the Lame Gull sat and shivered by the fireless hearth, while the Fiddler Crab dug deep into the sand outside.

"It's a long wait until evening," said the Lame Gull. "I wish it was time for the Hermit to come back." But the wistful gaze that glistened through the gray lace showed that it was just noon, and the Hermit never returned until after dark.

"Why, there he is now," said the Fiddler Crab, whose peeping eyes had made out a black speck riding on the top of the waves.

"He is early," said the Tabby Cat, as she rose and stretched herself.

"It isn't the Hermit," said the Fiddler Crab suddenly, "it's a raft with a small person on it, and she is holding on tight."

They all ran down to the edge of the curving waves, the Tabby Cat taking long leaps, the Lame Gull half limping, half flying, and the Fiddler Crab going sideways and working his one claw like a wall.

When they reached the beach they stood in a row and watched the raft.

On the raft was a Wise Little Girl. She was an orphan, and she had lived for a long time with an aunt, but one day the aunt had married a man with five children, and after a while the Wise Little Girl, who was really very wise indeed, found that the food and clothes that were given to her were needed for the five children, so she packed a little bundle and started away to seek her fortune, "and," said the Wise Little Girl, "I shall travel and travel until I find some one who needs me very badly, and then I shall stop."

So she kissed all the five children who were sleeping in their little beds, left a note for her aunt, launched her raft on the wide, wide sea, and sailed away.

When she saw the three strange companions on the shore, she clasped her hands.

"Poor little things," she said, "they certainly need some one to take them out of the cold," so she landed them and there.

The Tabby Cat came rubbing around her feet, but the Lame Gull and the Fiddler Crab stood back half afraid; but when the Wise Little Girl turned her pleasant face to them and spoke to them in her soft, sweet voice, they followed her straight to the hut.

The Wise Little Girl knocked at the door of the Hermit's hut, and then she knocked



"WE NEED HER HERE ALL THE TIME."

twice, and then she knocked three times, and as no one answered, she opened the door and went in.

It was a dull, cold little place. The floor was dirty, and there were cobwebs in the corners, for the Hermit, poor man, was always too tired when he came in to clean up properly, and there was no one else to do it.

"My," said the Wise Little Girl, "what a place!" and she opened one of the dusty windows and let the cold, fresh air blow in. Then she looked around carefully.

"It needs a good cleaning," she said, and went to work.

First she built a fire in the stove and put the kettle on to heat. Then when the water was hot she lifted the Tabby Cat and the Lame Gull to the top of the table out of the way, but the Fiddler Crab she turned out into the sand, for she was a little bit afraid of his claw; then she scrubbed the floor with sand and soap and water until it was white as foam. After that she washed the windows and polished the stove, and all the time she worked she sang a soft, little song.

"What a lovely child," said the Tabby Cat to the Lame Gull, as she stretched herself luxuriously on the clean floor in front of the blazing fire and licked her feet.

The Lame Gull preened his draggled feathers in lazy comfort. "We need her here all the time," he said.

"Indeed we do," echoed the Fiddler Crab, who had crept back into the hut.

After the Wise Little Girl had cleaned everything that could be cleaned, she looked into the little cupboard and found salt pork and a fresh fish and potatoes and onions, and she soon had a delicious fish chowder bubbling on the stove.

"There must be someone to come home," she said to the admiring Tabby Cat and the Gull and the Crab, "or there would not be things in here to eat, and whoever comes needs a good dinner on this stormy night," and she put the coffee-pot over the coals.

Outside the wind blew and blow and blew, and the waves roared and raged, and it grew later and later, but the Hermit did not come, and at last the faithful Tabby Cat became uneasy and meowed to go out, and the Wise Little Girl let her go, and the anxious Tabby Cat ran down to the beach and sat there in the storm and watched and watched the dark waters for some sign of her master.

He came after a while, fighting against the cruel waves that tried to wash him out of his little boat, and when he climbed over the side and waded in to shore he was half dead with cold and fatigue. He staggered towards his hut with the worried Tabby Cat at his heels. He stumbled over the steps and the Wise Little Girl heard him coming and opened the door, and when the Hermit looked into the bright room with its white, white floor and its red, red fire and with the fragrant steam rising from the shining pots, he

passed his hand over his forehead.

"It is a dream," he murmured, and fell into the chair which the Wise Little Girl had placed for him.

"Drink this," said the Wise Little Girl in her pleasant voice, as she brought him coffee in a big white cup. While he drank it the Tabby Cat and the Lame Gull and the Fiddler Crab sat at his feet and murmured to each other. "He must like her, she is so kind. He will surely let her stay."

Presently when the hot drink had revived the Hermit, he looked at the Wise Little Girl whose cheeks were pink as she stirred the chowder.

"How did you come here?" he asked wonderingly.

"By the way of the sea," said the Wise Little Girl, "and when I looked into your hut and found it needed me, I stayed to clean it, and now," she went on briskly as she lifted the kettle from the fire, "I am glad I am here to make you comfortable on this stormy night."

She poured some of the chowder into a big blue bowl and set it on the table, then she set the little dish for the Tabby Cat and the Gull and the Crab.

"The poor things must be very hungry," she said to the Hermit, "and they have waited so patiently."

The three companions gathered around the dish which she had set on the hearth and waited impatiently for the food to cool.

"Did you ever see such thoughtfulness?" said the Tabby Cat.

"Never," said the Fiddler Crab, "and while I prefer my fish raw, I shall eat chowder just for her sake."

"Look," said the Lame Gull, softly. Then they saw the old Hermit reach out his trembling hand and lay it on the bright head of the Wise Little Girl.

"Stay with me," he said. "For I am a lonely old man and I need you."

"If you need me I should love to stay," said the Wise Little Girl, happily, and she smiled at the Hermit, and the Hermit smiled back, and the Tabby Cat purred, and the Lame Gull whistled contentedly, but the Fiddler Crab waved his one claw in the air and looked very fierce. But that was really just his way of showing that he was the very happiest Fiddler Crab that ever walked seaward.

PLACES IT IS WELL TO AVOID

AS places of residence neither the Bahrien Islands in the Persian Gulf, nor the City of Yakutsk, Siberia, have much to offer in the way of climate.

In Bahrien you cook and in Yakutsk you freeze. Bahrien is said to be the hottest place in the world. The thermometer often registers between 110 and 120 deg. night and day for months at a time. This rather beats Fort Yuma, Ariz., which is considered the hottest place in the United States.

Yakutsk is called the coldest city in the world. The thermometer frequently registers 72 deg. below zero.

Though Yakutsk is the coldest city in the world, Verkhoyansk, in northeastern Siberia, claims to be the coldest inhabited place on the globe, the thermometer registering 90 deg. below zero in January.

It also claims to be the place possessing the most variable climate, for while it is 90 below in January, it is 86 above in the shade in August during the day with a drop down to freezing every Midsummer night at random cast.

The wettest place in the world is Greytown, Nicaragua, where the annual rainfall is 200 inches.

The driest place in the world is probably Atacama, in northern Chile. There is a shower there about once in every ten years. Nothing grows of this desolate strip of barren coast and the dreary towns from which the nitrates and the minerals mined in that region are shipped depend for their subsistence upon food brought to them in ships from the fertile strips to the north and south of the coast.

Northern Russia and the shores of the French Congo are said to be the cloudiest places in the world, and for fog there is no region like the Grand Banks, the southern coast of Newfoundland and the waters off Nova Scotia.

This region is one of fog for a large part of the year; and the very home of the fog is the island of Grand Manan, at the entrance of the Bay of Fundy, where, the sailors declare, the natives manufacture fog. When a bank of especially thick fog is seen approaching over the waters the mariners turn to each other and say, "The Grand Manners are at work."

A Deed and a Word.

Charles Mackay.

A little stream had lost its way
Amid the grass and fern;
A passing stranger scooped a well,
Where weary men might turn;
He walled it in, and hung with care
A ladle at the brink;
He thought not of the deed he did,
But judged that all might drink.
He passed again, and lo! the well,
By summer never dried,
Had cooled ten thousand parching tongues
And saved a life beside.

A nameless man amid a crowd
That thronged the daily mart,
Let fall a word of hope and love,
Unstudied, from the heart;
A whisper on the tumult thrown,
A transient breath of cheer,
It rained a brother from the dust,
It saved a soul from death.
O germ! O fount! O word of love!
O thought at random cast,
Ye were but little at the first,
But mighty at the last.



They'd better apply for me soon!

ROMANTIC TRIP OF HANS AND JULY

Chapter III.—Searching for Pygmy Land—They Escape From an Angry Farmer.



THEY ESCAPED FROM THE FARMER'S HANDS AND WENT AWAY.

WHEN Hans and July were aroused from their sleep under the haystack by the farmer and his sons, they could make out some of the words addressed to them; but Hans whispered to July to keep silence and let him answer. As soon as they were at the house the farmer said:

"Now, then, I want you to find your tongues and tell me all about it. You may be all right, but it is a strange thing to find two children wandering over the country by themselves."

While July stood with her finger in her mouth and her eyes cast down, Hans replied to the farmer. That is, he talked and motioned, but he knew that not one word in ten would be understood. If he could not understand the farmer he was sure the farmer could not understand him. That proved to be the case. After he had talked for five minutes, and the people of the house were no wiser, the farmer held up his hands and cried out:

"Stop your talk! I can understand nothing. I don't know what part of Germany you have come from that you speak such a lingo. If my donkey could

do better than that I would sell him for a dollar."

Then he turned to his wife and said:

"I think they are brother and sister, and perhaps they are orphans who are seeking to find a friend or relative. If misfortune has overtaken them I am sorry, but they can't be allowed to roam around the country this way. We will let them lie here on the kitchen floor tonight, and in the morning I shall call the constable to see what he can make of them."

Hans and July could not make out the words, but they felt that they had got into trouble and were much downcast over it. When the family went to bed, some straw was spread on the kitchen floor for the children to sleep on, and the door was locked so that they could not steal away in the night. When morning came they were asked to eat breakfast with the family, but it was no sooner over than the farmer put on his hat and took up his stick and said to his wife:

"I will now take these children to the house of the constable and solve this mystery. He can speak all dialects, and he will soon have their story. If they are runaways the parents will be sent for; if they are orphans the law will provide for them. Come on, you."

Hans knew that they were going to be questioned again, and feeling sure that

they would be found out as runaways, he said to July almost as soon as they had left the house:

"If we go with this man we shall never see the lost river or the people we have talked about so much. You see he is an old man and is slightly lame. Both of us can run fast, and when we get to that bit of woods down there we must give him the slip. When I start you must follow me and keep close at my heels."

"But if we run away the constable will chase us with dogs," replied the girl.

"Never you mind the constable and his dogs, but be ready to do as I do."

The farmer had ordered the children to walk on before him in order that he might keep an eye on them, and when he heard them talking he cried out to Hans:

"Ah, you young rascal, but I am taking you to some one who will quickly understand that lingo of yours and make you tell the truth about yourself! I don't know about you, my boy. I think you are sharper than you look. Don't try to play any tricks on me, however. I have my eye on you both!"

Presently the three came to a place where the road entered the woods, with bushes in plenty among the trees, and Hans suddenly called out "Now!" and departed into the woods to the right. He was at once followed by July, and they quite disappeared among the trees before the old farmer could understand that he had been tricked. Then he flourished his cane around and shouted at the top of his voice:

"Come back here, you rascals, come back! If you don't come back the constable and his two dogs will be after you within an hour and the dogs will give you many a bite before they are called off! Do you hear me—come back at once!"

The feeble children heard his shouts, and they could imagine what he was saying, but they continued to run until they were a mile away and out of breath. Then Hans stopped and said:

"We have run so fast and so far that the farmer cannot overtake us, even if he follows, and we need not run now. We must, however, go forward at a fast walk, as he will probably see the constable after us."

"And will we be bitten by dogs?" asked July as her lip trembled.

"If the dogs come we will climb a tree and escape them."

After walking for another mile under cover of the woods, the runaways headed so as to come out on the highway again. Just as they reached it a cart came along driving two big horses before an empty wagon. He had been to market with a load and was on his way home. He was a man about 30 years old, with a jolly, good-natured face, and as he saw the children standing by the roadway he stopped his horses and called out:

"Ah, now, but whom have we here?"

Hans understood fairly well what was said, but before he could reply the teamster continued:

"I see it is a couple of fat and good-looking children, and if you are going my way come right up here and ride with me. Come right up and don't be afraid of Carl Dondewetter."

(To be continued.)



PRUNELLA DISCOVERS THE WAY HOME.

SCARCELY had Lycurgus Sulfermister wished that Prunella Tramplehopper would fly around and find some way for them to get home, before Prunella went swooping up into the air on her broom as fast as a gull, only not quite so gracefully. Prunella did not really want to leave Wisly Wisly Land, but she couldn't help it once Lycurgus had made his wish.

Lycurgus himself began to have his doubts about going home almost the minute he had wished it; for it occurred to him that his rubber feet and his big fat body and his little, puffy face and his crown might possibly seem unusual to his playmates.

However, it was too late now. And just then Prunella Tramplehopper, who had flown so high that she was only a speck in the sky, came back with a loud whoop

and exclaimed that she had found a way to get home.

And the next moment Lycurgus and Lucinda and Prunella were landed with a terrible bump on the road just outside of Wisly Wisly? and far away down the road they could see their own village, with three mothers standing motionless, but expectantly, at three doors, each with a large stick in her hand. This sight annoyed Lycurgus Sulfermister noticeably, and Prunella Tramplehopper at once hopped off into the bushes with a howl of dismay.

"The best we can do," said Lucinda Candidaster, "is to take these things off."

"We can't," said Prunella Tramplehopper from the bushes. "I've been trying to get off this broom of mine and I can't budge it."

"And my royal robes seem to have taken root on me," said Lycurgus Sulfermister gloomily.

"What you've got to do," said a little

voice close beside them, "is to take a swim in the Unwishing Spring behind those bushes there."

It was Prunella who had said that, and she was the way to the land of Wisly Wisly. Immediately the adventurers rushed to the spring and dove into it. And the moment the waters closed over their heads, the broom and royal robes fell from Prunella Tramplehopper and melted away like soap-suds. And the rubber feet and the puffy cheeks and the crown and things flew from Lycurgus Sulfermister and burst like soap-bubbles. And Lucinda Candidaster climbed out, the same nice Lucinda that went away from home.

Then the three wended their way quietly and solemnly toward their native village, and the three motionless figures with sticks began to move.

The rest of this adventure would be of a kind to grieve sensitive children, and therefore we must conclude the tale to describe the scene that then ensued.

(The End.)

Palaces Grand and Otherwise

Homes of Three Absolute Monarchs.

NO monarch in the world excels the Czar of Russia in the splendor of his palaces. Tsarskoye, near St. Petersburg, where the Emperor has been staying recently, has a park around it which is 15 miles in circumference.

One room of the palace has walls of lapis lazuli and a floor of ebony inlaid with mother of pearl. Another has walls of amber curiously carved, and the walls of a third are laid thick with gold.

In the throne-room of the palace of the Shah of Persia there is a carpet so thickly sown with pearls that the texture of the cloth can hardly be seen. Near it is the throne of carved wood, studded with jewels valued at \$5,000,000. Near the throne stands a huge silver case set with pearls and turquoise, but, strange to say, alongside of it stands a cheap European painted urn, such as can be bought anywhere for a dollar.

The Shah has curious ideas about the value of things, and on the walls of one room a painting by one of the old masters hangs side by side with a gaudy poster advertising a dealer in fishhooks.

In one room where are kept many curious articles of gold and silver heavy with gems there is said to be an ordinary toothbrush, which the Shah regards as one of his greatest curiosities.

And everywhere about the palace are cats. The Shah has a specimen of every kind of cat of which he has ever heard, and there is hardly a country that is not represented in the feline army which it is the pleasure of the Persian ruler to maintain.

If he hears of any sort of cat which is new to him, he immediately gives orders that it be purchased, no matter what the price is, and it is possible that some ordinary American tabby may be at this moment luxuriating at the Shah's expense.

To take care of this assemblage of cats there is a corps of well-paid officials.

The palace of the Emperor of Abyssinia is a large building built like a Swiss chalet with a red tiled roof and whitewashed walls. It is a very ordinary affair and is surrounded by huts and other inferior buildings. There is nothing splendid about the palace or its furnishings, and, indeed, it would be considered as quite lacking in everything except size as a residence for an American of moderate means.

But it is the palace of an Emperor, nevertheless, and of a powerful one, with whom we have just concluded a treaty.

Faults of American Schools.

Chicago Chronicle.

Alfred Mosely, an Englishman of great wealth, whose attention was early drawn to the superior qualities of young Americans setting out to make their way in life. Seeking the cause, he organized an English commission to examine American schools. He paid the cost of the whole proceeding, and what the sum of his judgment was appears in his placid, his own sons in one of the New England grammar schools.

Well as he, therefore, thinks of our schools, he attributes some faults to them. He says that athletics are not practiced with sufficient generality. He thinks we are not particular enough in teaching our English tongue. He is right again. We are not. He thinks we have too many women teachers and too few men. Possibly, but that depends on the fitness of individuals more than on sex, though there is something in his stricture. He thinks we are liberal enough, perhaps, in expenditure, but we do not proportion expense wisely—that our school buildings are too fine and showy, their material equipment too elaborate, and their whole cost too great, while the salaries we pay are too small, not commensurate with the standard of living we exact of the teacher. Here again he is entirely right. We spend too much money on school buildings and plants and too little on teachers.



HOW DID THEY HIDE AWAY SO THAT NONE INTERFERED WITH THE OTHER?

KING RIGAMAJIG, of the Inkynk tribe, in the heart of Africa, was worried almost out of his velvet black skin; for Winker, Clinker, Tinker and Blinker, four apes from the forest, had conceived the idea of annoying him in a peculiar and subtle way that was enough to drive any one out of his skin, King or no King.

The trick that Winker, Clinker, Tinker and Blinker had studied out was to hide in a bamboo tree directly in front of the King's palm-leaf thatched palace—it was only a hut, and you had to crawl into it on hands and knees, and it sounded more royal and kingy to call it a palace—and then to stare at him until he went nearly wild.

What bothered him most was that the tree was so small that he couldn't see for the life of him how the four monkeys could hide in it, especially as he knew that they were of a quarrelsome disposition and that no monkey of that tribe would ever let another one crowd him.

King Rigamajig became so much annoyed by this problem that he was almost tempted to kill the four tormentors. But he knew too well that even a King could not dare do this without being slain by his people, for the Inkynks believed implicitly that all their relatives turned into monkeys when they died.

There was some reason for this belief. Winker, Clinker, Blinker and Tinker looked most amazingly like the King's grandfather and his brother and his aunt and his uncle.

King Rigamajig was not a person who loved to ponder and think. Thinking gave him a pain in his head. Yet the four monkeys were in the bamboo tree whenever he looked at it, and so he simply had to think and think till his woe

pulled at its very roots and he would roar with anguish.

"You can see for yourself that it would not be delightful to have four unrelenting monkey faces looking at you from dawn to night from your bamboo tree, so that whatever you did, whether you played the piano or sharpened a spear or did embroidery work or sentenced your enemies to death, you would be doing it under eight staring eyes that never turned away from you. And then, if you had to wonder how four big monkeys could pack themselves away in a small tree, you would surely get a headache."

King Rigamajig got a headache. It was the first and only one that he had felt since the day when he was hit over the head by a big warclub full of spikes, when he went on the warpath against King Whiseclissel, of the Makaronee tribe.

When Kings have headaches, their subjects may soon expect to have no heads at all. This thought made the King's Prime Minister, Hokipoki, the Wise Man, anxious to get rid of the four monkeys. So one morning before the sun rose he went to the bamboo tree and lifted his voice.

"Oh, noble and feebler brothers of the woods!" he cried. "You are worrying our noble and majestic monarch, Rigamajig, into an early grave. Go away! Please go away!"

Clinker, Winker, Blinker and Tinker laughed aloud.

"We will have a donation party for you if you will most graciously condescend to go away," continued old Hokipoki. "We will give you 14 bushels of bananas and seven bushels of plantains and 5 coconuts."

"None!" yelled the monkeys. "If you will give us the donation, and if, in addition, old Rigamajig will guess just how we pack ourselves away in the tree without interfering with one another or overlapping, we will go away and stay away."

"Alas!" thought old Hokipoki to himself. "The King can never guess it. It makes him tired even to remember his own name. I wonder where I can get hold of a good guesser."

"Nothing easier!" said the King, when old Hokipoki explained the trouble to him. "We'll go out and catch a guesser, and if he doesn't succeed we'll catch another, and so on till we catch one that will work."

So the Inkynk tribe dressed itself in leopard skins and stung skivers into its various noses and put feathers on its various heads and sharpened its various spears. Then it went forth and in the next village it caught an intelligent and industrious native who looked like a good guesser.

King Rigamajig told him what he would have to guess; and to encourage him he explained to him that if he didn't guess it before 5 P. M., Greenwich time, he would be tied to a tree and used for a target. "But," said the King kindly, "we will paint a bullseye on you, and no arrow that hits you will count unless it's in the bullseye, so don't you worry. We will do everything according to the International tournament rules."

The guesser decided on the spur of the moment that the best thing he could do was to guess against time, for he had not had enough experience as a target to feel confident that he could act as one with complete pleasure to himself. So he guessed till his hair actually stood from the labor.

And at 4:30 P. M. by his crocodile-skin chronometer he had worked out the positions in which the hidden bodies of the monkeys were. So they let him go. And the monkeys asked the donation and retired from the scene.

In the picture you will see how the monkeys were hidden in the tree. Can you adjust the bodies to the heads so that no monkey will infringe on his neighbor?