

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE PRETTY GOLD LINK BRACELET

A Story of A Young Girl's Inordinate Love Of Finery.

When Aunt Marian came to visit the Bells in their pretty village home, both Muriel and her sister Flo were in a flutter of delight. Aunt Marian was Uncle Fred's wife and they had never seen her before. At first they felt somewhat shy, for she was very stylish and pretty, but their shyness soon wore off, for they found her very kind-hearted and amiable.

She delighted the girls with her lively ways and her good companionship, and one of their great pleasures was to go to her room and gaze at all the pretty things she had to show them—her rich, dainty dresses and hats, her fans and parasols, her lace and her jewelry.

This last was what Muriel liked best to see, for she had a weakness for trinkets, and Aunt Marian had such beautiful things—sparkling diamond rings, a pearl brooch, and opal pin, a hair-dagger set with turquoise, a gold neck-chain, with a heart-shaped locket, and many others. But what Muriel admired most was a gold bracelet.

This was of dainty workmanship, with slender chased links and a little padlock set with a monogram in pearls. "I value this more than anything else I have," said Aunt Marian, as she sat with her jewel-box on her lap and Muriel and Flo on the floor beside her. "Not so much because of its beauty of value, but because father gave it to me the last Christmas I spent at home, and he died soon afterwards. I would not lose it for anything in the world, and I seldom wear it."

She had clasped it on her wrist as she spoke, and Muriel's eyes lingered on it wistfully. "What would she not have given for a bracelet like that," she thought. "I am not sure that Aunt Marian's display of dresses and pretty things was just the best thing for Muriel, although Aunt Marian herself had no thought beyond giving her young friends a pleasure; she did not dream that it might induce certain little demons of envy and discontent to creep in to their hearts."

It did not hurt Flo in the least, for she was a sensible, intelligent, contented girl, who enjoyed looking at pretty things for their own sake, and never thought of feeling covetous or discontented on account of them. But Muriel was very different. She was a pretty, brown-eyed girl of fifteen, and she wanted a great many things she did not, and could not, and perhaps ought not, to have.

Before Aunt Marian's advent she had been fairly well contented with her own simple, pretty gowns and hats, and the little pin and brooch that were her only jewelry. But her simple finery seemed very poor and insignificant beside Aunt Marian's city splendor. Flo could put on her new sash and walk serenely down the street with Aunt Marian in her summer silk, and enjoy herself thoroughly; but Muriel could not. Foolish? Yes, of course she was foolish. It is always foolish and maybe wicked, as well, to let thoughts about our clothes or envy of someone else's, interfere with our own comfort and happiness.

Muriel thought entirely too much about that bracelet of Aunt Marian's, and sighed whenever she thought of it. If only she had one like that! How the girls at school would envy her. When Muriel went into Aunt Marian's room with fresh towels the next day, she found herself alone. Aunt Marian's jewel-casket lay open on the dressing-table, and there, in its box, on a bed of perfumed pink cotton, lay the dainty thing itself. Muriel picked it up a little doubtfully and fastened it on—she had a pretty wrist and the bracelet became it.

"Oh, I do wish it were mine," she said despondently. "I've always wanted a bracelet so much and chains are all the rage now. I might as well wish for the moon, though, as for one like this. It must have cost a great deal!" She unlocked it and put it back with a sigh; but she did not leave with it her discontented longing; she carried that with her wherever she went, and she slipped in to peep at the bracelet a great many times, when Aunt Marian was out, forgetting that the first stage on the road to temptation is a very gradual one.

One day Muriel received a note from Clara Howard inviting her to a birthday party the following evening. Flo was not invited as she was not in Clara's class at school, but she did not feel disappointed over it, for she and Aunt Marian had planned a drive to the city the next day, to visit Aunt Isabel, and they intended to remain over night.

Muriel was in a flutter of expectant delight. She enjoyed parties, and Clara Howard's were always delightful, for Clara's father was rich and denied her nothing. She was sure of having a good time and she had a pretty new dress to wear to it; besides, her father gave her a new pair of slippers, and brother Charlie brought her the very prettiest silver belt-buckle imaginable.

Muriel dressed alone that night, missing Flo's skill and aid not a little; but very pretty, indeed, she looked when she finished her simple toilet and stepped back with a bit of pardonable vanity to smile at her radiant reflection.

But it takes a good deal to satisfy some people, and Muriel was not satisfied. She wanted a bracelet; all the girls at the party would have one, and she felt decidedly ill-used because she could not have one, too. Then Muriel thought of the gold-linked bracelet in Aunt Marian's box. Oh, if she could only wear that to Clara Howard's birthday party! How the girls would envy her!

When people allow such ideas to take possession of their minds, they very often get into trouble. Muriel should have resolutely banished such thoughts, but she did not. Instead, the foolish girl went into Aunt Marian's room and looked long-

ingly at the little heap of shining links lying on the pink cotton.

"I'm sure it would not hurt to wear it just tonight," she murmured. "I daresay if Aunt Marian were here she would let me if I asked her. I'd be just as careful as possible. And nobody need ever know. I'd put it right back in the box whenever I came home. I know mother wouldn't allow it if she knew, but I'm sure it's not a bit of harm"—which last speech was a pretty certain sign that there was harm in it.

Muriel knew very well that she was doing a wrong thing, but she refused to look the ugly thing in the face, and she hurriedly took the bracelet from its pink nest and clasped it on her arm. The little padlock fastened with a spring but could be unlocked only with the little gold key lying beside it in the box.

It isn't a single bit of harm," Muriel repeated, as she admitted the effect. "But, nevertheless, she flushed very guiltily, ten minutes later, in her own room, and quickly shoved the bracelet up out of sight under the lace frill of her sleeve when her mother came in to inspect her.

Half an hour afterwards she was the center of a group of laughing girls in Clara Howard's dressing-room. Her gold-link bracelet was noticed and pounced on immediately by the keen-eyed boys. A buzz of admiration and questioning arose. "Oh, Muriel, where did you get such a perfectly lovely thing?" was the burden of the chorus, but Muriel only smiled mysteriously and refused to say anything about it. Each of the girls privately concluded that Muriel's Aunt must have given it to her and envied her in it.

But Muriel felt very ill at ease and honestly wished that the gold-link bracelet was safe at home in Aunt Marian's jewel-box. In the first place, she had not a minute's peace of mind since she left home lest it should slip off her arm and be lost.

Then suppose Aunt Marian should come back that night, after all, and miss it before Muriel got home? When Muriel came to go to bed she could not be certain that Aunt Marian and Flo had really decided to stay away that night. They had only talked about it. This worried her. And, moreover, under all these surface bubbles of discomfort was the secret conviction that she had done a very mean thing, something that Aunt Marian and her mother and Flo would terribly disapprove.

Muriel hated the very sight of the gold-link bracelet before the evening was over. If she could only have taken it off she would, but the little gold key was at home.

She was heartily glad when the time came to go home, for her head ached and she thought, joyfully, that she would soon be able to restore the hated bracelet to its place; and she thought made her feel so much better that for the first time during the evening she forgot about it in the laughing excitement of the dressing-room while the girls were searching for their wraps.

She went home with a party of her classmates and, her spirits rising amid all the laughter and chatter, she did not once think of her unlucky adornment until she found herself in her own room. Then when she had flung off her wraps impatiently and turned up the gas, it was to find the bracelet—gone.

For a moment Muriel stared at her arm in a sort of horror. It could not be! It was too dreadful to be true! The bracelet had been on her arm in Clara's dressing-room the last thing before she put on her wraps. And now it was gone. When she realized it she gave a little moan of despair.

Muriel did not sleep much that night, you may be sure, and she cried a great deal, which did not help matters at all. She was up and dressed early, and out before breakfast. Eagerly she scanned the pavement, until she reached the Howard house, and explained the cause of her unreasonable appearance.

Clara was not up, but Mrs. Howard listened to Muriel's distracted tale with concern. A thorough search of the dressing-room was fruitless. Muriel hunted desperately and the maids were questioned, but none of them had seen it. They looked through all the rooms and he hall in vain, and then Mrs. Howard shook her head in disappointment.

"You may have lost it in the street," Muriel said; and Muriel, with fast-dropping tears, admitted the likelihood of this and hurried home in despair. Her absence had not been noticed, and she slipped up stairs to her room. Nobody called her, supposing her to be tired after the party, and it was there Flo found her when she and Aunt Marian came home.

"Why, Muriel, what in the world is the matter?" exclaimed Flo, as her sister lifted her flushed, tear-stained face from the pillow.

"Flo," sobbed Muriel, "what the door did come here. I have something to tell you. Oh, Flo, I'm in such a scrape; and there's no getting out of it. I am so glad you have come home. What will Aunt Marian think of me?"

And then she sobbed out her remorseful confession. Flo listened in pitying horror.

"Oh, Muriel, you don't mean to say that you took Aunt Marian's bracelet to wear to the party without asking her!"

"Yes, I did. I know it was not right, Flo, but I would not stop to think, and I was crazy to wear it. And now it's lost, and what shall I do? I will confess to Aunt Marian right after dinner; it will be awfully humiliating, but I deserve to be humiliated. I feel crushed to the very earth. I have been vain and silly and deserve it all."

After dinner Muriel went resolutely to Aunt Marian's room. Aunt Marian was reading by her window, and she looked up with a smile at her pretty niece. Evidently she had not missed the bracelet.

"Well, dear, come and tell me about your party. Did you have a nice time?" "No, not a bit, Aunt Marian. I had a horrid time, because I did something wrong before I went. I am very sorry and ashamed, and I have come to confess."

Marian listened in silence. Then she gently drew the girl to her and kissed her.

"Don't cry, Muriel; I'm not going to scold you. Of course you did wrong—and I'm sorry about the bracelet—but it can't be helped now. If you had asked me, my dear, I would have lent it to you."

"Oh, aunt, how good you are! You ought to give me a good scolding. I am so ashamed of myself, but my repentance won't restore your bracelet."

"Muriel," called Flo outside the door. "Oh, Muriel," she whispered eagerly, as she latter appeared, "here is a note from the Howards, and I do believe the bracelet is in safe of it."

Muriel tore open the envelope with nervous haste; out fell a little heap of gold links and a padlock. Flo caught it joyfully.

"What does the note say?" "It is from Clara," said Muriel. "She picked it up last night after we were gone and put it in her own jewel-box for safety. She was asleep when I was there, you know, and so could not tell me."

Muriel went back to Aunt Marian. "Oh, aunt, here it is safe and sound. I am so thankful and relieved. Am I truly I'll never feel tempted to do such a thing again. I know what it makes a person feel like, and I am sure I have learned a wholesome lesson."

"I think you have, dear," was all Aunt Marian said. "And she was right; Muriel was cured of one folly, and she set herself resolutely to work to root out the rest. When her birthday came, Aunt Marian gave her a pretty pin—a golden party with a pearl in the center. Muriel thanked her, and said: "I'll wear it as a reminder, and whenever I feel tempted to envy anyone, or to fret over what I can't have, or to do anything that my conscience does not approve of, I'll look at it and remember the gold-link bracelet."

GONE FOREVER

The rosy boughs tossed to the sky; There, as I passed along, A girl's voice passionate and high Rang out in sudden song.

Across the darkening street it came, Young, throbbing, sad of fall; I think old Homer heard the same By some ruined Smyrna wall.

Thenceforth, with my memories few, That song was a sooth thing; Yet went I back no more; I knew That it was gone with spring. —Little Woodford Reese.

SEASIDE

Mr. Logan visited Astoria on Wednesday last.

Fred Leinenweber spent Thursday on the beach.

Prospects are good for rather a quiet winter here.

J. H. Johannsen has moved into his new cottage.

The thermometer registered 88 in the shade on Tuesday last.

Prof. Mc Clure reports good progress with his school.

Mr. Logan has sold his mill to the Seaside Lumber Co.

F. Spittle visited Seaside during the week on legal business.

Mrs. F. E. Biles is now occupying the A. E. Butterfield cottage.

Mrs. F. A. Fisher and son Earl spent a few days at her cottage.

Services were held on Sunday last by the Rev. Mr. Dunlap of Warrenton.

The Logan mill is running and several carloads of lumber have been shipped.

Mrs. W. K. Smith of Portland was a guest at McGuire's during the week.

Mrs. Johannsen and children spent Wednesday with her mother in Astoria.

Salmon are plentiful and Messrs. Grimes and Coffman are catching a good many.

Mr. Alex Gilbert and wife spent a few days in their new house during the week.

Judge T. A. McBride visited this place again last Sunday and took home with him a fine string of trout.

A girl was born to the wife of Barber Chas. Cole on Wednesday last. Mother and child are doing well.

Mr. E. B. Stoner, with his engine is again on duty after a week's repair to the engine in the car shop.

is the best season and will stay a month later.

Great excitement was caused on Thursday afternoon last by the appearance of a ship's boat with two men in it in the breakers. A three-masted schooner was seen lying off the beach and some said, flying a signal of distress, which afterward proved to be not so. All Seaside turned out to help the boat through the breakers, but it landed towards Tillamook head, with no one near. Upon survival there it was learned that it was the schooner Traous, Captain Anderson, 15 days from San Francisco for Nehalem. The two sailors reported that the captain could not find the Nehalem, never having been there, and having no chart, and asked where it was. The necessary information was given and the sailors started out through the breakers on their return to the schooner, which disappeared about six o'clock, evidently having picked up the men.

Mr. Thomas Catburn has returned from Roseburg.

Mrs. C. M. Cutbirth was a visitor down this way last week.

Mr. W. S. Hardie has moved into the Erickson cottage for the winter.

Messrs. Duncan, Houseman and F. E. Warner are absent at Tillamook.

Dr. W. F. Pruden has decided to open up an office in Portland, and will move his family to that city shortly.

George and Fred Warren left for Portland last Monday, where they will remain for the winter attending school.

The Tribune reports the sale by H. F. L. Logan of his Elk Creek property to John Kopp, E. C. Hughes and F. Spittle.

Mr. J. W. Berg, formerly in the employ of D. K. Warren, went to Portland last week, where he will take a course in the Holmes Business college.

The Misses Aobas and Daisy Dean started for Nehalem last Thursday for a ten day's visit. They will make the trip on horseback both going and returning.

Mrs. P. J. Colton, formerly of Astoria, has rented the Harrison house and will conduct a first class boarding house, something that has been greatly needed here.

The billiard and soft drink (D) room which is to be run in connection with the Warrenton Independent club was thrown open to the public last Wednesday evening.

Mr. D. K. Warren has just finished planking the street between the railroad and the row of stores north of it. It is a great improvement to that part of the town.

Engineer Watson came in from the front Wednesday night with engine No. 2. Both engineer and engine will be laid up for repairs a few days. Engineer Ed Ford, with his pet "No. 1," will fill the vacancy.

Mr. W. T. Bohanan arrived in Warrenton this week from Yaguins. Mr. Bohanan is contemplating embarking in business, and as soon as a suitable house can be secured will move his family here.

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IN BEAUTIFUL SUNNYMEAD

and do business in Astoria. The plat is well watered by fresh water streams and the main streets are now being laid with wooden pavement. A neat little depot is located on the property, where all trains stop.

For the next few days a limited number of lots will be placed on the market at a reduced price, and the terms of sale made so easy that they are within the reach of all.

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