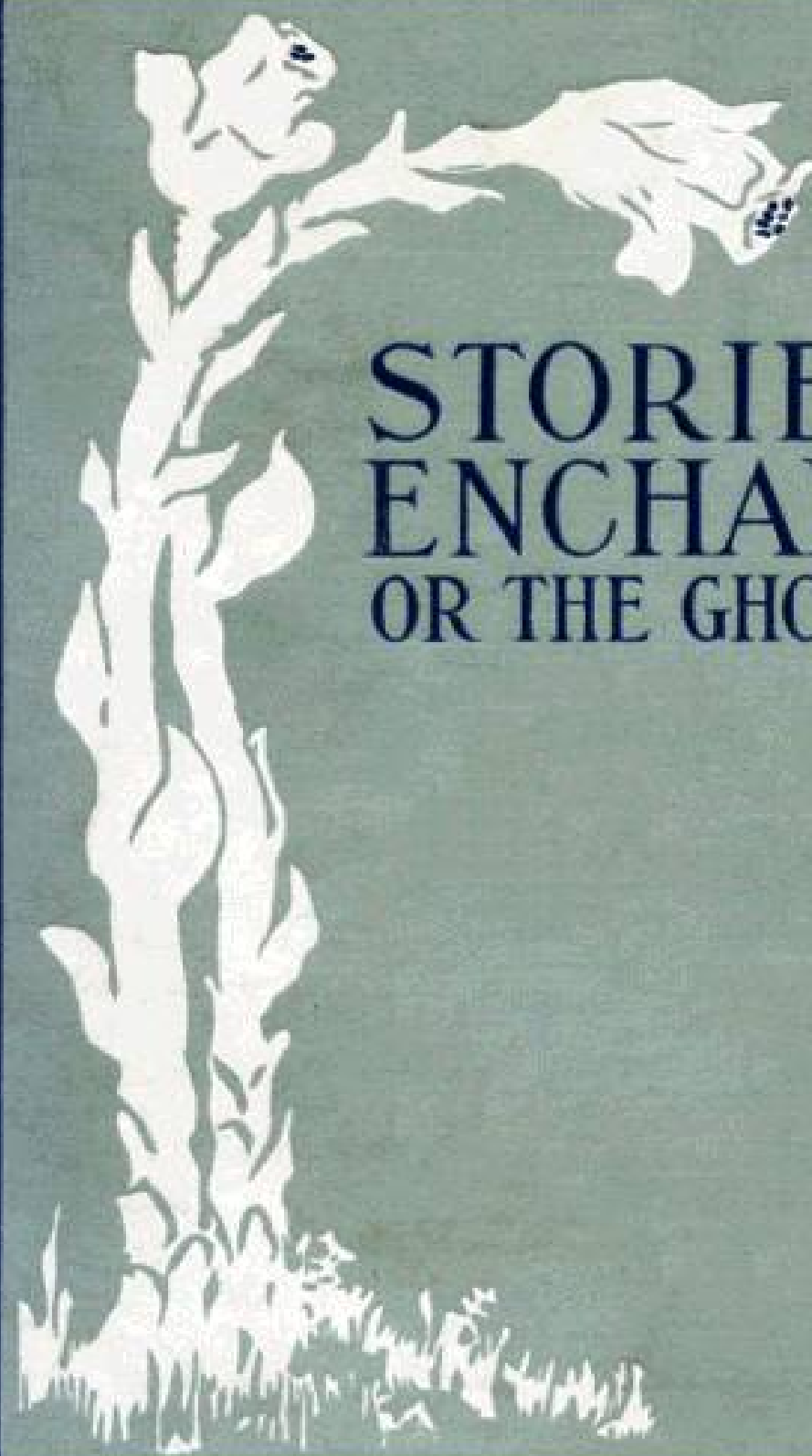




STORIES OF ENCHANTMENT OR THE GHOST FLOWER



JANE PENTZER MYERS

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THE LAND OF FANCY
THE LAND OF FANCY

STORIES
OF
ENCHANTMENT

BY
JANE PENTZER MYERS

ILLUSTRATED BY
HARRIET ROOSEVELT RICHARDS

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1901

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TO KATE WINIFRED.

Just between the “Land o’ Dreams” and broad daylight is a beautiful world: where good wishes come true: where the

poor and the lonely are rich in castles and friends: and where
sorrowful folk are happy.

There you may hear the birds singing and children laughing,
all day long. The trees are full of blossoms and fruit. The sky
is always blue, the grass green and soft.

Under the trees dwell the fairies, and against the blue sky is
sometimes seen the sheen of angels' wings.

On the borders of this land the real and the unreal are so
strangely blended that children are puzzled to know where the
boundary lies.

Just across its borders blooms the little white ghost-flower.

It is for you, little girl.

J. P. M.

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I.

THE GHOST FLOWER, OR THE WHITE BLACKBIRD.

There is a region of our own land, far to the westward, where great mountains lift their serene heads into the eternal calm of the upper air. Sunrise and sunset paint them with unearthly beauties; and night, with its myriads of flashing stars or its splendid moon, shines down on their white foreheads, and bids them dream on through the coming ages, as they have done in the past.

Among their barren valleys one sometimes lights upon a small oasis. A little mountain stream, fed by the melting snows of the peaks, leaps and sings and flashes to its grave in the desert sand. Its banks are fringed with cottonwood trees, and the short grass and underbrush flourish in their shade.

Usually, some energetic American or Chinaman is ranching it there, and claiming all the valley; but far away from the towns and the mines one may sometimes come upon a band of Indians, living their own lives separate and alone in their secluded valley.

A generation ago, a fierce war raged between the whites and the Indians; and during its progress a train of emigrants, passing near an Indian village, was attacked by the warriors of the tribe. All the whites were killed, except one little child, who crept away into the sagebrush, and, worn out with fear and fatigue, dropped asleep. There the wife of the chief

medicine man of the tribe found her; and when the little one opened her eyes, and, putting up a piteous lip, began to sob, the woman gathered her into her arms with tender “No, no’s” and soft guttural cooings, that soothed and quieted the child. For the Great Spirit had lately called her own baby “far over the terrible mountains” to the spirit land. And this little one crept into the bereaved heart of the Indian mother.

She took the child to her husband, and received permission to keep her. And so the little girl, with her lint-white hair and blue eyes, grew up among the other children of the valley. Soon after the massacre of the wagon train, the tribe withdrew from the vengeance of the white soldiers to a fertile, wooded valley, hidden in the heart of the mountains. Here little “Snow-flower,” as she was named, lived happy with her foster parents. Her Indian mother was very proud of her childish beauty, and took excellent care of her. She bathed her often, in the clear water of the little river that ran through the valley; for, contrary to the popular belief, the Indians of the mountain are cleanly in their habits, and bathe their persons and wash their garments frequently, if water is plentiful. She braided her fair hair, and made for her pretty little dresses of pink or red calico, bought at the trader’s store at the agency, many weary miles away.

In the winter, she wore over her dress a warm fur coat reaching to the ankles, with a hood at the back to draw over her head. This was made of the skins of jack rabbits. Warm leggings and moccasins helped to keep her warm, and she was usually very comfortable.

Sometimes the supply of pine nuts would give out, the fish refuse to bite, or the jack rabbits become scarce and shy. Then the only alternative was to go to the hated agency.

At such times little Snow-flower was hidden in some secure place and warned to remain quiet; for her Indian mother was haunted by the fear of separation from the child. She knew

that inquiries had been set afloat at the agency for a little one, said to have been saved from the massacre, and her heart told her that the child's kindred would claim her, sooner or later. So, for many years little Snow-flower never saw a white person.

When she asked her Indian father or mother why she was so different from the other children, they told her The Great Spirit had made her so, and she was content.

"Perhaps it's because I am the great Medicine Chief's daughter," she said to her father; and he gravely nodded.

She was very fond of both of her foster parents; but her love for the medicine man was mingled with awe. When she saw him dressed for some religious dance or yearly festival, in his strange medicine dress, with his face painted in grotesque and horrible pattern, she fled to her mother and hid her face in her lap. She loved her mother devotedly, and her love was returned. The woman was like all Indian mothers, very gentle and kind to her little daughter. The little girl was never punished, and was always spoken to in the soft, low voice peculiar to Indian women. "Little daughter," "Little Starlight," "Little Singing-bird," were the fond names bestowed on her.

The years passed quietly by, until Snow-flower was ten years old, when, one summer day, the medicine man came into the tepee looking very ill. He threw himself down on the pallet on the floor and soon was unconscious. He lingered so nine days, anxiously watched and cared for by his wife and Snow-flower. On the tenth day he opened his eyes and beckoned his wife to him.

"I must go far over the terrible mountains, into the heart of the sunset, into the spirit land. You will come soon; watch for the token I will send you."

Then, closing his eyes, he was quickly gone. And the tepee was very desolate and lonely to the wife and little Snow-flower.

All through the long days and the bright starlit nights the wife watched for the token he would send her, until her knees grew weak, and her head drooped, and she could not walk. Then little Snow-flower fed her, and waited on her, and also watched for the token that was to be sent. One day she crept into the hut and knelt by the Indian woman.

“Mother,” she whispered, “I have seen a strange sight: a flock of blackbirds lit close to our home. I thought to snare some for your food; but as I approached them, I saw that one of them was shaped like the rest,—but, mother, he was pure white; and he lit on the ridgepole of our home.”

Then the pale wife raised herself on her elbow, her eyes shining with joy.

“It is the spirit-bird, dear little one; it is the token. Go now, quickly, up the dark ravine; follow to its source the spring that runs past our door. I have never allowed you to go there, for a dark spirit lives in that dread place; but now, do not fear; the spirit-bird will protect you. Go into the deep wood that grows around the fountain head. You will come to a fallen log. Watch closely; and come and tell me what you see.”

So little Snow-flower, shaken with fear and grief,—for she knew that her mother must soon leave her,—followed the little rill, up the dark ravine, to its source. The white blackbird flitted ahead, and wherever he rested, the sunlight broke through the thick leaves overhead, so that she walked in light all the way. Presently she came in sight of the fallen log, and her heart stood still with fear; for, sitting on the log, wrapped in his blanket, and smoking a long-stemmed, strange-looking pipe, was the medicine man, her foster father. As she came toward him, he arose and fixed on her his bright eyes; and

then he spoke in a soft voice that seemed to come from a long distance.

“Little pale-face daughter, take this pipe to my wife. It is a token that you have seen me. Tell her I am lonely without her; that she must be ready when the sun is setting to go with me, through the sunset gates, into the spirit world. As for you, my daughter, your path lies there,” pointing toward the east; “follow it to your own nation and your own kindred;” and, laying his pipe on the log, he was gone in an instant.

Little Snow-flower, almost overcome with fear, ran quickly to the log. She picked up the pipe, which changed in her hands into a strange flower; the leaves, the stem, and the blossoms were all white. It was the Ghost flower, or Indian pipe.

Hurrying back down the ravine, she ran with flying feet into the tepee. The Indian woman snatched the flower from the child’s hand and kissed it, then listened anxiously to her story.

“Yes, little one, I must go. I had hoped that you might go with me; but the Great Spirit does not will it so. And before I go, you must leave me; I must see you started on your journey.” And then she told her of her rescue, and of her parentage.

The pipe changed into a strange flower.
The pipe changed into a strange flower.

“This was tied fast round your neck. I hid it, and told no one.” She showed the little girl the case of a gold locket, with a scrap of closely written paper within. “Take this to the agency. The paper talks; but do not fear, it is not bewitched. The agent will speak for it, and I believe it will tell you where to find your kindred. Now hasten, dear child; the sun will soon reach the cleft in the mountain, and then I must go. I will see you again; my husband’s power is great; he will let me come to you whenever you find a flower like this—the Ghost flower.”

Then, with tears and sobs, they separated. And when the sun was setting, a great flock of blackbirds flew straight into its splendor; and among them were two white ones: the souls of the medicine chief and his wife. And poor little Snow-flower had begun her long journey to the agency. She left the valley secretly, crept away without bidding any one in the tribe farewell, for her Indian mother feared that they might detain her. The medicine chief's home stood apart from the rest of the village, and was approached by the villagers with fear. When it was known that he was dead, the tribe buried him and mourned for him. But the mother and the daughter were unmolested in their grief.

A few days after Snow-flower had left, a kind-hearted woman ventured near. Great was her surprise to find the tepee empty; and it was believed by all that the medicine man had come for his wife and daughter, and had conveyed them to the spirit world.

Little Snow-flower followed the path as far as she had gone in the old days with her foster mother; but when she came to the cave where she had been concealed, she was at a loss to know which way to go. She wandered on, frightened and weary. The food she had brought with her was almost gone. One night she lay down beside a strange-looking trail. There were short logs laid across it, and on these were long slim logs or poles made of iron. It was in a valley between two great mountains. She wondered at it greatly. It was either a trail made by some wizard or medicine man, or it was made by that strange tribe to which she belonged, and of which she had heard for the first time that day, the "pale-faces."

But at least there was companionship in it, after the horrible loneliness of the mountains. So she snuggled down near the trail, and went to sleep. She was awakened by a terrible rumble and roar that shook the earth around her. Something all fire and flashing eyes went shrieking and hissing past her.

She screamed with fear, and tried to run, but her feet refused to carry her. The monster went a little way, and then stopped. Some men sprang from its back and came toward her, carrying a light. She saw that they were fair, like herself, and then she fainted.

The men came hurrying on. It was a special train, carrying the superintendent of the road, and a friend. "Did you say the massacre was just here?" said the gentleman.

"Right about here—perhaps a few feet farther north."

The gentleman sighed. "And has nothing been heard of the child?"

"The Indians positively declare that she is living somewhere in the mountains, and that she is well cared for, but refuse to tell anything more."

"Well, I must have the child, if she is to be found on— Why, what is this?" he exclaimed, as his foot struck against the soft little body of Snow-flower. She shivered and moaned.

"What in this world! a little white girl, dressed like a little Indian!" cried the superintendent.

"Let me see the child. She looks as my sister Mary did at that age. What if this is her child, the little one I am searching for? Here, let me carry her into the car; she is mine; I am sure of it," said the gentleman.

And so little Snow-flower awoke from her swoon to a new and wonderful life. It almost seemed in later years, as she looked back to that time, that she had entered another world; for she found love, riches, education, all awaiting her.

Once or twice since, in lonely walks, she has found the Ghost flower; and always then appears the vague, misty outline of

her Indian mother.

A few days ago, her little son (for she is a woman and a mother now) came into the house crying, “Mother, I saw a white blackbird. It was with a great flock of black ones; it was just like them, only it was white.”

She hurried out of the house hoping to find the spirit-bird; but it had visited her, found her happy, and hastened back to the spirit land.

II.

THE LITTLE YELLOW MOCCASINS.

A clear river goes winding down, past green and shaded banks, through the beautiful state of Iowa. It is named the Cedar, although the Oak, or the Maple, or a dozen other names would be more appropriate, for the Cedar is seldom found among the abundant trees that grow beside it.

Years ago, the Indians dwelt on its banks. They led an idyllic life: the men fished in the blue waters, or hunted and trapped in the woods; the women planted the small clearings with corn. These corn-fields may still be seen, covered with little hillocks resembling in size and shape those seen in a prairie-dog village; the corn was planted in these mounds, instead of in rows, as with us.

Here the women worked and gossiped,—the babies in their cradles, strapped to their mothers' backs, or propped up against the trunks of trees, and staring with round black eyes at the new and strange scenes around them.

Among the women was one pretty young mother, who watched, as she worked, her little son in his cradle. She talked or sang to him as she passed him by. She named him "Little Bravo," "Little Hunter." She told him that she was growing very old now; that he must step out of his cradle and take care of her. Then she would laugh, showing her white teeth, and the baby would wag his head from side to side, and laugh in sympathy, revealing two cunning little teeth also. All the fond

talk that a white mother lavishes on her baby was told over by this Indian mother; for mothers are alike in their love, whatever their color may be.

The years passed merrily along, for happy hearts make the hardest life a merry one. The Little Bravo was a large boy now. Ten summers and winters had passed since he came to his proud father and mother. He had learned to row a canoe on the river, to fish, to set traps, and with bow and arrow to bring down the wild duck and the prairie chicken. Soon he would be a man, a—young brave indeed,—and go with his father to hunt the bison, or on the warpath.

How many daydreams his mother enjoyed over his future! She saw him in fancy a great chief, leading the tribe in war and in peace; she saw him returning from war with many scalps of the enemy; saw him in the home with wife and children, while his father and herself, grown old and gray, sat in the warmest corner of the tepee and told his children stories of their father's brave deeds.

As she dreamed her daydreams, she busily worked on the fine clothing with which she adorned him and his father; for it was her delight that they outshone the rest of the men of the tribe in the splendor of their raiment,—hunting shirts and leggings of the finest tanned skins, adorned with fringes and gorgeous with crude embroidery, and moccasins of the yellow buckskin, trimmed with beads and porcupine quills.

The boy was a noble little fellow; brave, warm-hearted, and merry. But the Great Spirit saw that the doating love of father and mother was ruining the gift He had placed in their hands.

Little Bravo.

Little Bravo.

One summer night the heat hung heavy over the land. It seemed an effort to breathe. Black clouds hung sullen in the sky, and in the west the lightning was flashing and the thunder was rumbling. "There will be much wind and rain to-night. Where is our son?" said the father.

"Down on the river's bank asleep," answered his mother. "I sat long beside him, and brushed away the stinging insects that annoyed him. He has taken off his moccasins, the heat is so great, and his little feet are bare. He is very beautiful as he sleeps. I will lift him without waking him, and bear him into the storm cave."

She hastened quickly down to the river, for the storm was rapidly approaching. Just as her hands reached down to clasp her boy, there came a vivid flash of lightning, and two strong hands (the hands of the spirit who lives in the water) reached up, and grasping the boy firmly, drew him down under the water.

Where, but a moment before, the rosy, dreaming boy was lying, was only the print of his body in the grass, and the two little yellow moccasins, shining like gold.

The mother gave a scream; the father came bounding to the spot; together they sprang into the water, and dived again and again, striving to find their son. The storm broke over the river in great fury, tearing off great limbs of trees, and dashing their tepee to the ground; but neither knew that it stormed. Finally, half dead, and heart-broken, they sought the bank. The mother sat down and gathered the little moccasins to her heart. "My son, my son! O spirit of the river, give him back to us!" she moaned.

The father arose and straightened himself, and, looking into the dark sky, he said: "It is the will of the Great Spirit. He gave him to us. He has taken him away again." Turning, he walked away into the forest.

But the mother sat there beside the river many days, moaning, “My son, my son.” No food passed her lips, no sleep came to her eyes; and always she kissed and clasped to her heart the little moccasins.

One night, when the stars were flashing in splendor, she raised her eyes to the sky, and beheld that pathway made of star-dust, that leads to the spirit land. And while she gazed, longing to follow it, she felt the pressure of a small hand on her shoulder. She turned, to meet the loving, smiling gaze of her son.

“O Great Spirit, I thank thee! The dead is alive again! O my son, I grieved for thee! Why didst thou stay away so long?”

And the boy said, “Come, dear mother; we are to follow yonder path to-night,” pointing upward. “I have come for thee, because thy weeping grieves the happy ones.”

Then gladly the mother placed her hand in that small clasp; but first she said: “Stay, dear child; here are thy moccasins. Thou wilt need them; the way may be rough.”

The boy, laughing, held up to her gaze one of his feet, on which flashed and glowed a moccasin of shining yellow, like the color of a star, and he said, “Lay down the moccasins, dear, and thou shalt see how a mother’s love shall be remembered.”

She placed them on the ground, and at once a plant sprang up beneath them. It grew rapidly, and on its highest branches the moccasins were fastened. They shrank in size, and changed into flowers, keeping, however, their original shape and color. And the boy said, “These flowers shall bloom on forever beside this shining river; long after the red man is gone, they shall bloom.”

Then, wondering and happy, the mother followed her son along the star-strewn path to the spirit land; and not many moons later, the father, from the midst of battle, went to them.

Long ago, the Indians left the banks of the beautiful river, but the yellow flowers bloom on beside its clear waters; and the white children call them the “Orchid,” or “Lady’s Slipper,” or give them their real name, the “Indian Moccasins.”

III.

THE LITTLE GHOST WHO LAUGHED.

Dolores sat beside Aunt Polly, in the door of the cabin. The setting sun shone on her yellow curls, changing her into a veritable “Goldilocks,” peeped into her blue eyes, until she was obliged to shut them. It shone on Aunt Polly’s black face, causing it to glisten like black satin, and on her clean calico dress and white apron; for this was Sunday evening, and she was resting from her labors.

Across the fields, its light was reflected from the roof and chimneys of “The House,” as Aunt Polly called it; for there she had lived as a slave before the war, and to her it was the only house of importance in the neighborhood. Dolores watched the sun climb from the roof and chimneys to the gilded points of the lightning-rods, turning them to flashing spear points. Then it was gone; and she breathed a sigh.

Aunt Polly heard it. “What’s the mattah, honey girl?”

“I’m lonesome, Aunt Polly; won’t you tell me ’bout the little ghost girl up at the house?”

“Now, sugah, I have to be away from home all day tomorrow, and you’ll be here alone; that story will make you feel skeery.”

“I won’t be afraid. Besides, I’ll go to school, maybe.”

“Bless yo heart now, will you? Well, I’ll tell you then, ’cause yo goin’ to be so good. Well, honey, when I was a young girl, I lived up at The House; that was befo’ the wah. I was one of the house servants, sort of waitin’ maid, and table maid, too. Well, one stormy night, I was in the dinin’-room, settin’ the dinnah table. The rain and sleet was bangin’ against the windows, and it was growin’ mighty dark. I thought I’d go out and shut the shuttahs; I thought I’d run out the front doah, and close the pahlor shuttahs too. The lamp wasn’t lit in the hall yet, and as I went through, it seemed to me I saw somethin’ white curled up on the lower stair. I opened the front doah so that I could see bettah what it was, and then I turned and went to it, and there, cuddled all up in a heap, was a strange little girl. She had a little peaked white face and great blue eyes, and her hair was about the coloh of you-all’s. She had on a little white dress, and had somethin’ in her hands—looked like a man’s cap, and it was all torn and bloody; and there was blood on her dress.

“‘My land, honey, whar you come from?’ I says, and she huddled down closer than ever, and began to cry just like her heart was most broke. I stooped down to pick her up in my ahms”—Aunt Polly’s voice sank to a whisper—“and—she—wasn’t—there. I rubbed my eyes and looked agin, then I run to the doah and looked out; but they wasn’t nobody about. Then I got so skeered I banged the doah shut and run whoopin’ and screamin’ to the kitchen. Aunt Susan, the cook, grab me by the ahm. ‘Shut yo haid, girl, and tell me wha’s de mattah,’ she said. So I done told her all about it, and she just dropped all in a heap and she say: ‘O my Lawd, O my deah Lawd, the judgment am a comin’ agin! Tell me, gal, was dat baby laughin’ or cryin’?’ and I say, ‘Cryin’;’ and she say, ‘Ooh, my poo’ mistess;’ and I said, ‘Oh, Aunt Susan, what is it?’ She say: ‘Gal, you done see a ghost. Dat’s no baptized baby; dat’s a poo’ child dat was muhdard yeahs and yeahs ago by some wicked limb of dis fambly, fo’ to get its money. Whenever dat child comes here a weepin’ and a moanin’,

dat's de sign of a death; if it comes a laughin', den it brings good luck to we-alls.'

"Well, I was that skeered to think I'd done seen a ghost, that I shuck all over, and couldn't wait on the table. Well, honey, I kep' a waitin' for a death or somefin as bad; and 'bout a week later, my mastah's oldest boy was out huntin', and the gun went off too soon, and blowed the top of his haid plum off. They brought his torn and bloody cap home. I'd—seen—it—before.

"Aftah that, I was always watchin' for that ghost-child, but I nevah seen her no more. But she came after that, fo' my old mastah died; and there was othah troubles. Finally, aftah the wah, my old mistress moved to the city with young Mistah Tom, and left the house in the care of the overseeah of the plantation. Once a yeah Mistah Tom comes down and stays a week or so, lookin' aftah things. He used to bring a lot of company with him, but since ole Miss died, he's sobered down; don't seem to cah fo' company no more.

"And now, sugah, you come go to baid, so you can get up early, and go to school."

"Aunt Polly, tell me first, do please tell me, where did you get me?"

Aunt Polly looked at her doubtfully.

"I dunno as you need to know. But yo ma was a lady, and yo pa a gentleman. You come of a good stock. Sometime I'll tell you, but not now; so you go to sleep."

The next morning Aunt Polly was up and away early. She left a dainty breakfast spread out for Dolores, and a little tin pail packed with a lunch for her school dinner. Dolores awakened later and lay debating the question of school. It is needless to say that Aunt Polly, with her lax government and her fondness

for the child, was spoiling her completely. Dolores was a law unto herself, and came and went as she pleased. She was looked down upon by the girls at school, because she lived with Aunt Polly. She did not tell this to her, for she knew she would resent it bitterly. So she avoided them as much as possible, and many hours when Aunt Polly supposed that she was at school, she was wandering in the woods and fields.

She thought of her half promise given the night before in exchange for the ghost story, and resolved that she would go.

“My mother was a lady, and my father a gentleman; then why need I care for those white trash? Aunt Polly is better than they are. I reckon I’d better go. And I’ll go past the house, and peek in at the hall where Aunt Polly saw the ghost.”

So she hurriedly put away her breakfast dishes, tidied up her room, locked the door, hid the key, and started on her way to school. She crossed the field and came to the old house by a path through a grove of old trees. This side of the house was never used; the shutters were closed; and the trees grew so close to the house that their great branches scraped against the walls, causing a creaking, groaning noise when the wind blew, that had frightened the timid colored people away from the neighborhood.

Dolores put down her pail and books. She sat down a moment to rest in the shade, for the sun was hot. That resting-spell was the undoing of her good resolutions; for, glancing above her, she discovered a squirrel watching her, who began to chatter, as soon as he knew that she had seen him.

“Oh, you pretty dear, come down and I’ll feed you,” she said; and then she thought, “I wonder if he has a nest up there; I’m going to find out.” And soon she was among the lower branches of the tree, steadily working her way to the top.

The squirrel turned with a jerk and a squeak, and disappeared through an open window that the branches had concealed from below. Dolores, following, found that one shutter was gone, and that the wind, during some storm, had forced in the sash, while a limb had grown in through the window. She pushed her way in past the limb, in spite of the squirrel's remonstrance, and found herself in a large attic, which extended over the entire unused wing of the house. The squirrel scampered up the side of the window-casing, and sat scolding her from above.

The attic was filled with a rich treasure-trove for Dolores. There were old spinning-wheels, broken chairs, an empty cradle, a great old four-posted bed, and a number of trunks and boxes to rummage in. That was as far as she could see in the gloom, but no doubt beyond her range of vision were more delights. What a lovely place in which to play! The cradle for her dolls, an old clock to take to pieces, and dozens of old garments to dress up in. Several wonderfully queer old bonnets hung against the wall. She put on one (after shaking off the layer of dust with which it was coated), and glanced in a broken mirror to see the effect. Her merry laugh echoed through the attic as she beheld her face framed by the bonnet. And then she heard a sharp exclamation from the room beneath her, the scurrying of feet, and the slamming of a door.

“Oh you pretty dear.”

“Oh you pretty dear.”

Crouching down behind the cradle, she waited developments; but no one came; so in a little while she grew bold again.

“I think I won't go to school after all. I reckon it's too late, anyway; I'll stay here to-day. But first, I must go back and get my dinner-pail and books. I can study up here just as well as at school.”

And soon Dolores, watched by the protesting squirrel, had slid down the tree, secured her books and dinner-pail in her apron, and was back again. And then began her delightful, if naughty, day. She wound up the clock, polished up the broken mirror, pulled the lighter articles of furniture here and there, tried the spinning-wheel, and finally settled down to the delightful task of exploring the boxes and chests.

In the meantime, down below, in the kitchen of the old house, an excited group of colored people were talking. Aunt Polly was the centre of the group, and was relating, for the benefit of a new comer, her experience.

“I tell you, I done heerd that ghost-child agin. No, I didn’t see it, but I heerd it. I went ovah to the noth wing to put away that ar seed, as Mistah Jones told me to do, and while I was in that dark, lonesome bedroom above the pahlor, I heerd a child laugh, just as cleah and sweet as a bird; it sounded just right beside me. Oh, I was so skeered, I run and banged the doah after me. You don’t ketch this child goin’ in that pawt of the house no moah.”

“Aunt Polly,” asked one breathless listener, “wasn’t that the room whar the murdah was committed?”

“Yas, em; yes indeedy; the poor child was strangled in its sleep.”

Just then the voice of Mr. Jones was heard. “Here, hurry up in there; got too much to do to stand here gabbling. You know Mister Tom comes to-night; he wants this place to be shining.” Each one hurried off to her work. Aunt Polly, with a toss of her head and a sniff, proceeded leisurely to hang out the white curtains and bed-linen she was doing up against the arrival of her beloved Mistah Tom.

Dolores ate her dinner when she became hungry, gave some of it to the squirrel, and played on until the shadows in the

attic indicated that evening was coming. Then she scrambled down and ran for home. She had time to brush the dust from her clothes, wash her face and hands, and lie down on the bed and fall asleep before Aunt Polly returned. By the time supper was ready and Dolores awakened, Aunt Polly had forgotten to ask about the school, in her eagerness to tell the important news that Mistah Tom was coming, and that she had heard the little ghost-girl's laugh. And in a little while Dolores again had forgotten everything in the dreamless sleep which comes to tired children whether they are good or bad.

She awoke in the morning to find Aunt Polly already gone. Not long after, the little truant followed and, climbing her sylvan stairway, was soon in the delightful attic. She had explored all but one chest, that was pushed under the eaves. The other chests had yielded up a rich treasure, but she was curious to know what they all contained before she enjoyed the contents. So the little box was pushed close to the window, for it was growing dark in the attic. Dolores could hear the rumble of thunder, and the rain was beginning to patter on the shingles; she was not the least afraid of a storm, and proceeded leisurely with her task. The little chest was locked, but the key hung obligingly tied to one of the handles by a string. She unlocked it, and raised the lid. Who can say what loving, breaking heart looked last into that little box? For, carefully folded away, with dead roses in each dainty garment, was a little girl's wardrobe, complete,—the finest linen undergarments, trimmed with delicate laces, little white silk clocked stockings, little heelless slippers of blue and red kid, all faded and spotted with age and mould; the loveliest little lace-trimmed dresses with short waists, puffed sleeves, and long skirts. Dolores hesitated a moment before examining them. On top of them was placed a note in a woman's hand. She laid it aside and did not read it, until she had finished the examination. She opened it at last, and read, "This is the wardrobe of my dear little dead daughter Dolores."

She closed the lid down gently, sprang up, and went to the window. “I must go home; I don’t like this old attic. I’ve been a wicked girl to come here. But how did that little dead girl come to have my name?”

She started to climb through the window, and saw that it was raining very hard; a steady downpour that promised to last all day. She returned to the chest, laid the note carefully aside, and again lifted out and unfolded each garment. How beautiful they were! Time had given them the delicate, mellow tint of old ivory. Dolores dearly enjoyed pretty clothes, and had possessed but few in her short life. She was charmed by their dainty quaintness.

“They look like they’d just fit me—I’m going to try on a suit—the lady would not care—I’ll be very careful of them.”

So on went the pretty underclothing, the white silk stockings, and little heelless slippers. Then over her head she slipped a little white dress, hemstitched and hand embroidered. Her hair, which Aunt Polly kept tightly braided, was loosened in soft waves around her face and neck. The broken mirror revealed a little maid of the beginning of the nineteenth century; such a charming little maid, that Dolores was delighted with the vision.

“My, but she’s sweet; Little Dolores, do you like coming back to life?”

And then her busy brain recalled the story of the little ghost-girl. “I have a great mind to go downstairs. If any one sees me, I can run back.” She looked questioningly at the little figure in the glass. “Dolores, shall I go? You tell me, for I am you to-day.” The little shadow nodded. “Very well, then, I will.”

She went to a door she had noticed, tried it, found it unlocked, and ventured out.

A flight of stairs led down into a narrow corridor, flanked on each side by closed doors, and this led into the main hall. She stole shyly out into this, and proceeded toward the great stairway; but to reach it, she had to pass an open door. Some one was moving leisurely about in the room. She peeped in, and saw a young colored man unpacking his master’s clothes. He had carefully arranged the toilet articles on the dressing-case, and was trying one of the silver-backed brushes on his curly locks, with an unlit cigar between his teeth, evidently extracted from a full box on the dressing-case.

Dolores swung the door slowly open, and the man, seeing its reflection in the mirror, turned and confronted her, in her quaint dress, standing in the soft gloom of the hall. She was pointing a threatening finger at the stolen cigar, frowning and biting her lips to keep from laughing, as she saw the horrified look on his face. Evidently, he had heard of the little ghost; the cigar fell from his lips, and his knees knocked together: he was too frightened to speak.

When Dolores could control her face no longer she turned, and ran back to the attic. The colored man fled to the kitchen, declaring that he had seen the ghost; and that if Mass Tom didn't go back to the city, he would, for he wasn't goin' to stay in no old house full of ghosts.

Aunt Polly met her Mr. Tom, on his return from hunting, at the door, and told him the marvellous tale.

"Wait till I change my clothes, Aunt Polly, and then come to the little library, if there's a fire there, for I am chilly; I'll hear all about it then;" and he hurried upstairs.

In the meantime, naughty Dolores had tired of the attic, and, having enjoyed her first adventure, had sallied forth to meet others. Not encountering any one, she ventured down the wide stairs, peeped into numerous rooms, and opening a door into a very cosy one, small and snug, with a fire burning on the hearth, she drew a big cushioned chair in front of it, sat down to watch it, and fell asleep. About an hour later, Aunt Polly was met in the hall by Mister Tom, who looked very much surprised.

"Come into the library, quick, Auntie; I've found the little ghost," he whispered. Aunt Polly followed, her knees trembling beneath her. Seeing the little figure in the chair, she started for the door, but thought better of it, and ventured nearer. Getting a good look at the ghost, she saw it was Dolores, and sank limply down by her on her knees.

“Well, well, well, I declare for it, it’s the hand of the Lord,” she whispered.

“Who is she, Aunt Polly, and where’d she come from?”

“She belongs to this fambly, Mistah Tom, and I’ll tell you by and by whar she come from; but whar she got them clothes, or how she got in here, is more than I can tell you.”

Just then Dolores stirred in her sleep, opened her eyes, and seeing them watching her, jumped to her feet.

“Is this Mr. Tom? I am the little ghost-girl, and I bring you good fortune;” and she looked up into his face and laughed.

Aunt Polly grunted, “You need a good lambastin’ fo’ skeerin’ me so,” she said wrathfully.

Not long after, Dolores and Aunt Polly went to live with Mr. Tom. A wrong was righted, and the little ghost-girl walked no more.

IV.

TITANIA'S MAID OF HONOR.

“Mammy, I wish dis yer rabbit could talk to me; 'pears like he wanted to tell me somefin'.”

“Well, Mateel, yo take him in yo arms and lay down on yo baid, and I's a goin' to conjur' dat rabbit so he kin talk to yo-alls.”

The little girl took her pet in her arms and lay down, holding the soft furry ball close to her ear. The old mammy, whose duty it was to take care of the little darkies on the plantation while their mothers were at work in the field or the house, sat down by the child, and slowly, soothingly, passed her hand over the little dark head; presently the large eyes closed, and half awake, half asleep, Mateel heard her say,—

“Now, Mistah Rabbit, tell Mateel yo news.”

And to her intense surprise, the rabbit, slipping from her arms, sat back on his haunches, and, regarding her intently, commenced:—

“Mateel, have you ever heard of the fairies? And do you know where they live?”

“No, Mistah Rabbit. What is they for, and what do they look like?”

“Oh, I haven’t time to tell you; I’m due in Fairyland now. Do you want to go with me? Because if you do, you must come at once.”

And the rabbit began to hop impatiently toward the door.

Mateel joyfully slipped from her bed and followed him out of the house. The rabbit hopped ahead until they reached the thick shade of the woods that grew close to the little cabin. Here he paused, and, turning to Mateel, said briefly,—

“Give me your hand.”

Mateel stooped down and seized his paw, when, to her surprise, she felt herself grow smaller, or the world larger; the trees seemed as tall as the clouds; the grass and leaves that grew among them reached far above her head.

The rabbit now remarked,—

“We must go through a bit of rough country just here, so perhaps you had better hold tight to one of my ears.”

Mateel, in some alarm, grasped the friendly ear, and felt herself lifted along in tremendous jumps and leaps, over great gnarled roots, over rocks and briers, until her strength and patience were all but exhausted. Finally, they dived down what seemed the bed of a dead streamlet, came to a deep pool of water, which the rabbit took at one flying leap with Mateel clasped in his forepaws, and they found themselves in a wondrous world.

It was Fairyland. Where is it? and how shall we find it? Ah, that is the mystery; but of this you may be sure,—wherever children are, close to their homes lies Fairyland; and if only the small wild things of the wood could talk to you, perhaps you might visit it, as Mateel did.

She found herself in a court or pleasance, beautifully carpeted with the rarest moss. The richest, softest shades of brown, of fawn color, of old rose, and of tenderest green, mingled and blended in its coloring. Mateel sank down on her knees and gazed around. A soft green tint was over everything. It came through the leaves that closely roofed it over. These were supported by straight trunks, that arose to a great height, where they separated into two stems; and each stem bore a leaf that overlapped its neighbor; at the point where the stems separated, an immense creamy white blossom with a golden centre hung down like a bell.

Mateel sank down on her knees and gazed around.
Mateel sank down on her knees and gazed around.

“Why, they are May apple blossoms,” cried Mateel, clapping her hands in ecstasy, “Oh, how lovely! how lovely! May apple plants as large as trees.”

Not a ray of sunlight filtered through the large leaves; a delicious sense of peace pervaded the perfumed twilight, and Mateel, who was always tired lately, felt that she could rest here, and gave a happy sigh.

And while she rested and waited for something lovely to happen, she heard the rain falling on the leaves of trees somewhere at a great distance above her.

“It’s raining, Mateel, but you needn’t worry; the rain never reaches here,” said the rabbit.

“I am not worrying,” said Mateel, contentedly.

“The rain is almost over, the sun is setting clear. It will be starlight soon, and then will come the fairies. But now I must leave you; try to sleep and rest, and when the fairy queen comes, I shall be in her train, and will present you.”

So Mateel contentedly sank back into the soft moss, and let her tired little body rest, while the rain played her a soothing lullaby. The soft light grew more dim, and a sweet sleep came to her eyes.

When she awoke it was growing very dark in the fairies' court. Mateel sat straight up and looked about her. From far distant depths of the wood tiny men were coming, bearing little lamps, which Mateel saw were fireflies and glowworms; these they placed in the cups of the great flowers, and swung in festoons between the trunks of the fairy trees. The little men disappeared, and she was again alone; but now the court was flooded with light soft and radiant, just the kind of light in which fairies look their best.

And while she sat enfolded in this soft light, from a distance came the sweetest music that mortal ear ever listened to. Indeed, but few mortals have heard its exquisite cadence. There was one man, who lived long ago, when people knew that there were fairies and shuddered at real ghosts and witches, who not only heard the fairy music, but heard and remembered their songs, and has written them down in a beautiful poem, and named it "A Midsummer Night's Dream." So Mateel sat and listened, while the music grew clearer and louder; and presently a wonderful procession came into view. First came the musicians; and will you believe it?—they were crickets and cicadas. But they were playing in Fairyland, for the king and queen of the fairies; and the music they give to fairies is different from that which they give to mortals. Close after the musicians marched a regiment of fairy guards to their majesties; and then came grandly dressed noblemen, stepping backward and bowing at each step; and then, under a canopy of richest velvet made from pansy blossoms, came Oberon and Titania! The queen was all in white; her dress of lily petals was trimmed with dewdrops; back of her shoulders two gauzy white wings shimmered and glowed with each graceful motion; on her dainty head

sparkled a crown of gleaming points of light; her arms were bare, and in her hand she carried a shining wand.

King Oberon was in blue armor that shone like sapphires with every motion; it was made from the shells of blue beetles. After them came a multitude of fairies; pretty ladies of the court in brilliant flower-dresses, with dainty wings at their shoulders. They reminded Mateel of a great flock of butterflies. The fairy men were, like the king, in armor.

Mateel eagerly looked for the rabbit, and saw him walking with a group of wise-looking fairies, who were undoubtedly learned judges and philosophers.

The bright procession marched once around the court, and then the queen and king seated themselves on a green bank spread with violets; a shining little herald announced that the fairy revels would begin.

But waving his hand, the king said gravely, "We will first hear the arguments, and perhaps the witnesses, in the case of the accused maid, once lady-in-waiting to our gracious queen."

Here the queen put a lovely cobweb handkerchief to her eyes, and said:—

"They may bring all the evidence they want to, but I know that she is innocent; I am sure that Katie didn't;" and she stamped her little foot.

Then the king said soothingly, "Well, well, dear, don't be too positive; perhaps Katie did."

The queen would have answered, but just then the rabbit rose and bowed, and the king, who seemed slightly nervous, cried,
—

"Our wise and learned friend the rabbit may speak."

And the rabbit, bowing again, made an eloquent speech, in which he said that although the evidence was very strong for and against the defendant, yet he would beg a postponement of a decision until the learned counsel had found the answer to an unimportant question, which was, What did Katie do?

The king answered that perhaps it might be as well; for although convinced in his own mind that Katie did, he was anxious to allow her every chance to re-establish her good character.

The queen declared that there was no use in having the trial at all, as, whatever it was she was accused of, Katie didn't, didn't, didn't; and Titania was beginning to look vexed, when the rabbit, bowing again, asked if the queen had chosen any one to fill Katie's place during her (he hoped) temporary absence.

The queen had not, for she said,—

“Katie is a changeling, and where may I find another mortal?”

The rabbit, bowing low with his paw on his heart, asked permission to tell Titania a story, and the queen sighed, and answered,—

“Yes, if it's not very long.”

So the rabbit began:—

“There was once a boy, a mortal, who was out hunting. He had gone deep into the woods; night was coming fast; like all boys, he had a fear of the dark and lonely woods. He was walking very fast, and whistling (as mortals do to keep up their courage), when he heard a child crying; he listened, and then, thinking of wild animals, hurried on faster than ever. But the crying grew louder, and presently, right in his path under a huge linden tree, he found a little child, just able to walk

alone, and to talk a little. It was unlike any child he had ever seen: brown hair, brown eyes, and brown skin. It was dressed in some strange silky material, and round its neck was a necklace of the claws of some wild animal.

“The boy picked the little one up and carried it home. It was handed over to the old colored woman who has charge of the little colored children on the plantation. The boy claimed the child as his slave, and named her Matilde, which usage has changed to Mateel.

“She has lived, but not thrived, on the coarse fare and rough usage accorded the other little ones. She was petted and noticed by the young master for a day or two, then forgotten for many more. As the years pass she will have great beauty. She has never had a friend but her young master.

“Your Majesty is generous and kind; would not the little maid take Katie’s place?”

Then the queen, springing to her feet, exclaimed:—

“No, she cannot take Katie’s place; no one can do that; but she shall have her own place in my train, close at my right hand. Where is the child; have you brought her to Fairyland?” And the rabbit said, “I have brought her, gracious queen.”

So Mateel was brought into the presence of the king and queen and their court, and the queen, touching her with her shining wand, changed her into a bonny brown fairy, with shining brown eyes, and a beautiful dress made of petals of the red rose; for she was among the maids of honor most dearly loved by Titania. But the question of Katie’s guilt or innocence is still unsettled; for on summer nights you will hear the fairy lawyers still declaring that “Katie did” and “Katie didn’t.”

V.

BRAN, THE WOLF DOG.

On a high cliff overlooking the ocean, on the western coast of Ireland, stand the ruins of an old castle. The short grass grows on the floor of the great hall, and the wind sighs and howls through its broken walls, with a sound half human, half animal.

The peasants for generations have named it “The Wolf’s Castle.” Even long years ago, when it was tenanted by kindly folk and was running over with life and happiness, it had already earned its grim name.

Max had been out hunting. He had spent the day in the woods and fields, and now as night fell, dark and lowering, he hastened his steps. The first scattering drops of rain struck his face, and the wind was rising. It moaned and howled like the distant cry of a wolf; it made Max feel strangely nervous and frightened. “Frightened!”—he laughed at the thought. “A boy of twelve frightened by the wind!”

And yet, listen! the patter of the rain (coming faster now) sounds on the leaves like the stealthy tread of some animal.

“If it is a wolf, it is the ghost of one; for there are no wolves in this country now,” thought Max. “How like a sigh from human lips the wind sounds!”

“Home at last, I am thankful to say;” and Max ran swiftly round to the back door. As he closed it, the wind gave a long-drawn wail, and he almost fancied a hand strove to draw him back into the darkness.

“I think I need my supper,” thought he. “Fasting makes a fellow light-headed.”

Entering the kitchen with exultant heart but studied indifference, he threw his game down on the table before the admiring cook, and then hastened to change his dress. Soon, over a good supper, he had forgotten the uncanny night outside, though the wind still howled and the rain beat against the window.

After supper Max went into the library. How cosy and comfortable it was, with a fire in the grate, an easy-chair drawn in front of it, and the shadows dancing over books and pictures!

“I’ll sit here in front of the fire and rest,” thought he. He sat there mentally reviewing the day’s sport. “I need a good dog,” he said. “I must have one. Why, what is that?” For there, lying in front of the fire, basking in the heat, was an immense dog, with shaggy coat and pointed ears. Max called to him:—

“Here, old fellow; here, Bran,—why, he knows his name. How did I come to know it, I wonder!” For at the first call, the dog had raised his head and beat his great tail upon the floor. At the mention of his name he sprang to his feet, and came crouching and trembling with joy to lick the hands and shoes of the lad.

“What is it then, good dog? Tell me your story, for I’m sure you have one to tell,” coaxed Max.

Did he tell it, or did Max dream? For as the dog rested his head on the boy’s knee and looked with liquid, loving eyes

into his face, Max glanced round the room and saw a strange transformation: the walls widened, the ceiling rose to a greater height, and was crossed by great black beams. On the walls hung shields, spears, great swords, and numerous other articles of war and of the chase.

The polished grate had grown into an immense fireplace, and the floor was covered with what Max supposed were rushes. But the people in the room interested him most of all. On the opposite side of the fireplace, in a great carved chair, sat a lady, young and very lovely,—her dress some rich dark green material clasped at the throat and waist by heavy golden clasps, her bare arms heavy with gold armlets, her long black hair falling in shining waves around her, and her eyes,—the sea was in them,—gray or dark blue, and in moments of anger flashing greenish yellow like the eyes of some animal.

She sat with her elbow on the arm of her chair, her head resting on her hand, looking into the fire and listening to the music of an ancient harper, who sat in the background, softly striking the chords of his harp.

The firelight, dancing over the room, caused strange shadows; and Max fancied himself one of the shadows, for his chair was filled by a boy of his own age, sitting just as he had been sitting, with the great dog's head on his knee; and notwithstanding his strange dress, Max started with a feeling almost of terror, for the boy was his double; it was like seeing himself in the glass.

A storm was raging around the castle, and above the soft music of the harp could be heard the rush of the wind, and the roar of the ocean dashing at the foot of the cliff.

The lady shivered and glanced round the room. "I wish your father were home, Patrick. How glad I shall be when peace comes again."

“I wish I were old enough to lead the clan to battle, then father could remain with you.”

In a great carven chair sat a lady.
In a great carven chair sat a lady.

“What? become a dotard? Out upon you!” Her eyes flashed at the boy, and the dog, raising his head, gave a low growl. “Why do you not have that beast speared? You know I hate him,” said the lady.

“He was given to me (as you know) by the good fathers at the monastery. They told me always to cherish Bran, for he would save me from demons, as well as wolves. See the silver crosses on his collar. Nothing can harm us while Bran is here.”

The lady cast a look of fear and hatred at the boy and the dog. “Be not too sure,” she said. Springing to her feet, she walked back and forth through the room. Her step was smooth and graceful; she made no sound on the rushes as she walked.

Presently there came a lull in the storm, and from somewhere back in the hills came the howl of a wolf. The lady paused and listened, then turning to the boy she said in a hurried manner, while her eyes sought the floor: “I feel ill; I am going to my room. Let no one disturb me to-morrow; if I need help I will call.” And as she turned to leave the room, suddenly she paused. “Get you to bed, Patrick, chain up that dog, and—you are the hope and pride of your father—I lay my commands on you—do not hunt to-morrow.”

Then the lady was gone; but Bran was trembling and growling. “He heard the wolves howl,” said Patrick to the harper. The old man looked into the fire and was silent.

Presently Patrick arose, and bidding the harper good-night, went to his room, closely followed at the heels by the great dog. To his surprise, awaiting him in his room was the housekeeper, an ancient woman, who had been his father's nurse. She rose when Patrick entered, and came toward him.

"My mind is troubled, child," she said; "I must tell you my story."

"What is it, nurse?"

"It is about my lady Eileen, your stepmother. May I speak?"

"Tell on," said Patrick. "But remember, I will hear nothing against my lady;" for he well knew that the nurse bore the young stepmother no good will.

"Well, listen, child. You were not here when your father married my lady. You had not left the monastery where your father placed you for safety while he was beyond seas. I must tell you first how she came here.

"Fingal, the huntsman, told me that one day, when your father was hunting alone, he was followed all day by a wolf. It would lurk from one hillock to another, but when he turned to pursue it, it would disappear. Finally, at noon, when he sat down to rest, it came creeping and fawning to his feet. He was tempted to spear it, but did not, out of surprise. Presently it disappeared; but in the gloaming it returned, and followed him clear to the gate of the castle. This my lord told to Fingal, and greatly did he marvel. That same night," whispered the nurse, mysteriously, "came a call for help, and when the gate was opened, there stood a beautiful woman (my lady Eileen) who told how she had lost her way and her company as she journeyed to St. Hilda's shrine. Your father bade her enter, and she has abode here ever since; for soon he married her, and she became our lady."

“Well, well, nurse, I knew of her coming, and I know also that she was no waif, but of a noble house and high lineage, as her coat of arms bears witness,—a wolf couchant. But why explain all this to you? Right glad am I that she came to gladden my father’s heart and brighten our home.”

“Yes, child, but listen; this only brings me to my story. My lady has strange spells of illness, and always after a wolf howls.” The boy started impatiently, but the old dame, laying her hand on his arm, compelled him to listen. “The last time it was moonlight. I was up in the turret opposite her window; her lamp was lit, and I saw a strange sight. My lady was springing with long leaps backward and forward over the floor, and wringing her hands. Presently she went to her closet, took from it a wolf’s skin, slipped it over her dress, and I do not know how she got outside the walls, but I saw her presently speeding away with long leaps toward the hills.”

“Nurse, nurse, are you crazy? It is my lady of whom you speak. Never let me hear you breathe that story again. Think of my father’s wrath, should this come to his ears.”

Still the old woman shook her head and mumbled in wrath, and speedily betook herself away; while Patrick, laughing heartily at her foolish story, went to bed. But all night above the roar of the storm could be heard the howling of wolves.

The morning broke wild and gloomy; the castle seemed lonely and dreary without the cheery presence of Lady Eileen. Patrick went once to her door and knocked, but received no answer. Presently Fingal, the huntsman, came in, armed for the chase. Bran followed close at his heels. “Will my lord hunt to-day? The wolves were among the flocks last night, the shepherds tell me.”

Patrick hesitated, remembering his lady’s commands, but he decided finally to go. Soon he was ready, and issuing from the

gates, he and Fingal and the dog were lost in the mists that enveloped the hills.

Long did the household wait their return. Night was brooding: over the castle when Fingal's horn was heard at the gate. In answer to the warder's call his voice came sternly through the night: "Bring help, and come quickly; my lady is dead." To the grievous outcries and questions that arose he would return no answer.

Soon an excited group were hurrying toward the hills, and presently the torches revealed a sad sight. The first to come into view was their young lord, crouching on the ground, with the dog's head clasped in his arms; Bran's throat had been torn and mangled, and he had been thrust through with a spear. Patrick was wounded and torn in many places; blood was flowing down his face and throat, and his tears were falling on the dog's head. Not far away lay Lady Eileen, quite dead. Very beautiful and placid she looked, as if sleeping; but on her throat were marks of great teeth.

"Take up my lady and bear her to the castle," said Patrick; "as for Bran, you must bury him here."

"Nay, child, he is only a dead dog," said the old nurse, fussily. But she was met by a stern command to be quiet.

"Do as I bid you," he said to the servants, and then added, "The good dog went mad, and attacked my lady. I could not save her. Let my father know this, should I die;" and then the boy fell backward, fainting.

To the father it was a sad home-coming when, a few days later, he returned from war,—his beautiful young wife lying cold and dead in the chapel; his son very ill, calling always for Bran to save him from some deadly peril.

Greatly the household marvelled how their lady came to be out in the mist and the storm, alone on the hills; but Fingal, the huntsman, sought his two gossips, the nurse and the harper, and told this tale of the day's hunt.

“We had followed the wolves all day, and several had been killed. But there was one gray wolf, who seemed the leader of the pack. This one my lord singled out, and followed from valley to valley. Bran would not pursue it, but slunk and cowered after his master, whining pitifully. All day we followed it, until, late in the gloaming, it had headed toward the castle; and we pressed it hard. It finally turned at bay, and, springing at my lord's throat, it brought him to the ground. Bran was lagging behind, and I was urging him forward. When he heard my lord's cries, the dog flew at the wolf. The beast then turned on the dog, and as I ran to help to spear it, I saw—” here the huntsman's voice sank into a whisper—“I saw no wolf, but my lady, tearing and rending the dog, while Bran's teeth were buried in her throat.

“Separate them! save them!” cried my lord; and I, not knowing what else to do, watched my chance and thrust the dog through the body. He sank without a groan, relaxing his grasp on my lady's throat. My lord gave a cry of despair, and my lady, hearing it, crept over to him and whispering, ‘Forgive; I could not help it,’ sank dead at his feet. But Lord Patrick passed her by, and threw himself down by the dog; while I, half distraught, came home for help.”

Then said the nurse, “See that you hold your tongue, man, for if this story come to the ears of my lord, your body will want a head.”

But from that time forth the Lady Eileen was spoken of as “The Wolf Lady,” and in time, the grim name of the “Wolf's Castle” clung to her old home.

In the years that came and passed, Patrick became chief in his father's place; and then a cairn was raised over the body of the faithful dog.

Max awoke to find the fire out; shivered, and sprang to his feet. "What a strange dream!" he said.

VI.

THE CORN FAIRY.

Little Theo sat up in bed and looked out of the window. "It's going to be a nice day; the little girl will be in the corn. We will play all day long. I must hurry; she doesn't like to wait."

Presently, her breakfast eaten and her little tasks all finished, she was running as fast as her feet would carry her toward the wide fields of Indian corn. In a few moments the great blades were rustling above her head. They formed green arches, down whose long vistas the little girl eagerly peered. Soon, with a satisfied laugh, she ran with outstretched hands down the corn rows, and her voice came back chattering, laughing, asking and answering questions.

Theo's mother had often heard her speak of the little girl, or young lady, or old lady, who played or talked with her in the cornfield; but being a very busy woman, and having little time to give the child, she did not pay much attention. If she heeded at all, she thought some neighbor or her children had met the little girl while passing through the cornfield. To-day her attention had been aroused, and she began to wonder who it was that Theo was so eager to meet.

So when Theo ran down to the cornfield, her mother followed closely. She saw her disappear in the corn, and marking the place, hurried after. She could hear the child's voice close at hand, and another's, that sounded sometimes like a human voice, and again like the wind sighing in the corn. After a

short search, she saw at a distance her little daughter. But what was she doing? Clasp ing in her arms a group of cornstalks, and looking lovingly up among the green waving blades. But stay. Were they cornstalks? It surely was a beautiful young woman, dressed in trailing robes of green silk; her hair the color of corn silk, waving around her face and neck.

The little girl playfully clasped her knees, while the lady, laughing, bent over her, swaying and bending as corn does in the wind. “Am I losing my senses, or am I bewitched?” wondered the mother. She was tempted to call her child to her, and take her away from the field, but she seemed so happy.

Presently Theo sprang away from the corn, and called back, “You cannot catch me.” The wind suddenly blew the tossing corn-blades together. When it lulled again, she saw her little girl running down the row, and close in pursuit ran the young woman. No, stay. It was a child, following closely after Theo. On they ran, laughing, calling, and presently they came back, panting.

Theo flung herself down to rest in the shade of the corn, and so did the little girl. But now, it was not a little girl, but an old woman who sat there. Her face, half hidden by her hood, was wrinkled and yellow. She had a long cloak, with the hood closely drawn over her head. Her clothing was made of some material the color of cornhusks, and was coarse and stiff.

The little girl playfully clasped her knees.
The little girl playfully clasped her knees.

Theo rested her elbow on the old woman’s knee, and looked up into her face. “I almost think I like you best this way,” she said. “You make me think of such comfortable things,—gathering nuts and apples, and of pumpkin-pie, and—and—

Christmas, and going to grandpa's on Thanksgiving." The old woman nodded and sighed.

"Do you feel sad again?" Again she nodded.

"About the corn-husking?" A nod.

"But you know next summer will come, and you can begin all over again."

Just here Theo's mother thought, "I must stop this; the child is talking either to a ghost or a witch. Theo," she called, "come to me."

The child sprang up from her seat and came to her mother, rubbing her eyes.

"Now, mamma, you've frightened her away; she won't come back again to-day. She doesn't like folks."

"Theo, who in the world are you talking about; and why do you race up and down the corn rows, laughing and chattering to yourself?"

"Well, I'll tell you, mamma; but first let us go to the house; she might not like to hear me."

Soon after, they were seated in the cool shaded parlor. The mother took the little girl on her lap. "Now, Theo, tell me," she said. So the little child began.

"Well, mamma, it began long ago, by me being so lonesome. I haven't any one to play with, and one day I was out in the cornfield when the corn was just as high as me. And I spoke out loud, and I said, 'Oh, dear, what shall I do for some one to play with me? I shall go distracted' (I have heard you say that word, mamma)! And I said, 'I wish a little girl would grow out of those cornstalks;' and just as I said that, the stalks

parted, and out stepped the nicest little girl. She was so pretty! She had such curling brown hair, and blue eyes, and her dress was of green silk; and when she laughed, her teeth looked like little grains of white corn, and she was rubbing her eyes, as though she had just waked up. And she knew me, mamma; she said, ‘Why, Theo, did you come to play with me?’ and pretty soon we were the best friends you ever saw. And every day we played and played; only she never would tell me where she lived, and she wouldn’t ever come home with me to play. But one day, when the corn had grown way high above my head, and the roasting ears were getting ripe, she changed all at once into such a pretty young lady. At first I cried, for I didn’t want to lose my little girl; but the young lady was so lovely, mamma, and she sang to me, and we talked; and so one day last fall, when the cornstalks were turning yellow, I found my young lady had changed into an old one. And I was afraid of her at first, she was so bent over, and was queer looking. But I got real well acquainted with her, and she told me stories about gathering nuts, and about squirrels and birds, and oh, lots of things, and I just love her now!

“Well, I wanted to tell you, but you didn’t pay much ’tention when I talked to you; so, when husking time came, my poor old lady wrung her hands and cried, and told me good-bye, and I just couldn’t ’dure to see her go, and my dear cornfield torn down, and I have felt so lonesome.

“Well, this summer, the little girl came back, when the corn was tall enough for us to play in; and now we know each other so well that she changes just for fun, from a little girl to a young lady, and then to an old one; and she keeps me uneasy, mamma, for I never know just when she will change. She told me once she was an Indian woman, and that she was civilized now,—and that’s all.”

Theo ended with a sigh of relief that the story was told. The mother looked at the child long and curiously. “Well, I declare!” she said. But that night she said to Theo’s papa: “We must send Theo to school. The child’s head is filled with all sorts of nonsense; it’s time she was taught something sensible; and, if I were in your place, I would turn that cornfield into pasture-land, and invest in more cattle.”

“I have been thinking of that myself,” he answered.

By and by the mother asked, “John, was that cornfield ever used by the Indians as a burial place, or anything?”

“I don’t know,” he answered musingly. “I used to plow up arrow-heads, and pipe-bowls of red sandstone, when I first broke the prairie sod. Why do you ask?”

“Oh, just because,” she answered.

VII.

AT THE WAYSIDE CROSS.

There is a border land that lies just beyond this everyday life, but not within the bounds of dreamland. We call it, for want of a better name, "The land of fancy, or of waking dreams."

A young mother lay in her white bed, and close in her arms nestled the little soul whose life journey was just beginning. It was twilight time, and the mother lay half asleep, half awake, close on the confines of that border land.

The rain beating on the window, the fire purring in the grate, played a soft accompaniment to her thoughts.

"What will my little baby's life be,—happy or sad?" questioned the mother. "Oh, dear All-Father, if I might know!" thus she prayed. And while she asked and wondered, a soft rustle by her bedside caused her to glance up. Above her and the sleeping baby leaned a tall bright angel, in garments soft and white like snow, with folded wings like the petals of some great white lily. "What is it," wondered the mother; and a soft voice answered: "I am your baby's angel. Your prayer has been heard. Look." And the mother, following the angel's glance, saw at the foot of the bed three gray shapes, three mysterious woman forms. There they sat, solemnly regarding the little one. In the hands of one was what the mother knew to be a distaff; from it, a fine thread passed to the baby's hand. "Ah, that is why you clasp your

hands so tightly, my darling, lest you lose the thread,” said the mother.

The next sister held a pair of shears in her hand; her eyes were sad and downcast. The last one had empty hands, but she spoke with authority, and she said: “Sisters, this new soul is bound for the city on the heights of Peace. How shall she reach it?”

Then spoke the one with the distaff: “Ah, sister, she is little and weak. She is a woman child. May she not go by the way that leads through the valley, where there is pleasant shade, and the birds sing all day long?”

The eldest answered: “Who that takes that route reaches the city? Do they not wander away into the defiles of the mountains, and the heights are lost to them? Nay, sisters, she shall go by the way of tears till she come to the wayside cross.”

Then the pitying one raised the shears to cut the tiny thread of life, but the other stayed her hand. "Let me read to you her destiny," she said.

The angel bent low over the mother and child. "Be strong, be courageous," he whispered; and the mother's fears were stilled.

Then spoke the Fate: "This soul shall early be acquainted with sorrow; and the angel of pain shall walk hand in hand with her. But close beside shall walk the angel of patience. Her little feet shall be pierced with thorns and bruised with cruel rocks. But beside the stony path sweet flowers will bloom. She will hear the lark sing up in the blue, and at every turn in the path she will look backward and see that she is climbing higher. Sometimes, to strengthen her, shall be given her glimpses of the wonderful city. And always her guardian angel shall be with her to minister to her.

Glimpses of the Wonderful City shall be given to her.
Glimpses of the Wonderful City shall be given to her.

"As the years go by, she will not journey alone. She will be happy, for love will lighten the way. Then suddenly shall she come to the wayside cross. There a great horror of darkness shall settle over her, her strength shall be taken from her, and she shall lie with her face in the dust.

"But at the cross, the clouds will separate, the mists roll away, and she will find her journey almost accomplished. For behold, from it a wonderful stairway of pearl and gold leads up into the heart of the city; and her loved ones will hasten to greet her, and stretch out their hands to help her on her way. She will have gained the heights of Peace, and will be an inhabitant of that wonderful country, a citizen of the golden city."

Then the mother, weeping tears of sorrow and of joy, was satisfied, and the tiny baby stirred in its sleep, and nestled closer to her heart.

VIII.

IN QUEST OF THE DARK.

Little Gene, up at the castle, was missing. The night had come on, and the woods that inclosed the cliff on which the castle stood, and that swept down the valley and up the opposite heights, were hushed and still, or sighing dolefully in the summer wind. The servants were out with torches, calling, and running in every direction. Some one suggested letting out the dogs; but that, the lady would not allow. She would not have the child torn to pieces by the great wolf-hounds, she said. She sat in her room and wrung her hands in despair. For the twentieth time she questioned the weeping nurse, who grew more frightened and confused with each question.

“Most noble lady, I saw him last in the courtyard. He called to me and said: ‘Nursie, I will run away out into the deep wood;’ and I answered that the Dark would catch him if he did, and then he could never get home again; and he said: ‘I am not afraid of the Dark. I will find him, and tell him so; and I like the Dark.’ And then—I brought him into the play-room, and I —”

“Stop right there!” cried the mother. “You did not bring him in. You intended to do so; but in talking with the men-at-arms and other idlers, you forgot my son; and now, he is either in the grasp of that robber chief Montfort, or the wolves have found him.”

Here the mother's and the nurse's outcries blended; and if the nurse's shrieks were loudest, there may have been cause; for a noble dame's white hand could strike heavily, in those days.

The whole night through, the mother and the nurse mingled their tears for their darling, while the search went on. The men-at-arms and servants loved the boy, not only that he was the son of their lord but for his own quaint ways and bonny face.

Early in the morning the seekers came straggling in, tired and hungry; no trace had been found of the child. All feared to tell their lady of their fruitless quest. She had not ceased, all night, to walk the floor, weeping, and asking herself how she would dare tell her husband that their boy was gone. The nurse crouched by the door, trembling, and in sore distress; while the seekers asked of each other who was to tell their mistress. While they lingered, a shout from the valley caused all to hasten to the castle wall. A horse and rider came rapidly toward them from under the trees; clasped in the rider's arms was little Gene; his yellow curls glistened against the man's black armor.

Placing the child on the ground, the stranger bowed low to the lady, turned his horse, and disappeared into the forest. The mother scarcely saw him; her eyes were on her boy. She reached out her arms to him.

"Gene, little Gene, my dearest, come." The little fellow kissed his hand and waved it to her. Soon he was in her arms; and she held him close, while she questioned him.

"Where have you been, Gene, and who was yon dark man who brought you home?"

Soon he was in her arms.

Soon he was in her arms.

“That was the Dark, mamma. Nurse does always tell me that the Dark will catch me; and when I say that I do not fear, she threatens to send me to him. I asked her where he lived, and she said, ‘In the day-time, in the great vaults under the castle;’ and I asked her where he lived at night, and she said, ‘In the deep woods.’ So I said I would find him, and tell him I did not fear him.”

“Did you think to frighten his father’s son with such baby lore?” asked the lady of the nurse, scornfully.

“But continue, my son; tell me, how went you out from the castle?”

“There is a little door through which—but dear mamma, I cannot tell you what is known only to the men-at-arms.”

The lady glanced round darkly. “This castle needeth its master sorely,” she said. The men drew back abashed. The boy continued,—

“When I came out into the woods, I left the path that leads away—away,”—he spread out his dimpled arms and looked far off,—“I know not whither it goes, but I left it, and sought the deep wood. The shadows are heavy there, and it is very still. While I stood under a tree, uncertain which way to go, suddenly down toward me, through the trees, came the Dark.”

“Holy Mary! it was some robber,” exclaimed the mother.

“No, mamma, I tell you, it was the Dark. He was very black; his armor was black, and so were his beard and his eyes. He looked at me as though he wanted to eat me. But I said, ‘Are you the Dark? I come to find you and to tell you that I do not fear you.’ And then I looked at him, and he laughed, and I said, ‘I think I am going to like you;’ and he said, ‘Who are you? Have you strayed from Fairyland?’

“So I told him who I was, and he frowned and said, ‘Careless woman, to guard such a treasure so slackly.’ Who did he mean, mamma?”

“I think I am going to like you.”

“I think I am going to like you.”

The lady’s face flushed. “Continue, my son; did he harm you?”

“Oh, mamma, no. He found me some berries and a drink from a spring; and then he showed me how, at his coming, the little birds went to sleep in the trees, and the deer beneath them. And he showed me the stars, coming out in the deep sky. And when I grew sleepy, he held me in his arms, and sang of the white moths, and the glowworms; and the bird that sings at night sang with him; and then I went to sleep. But when morning came he found a great black horse, which was his; and so he brought me home, and made me promise never to seek for him again. I did not want to promise, only his eyes looked so that I feared him; so I promised; and he gave me this keepsake, for my mamma.”

“He gave me this keepsake for my mamma.”

“He gave me this keepsake for my mamma.”

Here little Gene drew forth from his sleeve a piece of parchment, which he handed to his mother.

The lady was obliged to call to her aid the priest, who read slowly:—

“Thou careless woman, guard this treasure more securely, lest he fall a second time into the hands of Montfort.”

“Holy St. Denis! it was that fierce robber,” said the lady.

IX.

THE KING WILL HUNT TO-DAY.

This story was told by an Indian mother to her children, while the wind whirled and twisted the snow into great heaps against the walls of the tepee.

“This that I will tell you happened many years ago, before the white man was here, and when the red man owned all the vast prairies and deep woods, the great lakes and broad rivers of this land. The red man ruled over every living animal, save the great bear, who dwelt in the dim vastness of the forest, and the gaunt wolves, who submitted to the rule of a king, strong and terrible.

“One winter the frost came early; the rivers were frozen solid; the snow covered the nuts under the trees and the roots that were eatable. The animals sought their dens and burrows, and the earth slept the death-sleep. All living things suffered, the red men most of all; there was fasting and sorrow in all the tepees—in all save one, where lived the Wolf-Maiden and her mother. Their tepee was warm and bright—warm with the furs of animals, bright with the light of great dry logs blazing on the fire. The daughter was plump and rosy, for she had plenty of food; but the mother was thin and pale, and sat all day with her face hidden on her knees, in the corner of the tepee. Every night the daughter called the mother to come with her; and the mother followed, trembling, not daring to disobey. Those who watched them saw them disappear in the starlight, across the wide, snow-covered prairie, taking the

direction of the ravine, where were the dens of the Wolf-King and his old wolf-mother. They would return heavily laden with meat and furs; and frequently the mother bent under a great load of logs. Often when the children of the village, hollow-eyed and pale, would come near the tepee, scenting the fragrance of the broiling meat, the maiden would snatch from the fire a portion and offer it to the little ones; but it was rejected with horror; for the mothers had told the children that the meat was bewitched, and if they ate of it they would be turned into wolves.

“The Wolf-Maiden was looked upon with fear; for it was said that in the long summer evenings she had been seen playing and romping with the old mother-wolf and the young Wolf-King; while her Indian mother, from a distant hill, watched her, and wrung her hands for fear. So all the girls of the tribe shunned her, and the young men feared her greatly.

“Now the winter waxed colder and fiercer, and cruel hunger dwelt in each tepee. Many little ones died, for there was no food for them; and there was mourning in the village. The Wolf-Maiden’s heart was filled with pity; she went to the mothers and offered them meat for the children. When they drew back she said, ‘Is it not better to give this to the children than to see them die? Do not I eat it, and am I a wolf?’

“Then her face grew red as the sky when the sun bids it good night. The mothers finally accepted the meat, although with many a smothered curse for the giver. The children grew strong and rosy again; and the parents watched them anxiously, to see if claws or fur would appear on them.

“But the Wolf-King and his subjects grew weary with the toil of supplying so many with food; and in sulky silence they retired to their dens and slept the time away. Then, when the Wolf-Maiden had gone to his den, and had called the king to come to her without avail, she sought the old mother-wolf,

and she said, 'Oh, mother, dost thou not care that thy child lacks food? and see, my lazy brother will not hunt for me.'

"And the wolf-mother said, 'Daughter, I know well that it is not for thyself thou demandest food, but for the helpless beings among whom thou dost dwell. What is it to me that they starve? Have they not taken thee from me, and dost thou not blush when thou rememberest that thou wast once a wolf?'

"'Not so,' answered the maid; 'I blush rather for the cruel heart that a wolf-skin can cover. Give me now my wolf-skin robe: I will find food for those helpless little ones.'

"Then hastily snatching the robe she flung it over her shoulders, and she was changed into a wolf, and, speeding away across the snow, she was quickly lost to view in the distance. Then the old wolf-mother sprang to the door of her cave and sent a cry of alarm and anguish up the valley. It entered the door of the Wolf-King's den, and awoke the sleeping monarch. He ran with great leaps down the valley to his mother's home. She quickly told him her story, and bemoaned her own and her son's selfishness.

"'Thy sister will die, will die! And I, her mother, have sent her to her death. She is all unused to the hunt, she will perish alone in the bitter cold! Follow her! Bring her back!'

"Then the king ran swiftly down the valley, giving the hunting call as he ran; and all the wolves of the pack awoke and called to each other: 'The king will hunt to-day!' And there was a gathering and mustering of the strong ones of the tribe. And the king said, 'Come, follow, follow quickly, we are on the track of a wolf. I warn ye all, let no one harm the stranger should we meet with it; for it is my royal sister, returned to us once more!'

“Now the Wolf-Maiden ran long and far over the dim snow-covered plain, but found nothing; for she was unused to the hunt, and knew not how to track or to follow. Presently she drew near the great black forest, wherein dwelt the Bear-King. But this she did not heed, for just on the edge of the forest an antelope started up from the long, high grass and brush, and sprang away among the great trees. The Wolf-Maiden followed closely on its trail. She did not see the wicked eyes, cruel claws, or gleaming teeth above her. Just as she sprang on the antelope, a blow from the great bear’s paw struck her down. She sprang to her feet, all the royal blood in her body aroused by the blow; but who could strive against that terrible arm? Suddenly through the forest rang the royal hunting call of the Wolf-King, and the great bear turned to face as cruel a fate as he had planned for the Wolf-Maiden. Then came the combat: terrible blows were given and taken, growls and snarls of rage, the wild joy and glow of the battle. The Wolf-Maiden, forgetting all but her wolf nature, joined in the struggle, and helped to drag the monster to the ground.

“When the battle was over and the bear was dead, the pack withdrew to a respectful distance, and formed a circle around the dead bear and antelope. They watched the Wolf-King and his sister divide the spoil; a large portion for the helpless children, a smaller portion for their mother and themselves. And when they were served, the wolves closed in around the carcasses and left scarcely the bones.

“The Wolf-Maiden returned no more to the Indian village; retaining her wolf form, she abode with her own mother. But all through the cold of the terrible winter, the wolves brought down the game, and supplied the wants of the children; and when the winter was gone, and the birds sang on the ridgepoles of the tepees, the Wolf-King, his mother, sister, and tribe removed far to the north land. Ever after, the wolf was venerated in the tribe and was chosen as their totem.”

X.

HE WAS A PRINCE.

The rain had poured down steadily all day. Max was tired and depressed, for a slight cold made going out into the rain impossible. All the books had been read and re-read. There was no one to amuse him but Candace, the nurse, a mulatto woman of dignified and solemn mien, who always reminded him of Thorwaldsen's "Africa," for her large eyes had a far-away look, "As if she were remembering things," Max said.

She was kind, but seldom talked to him; and as Max had no mother to tell his thoughts to, they would sit for an hour at a time, dreaming their own dreams, neither speaking to the other.

As the afternoon wore on, Max grew more and more restless and his sighs more frequent. Nurse Candace glanced up from her sewing, but said nothing.

Just then the great white cat, "Necho" by name, rose up from his dark red velvet cushion, yawned wearily, stretched himself, and stepped with stately grace from the room.

"Why! he walks like a prince," said Max.

"He is a prince at night," said Candace.

"Is he? How do you know?" eagerly asked Max.

“If I tell you, you must not let him suspect, even by your actions, that you know,” said Candace, “or my punishment—” Here she broke off.

“I promise,” said Max.

“Well, it is as I tell you. All day long while the daylight lasts with us he is under a spell. Once, in the olden days, his father, the king of Egypt, caused to be put to death a great magician; but before his death the magician laid a spell upon the great king’s only son, Prince Necho; and this was it. When night came the prince and one attendant were to depart to the westward, far over the unknown sea; and when they came to the land of strangers, the prince must take the form of some animal.

“When the queen heard this she was filled with despair, and implored the great cat-headed goddess, Pacht, to have mercy on her son; but all the comfort the goddess promised her was, that the spell upon the prince should last only from darkness to daylight; that he might take the form of the animal sacred to the goddess, the cat; because of his pure and blameless life he should be a white cat; that while he was under the spell he should have a kind and loving master, and his faithful attendant should be with him.

“Now, when night is settling down over us, and the sun-god is rising over Egypt, great Prince Necho returns to his own. Not to the present Egypt, with its lonely ruins and its race of slaves, but to a great and glorious realm; for the curtain that hides the past is lifted.”

“And do you go with him? Are you a great princess in Egypt? Oh, may I not go too? Please, please, Candace, let me.”

“Peace! child of the stranger,” said Candace sternly. “Is it not enough that I am revealing the prince’s life to you?”

Then presently she added in a kinder tone: "Now at night, when Necho goes to the door and asks to have it opened, you unfasten it for him and watch him as he walks leisurely to the steps of the porch. But what you do not see is a great ocean, whose waves lap the steps; and on its waves rises and falls a galley of gold and precious wood, with silken sails. This awaits the prince.

"He steps on board and is received with joy by kneeling subjects. The white fur robe he wears here is thrown gladly aside, and the prince sinks to rest, lulled by beautiful music. Speedily he is borne to the mouth of the Nile, where thousands of boats await his coming. Softly he is wafted up the river to the great city, where in their palace by the water wait the king and queen. The father advances with joy to receive his son. The queen, with tears in her beautiful dark eyes, clasps him in her arms and kisses into forgetfulness the sad night of humiliation he has known. All the land rejoices as at the coming of the sun-god.

"Then begins the real life of Prince Necho. He is taught by the priests the sacred mysteries he must know as the great ruler of Egypt. He is taught also the art of ruling himself as well as his subjects. In all manner of noble feats of horsemanship, of chariot racing, of hunting and of war he is taught. And the hours are light with happiness and joy and love. And as the day nears its closing, the father and mother, sitting by him and clasping his hands, speak of their love and their sorrow, and of the time when by great gifts to the gods and to the poor, and by living noble lives, they may expiate the crime of the magician's death (beloved of Osiris) and so remove the spell from their beloved one.

In their palace by the water wait the king and queen.
In their palace by the water wait the king and queen.

“Now as the sun sinks in the desert sands, behold there is mourning in all the land of Egypt. And the queen, prostrate on the steps of the altar sacred to Pacht, implores her protection for her darling; while the king and the prince, kneeling in the great temple of Osiris, offer oblations to the offended god. As the twilight deepens, sadly the prince returns to his galley, and sinking into troubled dreams, is borne to this land of strangers. And here the waiting attendant wraps the white robe of fur around him; and he awakes to find the spell not yet removed.

“But the one bright spot in his dark prison life is the love he bears the son of the stranger.”

While Nurse Candace, in a low monotone, repeated her wondrous story, the night outside the windows darkened, and Necho, coming into the room, came up to Max and rubbed his head gently against his knee, then walking to the hall door he asked for it to be opened.

As Max stood in the open door and watched the enchanted prince go down the steps, he fancied he saw, through the rain, the sheen of the silken sails and the gleam of gold on the galley’s prow, and was sure he heard the hymn of welcome. Returning to the room, he saw Nurse Candace sitting with bowed head and sad eyes.

“The attendant does not go with the prince to Egypt,” said Max.

“The attendant awaits here the prince’s sad returning,” she answered.

“But the days will not seem long to the prince; he sleeps the time away,” he said.

“What better can he do,” answered Candace, “than to make of this life a sleep and a forgetting, or to wander in dreams in

Egypt?”

Long did Max sit and ponder over this strange story. “Can it be true, I wonder?” he thought. “It cannot be; it is too wonderful. And yet, Candace is so strange. And Necho often reminds me of the sphinx. Well, I will believe it if to-morrow morning I find a lotus blossom on my pillow.”

And so, going to bed, he dreamed of following Necho over a sunlit sea to Egypt.

Strange to tell, in the morning a blue lotus blossom lay on his pillow when he awoke. And when Candace came to call him, she glanced at the flower and started.

“Where did it come from, Candace?” asked Max, although he was quite sure that he knew.

“From the market, of course,” answered Candace. “Uncle Moses” (the colored man of all work) “was there early, and no doubt brought it home with the marketing. He must have laid it on your pillow.”

But Max thought Necho could tell him about the flower, although he was careful not to ask him, or by his actions to reveal the secret that he knew that he was a prince.

A few nights later Max had retired early with a severe headache. He awoke, after a deep sleep, to find his headache gone, the room filled with moonlight; awoke to the pressure of a soft hand on his forehead, and saw Candace bending over him. But how oddly she was dressed! He gazed at her in wonder. And then it flashed through his mind that her costume was an exact copy of a picture he had seen, taken from some rock-tomb by the Nile. It was the ancient dress of an Egyptian lady.

“Waken, Max, rise and dress quickly; for permission has been granted us to go this night with the prince to Egypt. Hasten, and I will wait for thee outside the door.”

How soft and musical her voice sounded! Soft and exquisite as a haunting melody heard in dreams. And how wonderfully her strange dress became her! But almost before he had time to note this, she had vanished softly from the room.

Wondering greatly, Max hastened to dress. But what was this? Instead of his usual garments he found the very oddest dress that was ever worn by an American boy. Strange to say, he found no difficulty in placing the different articles, for each one seemed to take its required place without effort on his part. It was all so familiar, and yet so strange. Soon he was attired in the most approved costume of a young Egyptian noble of some thousands of years ago.

When he had finished dressing he softly opened the door. Candace seized his hand and hurriedly drew him through the upper hall and down the stairs.

And there Max beheld a wondrous sight.

For the hall door was open. And down the hall and porch knelt two rows of the prince's subjects, richly and strangely dressed. But he had small time to note them; for at the foot of the stairs stood the prince. When Max saw him in all his glorious young majesty, something in his heart compelled him to bow the knee; free born though he was, he knelt low before the prince, for his face was homage-compelling.

The prince was dressed in dazzling garments, and jewels innumerable glittered when he moved. From his shoulders hung the white fur robe.

Taking Max's hand, the prince bade him rise, and turning to his attendants, commanded them to hasten. Quickly they

stepped on board. Candace reverently drew the white robe from the prince's shoulders; then, settling back among his silken cushions, the prince bade Max sit beside him. Candace knelt at his feet. And, strange to relate, Moses, in most gorgeous array, held the insignia of royalty over the head of the prince.

Then to the accompaniment of soft music, as they swiftly sailed, the prince told how he had prevailed on the priests to allow him to take with him Max and Candace.

“And they were the more willing,” said the prince, “since it was predicted by the astrologers at my birth that I should be saved from great evil by one of an unknown time and race. And the astrologers assure the priests that the hour has come.”

Then Candace, looking far across the sea, murmured her thanks to Pacht that it was come; and Max told the prince how he longed that he might have the great honor and joy of saving him.

Then Prince Necho set himself presently to the task of teaching Max the forms and ceremonies to be observed when they should come into the presence of the king and queen; and Max learned readily, as one recalling some half-forgotten lesson.

When they had reached the mouth of the Nile, they were borne up the river to the city of the great king. There the royal father and mother and a great multitude welcomed them to Egypt. The queen kissed Max, and her lips were cool and soft on his brow as the petals of the lotus blossom. And afterwards she embraced Candace and thanked her for her devotion to her son. Then, after many strange ceremonials and great rejoicing, the multitude were dismissed, and the king and queen led the way to their private apartments.

Now it seemed to Max that he remained many days in the palace and saw wonderful sights; and his soul was surfeited with pleasures.

But the prince grew restless under this life of ease and luxury, and longed to break away from it all. One day he said to his royal father, "I would I might take Max for a day's hunting; I would show him noble sport."

The queen looked up, pale and anxious; and the king answered slowly, "Thou mayst go, since the spell is on thee; but beware the lions."

And Necho answered: "Why should I fear them; am I not thy son? Then am I mightier than they."

But the queen was weeping.

Then the next day, early in the morning, they started for the wild beasts' haunts in the thick jungles by the river in the royal hunting grounds. And on the way Necho said: "Max, part of the spell laid upon me is my mad desire at times to hunt the wild beasts and kill them. When that desire comes, I know no rest until I have killed."

Just then the royal hunters came to them and announced a lion hidden in the thick reeds. Then Necho, leaving Max in safety to view the sport, sprang into his chariot and bade his charioteer drive on. Straight toward the jungle they drove, when out from it sprang a great tawny beast. At the sight of it Max's heart stood still with fear. On it bounded, past the horses, straight at the prince. Swift as thought he threw his spear; it sank deep into the eye of the lion, and he rolled over, roaring with agony. The nobles and hunters soon despatched the beast; and when it was dead all joined in lauding the prince to the sky.

“Tell me, O prince,” said Max, as they were wending home, followed by the carcass of the lion, borne on the spears of the hunters,—“tell me, did you strike purposely at the lion’s eye?”

“Surely; I could strike at no better place, and I have been trained to a steady and sure hand.”

And Max thought to himself that Necho was the bravest as well as the handsomest prince that ever lived.

That evening, as the sun was travelling westward toward the desert, these two were idling away the hour in one of the courts of the palace. It was a beautiful spot, cool with the spray from the fountain and musical with the sound of falling waters. They were idly tossing a ball backward and forward to each other. The prince leaned against a gilded trellis on which some rare vine was growing. He spoke suddenly: “Max, I feel strangely restless. When I went early this morning to the temple of Osiris, the priests told me that I should be in deadly peril this day, but that Osiris would this night be pleased with me. I would have hesitated to go hunt the lions this morning, but I thought if Osiris was pleased with me, I had naught to fear, even if death came. And now the hunt is over; and I was not in deadly peril.”

“Surely you were in danger this morning of losing your life, prince; be assured that is what the priests foretold.”

“I think not,” answered the prince, and then was silent.

Suddenly, there came springing through one of the entrances to the court an immense dog. Max recognized it as a huge mastiff, one of the largest and fiercest. His voice was a hoarse roar of rage, and his great mouth, wide open, showed his white teeth. With gleaming eyes he rushed at the prince; and when Necho saw him, he gave a shriek (strangely like the cry

of a cat) and sprang up the trellis, which began to bend with his weight.

“Oh, Max! save me; save me from the magician!” he screamed.

Max, very much startled and rather shocked at the prince’s fright, seized his sword and rushed at the dog, who now turned his rage on Max. The boy struck at him again and again with the sword, and finally with a sharp thrust of its point he gave the dog his death wound. Max turned, to see the prince trembling and cowering, with his hands over his face.

“Look up, dear prince, he is dying. You have nothing to fear.”

“I cannot look until the life has left him. It is the evil one, who has this wicked enchantment over me,” answered the prince. Just then, with a groan, the dog stiffened himself and died.

Then suddenly, from the palace, from the temples, from the city, arose a great shout of joy. Max was clasped close in the prince’s arms and felt his warm tears on his face. Still the shouting went on. It was a glad psalm of thanksgiving for one beloved of the gods and men, who was delivered from great evil. “Glory and thanksgiving,” chanted the priests. “Joy, joy,” sang the people.

And while they listened, suddenly the king and queen, Candace and Moses, and a great company were around them. They would have knelt to Max, but he would not allow it.

But while he witnessed the father’s and mother’s joy over their son, suddenly he remembered his own father, left alone in a distant land, and a great longing to go to him took possession of his heart. He could not tell this longing to Necho, for already he was planning a happy life in Egypt, with Max as his other self. And Max knew that when he

returned to his own country he must bid adieu to Necho during this life.

Now as he walked, troubled in mind, in the palace gardens, the queen sent for him to come to her, and she said: "Dear Max, savior of my son, what is it that troubles thee?"

Then Max laid all before her, and she answered: "It is right that thou shouldst go, for not only does thy father need thee, but thou dost belong to a far-away race and age that we may never know. It is not meet that thou abide here. Nay we must not hold thee, lest we risk the anger of the gods. Go, then, to thine own country; only sometimes, in thy dreams, remember us, who then will be only phantoms of a forgotten past."

Her dark eyes looked sadly at Max, and he answered, "Beautiful queen and loved mistress, I will never cease to remember Egypt and thee and my loved prince."

And while he yet was speaking the sun had risen, and Max was sleeping in his own bed at home.

He sprang up to see if the Egyptian dress was on the chair where he had found it, but his own garments were there.

He hastily dressed, but while doing so glanced at his hand, and saw the prince's thumb ring, which Necho had placed on it the day before. Then Max knew that he would never see Necho again. He ran downstairs, half hoping to find Candace in the sitting-room. He found the cook, looking much mystified.

"Where is Candace?" asked Max.

"Sure enough, where is Candace, and Moses too? Not a sign of them can I find this morning. It's my belief they have run off, and taken the cat with them; for I tried to find him an hour ago to catch a mouse that was in the pantry; not that the

lazy thing would catch it, for he never would catch mice, the spoiled little—”

“Now, now, cook, you shall not speak a word against Necho,” declared Max.

It certainly was very strange (to all but Max), for from that day nothing was heard of Candace, Moses, or Necho, until one of Moses’ colored friends declared that he had visited them in a neighboring city, where they lived quietly as Mr. and Mrs. Johnson. And he further declared that he had stroked Necho’s back many times during the visit.

But as the colored gentleman’s statements were always to be taken with a grain of salt, Max placed no faith in the story; for he knew full well that Necho and his attendants were in Egypt, where he was indeed a prince.

XI.

WHERE THE RIVER HIDES ITS PEARLS.

Just where the river bends on its course stands a high point or headland. It is covered with short, sweet grass and white clover, and partly shaded with trees. From its highest point there is a beautiful view of the river, which you may watch sparkling in the sun or dreaming in the moonlight. To the north the path of the river is almost straight for a mile or more; to the south the wooded hills on its farther side confront you, for here it turns and for at least a half mile flows to the west, before it turns southward again.

On this headland a company of friends and neighbors were camping; and on the highest point was built the camp fire. It was the children's daily task (or pleasure) to collect sticks and bark to keep this fire going from dusk until bedtime. Around it the hammocks were swung, and here the company assembled each night.

But one night, when the moon was very bright and sent its path of silver far across the water, all were on the river, except two children and one who loved them. The children nestled close to their friend, and listened to the soft voices calling or singing across the water. The summer breeze broke it into a thousand little ripples of light.

"How the river shines to-night! it seems full of pearls," one child said, softly.

The other one asked, "Are there pearls in this river as there are in the Mississippi?"

"Oh, quantities of them; but the river hides them safely," answered their friend.

"Can you tell us where it hides them? Please tell us," they pleaded; and their friend told softly the following legend:—

Years ago, before there were any white men beside this river, there lived in a village just around the bend an Indian boy. He was not uncommonly handsome, brave, or good, but very much the reverse; and he spent all of his days and most of his nights idling in his canoe on the river. He did not fish or set traps or do any of the work that the other boys did, but allowed his father and mother to furnish him with food and clothing. His grandfather would shake his head and tell him that some day he would displease the spirit who dwelt in the river, and that harm would befall him. But he was wilful, and laughed at the mention of the spirit. He did not believe there was one; he had never seen it.

One night when he had been far up the river in his canoe, he came floating down in the moonlight, just as that boat is floating there. Do you see that tree that stands out on that point by itself? Yes; just there was once a sand-bar. The moon shone on it, and the yellow sand was like gold, as the boy neared it; he idly gazed at it, for he was half asleep; but his attention was suddenly attracted by a wonderful sight. He lay down in the canoe and let his eyes come just above its rim, and this is what he saw as he slowly drifted past.

An immense mussel shell lay just on the edge of the bar, half in and half out of the water. It was wide open, and was so large that the half of it formed a beautiful seat or throne. The upper valve curved over like a canopy, and seemed to protect a beautiful girl who was reclining in the hollow of the shell.

Her face, a soft bronze in color, stood out in relief against the mother-of-pearl lining of her throne. Her hair waved round her in shining curves. Her hands were clasped above her head. Her dress was of some shining white material, soft and lustrous as silk; she was gazing up into the moonlit sky, and seemed lost in thought. But it was not her beauty or her strange appearance that attracted the boy; his eyes had caught the shine of a wonderful belt she wore around her waist. It seemed to catch and hold the moonbeams and the sparkle of the water. It was made of many strings of what appeared to be the most beautiful wampum the boy had ever seen. (Wampum? Oh, you must ask your mamma to tell you tomorrow what it is; this is not an instructive tale, this is a fairy story.) But it was not wampum; the beads were pearls. The boy had never seen or heard of pearls, so he naturally decided that it was a belt of glorified wampum, and his heart went out to it; he longed exceedingly to possess it, for he was covetous.

He floated down past the bar, and left the beautiful vision behind him; but all night long he dreamed of the belt, and vowed to himself that he would possess it, if the girl ever returned; so he set his wits to work and devised a plan. He determined to capture her and demand the belt for her ransom. He secured a stout deerskin, and concealing it in his canoe, he entered and paddled a long distance up the river. He spent the day in making out of the skin a strong noose, and practised throwing it until he was perfect in the art. Then, when night came and the moon was rising, he drifted as before down to the sand-bar. The beautiful girl in the great shell was there, and around her waist shone the pearls. Fortune favored him to-night, for she was asleep. He ventured near her, his feet making no sound on the sands. When close enough he sprang toward her, like a young panther on his prey. She jumped to her feet with a cry, and the noose fell over her head, slipped down past her shoulders, and pinioned her arms to her side. She tried to break away from it, but it held her securely. Turning, she saw her captor; her eyes flashed.

“Cruel wretch!” she cried. “Why do you treat me thus? Have I not allowed you the freedom of the waters, and because I thought that you loved them, have I not guarded you from many dangers? Do you know who I am?”

The boy answered, “I do not know, nor do I care. You must go with me to the village; you shall be adopted into the tribe.”

In vain she implored him to set her at liberty; he would not listen. But pretending finally to melt under her prayers and tears, he said, “I will release you if you will give me that belt of wampum you wear around your waist.”

The girl looked at him sternly.

“Can I give away what is not mine? These pearls belong to the river; and because I am the Spirit of the Waters, I am allowed to wear them. I will loan them to you, but there are conditions. You must promise that while you wear them you will refrain from cruel or cowardly deeds, and, because your heart is evil, you must spend to-day (for day is breaking) in the deep woods, fasting and alone, praying to the Great Spirit for a heart pure enough to wear these pearls. If when the moon has waned and grown bright again, the pearls are not dimmed and you have refrained from evil, the belt may be given to you. But I know that you will not keep it; I shall have it soon again.”

She started up in alarm.

She started up in alarm.

So saying, after he had loosed her hands a little, she unclasped her belt and held it out to him.

He snatched it rudely, and said boastfully, “What I get, I keep.”

Then he hastened to loose the thong, for he saw that daylight was coming, and he feared that some one would find him there and compel him to return the belt.

The girl sprang into the shell; it closed, and sank with her into the water, while the boy, overjoyed, made off with his prize.

The pearls were very large, and seemed to shed a soft light around him. He bound the belt around his waist; it was too short, but he lengthened it out with strings.

He entered at once into the deep wood to fast and pray to the Great Spirit, as he had been told to do. But his mind was so fixed upon the belt that he forgot to ask for a heart pure enough to wear it. When evening came, he entered the village. It was the hour of rest after the toils of the day, and men, women, and children were in front of their tepees. Very haughtily he strode past his neighbors. Exclamations of wonder and delight, and questions as to where he had obtained the belt, assailed him. He answered that he had “found” it, but would not tell where.

His grandfather shook his head mysteriously; he did not believe that he had found it. “The River Spirit is weaving her enchantments for the boy; I fear for him greatly,” he said.

This made the boy very angry with the old man, and he treated him rudely.

Each day that he wore the belt he grew more insolent and vain. He spent all his time in admiring himself and the belt. And each day the pearls grew dimmer. He saw that they were fading, and he tried to brighten them. He bathed them in the river and polished them with care, but they did not regain their lustre.

One night when the moon had waned and come again, he was out in his canoe on the river. He had asked a younger boy to

go with him, for he feared that, if alone, the spirit would meet him. The child asked him repeatedly where he had found the belt; finally becoming enraged at his questions, the boy raised his paddle and struck him. He fell backward into the water. The boy did not attempt to help him, but turned his back upon him, and paddled swiftly away.

The Spirit of the River saw it all, and hastening to the child, she bore him safe to the shore. The boy hastened up the river until he saw with alarm that he was near the sand-bar where he had secured the belt; and when he felt a hand steadily drawing him to the bar, he was frantic with fear. He resisted with all his might, but the canoe kept steadily on. When it reached the bar, he was thrown violently out on to the sand, and the boat drifted away bottom upward. He sprang to his feet, and was confronted by the spirit; but now she was no delicate girl, but a woman, strong and terrible.

“Give me the pearls,” she said, “and the river shall hide them henceforth from the greed of mortals.” The boy sullenly returned the belt; and, at a word from the spirit, there came up through the sand and from the river thousands of mussels. Each shell was gaping wide, and into each she dropped a pearl. When all were gone, the shells closed with a snap, and disappeared as quickly as they had come.

The spirit turned to the boy. “Since you know the secret that the river would keep, your lips must be always closed. Stay by these waters forever, and search in vain for the pearls.”

So saying, she changed him into a sand-hill crane, and he may still be seen, standing on the sand-bars, looking intently into the water for the pearls.

“We have seen him,” cried the children. “He was over on that sand-bar, on the other side of the river, this afternoon.”

By and by the smallest child said, softly, “I am sorry for that poor, naughty, sandhill crane.”

XII.

THE MIST LADY.

There was once a little girl who was not like other girls at all; for instead of running and jumping and dancing, she could only walk a little way, and she had to have two crutches to help her. All day long she sat in her chair and kept quite busy reading, or playing “just pretend;” for you know when you play “pretend,” you can change yourself to a fairy, or a bird, or an enchanted princess, or anything you have in mind; and then, of course, the time passes swiftly. So the little girl’s days passed pleasantly. But at night, after she was in her bed, and the house was quiet, and every one asleep, the pain would come, and that was so dreadful that the tears would follow. Now the little girl’s hands were lame, and it was difficult to wipe away the tears; so that she had to leave them in her eyes, and sometimes because of them she could not see the kind old moon that shone down on her bed, or the bright stars that danced and sparkled for her.

One night the little girl was very sorrowful, for she had heard the doctor telling her mother that she would never be any better, and that she might live many years before the kind death-angel came for her.

“Open your eyes wide and look at me.”
“Open your eyes wide and look at me.”

And now the tears had entirely blotted out the moonlight; everything was in a blur. She was trying to brush them away,

when the sweetest, softest voice said, “Do not brush them away, dear; open your eyes wide and look at me.”

She did as the voice commanded, and saw the loveliest, strangest lady that one can imagine. She was so tall, so fair, with such bright eyes, smiling lips, soft waving hair; and she seemed made of some material so fine and delicate, that the little girl felt that, if she would try to smooth her face or clasp her hand, she would feel only substance light as air.

Her dress was a soft, floating, waving material like the most delicate chiffon; it waved and floated about her with every motion. She bent down and kissed the little girl’s forehead, and the kiss was like a soft breath of damp air on her face. The sweet voice spoke.

“If you had wiped the tears away, you could not have seen me, for I am one of the children of the Mist. Come with me, little Princess of tears; you shall be one of us, and I will show you where we dwell.”

So the little girl took the Mist Lady’s hand, and they passed through an open window.

The little girl found herself floating softly along through the moonlight beside her companion. Her garments were like the lady’s, of the softest, finest, misty chiffon, and seemed to bear her up as though she floated on a fleecy cloud.

The lady said: “Even tears are not in vain, for these garments you wear are woven of the tears you have shed. You could not have gone with me without them.”

The little girl laughed and said, “How strange that I should ever be thankful for the tears I have shed!”

And the lady answered, “Some day, when it is over, you will be thankful for the pain also.”

But the little girl thought that would be impossible.

So they floated happily along. They stopped to breathe on some drooping flowers that a careless child had neglected. They crossed a great river, and presently they came to a mighty cataract.

“Here is our home, and here are the children of the Mist,” said the lady.

The little girl held her breath in astonishment, and so would any other earth-child at what she saw. For, whirling, floating, dancing over the cataract, on the shore, diving headlong down the mighty fall with the water, floating up again from the abyss, were myriads of beautiful forms. There were large and small, smaller than the little girl.

The Mist Lady’s eyes sparkled; she held out her hand; “Come, little Princess,” she said, “let us join them.” But the little girl drew back.

“Oh, I cannot; I am afraid. Do you go, and I will watch you from this bank.”

“Well, then; but sit here where some of us can be with you every moment, or your garments will wax old and fall from you, and how then will you reach your home?”

So the little girl sat close to the falls, where the Mist children encircled her, clasped her in their arms, kissed her face, and made much of her. They sang for her and told her wonderful stories of the upper air, of cloud-land and its palaces.

The little girl loved the Mist children dearly, for they were so dainty and graceful, so kind and loving. And they in return loved and pitied the little “Princess of tears,” for they knew her story well; they had listened in the night to her sighs, had

wept with her, had often lulled her to sleep by tapping on the window pane. So they were old friends of hers.

By and by the Mist Lady came to her more fair and radiant than ever.

“Come, little Princess, let us go; for we must meet the dawn-angel near your home.”

So the little girl waved a last farewell to the Mist children, and contentedly placed her hand in the hand of her guide; and they floated on, around mountain peaks, over fair valleys, and over the bosom of a clear lake, where the moonlight was sleeping.

Presently the eastern sky grew rosy; and flying toward them from its radiance, came a great white angel bearing in his arms golden shafts of light. The lady and the little girl veiled their faces as he passed them by. Then, hastening home, the little girl found herself in bed just as the sun’s first beams kissed her face. The Mist Lady had whispered to her that she would come again; so she sank into a quiet, happy sleep, and her mother found her smiling, when she came to help her to dress.

Now the little girl and the doctor were great friends; for although the doctor was strong and well, and laughed a great deal, he knew how to pity little ones who were different from other children.

The little girl told him all her fancies and dreams, when he had time to listen; and the next time that he came, she told him about the Mist Lady and her journey.

The doctor was greatly interested, and said, “Do you know, little girl, I intend to stay here all night, sometime; perhaps I may see the Mist Lady too.” But the little girl said, “Doctor, it

will not be any use for you to stay, you laugh too much; you can see the Mist Lady only when your eyes are full of tears.”

And the doctor said, “I really must cure this bad habit of laughing.”

The little girl said, “I do not want you changed the least tiny bit.”

So they were better friends than ever.

Not many nights after, the doctor stood by his little friend. She was asleep, with a happy smile on her face; for the time for pain was all past, and she knew now why it had been allowed. The doctor was not laughing; he saw his little friend’s face through tears; and, glancing from her face to the foot of the little white bed, he saw the Mist Lady kneeling, with her face hidden in her hands.

And the little “Princess of tears” has a new name now.

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