

THE BAD BOY.

His Ma Decides Him.

"Give me ten cents worth of saffron, quick," said the bad boy to the grocery man, as he came in the grocery on a gallop, early one morning with no collar nor vest on.

"I don't keep saffron," said the grocery man as he picked up a barrel of ax handles the boy had tipped over in his hurry.

At this point the boy shot out of the door, tipping over a basket of white beans, and disappeared in the drug store.

The grocery man looked after him, took up an ax handle, spit on his hands and shouted to the boy to come over pretty soon, as he wanted to talk with him.

"What is it, a boy or girl?" asked the grocery man, winking at an old lady with a shawl over her head, who was trying to hold a paper over a pitcher of yeast with her thumb.

"How in blazes did you know anything about it," asked the boy as he looked around in astonishment and with some indignation.

"Oh, don't feel bad about it," said the grocery man, as he opened the door for the lady, "such things are bound to occur. But you take my word for it, that young one is going to have a hard life unless you mend your ways.

"I wouldn't touch the darn thing with the tongue," said the boy, as he rallied enough to eat some crackers and cheese.

"Well, how does your pa take it?" asked the grocery man.

"Oh, pa'll pull through. He wanted to lose the whole concern until ma's chum, an old woman that takes snuff, fired him out into the hall. Pa sat there on my hand-sled, a perfect picture of despair, and I thought it would be a kindness to play it on him.

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and pa fell over the sled and began to talk about the hereafter like the minister does when he gets excited in the church, and then he picked up the sled and seemed to be looking for me or the cat, but both of us was awful scarce. Pa don't look as though he was very smart, but he can hold the cat about as well as the next man. But I am sorry for ma. She was just getting ready to go to Florida for her neuralgia, but this will put a stop to it, 'cause she will have to stay at home and take care of that young one. Pa says I will have a nice time this summer pushing the baby wagon. I'd rather catch a string of perch than wheel a baby. They needn't to have one on my account, if it's to amuse me. I don't see why ladies can't be sawed off onto people who need 'em. Our folks don't need a baby any more than you need a safe, and there are people just suffering for babies. Say, how would it do to leave the baby on a bachelor's door-step some night? If ma had had a bicycle or a breech-load, ing shotgun I would have been glad, but a baby! It makes me tired. I'd rather have a prize package.

And the boy went out and put a paper sign in front of the store: "Leave your measure for saffron tea"—Peck's Sun.

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