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CHILDREN'S PAGE STORIES -- 1965

By Mrs. Paul E. King

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Story 1 RESOLUTIONS

"I resolve to love! I resolve to love -- especially Jane March!" Alice exclaimed loudly to herself as she continued writing her New Year's resolutions.

"You at it again, Sis?" Danny asked, sticking his dark hair around the corner of the living room door. "Always, you resolve; but never do you keep," and he shook his head as a concerned look stole into his deep blue eyes.

"You having troubles with Janie again?" It was six year old Joanne Kay. "Jesus can make you love Janie. I know! 'Cause He gave me a great big love for Earbie who is always coloring Susie's pretty cheeks with black crayons, and . . . and . . . always pushing her dreamy eyes way, way back in her head."

"Oh, go away; Kay! You and Danny make me sick! You just can't understand. It's not your problem, that's why," and Alice Ann walked over to the big bay window and, nervously toying the pencil, she watched the hungry birds flitting from the bird feeder to the many bushes and trees on the sprawling lawn. The nervous, gregarious English sparrows seemed never to get enough food and she watched them carefully as they ate hungrily. Two scarlet red cardinals sought earnestly after the sunflower seeds and, with their strong bills, rapidly cracked the shell and freed the kernel of goodness from its snug little place of hiding on the inside and devoured it hungrily. She listened as four beautiful saucy Tufted Titmouse birds chatted and chatted excitedly to each other as they fed on the choice seeds. This little, gray blue creature seemed less fearful than many that fed there daily and always Alice watched and waited for them. She especially liked them. They seemed to know how to take care of themselves and especially were they adept at getting along with the many other birds. Just then a saucy bright Blue Jay landed in the maple tree and began his loud, noisy scolding. "Thief! Thief! Thief!" he shouted incessantly, then darted after some of the beautiful birds and, chasing them from their favorite haunt, he settled down contentedly to the feeder -- alone, save for the fearless, industrious Titmouse who seemed to feel the feeder was as much theirs as all the Blue Jays in the world.

"You big bully!" Alice said watching through the big window. "You always want your own way. You're... You're... beautiful to . . . look at, but your ways make you hateful. Just for that, I'm going to chase you away," and she started for the door when Danny's kind hand came down gently upon her slender shoulder.

"Sis, don't you suppose it would be best to let the Blue Jay feed? After all he's hungry too."

"But he's selfish, Danny, and he's . . . a . . . regular bully type bird. Why, he always chases the birds away when he comes. He's too selfish to have in our yard. Certainly, he's pretty. In fact, he's such a pretty bird he's handsome, but does that make me like him? Oh, no, Danny! His ways and his habits make me almost despise him."

"Physician, heal thyself!" Danny exclaimed loudly.

"Why, Danny Hopper!" Alice Ann exclaimed, exasperated. "Certainly you don't mean that!" and the tears began flowing down her flushed cheeks.

"Sit down, Sis. I'd like to talk to you," and the tall handsome lad led the way to the sofa. "I didn't mean to hurt you m not really, Alice Ann; but it's time you knew some things. Just 'cause you're pretty people overlook your faults; that is, most of them do. The reason you have trouble loving Jane is because you have a heart condition that only Jesus can change. Jane's your equal and that's another reason you can't get along with her. In your heart you envy her."

"Danny!" Alice exclaimed.

"It's true, Sis. You envy Janie because she's as popular at school as you are, and because she was elected Class President in place of you this time. One never envies anyone beneath him -- it's always someone who's a competitor, or . . . or . . . above him."

"And are you inferring that Jane's above me?"

"Well, yes, maybe in some ways. At least she possesses a better spirit than you do -- that without making any religious profession as you do."

"Oh, Danny! You despise me," Alice accused defensively.

"Just love, Sis, not despise. I think you're pretty wonderful, and when God gets through with you and shows you your carnal heart you'll really be something. He knows how to knock the pride out of us. I know for He truly sanctified my soul in our last revival."

"Oh, Danny, I feel so mean when I hate Jane," the girl confessed honestly and broken-heartedly.

"That's what I mean, Alice Ann. It's the carnal nature warring in your flesh -- striving for the mastery over you. Sis, if this awful nature isn't subject to God, how do you ever expect it to be submissive to you?"

"Is . . . Is . . . that what the Apostle meant in Romans?" Alice Ann asked seriously.

"Exactly so", Danny said soberly. "Romans 8:7-8 tells us all about it. But God wants to deliver you from this inherited nature, Alice. You need not struggle with it any longer. God wants to purge it out of your heart. Years ago folks called it the "Second Blessing" or the "Double Portion"; no matter what you call it, it's Holiness of heart or entire sanctification, and it's perfectly wonderful to possess the Holy Spirit."

"Oh, Danny, you sound just like a preacher."

"And nothing would thrill me more than to have my pretty sister as my first seeker," Danny said, patting Alice Ann gently on her soft silky head of hair.

"Will you pray with me, Danny?"

"I'd be happy to," and together the two knelt by the sofa where Alice Ann fully repented of her sins and, after Jesus saved her soul, she began seeking diligently for Holiness of heart.

"Oh, Danny!" she exclaimed suddenly. "It's all gone! It's taken out -- that hatred for Jane. Praise the Lord! He has come! The Comforter has come and I love Janie, and I'm going to try to win her to Jesus," the happy girl said as the Holy Ghost came and took complete possession of her heart and her life. "Where is my page of new resolutions, Danny?"

"Where you left them," Danny said, wiping tears of joy from his eyes and smiling sweetly up into Ann's radiant face.

"Bring them to me, will you. please?" the happy girl asked.

"Here they are," Kay said, softly entering the room and throwing her small arms around her beloved sister's neck.

"Thanks, honey," Alice almost whispered as she tore the sheet into dozens of pieces. "I'll never need this page again. What my yearly resolutions couldn't do, Jesus has done -- and in an instant too," she added joyfully.

Just then a bright red cardinal burst forth in joyful and loud praises to God.

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Story 2

A HIDING PLACE

Robbie walked rapidly beside Grandfather, holding tightly to the kind old man's hand. Grandpa was old and all silver headed but he surely had a quick easy stride. In fact, so quick and fast that Robbie had to run most of the time to keep pace with Grandfather who never talked too much but whose presence was all any grandchild needed and wanted. Something about dear, sweet Grandfather gave Robbie a good feeling -- a sense of security feeling. Grandpa knew God and one could always feel God very near when he was around Grandpa.

"Goin' too fast for you, Sonny boy?" the dear old man asked as he slowed his pace down to Robbie's. "Sorry, Robbie; I keep fergettin' your legs are shorter than mine," and he squeezed the small hand fondly.

"Oh, that's all right, Grandpa. It's wonderful just being with you, and I don't mind that I have to run most of the time."

"See that big dark cloud covering the sky, Robbie?" and Grandpa stopped and pointed to the north.

"I didn't notice it at all until you mentioned it," Robbie said as he watched the rapidly approaching cloud.

"There's a bad blizzard comin' our way," Grandpa said, "and I was trying to get home before it reached us. Those things can drop a lot of snow and we're still a few miles from home. Maybe I should have waited until the weather cleared up good and proper before I went over to see poor old Josh."

"But, Grandpa," Robbie exclaimed, "he was so glad you came and left him that . . . that . . . money. He said he had been praying for God to send him some help, and . . . and . . . he's all alone."

"I know, dear boy, I know. But it's you I'm concerned about, not myself," and the first snow flakes began to fall as Grandfather led the boy on down the narrow, winding trail through the forest

"The dear Lord Jesus said He'd take care of the sparrows, Grandpa, so I know He's watching us and will protect us," Robbie said confidently. "And Grandpa, God is very near to us. I can feel Him!"

" 'Tis so true, child. But let us travel a little faster if you can take it." And again everything was silent, except for the wonderful sound of softly falling snow and the occasional twitter of some bird as it flitted away from the approaching pair.

The heavens had become increasingly more cloudy and a heavy leaden gray settled over it entirely. The wind whistled through the trees, causing the branches to sway and tremble while the snow kept piling in big drifts everywhere. Twice, Robbie would have fallen had Grandpa not steadied his small body.

"This is too much on you, Sonny boy," Grandpa finally said. "And what's more, we're lost. This makes the second trip back to this same spruce tree. We've just been going in circles."

"But, Grandpa," Robbie said, gasping for breath, "we can't see where we're going so it's not your fault we're lost."

"I know that, Robbie, but we must do something or we'll freeze to death I can't find the trail as it's all full of snow and everything looks alike."

"It's It's . . . beautiful," Robbie said. "The Lord is dressing everything in white and it looks so clean and pure. I like it, Grandpa, and I think it's fun to be lost so long as I'm with you."

"If I only knew about where we were I may enjoy it some too," Grandpa said, looking about him, "but I can't seem to get my bearings."

"But God knows where we are, Grandpa, and that's the main thing."

"Right you are, my dear boy. That's the main thing. Let's talk to Him about our troubles, shall we?" and the pair knelt beneath the snow laden boughs of the drooping spruce tree.

"Come, Sonny boy," Grandpa said reverently and confidently, as he began leading the lad on into the forest.

"Do you know now, Grandpa? Did the Lord show you where to go to get home?"

"We're going by faith, dear boy, and wherever He leads us is perfectly all right with me," Grandpa said sweetly.

"The storm's getting worse," Robbie said, nearly shouting to make his voice heard above the howling blizzard. All he got for an answer was a tight, firm squeeze on his little: hand and a reassuring smile from his godly Grandfather.

On and on they plodded, never once stopping for rest or breath. At one time Grandpa almost fell and Robbie noticed his cheeks were pale looking in spite of the bitter cold wind.

"Let's rest, Grandpa. I feel so tired," Robbie finally shouted, but the elderly man kept going on, knowing that to rest meant certain death. On and on they walked, not knowing where to, but confident of Whom was leading; and then, miracle of miracles, a funny looking, crudely built cabin loomed up before them.

"A house! A house, Grandpa!" Robbie shouted in great excitement.

"Thank God!" was all the big strong man could say as he turned the latch on the door and entered the sheltering place.

"It's not like Grandma's big farm house," Robbie said, once inside and after he had carefully surveyed his surroundings. "Only one chair, a rickety wooden table and a funny looking stove and a . . . a . . . bed," and the lad cast his weary body down upon it.

"Let's start a fire," Grandpa said. "Then I shall remove your damp clothes," and he found a few matches, some paper and wood chips and in a short time there was a warm golden fire in the black pot-bellied stove.

"Wonder who lives here," Robbie said, after his feet and hands were warmed.

"Perhaps some trapper or hunter built it for his hunting or trapping expeditions, but God lent it to us for this time. Praise His worthy Name!" and Grandpa fell to his knees and began thanking the Lord for the seclusion and warmth of the rustic cabin.

"Looks like we'll be spending the night here," Grandpa finally said, looking through the one small window to the outdoors where the storm was raging in great fury. "Guess we may as well prepare for the night and get some sleep."

"But what about poor Grandmother! Won't she worry?" the boy asked.

"Grandma knows how to trust the Lord, too, Sonny boy. God has already reassured her heart that we're all right; I've asked Him to do it and I know He has. So have no fears but let us get some rest," and the pair crawled beneath the warm covers. Grandpa's big hand found his grandson's small hand and, taking it fondly between his, he said, "Robbie, isn't this wonderful! This storm reminds me of sin and Satan."

"It... It... does?" Robbie asked. "How?"

"Well," Grandpa began reverently, "the person who has found Jesus in saving grace and sanctifying power has a wonderful peace and rest on the inside of his soul. Outside the devil may batter, beat, hound, harass, and storm that man's soul, but, so long as the individual stays covered by Jesus' precious blood and remains close to His side, the snarls and storms of the devil can never touch nor harm his soul. Oh, it's amazing and wonderful, Robbie. We, who are Christians, have a refuge from the devil. This is found only by abiding in Christ. Just listen to that wind and blizzard howling! It's on the outside, though, and can't harm us. It's so cozy and warm inside -- just like my soul -- it has a great calm and a secure refuge in Jesus. Blessed be God!" and sleep overtook the pair.

Outside, the blizzard raged and piled the snow in big drifts around the little cabin but all were safe within, sheltered and protected by God. A refuge from the storm!

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NO CHILDREN'S PAGE IN THIS ISSUE

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Story 3

SPRING COMES TO THE FAIRY WOODS

Peter slipped quietly out the back door of the big orphanage and ran down the road to the woods. He was panting as he reached the edge of the forest and started down the path toward the creek. It was cool and quiet there and he was safe. He stopped to catch his breath and wipe the perspiration from his forehead.

Overhead, fleecy white clouds skipped and flitted across the blue sky. Peter stood for a long while, watching as the clouds took on the shape of frisky lambs, grizzled white bear and even cotton candy. Far to his right a snowy white mountainous looking cloud appeared, gilded on all sides with shiny gold gilt from the sun. How he wished he could be riding the magnificent thing! A salty tear found its way over dark eye lashes and dropped to a rock below. Peter, intent on watching the approaching cloud, sat on the gray rock. No longer was it a big mountain but now it floated as a snow covered hill. The lad sat enraptured, a smile played across his freckled face as he pretended he was pulling a sled up the big drift of snow cloud and going for a ride. Spring was wonderful! Yes, sir!

Keeping an eye on the beautiful clouds he began a slow walk toward the stream. Crickets chirped softly all around him and a mocking bird sang melodiously and excitedly high on a tree.

Upon reaching the cool, clear stream Peter pulled his shoes and socks off, then, carefully rolling his pant legs up to his knees, he waded out to the place where he could see all the way to the bottom of the stream. Little minnows darted past his small bare feet in silvery streaks, and the sand, oozing up between his toes, gave him a sense of satisfaction.

He knew he should not be down here just now, but he couldn't bear the thought that this would be Laurie's last day at the orphanage. Laurie was his, in a very special way. She always understood him when the other matrons thought he was too loud or too noisy or too . . . oh, well! It really didn't matter! Nothing mattered any more. Laurie was getting married and leaving him! Who would soothe him now when he cried, and who would tell him about Jesus and the way He died and then rose again! No one! A big hurt was all through his eight year old chest and he felt like something inside was being crushed. He stifled a deep sigh.

'Wonderful things happen in the spring.' Laurie's soft voice seemed to be whispering in his ear again. Maybe . . . just maybe, some miracle would happen to him the way the satiny Easter lilies popped up through the dark earth from seemingly nowhere, and blossomed and bloomed until their perfume was wafted all through his room! The Lord could still perform a miracle for him! Hadn't he been praying about this for a long time! A soft crackle of brush made him start.

"Hi, fellow! Sorry I scared you," and the black haired man's voice had a ripple of laughter in it.

"Oh . . . that's . . . all right, Mister," Peter said, brushing the tears from his own dark lashes.

"You crying, Pal?" the man asked affectionately.

"Guess maybe I was. Sorry though," and he watched in profound admiration as the stranger picked up a smooth round pebble and ,skipped it across the surface of the creek. He wanted to be like that when he grew up, he thought, as he watched the tall handsome man.

"Sure is wonderful out here, Peter," the stranger said. "You can almost hear God and feel Him working."

"You . . . You . . . know my name!" Peter exclaimed timidly, wading out and picking up his shoes and socks. "I...I...like you, Mister.. "

"Just call me Jeff," the man said. "Wonderful things happen in the spring," Peter said. "Laurie always tells me that."

"You think a lot of Laurie, don't you, Peter?"

"I love Laurie very much. She tells me a lot of secrets and she helped me find Jesus. Know somethin', Jeff! I believe some day the Lord will send me a real mother just like Laurie," and a far away look stole into his deep blue eyes.

"Let's go back to the orphanage, shall we?" Jeff asked, smiling and reaching lovingly for the small hand.

"Who told you my name?" Peter asked as Jeff tucked the small socks into his pants pocket. "Laurie."

"Laurie knows you?" Peter asked. "But why haven't you been around here?"

"I've been away to school, studying. I'm a preacher, Peter, and I've come to see Laurie. You see, Laurie and I are to be married next week."

The lump came back into Peter's throat and that big, funny hurt feeling stole immediately into his chest. "Laurie's . . . sure gettin' . . . a . . . nice man," Peter said weakly.

"I'm getting a wonderful girl, Peter, and Laurie loves you very, very much."

"She told you that?" Peter asked.

"Many, many times over. But come, let's be getting back to the orphanage. It's growing late," Jeff said affectionately, giving the hand a tight little squeeze.

"I should not have come to the woods," Peter ventured. "Mrs. Briggs will be cross with me. But I couldn't bear the thought of Laurie going . . . away," and he sighed heavily.

The big orphanage loomed up ahead of them. "Guess I'd better go around back and go right to my room, Jeff. That's where Mrs. Briggs will be sending me anyhow."

Jeff tightened his grip on the small, trembling hand as he said, "Nothing of the kind, Peter. We go up the front steps together and right in through the main vestibule. We're in this together. And whatever comes, from now on, we'll face it together."

Boldly they went up the steps of the orphanage and in through the front door. The Easter lilies had sneaked in again -- Peter could smell their fragrance all over the lobby and the vestibule. Then he saw Laurie, her soft blonde hair was all gold and silken looking where the warm sunshine was caressing it.

Laurie saw the pair enter the big swinging doors; quickly she joined them. Jeff extended his free right hand to her and, together, they walked to the old familiar oak desk.

"Laurie and I want to adopt Peter, Mrs. Briggs."

Peter thought he must be dreaming and his expressive blue eyes filled with tears of gratitude and joy.

"You . . . You . . . really . . . mean it, Jeff?" he asked in disbelief.

"Wonderful things happen in spring, Peter! Did you forget?" and Laurie held him close to her bosom as she added, "Don't you remember what Jesus said about all things being possible to him that believeth?"

"It's . . . It's... wonderful, Laurie!" he exclaimed. "It's . . . It's a miracle . . . like the resurrection and... and... the Easter lilies," and he looked fondly into her own soft blue eyes as he added, "Wonderful things do happen in spring."

Outside, a robin put his approval on the transaction by bursting forth in loud song.

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Story 4

AMONG THEM -- BUT NOT OF THEM

The morning sun peeked its bright warm head over the green eastern hillside and winked merrily in through the sheer curtains of Dottie's bedroom. At the same time a soft, playful spring breeze caught the curtains and sent them swishing gently over the young sleeper's rosy cheeks.

"Wake up! Wake up!" a happy robin sang lustily on a leafy locust branch outside the window.

Sleepily, the dark haired child sat erect, her young heart bursting with happiness over the peaceful morning sounds: Then it dawned upon her-- again, as yesterday morning -- it burst upon her young heart with such a longing and fear until she thought something within her would burst. But what was the verse Mother had so often quoted to her! 'What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.' This was one of the Psalms of David. She must not cry! She would trust! Trust in the Lord!

It all flooded her soul like a nightmare. The car! The accident, the ambulance, and then the news. Her mother and father, brother and sisters, had all been killed! She was left alone -- an orphan! Now she was here -- in a strange home -- adopted by strangers who were, in every sense, good to her, but knew nothing about God and His saving and sanctifying power. An uncontrolled tear coursed rapidly down her cheek and fell on to the dainty white quilt. Quickly she brushed it away and jumped out of bed. The big clock on the mantle in her room said a quarter till five and she knew the other occupants wouldn't be getting up until nearly seven, so she resolved what she would do.

Dressing noiselessly and making the bed, tidying the room and brushing her hair as Mother had taught her to do, she slipped silently down the thickly carpeted hallway to the verandah; then, opening the heavily curtained door, she slipped quietly through it and down the outside stairway. How delicate and dainty the grillwork was! A mocking bird sang lustily to his mate as her footsteps seemed to glide down the rose bordered pathway, past the big wall, on to the open field where she heard the gurgling, babbling, laughing sounds of the stream. With her mother's worn Bible tucked lovingly beneath her arm she seated herself on one of the many rocks which were along the stream. Tiny minnows darted here and there with lightning speed, and she watched as a few lovely mountain trout swam gracefully down stream, then back again. The meadow was alive with color as purple violets and dandelions made an exciting contrast. On the hillside she saw the daffodils swaying and nodding their pretty heads as though whispering some secret to the clean spring breezes.

Reverently she opened her Bible, the only real treasure she possessed, since her new parents had wanted her to have everything new -- no past reminders; and, as she read, it seemed as though she could hear her own dear mother's voice. 'Honey,' she so often had said, 'you are in the world, but not of the world. You can be like Jesus! You can be different if you'll let Him mold and shape your life.' That was exactly what she needed! Maybe -- just maybe -- God had put her in this fine big home to be a little candle -- a light! The thought sent new courage through her being and as she read on the Lord's presence drew strangely near. All Heaven seemed to come down by the big rock and the kneeling child as the birds sang and the flowers swayed to the breezes soft whisperings; and, when she left the sacred spot to return to the stately house on the hill, her entire countenance shone like some angelic being.

"Where you been, chile?" the old colored maid asked, sleepy eyed. "Down by the laughing stream with God," the sweet child answered.

"By a stream wid God !" Mandy exclaimed, puzzled. "How funny yo' all talks, honey chile! Ain't no one evah' thinks o' God 'round 'bout this here place," and a big salty tear ran down her full, black cheeks.

"Oh, yes, Mandy! I think of God, and I talked with God already this morning. I felt His arms go 'round me and He seemed to hug me, almost like Mama used to do, only it was a much warmer kind of love. You know, it made my heart all good and warm on the inside! It's a wonderful feeling, Mandy, to know God loves you and is caring for you all the time. I felt so alone; but I don't anymore, not since I talked with God this morning."

"You what?" and Mrs. Wrightsmore stood, ashen white, in the kitchen doorway.

"I talked to God, Mrs. Wrightsmore," Dottie said sweetly.

"Mother, please! Can't you remember to call me 'Mother,' " and a tear coursed down the fashionable woman's face. "I wanted a little girl m a little girl who'd call me 'Mother.' I thought I had found her when we adopted you, Dottie, but you never call me 'Mother.' Why not?" and Mandy noticed her mistress trembling.

"Go put yo' arms 'roun' about yo' Mommie's neck an' tell her yo' loves her, sho' nuff," the colored mammy whispered in Dottie's tiny ears.

"Oh, I didn't mean to make you cry, Mrs. Wrightsmore," the girl said tenderly, "but, you see, my Mama was . . . well, she was different. She was a Christian and . . . and . . . always read the Bible to me, and . . . and prayed with me too. But I'll try, Mother. I'll really try to always remember," and she bounced up on the woman's lap and threw her soft, rosy arms around the neck of the woman and kissed her lovingly on her cheek.

"You say your mother read the Bible to you, dear?" Mrs. Wrightsmore asked, her voice trembling with emotion.

"That's right. She read to us in the morning and at night before we went to bed," the innocent child answered sweetly. "I can't read too well yet, but the Lord helped me to understand this morning by the big rock," and a dreamy look came into her beautiful clear blue eyes.

"Dottie, darling !" and the woman folded the beautiful child closely to her bosom. "We'll read together, always. From here on out, Daddy, Mandy, you and I will read the Bible together -- just as soon as I can get to town to buy one."

"I have one," Dottie said, sliding quickly off her lap down to the floor and running over to the worktable. There, near Mandy's biscuit dough she found the old, well worn Bible.

"It was Mama's, but she'd be happy to know my new mother is reading it to me," and she lovingly deposited the treasure in the hands of her new mother. Just then Mr. Wrightsmore entered the doorway, clothed in his usual rich black suit, white shirt and freshly polished shoes.

"Is this a family conference?" he asked, jesting.

"Yes, John, I guess it is," his wife answered. "We're going to begin something new -- something which I, for many long years, have been longing to do."

"What is that, my dear?" the portly gentleman of the house asked.

"We're going to read the Bible, and I, for one, am going to become a true Christian. I have a little girl to raise now and I want to be an example of good to her. She has been among us, John, but not of us. I want to become like her," and she dropped her head on Mandy's salad table.

"An' a little chile shall lead 'dem," Mandy quoted, misty-eyed.

"Don't cry," Dottie began tenderly. "Jesus loves you so much that He died to save you. If you'll confess all your sins, He'll forgive you and come into your heart."

"I believe it! I believe it!" the fashionable lady shouted. "I know He has forgiven me and I'm so happy. I found Him! He, whom I knew as a young child, but lost. Oh, it is so wonderful! Thank God for you, dear child."

As she bowed her silken black haired head at the breakfast table, Dottie said softly,

"Thank you, dear Lord, for my new mother and father, and thank you for dear Mandy. Bless them all, dear God, and make us the happiest family in all the world."

Mr. Wrightsmore reached for his wife's hand and gave a warm, gentle squeeze. They were indeed a family -- born thus by God.

The sun's rays penetrated through one of the pine branches and kissed Dottie reverently on her rosy cheek as the small frogs in the pond burst out in a chorus, singing, "Spring. Spring. Spring."

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Story 5

A GOOD SPIRIT

The hay lay sweet and fragrant in the meadow as a hot June sun kissed and dried the newly mown grass. A meadow lark sailed gracefully downward and landed, singing melodiously, as he did so. Butterflies, with wings a golden butter yellow, bright orange, and speckles of black or deep purple and bright blue, flitted carelessly and prettily about, landing ever so often on the plump fat blossoms of red clover.

Robbie, with Speckles panting loudly by his side, sat beneath the big old crooked apple tree, waiting for Grandfather to make another round with the mower. The boy leaned his back up wearily against the stout trunk and closed his eyes as a good, warm feeling possessed him.

Everything was beautiful and wonderful. The earth bespoke of the glory of God; the birds were singing and making sweet music for everyone to hear, and dear Grandfather was constantly singing or praising God. Yes, everything was wonderful! All, that is, but one thing. How he wished he could do something about it! A big tear rolled down his cheek and he breathed a simple boyish prayer heavenward. He knew the Lord cared and somehow, he felt certain, He would undertake.

Speckles sprawled, the full length of his furry body, on the soft, cool, gassy earth and had just settled down for a cozy nap when a busy bumble bee buzzed noisily by just a short way from his spotted furry ear. Immediately he was on his feet, chasing bees and butterflies.

Grandfather halted the big white horse and headed for the crooked, shady tree and Robbie.

"What you thinkin', Son?" and the white haired man sat down by his youthful grandson, one hand resting on his knee. Speckles, a look of mischief in his eyes, began chewing on the elderly man's heavy work shoes; then, receiving a soft, gentle pat on his little furry head from the kind old man, he lay by his side, his spotted head and long, soft ears resting on the denim clad leg.

"What am I thinking, Grandpa?" Robbie asked, sitting instantly erect and as tall as his nine years would permit. "Lots of things, Grandfather. Lots and lots of things."

"Like what, fr instance." and the soft spoken man gave Robbie a tender look as he stroked the furry head resting lightly on his leg.

A far away look came into the light blue eyes and the boy methodically brushed a wisp of unruly blond hair out of his face as he watched for the big bright orange tractor to make another round in the neighboring field.

"Why does Mr. Hilton treat you like he does," and a big salty tear coursed down the sun tanned cheek as the boy continued, "Why, you've never done anything but good deeds to anyone."

"Laddie," and Grandfather looked for a long while at Robbie before he continued in his well modulated voice, "think much upon what I am about to say: 'Tis not so much what people do to you as what you do to them, and how you treat them. We will never answer to God for another's actions and deeds, but we must answer to Him for our own deeds. Never think upon your own hurt nor what's happened to you, but always be loyal and fair and full of loving kindness in your daily treatment of every individual. In other words, do unto others as you would like them to always do unto, you."

"But, Grandpa, you are always kind and good, and . . . and . . . so patient and loving to Mr. Hilton; yet he says you wanted the cows to get into his corn field."

"'Tis really quite all right, laddie. Our Heavenly Father is keeping books. He knows the truth. I paid for all damage and have turned Mr. Hilton over to God. Now stop worrying, sonny boy, and . . . and . . . stop thinking," he added, slowly, thoughtfully. "The devil's quite shrewd and could put bitterness in that young heart."

Robbie watched as the bright orange tractor putt, putt, putted into full view, then he heard a loud scream and a shout for help.

Immediately Grandfather was on his feet, racing swiftly toward the neighbor man's "little acre" where "Big John", the ferocious bull, was fenced. Every minute counted.

Robbie headed for the bright orange tractor, waving his hands and arms excitedly, with Speckles barking loudly by his side.

For a long while Mr. Hilton ignored the small boy and the barking dog who were now keeping pace with the big tractor.

"It's tiny John!" Robbie shouted above the noise of the tractor. "Look!" and he pointed to the small acreage of lush green pasture land.

Immediately Mr. Hilton became alive and alert and, following Robbie's tear stained gaze to the "little acre", he saw what was happening.

Without saying a word, he turned the ignition key off and raced like the wind toward his small son. Robbie and Speckles followed closely behind.

Suddenly, like one in a daze or a stupor, the man stopped dead still in his tracks. He saw a big red handkerchief fluttering steadily from the work worn and calloused hands of the silver haired gentleman; blood was streaming from his face and his legs. The enraged animal charged at the aging man, foam and froth issuing from his nostrils and mouth. He had no eyes for the tiny four year old who was totally unconscious of the immediate danger and who was all the time getting closer and closer to a small opening in the fence which would secure his safety.

"Da... dee!" his childish voice exclaimed in eager anticipation as he saw his father and crawled through the small opening in the fence to safety.

Mr. Hilton, his face an ashen white, spoke not a word.

The impending crisis staggered all imagination -- to shout would only increase the anger of the enormous black bull and to remain dormant meant certain death to his neighbor. Seeing Robbie, he ran to tiny John and, grabbing him gratefully up into his brawny arms, he pressed his small body tightly to his heaving chest; then, just as quickly, he deposited the baffled child in the warm embrace of Robbie as he said calmly,

"Take him away from here and don't let go of his hand."

Without any further word the man was over the fence, a heavy club dangling from his hand. Robbie wanted to scream but instinct told him better. Quickly he started for the Hilton farm house with Johnny chattering happily by his side. When Mr. Hilton crossed the heavy fence he called softly:

"Work your way over to the fence, Tom. I'll try to get his attention this time." At the same time he drew out his big red handkerchief and let it flutter in the warm breeze as he called "Big John! Oh, John!"

For an instant the giant animal hesitated, then, with all the beastly nature within him angered and stirred up, he put his head down and charged on the silver haired man again. Grandfather jumped out of the path of the anger blinded animal and slowly backed his way toward the fence and safety.

Mr. Hilton too, moved closer to the fence, ever keeping his eyes on the fast approaching bull. He did not want to use the club unless absolutely necessary as this would, he knew, only intensify his already burning anger and rage. He jumped out of the way just in time and made a frantic rush for the fence where he jumped to safety. The animal pawed the ground and blew great cotton balls of foam and froth into the air as Mr. Hilton walked humbly, brokenly to Grandfather.

"You . . . You're . . . hurt," he said tenderly, brokenly.

"Not much, Sam. Thank God! A mite weak though from losing all that blood where Big John gored my slow lame leg that first time."

"Sit down and let me have a look," and Mr. Hilton carefully examined the deep wound.

"Tom! Tom! I . . . I'm so ashamed of myself! I . . . I . . . don't know what to say, nor . . . how . . . to say it!" and he was sobbing loudly.

"I've watched you, Tom. You , .. You . . . really have the Lord in your heart I've been so unkind and . . . and.., hateful . . . to you. Forgive me and pray for me, Will you, Tom? You saved tiny Johnny and I am tired of living this wretched kind of life. I want something that will give me peace, joy, and rest like you have."

The loud wail of a siren made both men look down the dusty lane where an ambulance was rapidly approaching.

"My Mary must have called the ambulance," Mr. Hilton said, "but, Tom, pray for me now before they get here. I'm lost, and going to die and go to hell unless I get saved."

"Confess all your sins to Jesus, Sam, and of course I'll pray."

As the wail of the siren rounded the corner of the Hilton farm, a loud shout of victory rang out across the meadow, past the "little acre" and up to Robbie's happy listening ears. Mr. Hilton had just found Jesus and Grandfather was going to be all right. He just knew it. He felt it all over

and through his boyish body. Everything was truly and really wonderful. He lifted his innocent, boyish face heavenward as he looked from tiny John to where Grandfather was and, folding his hands reverently, he smiled sweetly upward, "Thank Thee, Jesus dearest, so much."

Simultaneously, several meadow larks began a soft, melodious song of praise.

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Story 6

TRIPLETS

"Quick!" Mindy shouted, running as fast as her nine year old legs would carry her. "It's Ferdinand, Muncher, and Gobolinks."

"Sho' nuff!" Uncle Mose said with a chuckle, as he lay aside the hoe and followed the breathless, golden haired, blue eyed girl of his master.

"Is that all you can say, Uncle Mose?" Mindy asked, taking the hand of the gray haired gentleman. "Why, Ferdinand's about to eat all the pecans out of the sack on the cotton shed," and she tried to hasten the kind old man on.

"Sho' nuff! Now hain't that somethin'!" And the man had a twinkle in his kind old eyes. "I've been tryin' to tell yo' to keep dem in de barn but no, yo'all jes' can't see it, I reckon," and he shook his gray head vehemently,

"But, Uncle Mose," the child protested, "How'd you like to be shut up in a little bitty space in a barn every day of your life?"

"Ah hain't no animal, honey, and I've plenty grateful ah hain't no goat! Them's three o' the tryin' critters ah evah has seen. Yes'm, Mindy, they's sho' nuff' tryin' critters."

"Don't talk so, Uncle Mose. They're just little baby goats and they don't know any better," the girl defended.

"No'm, an' they hain't nevah gonna git bettah! They's goats 'Tain't no fault o' their'n -- they's born goats and can't help it no how that they's got dat goat nature," and he chuckled as he saw Muncher chewing diligently on a thistley flower shrub with Gobolinks part way up the slanting trunk of the big magnolia Ferdinand was munching noisily and loudly on the pecans, his little whiskery goatee shaking in the breeze.

"See!" the child exclaimed. "If Daddy sees them being so naughty he'll want to sell them for sure," and Mindy began calling softly to the cute, mischievous animals. They observed her silently and with a look of profound mischief; then, without warning, Gobolinks bounded down the tree

trunk, a beautiful, waxy leaf between her teeth. Muncher, frightened by her frisky sister, took off across the sprawling lawn with leaps and bounds.

"Quick, Mose!" Mindy shouted. "If Muncher gets into Mother's lily or pansy bed it'll be too . . . too . . . bad . . . for me," and she raced across the lawn after the rapidly receding frisky white kid.

"Perhaps yo' needs what's a' comin'," Uncle Mose called after her. "You'se dis'bedient agin', chile," but Mindy never heard.

"You naughty, naughty goat," Mindy scolded as she led the balky Muncher back to where Uncle Mose was coaxing Ferdinand with a small apple.

"You make me so cross!" Mindy shouted in Muncher's tiny, erect ear. Muncher, angered at her mistress' outrage, gave her a quick nip with her small white teeth. "Oh!" Mindy said, stomping her feet. "You mean, mean thing I hate you!" and she was about to turn loose of the frisky animal when she remembered she'd have to chase after her again. Instead, she jerked violently on the small collar around her neck.

"Miss Mindy," Uncle Mose said softly but firmly, "you'se worse off than Muncher."

"Why, Uncle Mose!" the astonished child exclaimed, sudden tears filling her eyes.

"Yo' sho' am, chile," Uncle Mose continued as he led the bleating Ferdinand and prancing Gobolinks back to the pen in the barn. "Yo' heart sho' needs fixin' up, honey. I...I...guess... maybe yo' needs pityin' like Muncher and Gobolinks and Ferdinand."

"Oh, Uncle Mose! You're not to be comparing me to a . . . a . . . goat!" and anger flashed in Mindy's ordinarily pretty blue eyes.

"Yes'm, ah knows; but yo' sho' needs pity. Muncher's heart is naughty 'cause she's got the goat nature in her. Ferdinand's heart's full o' mischief 'cause he's a goat, and likewise Gobolinks."

"But . . . but . . . why do you feel I should be compared to . . . to . . . these critters?" Mindy asked, still angry with the naughtiness of the three playful, destructive animals.

" 'Cause you'se jes' a showin, what's in yo' heart. Tha's all! You'se angry and mean 'cause yo' heart's not what it needs to be. Yas, suh, you'se to be pitied! Yo' is merely doin' what's in yo' heart, for de Scripture done say 'Out o' de abundance o' de heart de mouth speak.' Yo' needs Jesus to change yo' nature. Dem poor goats can't change der natur' nohow; but yo' sho' can -- if yo' wants to," the old man said sadly

"I certainly don't want to be like Gobolinks and Ferdinand, nor Muncher," and the tears were falling rapidly down the deep pink cheeks and dropping softly on to the concrete floor of the goats' pen. "And I'm . . . really sorry I . . . I . . . acted so nasty, Uncle Mose. I want you to forgive me. You are always so sweet and kind, and ... so ... unruffled."

"Tha's 'cause ah got Jesus an' His love an' peace in my heart. 'Tain't nothin' in dere to ruffle me. Ah asked de dear Lawd ta please ha' mercy on mah poor los' soul, an' He sure did. Praise de dear Lawd!" and Mose clapped his hands for joy.

"Do . . . you . . . suppose He'd forgive me if I asked . . . Him... to?" the child asked earnestly. "I want to be like you and Mother and Father."

"He sho' would, dear chile," and Uncle Mose blew his nose loudly into his big red work handkerchief. "He done said if we confess all our meanness an' sins dat He am faithful an' jus' to forgive us o' all our sins an' to cleanse our hearts from all unrighteousness. Le's pray, shall we?"

Just as Mindy prayed all the way through to God and knew that Jesus had come into her happy heart to abide and live forever -- for she was determined that she would always pray and mind God, from here on out Muncher, her two front baby legs up over the one part of the pen, was observing her new mistress with a naughty, mischievous look all over her pretty little pointed goat face.

"Oh, you needn't think I'll scream in your tiny ears again ever," Mindy said joyfully, weeping for joy. Ferdinand and Gobolinks, who were chewing on some dry weeds they had found on their way back to the barn, shook their hard little heads and, with front feet up along side Muncher, began bleating pitifully. Mindy, her childish arms flung wide, hugged all three naughty animal triplets tenderly. "You've got a new Mindy, a changed Mindy!" she exclaimed. "I pity you. You can't help it that you're naughty you're just goats, but I could help myself and the Lord Jesus has changed my nature because He came into my heart. Do you understand? I really pity you."

Gobolinks and Ferdinand pleaded with a loud "ba-ba-a" and Muncher took her hard little hoof and laid it on Mindy's arm as if to say 'I'm happy for you.'

"De good Lawd be praised," Uncle Mose shouted, getting back to his hoe and the flower bed he was weeding. "Yas, suh! It done pays to be a real Christian! Glory to God!"

"What were you saying?" Mindy asked, coming up by his side unexpectedly. "I want to thank you for being honest with me, Uncle Mose. I'm so happy in my soul and feel so . . . so... light. I must hurry in to tell Mother," and she hurried toward the big old house with its high white columns as the trees all across the sprawling green lawn seemed to be whispering loud hosannas to God.

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Story 7

TELLTALE HANDS

Terry stuck his hands deep down in his crisp new denim overalls and thought. For some reason or other, he could always concentrate better with his little chubby hands in his pockets. Those pockets were kind of like Pudge, the playful black cocker spaniel -- they always made him feel good and at ease.

'Now what could he do?' he thought, and he plunged his hands down more deeply into his two new stiff pockets, then sat down on the front porch step. Life sure was dull with Jimmy in school and Michael taking his nap and Grandma at the store. Poor Pudge! He wondered if Pudge was as lonesome for him as he was for her right then. Next time he came to grandma's house he'd bring her along. Yes, sir! Not that he didn't like grandma; oh, no! He loved grandmother and grandfather, but grandpa was always so busy keeping the apartments nice looking and . . . say! what was that paint brush doing in the corner?

Quickly Terry rushed to the corner of the big porch and grabbed the stout brush in his two five year old hands. A bright idea struck him and his eager eyes lighted up like light bulbs from within. He'd help grandpa finish painting the big porch! How surprised and pleased they'd be!

He pried hard at the lid on the paint bucket and, lucky for him, grandpa had just barely set the lid on the big can. He inhaled deeply of the clean paint odor then plunged the awkward, clumsy brush 'way down into the can. When he brought it up, the gooey paint dripped and dropped like half cooked frosting across the porch, making a speckled polka dot trail. Vainly he tried to brush it on like Grandpa did, but the bristles refused very little movement from the small chubby hands. Back to the bucket, then the middle of the porch, and more speckles and polka dots. Oh! this was fun! He could polka dot the porch if he couldn't paint quite like grandpa! Wouldn't mommie and daddy be proud of him when grandpa told them he had helped paint the big porch! On and on his happy childish thoughts roamed until he heard the back screen door open. Quickly he scurried to the corner and laid the big messy, clumsy brush on top of the paint can. Zoom! It fell to the bottom. He pulled it out and set the drippy mess in the corner.

"Terry. Oh, Te-rr-y! Where are you?" and he heard grandpa's footsteps coming through the house.

He stuck his fat chubby hands way down deep in his pockets and started for the front door.

"Here I am, Grandpa," he said, standing all innocent looking in the living room, both hands again thrust deep into his pockets.

"What were you doing?" grandpa asked. Without waiting for a reply, the white-haired gentleman came over to the round faced grandson. "Terry!" he exclaimed sadly. "You've been in papaw's paint! And I told you not to go near it!"

"But but . . . Grandpa! How did you know?" and Terry's round blue eyes filled with sudden tears.

"How did I know? Look at the new overalls grandma bought you. Your pockets! They're full of paint smears," and grandpa sighed a long, deep sigh. "Let me see your hands, Terry."

From somewhere deep down inside the crisp new pants pockets, Terry very reluctantly withdrew the two chubby hands -- sticky and messy.

"Just look at those hands!" grandpa exclaimed, carefully taking hold of the one with the least amount of paint on it.

"I can wash them." Again the boy was all innocence.

"You'll never wash that mess off. That's paint! We'll have to get a special something to remove it. Come along now before grandma gets home. She may think you deserve a spanking for ruining those nice pants."

"But, Grandpa, I thought I was helping," and tears flowed freely now. "And grandpa told you not to touch the paint. Remember?"

The boy nodded as the old man continued, "Your hands are like the Bible says sin is."

"Oh, no, Grandpa! Not that bad," and he looked at his fat chubby, messy hands.

"Remember what grandma and I often told you, 'Be sure your sin will find you out?' Well, your little telltale hands told on you."

"They... they..., did? How?" and Terry looked at his speechless hands in utter disbelief.

"Oh, maybe they didn't talk, Terry, out loud, that is; but they told me what you had been doing by what's on them. See?" and grandpa rubbed the child's hands briskly with the paint remover. "Whenever you're naughty, the Lord has a way of letting mother and daddy know."

"He does?" Terry asked in deep thought. "I often wondered how mommie knew every time I did something wrong. God must have showed her."

"Shown her, Terry, not 'showed her,'" grandpa corrected. "Yes, there are different ways the Lord uses to let mommies know when their little boys and girls have been naughty. This paint told on you today. It always pays to be obedient, then you'll never need to fear anyone or anything -- not even to show papaw your hands," and he held the clean chubby hands up for Terry to behold. "Now let's go to work on those new overalls before grandma gets home. Stand still while papaw works on them." The boy hardly moved a muscle, so intent was he on having every bit of paint removed.

"Whenever you sin," grandpa continued as he worked, "it makes ugly stains and marks on your life and no matter how hard you may try to erase those marks and wipe out those stains, they're there. There's only one thing that can wash away the sin, Terry, and that precious thing cost a Man His life. It takes the blood of dear Jesus to wash away our sin. Water cannot do it, but Jesus' blood can. If ever you sin, remember it takes His blood to wash away your sin. But you don't need to sin. You can let Jesus save you and take away all your sin, then ask Him to sanctify you and fill

you with His Holy Spirit and you'll want to please Him and do exactly what you know He wants you to do. Do you understand?"

Terry nodded sweetly, then, hearing the screen door open, he rushed to grandma saying, "I know now how mommie knows when I'm naughty -- God tells her."

Grandma, smelling the pungent paint remover and seeing a few remaining smudges on the dark blue pants, said nothing as she turned to the refrigerator and: smiled.

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Story 8

PETER'S ROOSTER

"Mother! Mother!" Peter exclaimed as he set the box on the kitchen stool, "Guess what Uncle Charlie gave me! Oh! It's beautiful!" and his eight year old hands clapped joyfully as he pranced around the kitchen floor.

A loud "peep" gave the contents away. "It's another chick!" Mother exclaimed aloud as she lifted the lid with holes in it and peeked inside.

"That makes six for me now." Peter said, laughing loudly and excitedly.

"You'll have to take good care of him," Mother said.

"But what if it's a baby girl chick again?"

"Maybe this one will be a rooster, Peter." Mother encouraged.

"I hope so. Uncle Charlie said I'd be surprised with this one." And his eyes shone brightly.

"Well, one thing sure," Mother laughed as she got back to her ironing, "We'll be having some good laying hens one of these days, if Jesus tarries. Those other five chicks have all their feathers and are really big. This little fellow will be a lone wolf."

"Oh, no Mother. I've already .fixed that. Uncle Charlie told me to come back tomorrow and he's giving me two more little chicks. They'll grow up together." And he thought a while then added, "Just like Randy and Kathy and I are growing up together."

Mother smiled sweetly as she listened.

The days that followed were busy days for Peter. Besides having eight chickens to care for he had the care of his pink eyed white furry rabbits -- a whole pen of them.

His joy was complete when he realized that the little fuzzy chick he had set on the high kitchen stool that one particular day was indeed a rooster.

"It's a boy!" he exclaimed loudly, running to Mother some days later.

"Are you sure?" Mother asked, her eyes sparkling.

"He tried to crow, Mother," he went on, not hearing her question. "He made the funniest sound real high and squeaky like; but he crowed in his way. My rooster shall be called Hector. How does it sound, Mom?"

"As good as Princess, Patience, Prudence and..."

"Then you don't like it?" the boy asked.

"It's fine, Peter. Just fine for a rooster."

So . . . he had come to be called Hector; and Peter, out of all his flock, was proudest of his rooster.

He was small of stature, for Hector was a bantam rooster, but his loud voice belied the fact.

As Hector grew older he was allowed privileges which his seven counterparts were deprived. Hector was king of the yard and, as such, he had full run of any and all of the big lawn while Patience, Prudence, Princess, Mop Top, Lolly Jeerer and Frisky had to remain in the fenced in pen and lay eggs.

Early every morning Hector performed his duty as alarm clock for the entire household and no one was prouder of him than Peter as he crowed and crowed, announcing the breaking of day.

One bright sunny, warm morning as Peter dressed for the day Mother called him to her.

"Peter," she said, "Today your rabbit pens must be cleaned out good and the hen's laying nests need new straw in them. When you're all finished father and I have a big surprise for all of you children."

"What is it?" the ever curious Randy inquired, looking for the world all of five instead of four years old.

"Do tell us, Mother," Kathy exclaimed, jumping up and down joyfully.

"I promise I'll do my work, now, but tell me what the surprise is. I can't wait," and Peter's eyes danced mischievously.

"We're going on a picnic by the rose gardens -- wieners, ice cream and all," Mother confided.

"Oh, goody! goody!" the children exclaimed together.

"I'll hurry with my work," and away the lad ran.

He did an excellent job at cleaning the rabbit hutches but the nests of the hens were badly neglected.

"Looks like I'm finished," he announced as he hurried into the kitchen. "When do we go?"

"The car's nearly packed, Peter. Run out and help Daddy finish. We need the ice chest and the ice cream freezer yet. Go to the basement and get them."

To say that picnics thrill every child is putting it mildly; but to Peter the thought of a picnic was sheer intoxicating joy; for a picnic to the Cushing family, and by the beautiful rose gardens of one of the many parks in the big city thirty miles away, was a rare treat indeed.

It meant not only home made ice cream, chocolate cake, wieners and many other delectable foods but a game of ball with daddy, as well. This was always a most exciting time and, when finally Peter rolled his little tired body in bed that night he slept soundly. He had forgotten about the not too clean hen nests, dreaming pleasantly of the gurgling fountain in the very center of the mammoth rose gardens.

A loud shrill 'cock-a-doodle-do' made Peter suddenly awaken and rub his sleepy eyes.

He looked toward the window and saw, not the faint pink streaks of morning but total darkness. Had he been dreaming or did he hear Hector? He rolled over and was almost asleep when the high pitched message penetrated his heart.

"Peter-told-a-lie! Peter-told-a-lie!" Then silence.

Cold chills raced up and down his spine and he was suddenly as wide awake as any healthy boy could be. Again Hector took up his call "Pe-ter-told-a-lie! Pe-ter-told-a-lie-e-e!"

Suddenly Peter began to cry. He remembered father and mother reading in the Bible about a rooster putting Peter under conviction but he never thought Hector could bring conviction and condemnation on his heart! And he had been professing to be a Christian, too!

Well, he knew what he must do! He had grown careless and told mother he was finished with his work when he knew those hen nests weren't like they should be!

Quickly he jumped out of bed as Hector took up where he had left off: "Pe-ter-told-a-lie! Pe-ter-told-a lie!"

"I'm going to get it settled," Peter cried, "Then you won't bother me any more."

"Mother! Mother!" he cried, rushing into her room and throwing himself over her, "Forgive me! Forgive me! I told you I was finished with my work yesterday but the hens' nests aren't nearly as clean as I know they should be. Forgive me and pray with me!"

"Why, Peter!" Mother exclaimed, sitting suddenly upright, "whatever is the matter with you?"

"Hector told on me."

"Hector?" and mother rubbed her sleepy eyes.

"Yes, Hector knows I didn't do the hen nests and I want you to forgive me. Pray with me, Mother. My disobedience will take me to Hell."

As they knelt side by side, Peter, with broken heart, repented and confessed and Jesus sweetly forgave and saved him.

Suddenly, from his roosting place in the tree outside Peter's window, Hector broke out loudly, jubilantly, "Peter's-found-the-Lord!"

The boy laughed and shouted for joy. "Good old Hector!" he said aloud, "you're not the first time God used a rooster to help someone."

"Go back to bed now, dear," mother said softly, stroking his black hair gently, "It's only two o'clock and you can sleep a good little while yet."

As Peter entered his room he tiptoed softly to the open window. "Thanks, Hector,, he whispered through the screen, "You're my real friend, I got rid of a profession and have the real possession now. Good night, Hector! Buddy!"

In a short time he was sleeping soundly, peacefully.

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Story 9

SCHOOL DAYS

Kathy pulled her sweater more closely around her shoulders and walked a little faster. The air was fresh and crisp and smelled like God had just newly washed the entire earth. Somewhere nearby a clematis, was blooming, she could tell by the wonderful perfume that was being wafted to her nose by every little errant breeze that skipped by. A cardinal landed on a mock orange bush and, throwing his head high into the air, burst forth in loud praises to God.

Kathy loved this time of day and the two mile walk to school. It gave her time to think and meditate on the good things of God kinda' like the Lord was doing His best to get passersby to pause and notice all the good and beautiful things He had created for their enjoyment; and the child fully appreciated every bit of what God had already shown to her. Since her recent conversion everything had become so new and so beautiful, until she enjoyed all the bird songs and the beautiful blooming flowers.

She walked briskly as she got farther into the country. The 'corn stalks waved long, dry leaves at her and rustled in the wind. The purple New England asters and goldenrod, which bloomed in great profusion along the road, attracted myriads of butterflies, bumblebees and honeybees.

She paused long enough to gather a small bouquet of the striking, contrasting blooms, then hastened on her way to Berryville. She liked the small town. Its wide, tree lined streets made it look like some town in a story book. Before she realized it the red brick school building loomed up before her.

"Hi, Kathy Sue," and Elaine hurried to meet her best friend. "Where did you find the flowers?" she asked.

"Along the road," Kathy replied. "You should see them! The bees act like you'd think winter's about here -- the way they're gathering the sweet nectar from the flowers," and she laughed.

"It's not too far away," Elaine replied. "My sweater surely felt wonderful today," and she drew it more tightly around her young, slender shoulders as she said, "You heard we're to have gym today."

"I knew it was to be soon," Kathy replied, and the girls walked through the swinging doors, down the long hallway to Kathy's locker where she deposited her lunch and sweater and got a vase for the bouquet she had gathered.

"For me?" Miss Miller asked, a pleased smile on her round, full face.

"I gathered them along the road," the girl said, pleased with Miss Miller's smile. "You should see them! You'd simply love them. They make a spectacular sight."

"I know they do," Miss Miller said as she placed them on the upper right hand corner of her desk, then stood back and proudly surveyed the color they added to the room. The children loved Miss Miller; she not only had a pleasant smile but seemed possessed with the rare gift of thorough understanding of each pupil. It was, therefore, a bit confusing and troublesome to Kathy when she announced that they would have dancing for recreation that day.

"Come, now, boys and girls, let's form a circle around the schoolroom. Boys, find a girl and she shall be your partner. I'm going to be teaching you a few dance steps and..."

"Miss Miller," Kathy interrupted. "May I be excused, please!" "Excused? Of course not! This is your physical fitness session."

"But . . . But . . ." and the girl was on the verge of tears when a fresh flow of courage and strength seemed to be infused in her inner life. Hadn't she prayed for: strength and courage -- just that morning -- to meet the known and the unknown, the seen and the unseen. "I'm a Christian, Miss Miller, and I wouldn't do one thing to grieve the Lord out of my heart and life. I can't dance and I don't want to dance," she said sweetly. "I have no desire for worldly things."

For a long time Miss Miller stood looking at the child before her, her innocent face and honest eyes seemed to do something to her. "Sit down -- all of you," she said quietly to her scholars. "Kathy, I'm sorry. You needn't dance -- ever!" Then, turning to her remaining students she said quietly, softly, "If Kathy can't dance because she feels it's wrong, none of us will dance -- never again in school."

The weeks rolled smoothly by and the students were absorbed in studies of Spanish, math, and the general subjects when Mr. Broom entered the classroom and announced gym for the whole class -- in the big gym! The students were excited and could scarcely wait until the one o'clock buzzer sounded.

"Aren't you going to gym?" Miss Miller approached Kathy Sue.

"May I be excused, please?" the girl asked.

"This is required, Kathy, for your report card."

"But . . . I . . . I'll do anything in the study line, book reports or extra homework, to make up for it. I can't conscientiously take gym."

"We'll have to see Miss Stewart about it," and Miss Miller led the way to the gym teacher in the big auditorium.

"So... this is the girl who's too good and too religious to take gym!" and Miss Stewart looked hard as stone, standing in her gym shoes and skimpy gym suit. Her eyes seemed to be looking through Kathy and the girl felt uneasy. "Well now," she sneered, "we'll see about that! You go back to your room, Miss Miller. I'll take care of her," and she pointed a harsh finger in the child's face. "You know it's required that you take gym?" she asked.

"Yes, Ma'am! I . . . I mean, I heard it was."

"And you wish to defy school laws?"

"Oh, no! Not really," Kathy said softly. "I'll do any other kind of studies and the like but I'll not take gym."

"Stubborn, eh?" Miss Stewart said loudly enough for the rest of the pupils to hear. "We'll see about that! Come with me -- we're going to Mr. Broom's office."

"This little upstart feels she's too good to take gym," Miss Stewart said as she stood inside the open door of the Principal's office.

"It's not that at all, Mr. Broom," Kathy said sweetly. "You see, I got saved and . . ."

"You what?" the principal asked, sitting on the edge of his big chair.

"I saw I was a poor lost sinner going to hell," Kathy began, "and I went to the altar and asked the Lord Jesus to save me and forgive me for all my sins, and He did."

"And what does that have to do with gym.?" Mr. Broom asked kindly.

"I can't conscientiously dress like you say we must, in... in... those scanty clothes," and the child pointed to Miss Stewart's attire as she said sweetly, "I'll do any extra homework you may assign me or any kind of research library work, Mr. Broom, but please let me be excused from gym -- for conscience' sake. I'm a new and a different girl since Jesus saved me and I can't do that," and she faced both individuals calmly.

"You may be excused," Mr. Broom said hoarsely. "Your grades have been excellent and you need never take gym so long as I'm here as principal, Go to your room and read or study. Miss Stewart, you may be excused to the gym and never insult the girl again."

"Thank you, Mr. Broom," Kathy said, "and I shall be praying for you. What I have found is wonderful and so-o-o satisfying," and she smiled sweetly as she left the office. Her soul felt light and free like the clean, pure air. God had fought her battles again and she knew that what He had done once He could keep on doing across the changing years of her life. Tears of gratitude and joy flowed down her full pink cheeks and glistened like diamonds. It paid to serve Jesus! A new strength surged up within her over having gained the victory again.

Written especially for a very wonderful girl, Kathy Sue Roose, who actually had this happen to her while in our pastorate at Lima, Ohio.

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Story 10
TEACHING DOLLARS MORE CENTS

Russell stood in the open doorway watching the men across the street as they worked the big bulldozers and heavy equipment. Deeper and deeper they scooped and louder and louder the tractors roared.

A sudden gust of wind sent the dust flying in thick billows across the road in through the open door.

"Ugh! Russell!" Mother choked. "Close the door. This dust is about to blow us all away."

"But, Mother, I was watching the bulldozers and I can't see if the door is shut."

You'll have to go outside, Russell. I can't have the dust blowing in like that. It sifts in badly enough with the doors and windows shut, let alone having them open," and she closed the door tightly as she added, "I'll be so glad when that new shopping center's completed. I can hardly stand this dust and dirt. I can't keep anything clean since they began bulldozing."

"I think it's fun," Russell laughed as he ran outside and settled himself on the first step of the porch.

The big yellow bulldozer roared by, across the street, and Russell was showered by another cloud of chocolatey-looking dust and dirt. He sputtered and coughed as he stroked Taffy, the golden haired cocker spaniel who came suddenly up by his side, wagging her curly stub of a tail.

The bulldozer unearthed more dirt and sent a new shower of dust in Russell's direction. At the same time a piece of paper fluttered lightly across the lawn. Taffy ran after it; jumping high in the air and, on the second try, she caught it and proudly brought it to her little master.

"Taffy!" Russell exclaimed as he eyed the bit of paper between her teeth. "You . . . you . . . found money. That's money you have!" and he tried to take it from the mouth of the playful pup, as he said in astonishment, "Where did it come from? It's ten dollars! You caught a ten dollar bill, Taffy," and the boy finally got the bill.

"Mother! Mother!" he shouted as he ran into the house. "Look! Taffy caught a ten dollar bill that came flying through the air when the big bulldozer scooped up more dirt," and he proudly displayed the well worn bill.

Mother looked from Russell to Taffy in utter disbelief. "Wouldn't it be something if old Mr. Fenst had buried his money like everybody said he did!" and she went out in the yard and watched as the entire working crew stopped the machinery and began searching the ground. They had unearthed money! She, with Taffy and Russell by her side, crossed the street and approached the man nearest her.

"Pardon me, sir," she began timidly, "but my son brought this to me. It blew over in the yard as you worked. Does it belong to you?"

"No Ma'am the sun-bronzed man said. "We just dug some money up. Look at these coins!" and he showed her a handful and rattled more in his pockets.

"They're sure old looking," Russell said as he began searching.

"What is the proper thing to do?" Mother asked, holding the bill before her. "I'm a Christian and want to do the right thing." "Keep it the man said, making a diligent search in the damp, clean-smelling earth. "The old man's been dead a long time and there's no living relatives."

"Looks like you'll have your missionary," Mother said as she took Russell by the hand and went back to the house.

"I was praying for the Lord to send it in," the boy said thankfully, "and the Lord did it. I'll put my dollar tithe in on Sunday and give the other nine to Sis. Miller's work in Old Mexico."

"That's wonderful!" Mother exclaimed joyfully, "and we shall ask the Lord to bless those nine dollars as they go on their way. Cast thy bread upon the waters and after many days thou shalt find it again."

Russell's nine dollars went to the needy field of Old Mexico where it was put to work immediately. Several dollars helped buy more tracts and Christian literature and several more bought simple medical supplies and dressings. On and on the nine dollars was spread out for various urgent minor needs.

Some weeks later a fine looking young Mexican man entered the mission station.

"Senorita," he stammered to Sis. Miller, "I came to tell you that I get saved."

"Praise the Lord!" Sis. Miller shouted as tears of joy coursed down her cheeks. "But how, Pedro? Did someone preach to you?"

Drawing from his pocket a small piece of crumpled paper, he held it up as he exclaimed, "Thees! These make Pedro feel awful bad in here," and he smote his chest, "so I do what eet tell me to do. I pray and I get saved. Oh, Pedro's changed! A new man!" and he rejoiced over his new found joy and went back to his village where he won many to Christ.

Still more weeks went by. One day at sunset, Sis. Miller heard a faint rap on the door. Upon opening it, she saw a beautiful dark haired young mother with a tiny baby held tightly to her bosom.

"Come in," she welcomed the stranger.

"I cannot stay," the lovely woman said softly. "I came to thank you, Mees Miller. Thank you for saving my baby's life and for leading me to the Saviour. I now believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins and I am saved. In here!" she spoke joyfully, pointing to her heart. "I haf' found peace, Mees Miller, and I am happy in my soul!"

That night Sis. Miller remembered how Russell's nine dollars had reached her when she had been in dire need for money wherewith to buy the tracts, surgical dressings and simple home remedies. She remembered, too, of Carmen coming to the improvised mission dispensary she had

set up in the young mother's village and how critically ill the child was with pneumonia. That night she had talked to the young mother about her soul, and many days and nights thereafter. Russell's dollars and her frail God-anointed efforts had begun to reap the harvest, and would continue to do so for many years to come.

"Oh, Mother!" Russell exclaimed happily! after Mother read all Sis. Miller had written, "I'm so glad I sent those nine dollars to the mission field. I never knew nine dollars that had more cents!" And he rejoiced in heart.

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Story 11

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL

Alica stood at the picture window watching the snowflakes as they fell to the good earth. Some were tiny, tiny; others were big and starry looking. Momentarily they ceased falling and her heart sank. Then, just as quickly again it began to snow . . . this time rapidly

She tore herself away from the beautiful snow and the picture window and .ran to the kitchen to help mother bake delicious and beautiful Christmas cookies.

Late that same afternoon she walked into the kitchen, fully dressed . . . scarf, boots, mittens and all. "I'm going to see Mrs. Perkins," she said with tears in her eyes.

"But she's such a cross old woman, honey, and hates children," mother said.

"I believe Jesus told me to go; at least I felt that way as I prayed. May I take a few cookies, please?" and Alica's big blue eyes plead with her mother.

"Gladly, gladly, honey," and mother found a two pound Crisco can. "Let's cover it with some pretty Contac and put a bright red ribbon on the lid."

Together they worked. Soon the can was all covered and looked like some masterpiece from the downtown hardware household items shelf. Alica filled it to the top with the prettiest cookies she could find, then started on her mission.

The snow was piling high now and drifting in soft peaks around her feet, but she did not notice, so intent was she on talking to the Lord.

Mrs. Perkin's house loomed up in the distance and her heart sank. Silently she prayed for strength and courage. When she got to the door and two big dogs showed their ugly faces in the window and barked fiercely, she didn't know what to do. Quickly a thought entered her head and she began to sing: "Away in a manger, no crib for His bed;" she sang softly and tearfully. The big door swung open wide.

"Get back! Get back!" a gruff voice said as she motioned the two big dogs to silence and away from the door.

"And what do you want?" Mrs. Perkins asked crossly.

"A blessed Christmas to you, Mrs. Perkins. I came to sing you a carol and give you these cookies," and Alica trembled with fright.

"Come in! Come in!" Mrs. Perkins said, brushing sudden tears aside. "You must be frozen. Just see how you tremble, child."

"I'm not cold, Mrs. Perkins. Not really! In fact, I feel warm." Mrs. Perkins' soft word, "child," had suddenly warmed Alica all over.

"These cookies are for you," the child said, as she settled her small body in the big rocker by the fireplace.

"Isn't Christmas a lovely time of year! God gave us His Son to be our Saviour, Mrs. Perkins"

"Yes, He did, didn't he? I had almost forgotten," and Mrs. Perkins came near Alica and felt of her cheeks and her small head. "You are human, aren't you? Or ... or... are you an angel from Heaven? It's been such a long, long time ago."

"It has?" Alica asked, puzzled. "I'm real, Mrs. Perkins. A real human being. May I sing for you?" and she began singing, "Joy to the world, The Lord is come!"

"Stop! Stop!" Mrs. Perkins said, weeping and trembling. "I want Him to abide in my heart I've been a bitter old woman and have blamed God unjustly," and her voice broke. "It was years and years ago. I lost my little girl; she was sweet like you, and always pleasant and joyful. Her father was lost at sea some years before, and when she died I became bitter and felt God had been unjust with me."

"He took her to lead you, Mrs. Perkins. If she was a little girl she's happy in Jesus' arms and is safe at home in Heaven."

"I see it! I see it now! And oh, I want to be forgiven and find this Christ who has brought joy to the world and sent you here. I thought, when I first saw you, you must be the angel of my Alice. Oh, I've been bitter, and have hated children and everybody ever since! But I want forgiveness and I want peace for my poor wretched soul and heart."

"May I pray for you?" Alica asked, laying her small hand on the broken-hearted woman's arm.

"Will you? Oh, please! Will you?"

By the big old-fashioned rocking chair Alica and Mrs. Perkins knelt and, as the old woman confessed all the sins of her life and the bitterness of her soul, Jesus came into her heart in saving power. Her face shone like some heavenly being and Alica could scarcely believe the transformation before her very eyes. Mrs. Perkins was actually pretty as her face was wreathed in heavenly smiles.

"What is your name?" she asked.

"Alica. Alica Moffett."

"Alica!" the happy woman said in surprise. "Alica! Ah! It is almost like Alice. I shall call you 'Angel.' Truly, you have been an angel sent by God." Then, folding the delicate form close to her bosom, she whispered, "Thank God! Thank God! Angel, you must come to see me often Oh, Christmas is a wonderful time of the year. For unto me a Saviour was given!"

The snow flakes swirled and danced dizzily about Alica and the earth seemed full of the glory of the Lord as she walked homeward in the early evening dusk. From a distant hillside a group of carolers were singing softly,

"Fall on your knees!
Oh, hear the angel voices;
Oh night. Oh Holy night
Oh night when Christ was born."

Alica dropped reverently to the soft powdery snow and, raising her hands heavenward, she gave praise to the Lord ere continuing homeward.

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