



Tillie's Tea-Set

By ROSE MILLS POWERS



When Tillie brings her tea-set out—
Her lovely set of blue—
And lays the dishes all about
The table, two by two,
The little doll-house people all
Begin to wonder who will call.
For 't is a signal, beyond doubt,
That visitors are due,
When Tillie brings her tea-set out—
Her treasured set of blue.
So all the dollies watch and wait,
And sit up very nice and straight.

And Pierrot forgets to tease
In hopes to be a guest;
The little Jap from over-seas
Tries hard to look his best;
While Mam'selle French Doll, all the while,
Wears—ah, the most angelic smile!
For all the nursery people know
As well as will can be
That dollies must be good who go
With Tillie out to tea.
And would not that seem fair to you
If you possessed a tea-set blue?



Nine Little Bears

MRS. BRUINBEAR had nine children. Mr. Man, who had moved into a house on the other side of the big woods had one, a little girl, and that little girl was the greatest somebody to play with bears since the time of Silverhair. The nine little bears from the Bruinbear household used to make a beeline for the back fence of her back yard as soon as they got their breakfast.

She showed these young bearlings a number of things that they had never seen nor heard tell of before. One—and the mainest one—was dolls. Dorothy had a good many dolls, because it was a lonesome place, and her mama was a kind person who could sew very nicely and who liked making rag babies, and clothes for them, too.

However, of course, she didn't have nine dolls so that each of the bears could have one all at the same time; and when she brought her three or four out into the grove she used to let one cub at a time have a doll to play with and the rest would generally sit about and weep while that one and Dorothy played.

So Dorothy began to ask her mother for more dolls, and her mother promised that when Christmas came she should have a Christmas tree with plenty of dolls on it—plenty! Of course, she went and told the little Bruinbears about Christmas-trees, and how they were just covered with candles and dolls. The cubs didn't care about candles, but the idea of a tree full of dolls struck deep! They galloped home to Mother Bruinbear like a brown furry streak.

"Dear me!" she said, when she saw them coming. "The dinner isn't half done, and those children look hungry."

"We want a Christmas tree!" shouted Howler, as soon as they got close enough to be heard.

"With dolls on it!" grumbled Growler.

"Plenty of dolls!" put in Prowler, sniffing at an ant-hill.

"And if we don't get it we'll make an awful fuss," muttered Scowler, twisting up his face.

"You'll get it for us on Christmas day, won't you?" inquired comfortable Bunchy, plumping down as soon as she got inside of the door.

"And there has to be a doll for every one of us," put in Hunchy warningly.

"We want a Christmas tree wiv dolls all over it—a Christmas tree wiv dolls all over it," droned Tiny and Whiny, as they came bundling in together.

"Oh, my gracious goodness me!" groaned Mrs. Bruinbear, running to get a towel to tie up her head. She always had a headache when the children were bad—she just naturally did.

She looked at the nine little brown furry things, and their eighteen little black beady eyes twinkled at her inquiringly. "I know most of the trees in the woods," she began finally, "but I don't believe I ever met a Christmas tree. I'll find one for you, though, if you'll just hush and be good children—my head aches dreadfully to-day."

"It doesn't have to be anything but a common pine tree," Dorothy says, explained Tinybear, who knew more than the rest of them because he was smaller. "You take any little pine tree, and put dolls all over it, and it'll be a Christmas tree."

"All right—all right!" agreed Mrs. Bruinbear hastily in a heady kind of voice; "you tell me where to dig for those dolls and I'll go and dig 'em up most any day, and put 'em on the tree for you."

"You don't dig for dolls," sneered Scowler. "And you can't pick 'em off the bushes, either, so you needn't try. I expect you thought they grew on Christmas trees; but they don't. You have to put 'em there."

"Do hush—and tell me all about it," said Mrs. Bruinbear. "What are dolls, anyhow?"

"Dolls are little things just like you, and mothers make 'em for their children to play with," explained Tinybear reasonably. "And you'll have to make nine because there are nine of us. And I expect it'll keep you pretty busy, because Christmas isn't so very far off, and they have to be done by Christmas eve."

Mother Bruinbear rubbed her aching head, and thought about this a long time. In fact, she kept on thinking all the while she was dishing up the dinner and settling the nine little cubs so that they wouldn't quarrel too much or scold each other with hot soup.

"What'll I make 'em out of?" she asked suddenly, when the meal was over and they had forgotten all about the dolls, and everybody was ready to go to sleep. Now Mrs. Bruinbear was a very fine sewer.



You've begun to be suspicious and want to know where she got anything to sew with. But there are plenty of pine needles in the wood, and I've heard people talk about threads of smoke around over camp-fires; and I guess you'll have to do a little more believing if you are going to get along well with this story. You won't like to be put out of it, you know. Just shut your eyes for two minutes and believe as hard as you can. There—that's all right! Now we're off again!

So Tinybear brought a great big scrap-bag well filled to Mother Bruinbear, and she set to work, getting her patterns in the most natural manner, and hiding everything she made, because the children told her that that was the way you did with Christmas presents, for they must be a surprise.

When Christmas eve came around, she put the cubs

to bed early and trimmed her Christmas tree, a little pine that grew in the dooryard. The frost fairies came in the night and put spangles all over the tree, so that it was trimmed almost as beautifully as yours was last year, and in all its branches Mother Bruinbear had stuck the dolls she made, some of white, some of cream color, some of brown, some almost black, but all looking very appropriate in amongst the green.

When those nine little cubs woke up they stretched themselves and yawned, and then one said to another: "Ho! it's Christmas morning!"

And the other said to one: "We've got a Christmas tree!"

And then all nine of them shrieked together: "With dolls on it!"

And they jumped up and ran out into the yard with nothing on but their fur overcoats.

Mother Bruinbear stood in the door watching and listening for their exclamations of delight. She was proud of her work, and she knew that any sensible cubs would enjoy the nine dolls she had made.

But she didn't hear any shrieks of rapture. Howler got to the tree first. He gave one look at the dolls in its branches, then he sat down on the ground and used his name so hard that he almost used it up.

Growler and Scowler joined him. Tiny and Whiny hopped from one foot to another and shrieked aloud: "Those aren't dolls! Those things aren't dolls at all! Those are—why they are but—sub—bears!"

Poor Mother Bruinbear! She came down amongst her troublesome nine, wiping her hands on her apron and looking just as miserable as she possibly could.

"Now see here," she began doubtfully, "you told me that dolls were things just like me, and I made 'em the best I could."

"Just like you!" repeated the nine cubs in horror. "Oh, dolls aren't anything on earth like you. Dolls are pretty. We like dolls. Those things are just like bears."

Mother Bruinbear took one down and looked at it. She felt very sad. "Perhaps I did get their noses a little too sharp," she said mournfully. "But then, you all have very sharp noses, and these shoe-buttons look exactly like your eyes. Do you see how the arms and legs will move?" And she showed them hopefully how they could put the bears in any position they wished. "They've got a squeak in them, too, just as you children have."

"Huh!" said Bunchy, as she pressed on the bear-doll's "tummy" and made it speak out—"huh! we don't call the noise we make a squeak—we think it is language. Dorothy says so."

At last Mrs. Bruinbear was angry. You mustn't blame her too much; she had sat up nights for weeks and weeks working on those little toy-bears, and taking care of nine cubs isn't the easiest job in the world at the best of times.

"Well, you may just take those dolls and do the best you can with them," she said tartly. "I shall not put myself out to make you any more. I think if children's dolls are little children, bears' dolls ought to be little bears. I think that you ought to be thankful and pleased. But, of course, it doesn't make a bit of difference to your wonderful Dorothy who knows so much, and see what she has to say."

This seemed a pretty good idea to the nine little cubs, and each one shouldering a bear-doll, they trotted off in the snow toward Mr. Man's house. They were certainly a funny little procession, nine small bear cubs carrying nine smaller bear-dolls, and if you could have met them I'm sure you would have laughed. Dorothy did, when she saw them trudging right up the front walk; she opened the door, for she was all alone in the house, since her father and mother had gone to church.

"Did you come to see my Christmas tree?" she inquired. "And what on earth are these things you've got in your arms?"

By this time the nine cubs had got into the room where the Christmas tree stood, and on that Christmas tree, among other things, there were exactly nine rag dolls. Some had pink calico dresses and white sun-bonnets; some were dressed like sailor laddies, and some like sailor girls; one had a little frilled white cap and long white skirts, and must have been meant for a baby.

But there were nine of them, and the nine little cubs stood and looked at them, and looked at them, and looked at them, until the tears popped out of their little bear eyes and ran down their little bear cheeks.

"Oh," they howled, "here are the dolls we want! Real dolls—not bears like these things. Won't you swap, Dorothy? Please trade, little girl! You can have mine"—and mine—"and mine!"

Dorothy wanted to be kind; she had taught the Bruinbears all they knew of dolls; and she went reluctantly to the tree and began taking down her own gifts and exchanging them for those Mother Bruinbear had made. She was glad, when she saw the rapture of the cubs, that she had a doll for each one.

And in about fifteen minutes there was another procession (going in the opposite direction to the first one) that stepped high on its funny little flat feet, and gave little bear whoops and squeaks of delight. You would have laughed at this one, too, for every bear in the lot carried a rag doll over its shoulder.

But in Mr. Man's house, Dorothy, rather thoughtful and depressed, sat on the floor with her nine bears and dressed them in the clothing that her dolls had once worn.

Ah, but that was before the mamma had time to put in a sensible word! That afternoon a very sober little girl met nine rather dejected small bears out at the back fence. She carried nine of the small toys which have come to be called Teddy bears piled in her arms like sticks of wood. Each one of the bearlings had a doll under his arm.

"My mama said I was very foolish to trade my nice dolls for these things," she began, almost ready to cry. "And our mama says," screamed the bears, "that the sight of us playing with these things gives her the headache. She says that her head is going to ache every single minute of the time till we trade back!"

There was a little scramble as the dolls were exchanged. Then, when they were ready to march away in the snow, each faction contented with its own possession, Tinybear summed the matter up with, "I guess girl dolls are silly for bears; and I'm sure bear dolls are silly for girls."

For Every Boy and Girl

Miss Cat's Visit to the City

By GRACE MACGOWAN COOKE

THE big white cat trotting across the lawn with a rat in his mouth started Meriky on a story this afternoon.

"O-o-oh! Hear him growl!" cried six-year-old Pate Randolph, as Tom strutted proudly past.

"Huh!" exclaimed Meriky, "cats and mice didn't used to be such bad friends as dey is now. Once 'pon a time dey visited back an' forth like yo' ma an' Miz Paterson."

"What made them fall out, Meriky? Is it a tale? Oh, tell us—do," begged all the three children in chorus.

"Hit come 'bout dis-er-way," the nurse said drowsily.

meet up wid town folks, an' larn town ways. 'Don't you eat sich in town? What you eat in town, anyhow?' "De town cat look all 'bout. He boun' to see! Miss Pussy Cat on a arrant dat'll take her 'way from dem good victuals. Right den he see Mr. Mouse peep out a hole to ax Miss Cat how she come on. He boun' if Miss Cat git to runnin' after Mr. Swif' Foot Mouse he have time to steal her dinner.

"We eats mice," he say, in de grandest way imaginable. 'You never will larn town ways tell you larn to eat mice.'

"I done told you dat Miss Pussy Cat plumb crazy



"Of Miss Cat live in de country, but she mighty hungry to know 'bout town doin's. She tell round 'mongst her friends 'bout how greatly she's honin' for to see de sights.

"Middle of de night come little Mr. Gray Mouse knockin' on de door, and say he got a cousin goin' up to town, an' if Miss Cat still wantin' to see de sights, dis hyer cousin be proud to give her a lift.

"Den Miss Pussy Cat put on her bonnet an' put on her shawl, an' tuck her poke full o' victuals an' started out wid Mr. Mouse. Mouse does dey travelin' by night an' de cat an' mouse travel all night and git to town de next day.

"When dey come where all de people was, Mr. Mouse pick up his foot and run in a rat hole; but Miss Cat set down by de side de road for to eat her snack. She was a-settin' dar, spreadin' out all dat good country sassage, and ham, and sich truck, when a town cat come apast.

"Dis-hyer town cat was hungry, he was all raggety, same as de beggar man what yo' ma give a dinner to yistiddy. He want Miss Cat's victuals mighty bad. 'My lan!' he say, 'what you git dat pig mess?'

"Dat my snack," say Miss Cat, mighty polite. 'I bring hit wid me from home. Won't you jine me, sir?'

"Now dat dar ol' hungry town cat want every bit of Miss Pussy Cat's snack. He never want to jine her; so he say, 'Does dey really eat sich a mess as dat in de country whar you come from?'

"Yes, indeedy," say de country cat, mighty glad to

"MY LAN', WHAR YOU GIT DAT PIG MESS?"

'bout larnin' to do like town folks does. She hop up and leave dat lunch, quick as you could wink—an' dat ol' hungry town cat grab hit des' as quick. She run dat mouse plumb down all de way to de Co't House. Dar she ketch him, an' right dar she eat him—all but de squeak an' de teef.

"Den by dat, she got de taste; and all cats been eatin' rats and mice to dis good day."



"SHE RUN DAT MOUSE PLUMB DOWN INTO DE CO'T HOUSE"

In the Springtime

By THEODOSIA GARRISON

When we go to my uncle's house
Out in the country every Spring,
My mother always says, "Poor child,
She's worn out with her studying.
And needs the country milk and air
To make her strong again, I know."
But it isn't for these things I care
Or think about before we go—
I'm thinking of the buttercups.

And when we get to Uncle's house
It seems just hours before they say
Those things relations talk about
Before they tell you "run and play!"
'Bout how you've grown, and if you're well,
'And who you look like; and I try
To sit quite still and smile and tell,
But all the while they're talking, I—
I'm thinking of the buttercups.



They grow so yellow and so high—
A field all full across the brook;
Sometimes I think they shine at night—
It hurts my eyes, at first, to look.
My mother says, "Remember, dear,
The gingham dresses are for play.
Tell Aunt that the bow ties here."
"Yes ma'am," I say, but right away
I'm thinking of the buttercups.



And when at last they change my dress
And let me go, why I just run
And cross the brook and look—and then
It's just like dropping in the sun
A million, million yellow wings
I make believe they are, and lie
Right down among them, and dream things
Of flying through the trees and sky,
Just thinking of the buttercups.

And sometimes when we sit at tea
And all the others talk, they say,
"What are you thinking of, my child,
To make you look and smile that way?"
And I say, "Nothing," for I know
They'd surely laugh, those queer grown-ups,
If I should truly answer so,
"I'm thinking of the buttercups—
Just thinking of the buttercups."