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## **CHILDREN'S PAGE STORIES -- 1970**

**By Mrs. Paul E. King**

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Story 1  
THE TELLTALE

"Are you sure your mother won't mind?" Ralph asked anxiously, as Guy started across the field holding his brother's BB gun securely in front of him.

"She won't even know I took the gun," Guy bragged, a crooked smile playing across his rosy-red cheeks. "We won't be gone long."

"But she told you not to go to the woods; and I heard her say she didn't want you taking Ray's BB gun without permission," Ralph reminded.

"Aw! C'mon!" Guy exclaimed. "I'm not a baby anymore. It's time Morn and all the rest of the family realized this!"

"Bu . . . but . . . you're being disobedient!" Ralph stuttered. "And God hates disobedience."

"Just once won't do any harm!" Guy hurled sharply at his cousin.

"Just once is all you need to get you into a peck of trouble, too," Ralph reminded, stalling.

"Stay there then; I'm going. I know John's trap route. I'm going to surprise him this morning. I'll make the route. By the time he's through helping dad with the barn chores I'll be home again. Are you coming?"

Without saying a word, Ralph followed Guy across the meadow to the marshes beyond.

"Not a single muskrat" Guy exclaimed in disgust. "John's going to be disappointed. He needs a new coat; the pelts were to help buy him one."

The boys walked on and on, pausing just long enough to make sure John's traps held no animal and weren't sprung.

"The muskrat likes more cloudy skies," Ralph said, after they found the traps all empty. "Usually the foggy, cloudy weather seems to make them come out better, What would you do if John would have had something in his traps! A BB gun's not the best thing in the world to have around then."

"Just you wait and see," Guy boasted. "Ray's gun is powerful." He pointed it at a young sapling and pulled the trigger. Zing-g-g! It rang. "See there!" he said, as the BB embedded itself in the tender sapling.

"Wow!" Ralph uttered in amazement.

"We'll go to the woods now," Guy said, beaming proudly. "John's got traps set there for skunks, opossum and fox. Maybe there'll be something in one of these traps."

The boys followed John's route from trap to trap, tree to tree, without success .....

"I'm not going any farther," Ralph moaned. "Let's go home. I'm tired."

"There's one more trap," Guy insisted. "It's along a little trail up the mountainside. Let's finish the route, Ralph. This is the nicest walk of all. Find a walking stick. It'll make climbing easier for you."

With a sturdy walking stick held securely in each of the boy's hands, they started up the narrow, winding trail. Before they reached the spot where John's trap was anchored securely to a stout stake in the ground, Guy whispered in eager excitement.

"John's got something! See! It... it's a skunk! What a beauty he is!"

"But how will you get him? I . . . I mean ....."

"Watch and see!" Guy bragged, stepping dangerously near to the frightened creature who was being held captive by the strong, stout jaws of the thick metal trap.

"Pow! Pow! Zing-g-g! Zingg-g!" The BB whistled as Guy released the small hard lead balls toward the helpless animal.

Poor Mr. Skunk! He hardly knew which way to turn nor what to do, the BB's poured at him so fast. Quick as a wink, he released his God-given weapon of defense upon Guy.

"Help! Help, Ralph! I can't see! The skunk got me in the eyes! Oh, I believe I'm blind!"

"What'll we do?" Ralph asked, nearly panicking. He wanted to help his cousin! He did! He did! But if he did . . .! Ugh! He'd smell like a skunk all over, too, exactly like Guy.

"Get me home to mother!" Guy begged. "She'll know what will help me. Oh, Ralph! I'm suffocating from this horrid odor! Can't you help me, please? Oh! Why did I disobey? Why? Why?"

"I wish we hadn't disobeyed," Ralph said, feeling suddenly helpless and awful.

"Let's get home," Guy begged. "You'll have to lead me. I can't see a thing. My eyes are burning like fire."

Ralph held his nose all the way home. Like someone leading a blind man, he led Guy down the narrow path, across the fields and meadow to the yard.

Before either boy was on the porch, mother was at the door.

"O-o-o-o! Ugh!" she exclaimed. "Don't come in here," she warned. "Go down to the spring house by the well and get out of those clothes . . . both of you. I'll be down with basins of clean water and soap and some different clothing. Hurry!" she ordered. "Mother, I . . . I ...."

"I know. You've been disobedient again, Guy."

"But . . . how did you know?" Guy asked, not daring to open his eyes.

"Sin always has its 'tell-tale' marks, Son. Yours is exceptionally potent, well-marked, and strong. It's all too obvious, Guy. I know what happened without your telling me."

"I . . . I'm sorry, Mother. I'm really sorry this time. All the way down the mountainside I told the Lord how sorry I was. I asked Him to forgive me. Mother, I promise I'll never disobey again! Never!" Guy was crying as Ralph led him down the rose bordered pathway to the spring house.

"Well, this worth all it costs," Mother said softly, as she gathered the clean clothing together to take to the spring house. "If an ass could talk to Baalam, I'm sure God can use a skunk to teach obedience to a disobedient little boy." And He did!

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February, 1970

Story 2

THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL

"Mother, come quickly. Two more cows are dead and the mule's dreadfully ill. Looks like he's not going to make it either. Whatever will we do?" David Manning wrung his hands in despair. "If only father were here!"

Without saying a word, the faithful little widow followed her eldest son to the barn where Robert, next to David, was leaning hard against a feeding manger and weeping bitterly.

"It looks like God's forsaken us completely, mother," he said softly with not a trace of bitterness in his voice. "Maybe we're not living right." Quickly altering his statement, he defended, "But I know you are, dearest Mother."

"Not always for wrong-doing does the Almighty punish us," Mrs. Manning said, her voice soft and sweet. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him,' . . . 'For I know that my Redeemer liveth.' "

"How right you are, Mother!" David exclaimed.

"But it does seem strange," Robert countered, "first, father dies suddenly; then we lose most of the flock of chickens through disease; now the cows and pigs and horses. We have very little left us."

"Remember Job!" It was a short admonition but served to quiet the questioning of the boys. "Call the dead stock men, boys," she ordered, "and leave the results with God. He knows our predicament. I must hurry back to the house. It's not safe for the smaller children to be alone too long." With these words she hurried back to the kitchen.

"I'm hungry, mother," three small voices chorused as she entered the door.

"We'll eat as soon as David and Robert are through with the chores," Mrs. Manning said, smiling pleasantly and trying to be brave.

It was after Robert, David, Nancy and Elizabeth had taken leave for school that Mrs. Manning hurried to her bedroom.

Telling the smaller children to play quietly in the living room, she went into her secret place of prayer. Putting her head between her hands, she sobbed.

"Oh, God," she began, "I have no money and tomorrow we reach the bottom of the barrel!"

Before she could recover her senses, two little arms were thrown lovingly around her neck and a little voice full of love and faith and hope piped up emphatically, "But, Mama, don't you know that God hears it when we scrape the bottom of the barrel?"

A flood of heavenly glory burst over Mrs. Manning's soul and she began to shout. Her faith was complete. If Jimmy could trust God in such a simple, child-like way, so could she.

Wiping the tears from her eyes, she drew Jimmy tenderly to her breast.

"You're so right, honey. God does hear me when I scrape the bottom of the barrel. I believe Him! I believe Him! Hallelujah!"

For a full minute Jimmy looked his mother in the face. Smiling sweetly at her he hurried back to his playing.

The following morning Mrs. Manning made the last of the flour into little cakes for the children.

Around the family altar they thanked God for His wonderful care over them and for providing so graciously their every need. Presently a loud knock sounded on the door.

It was Mr. Jackson, a godly neighbor. "The Missus and I were asking the Lord about you yesterday," he said, "and He seemed to whisper that your meal barrel might be getting low. We decided to come over and see you this morning and bring some food for you." With that, he began carrying sack after sack of groceries, meats, flour, potatoes and clothing into the house.

Mrs. Manning, completely overcome with joy and gratitude, stood by, weeping her praises to God.

"It's simply wonderful to live close enough to God's heart to hear His every whisper!" the neighbor said, with tears trickling down his cheeks.

"I told Mama God heard it when she scraped the bottom of the barrel!" Jimmy exclaimed, with radiant face and bright eyes. "I knew He heard! I just knew it!" And He did. He always does!

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March, 1970

Story 3

THE STRANGE "FISH"

Marie skipped happily down the sidewalk clutching Penelope tightly in her arms. She was so happy to have Mari Beth for her best friend.

Mari Beth was new in the neighborhood. She lived in the big fancy-looking house on the hill, just a half block from Marie's house. She had chosen Marie as her best friend. This is what made Marie so happy.

"Good morning, Marie," Mari Beth called from the lawn.

"Good morning, Mari Beth. Mother said I could come over and play with you this morning. I brought Penelope. See?" and Marie held the doll out for her friend to take.

"Oh! Goody," Mari Beth said softly, laughing sweetly. "Let's sit here and watch the movers. They're moving furniture into the house down the street. It's fun to sit and watch."

The girls seated themselves on the lawn and chatted happily as the men continued carrying piece after piece of furniture into the house.

"Look, Mari Beth! A big piano! Somebody plays a piano in that house," and Marie's eyes were large with wonder.

"I wonder if it might be the little girl I saw down there not too long ago," Mari Beth said. "She has long black curls and she's real pretty."

Marie stiffened. "Oh! Well, we don't care about her."

"I'd like to be friends with her," Mari Beth said sweetly. "I wonder if she's lonely. I was, until I met you."

"Let's go up under the tree and play," Marie said. "I'm tired of watching the movers."  
"I'm going down to meet that pretty little girl," Mari Beth said suddenly. "She'll need a friend."

"I'm going home!" Marie exclaimed angrily. "Give me Penelope," And she grabbed the doll roughly.

"Why, Marie! What's happening?" It was Mari Beth's mother. She had come up beside the girls.

"I . . . uh . . ." Marie stuttered, then hung her head in shame.

"I think the little girl at the house down the street would be happy to make friends with both of you," Mari Beth's mother said. "I told Mari Beth to introduce herself and welcome the new girl to our neighborhood. I remember how lonely my little girl was before she met you, Marie."

"But I don't want another friend," Marie sulked and pouted. "If Mari Beth wants another friend I won't play with her anymore," and she started for the sidewalk.

"Marie, wait." Mari Beth's mother had her kind hands on her shoulders. "Do you feel good inside when you act this way?"

Marie pouted. Her mouth was curved in an ugly upside-down smile.

"Do you feel good inside, Marie?" she asked again.

"I . . . I guess I don't," Marie admitted.

"Let's sit down on the lawn," Mari Beth's mother encouraged. "I want to talk to you. At our house we are all Christians now. But I remember one day before Mari Beth was converted and sanctified when she had a very wicked and exceeding strange 'fish' in her heart."

"A fish? In Mari Beth's heart?" Marie was shocked. Her face registered surprise. "Tell me about it," she said, seating herself on the soft lawn with her friends.

"Mari Beth had a doll that she loved very, very much. Her younger sister, Ann, loved the doll too. Ann wanted to play with the doll and cuddle it close to her bosom like she had seen Mari Beth do, but this strange 'fish' in Mari Beth's heart wouldn't allow Ann to play with the doll. Every day this dreadful 'fish' grew stronger and stronger, making Mari Beth almost hateful at times."

"What did you do, Mrs. Adams?" Marie asked anxiously. "How did you get it out of Mari Beth's heart?" ....

"Jesus did it, Marie." Mrs. Adams answered sweetly. "One Sunday morning while in church the sweet Holy Spirit talked to Mari Beth's heart. He showed her that she was full of sin and wickedness. He showed her, too, how dreadful the big strong 'fish' was in her heart and ....."

"What kind of fish was in your heart, Mari Beth?" Marie asked.

"It was sel-fish-ness," Mari Beth said sweetly. "But Jesus forgave me of all my sins that Sunday morning when I asked Him to come into my heart. He made me kind and I love everybody, Marie. I asked Him to sanctify my heart and do you know what?"

"Tell me!" Marie exclaimed anxiously

"He filled my heart with His love and took every single bit of that dreadful, hateful, wicked 'fish' out of my heart! It's wonderful to have Jesus living all through you, Marie, and to know that ....."

"Oh, Mari Beth, that's what I have in my heart right now. Will Jesus take that 'fish' out of my heart? I've never been to church so I don't know if Jesus Would want me." Marie's eyes were filled with earnest tears. Her heart felt hungry and strange.

"Come into the house," Mrs. Adams urged, taking Marie's hand. "Mari Beth and I will pray for you. Jesus is waiting to come into your heart." The three hurried into the big fancy-looking house on top of the hill to pray.

A wonderful thing happened in Marie's heart. She got converted! Jesus came into her heart and washed away all her sins.

"Let's hurry, Mari Beth," she said, hurrying down the hill again. "The new little girl may be awfully lonely and she may need Jesus, too."

Hand in hand the girls made their way to the door. Penelope was cradled in Mari Beth's arm. If having one friend was wonderful, two would be even better, Marie thought, feeling all new and good inside.

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April, 1970

Story 4  
WEEDS

They were born identical twins, the doctor told Mrs. Norriston; and with her husband's consent they were called Morris and Maurice. Since they were identical, one would expect identical everything; but not so with these two boys they were as un-identical in ways and actions, temperaments and dispositions as was daylight from darkness.

"Morris," Mrs. Norriston had to call loudly every morning, "it's time to get up and get ready for school. Mor ....r... is, do you hear?"

"Huh? Oh, school! Yes, I hear."

"Get up, Morris. Maurice is all ready to go."

"Huh? He is?" Whereupon the lad called Morris, hit the floor with such a loud thud that both mother and twin brother rushed madly upstairs to see what had happened. Morris was fun-loving, carefree, and (seemingly) unconcerned, while his twin counterpart was serious-minded, quiet, obedient, and most punctual. In a sense Maurice, with his serious-mindedness and quiet manner, "bugged" his mischievous, fun, loving brother.

"Why must you hurry so fast to get home from school?" Morris asked his brother one night. "You know what we'll have to do when we get home, Maurice. Slow up a bit and it's that much less time we'll have to pull weeds or hoe corn. Can't you see that?"

"I sure can, Morris. But I can see more than that .... I can see all the many more evenings we'll be dragging this job out. The sooner we get to it the sooner we're finished. Logical?"

"Logical, yes. But I'd rather take my time at getting home. This sun sure feels good on a fellow," and he threw himself down on the cool green grass and watched as his "identical" twin plodded gallantly along toward home. Why couldn't they be really identical? he wondered, taking his shoes off and digging his toes far down in the long blade of cool green grass. How good and relaxing the earth felt and how clean and refreshing was the smell of the grass! He should be home weeding his own tomato patch and cornrow if he expected it to produce, he knew. Oh, well, tomorrow was always another day! He consoled himself thus and was soon fast asleep in the cool grass, a pair of dusty shoes by his side and an empty lunchpail and some books at his fingertips.

He awakened some hours later and his aching stomach told him he had missed his supper. Quickly he put his shoes on and gathered up the empty pail and pile of books and started homeward. He knew what awaited him, but in a carefree way he whistled his way into the kitchen.

"You're late again, Morris," Mother said simply. "Change your clothes and go do your share of the weeding. Your tomato patch and corn needs attention, too."

"I'm starved, Mom. Can't I have some supper first? I went to sleep along the road. Sure felt good, that cool grass."

"Change your clothing, then go to the field and do what you were supposed to do, Morris. We do have rules and regulations here, you know."

"But a fellow sure can work a lot better with something in his stomach and a little rest." Thus it had gone day after day -- not rebellious nor stubborn, just carefree, happy-go-lucky and unconcerned. Oh, he always got his work done . . . usually later than the rest, but Mr. and Mrs. Norriston saw to it that he did his share of the work, all except his own tomato and corn patch!

Each of the twins was given a certain small plot of ground to raise vegetables to sell at the Farmer's Market in nearby Lewisburg. Maurice worked his diligently and fertilized and watered it whenever necessary. Not a weed was seen down the long rows of his tomato vines and corn plants and his vegetables grew rapidly under the careful attention and excellent cultivation he gave them. Morris, on the other hand, worked his whenever he felt an urge to do so which was seldom. "Oh, they'll grow without me watching them every day," he said to his "identical."

The warm, hot summer days lengthened into hotter summer days and the boys were now selling their produce at the Farmer's Market.

"Hey, what's the matter?" he asked his brother one day. "Nobody buys anything from me. I can use a little spending money, too."

Maurice said nothing as he waited on another customer.

"I bought some of your sweet corn last week," the woman was saying, "and it's the very best I've had all summer so far. My, but it is tender! And such big ears, too!"

"Thank you, Ma'am," Maurice said courteously. "I guess it pays to work and keep the patch free from weeds and the like."

"Have you raised these by yourself?" she was asking.

"Not exactly," Maurice answered, smiling, "you see, I planted and watered but the good Lord gave the increase. So you can see I didn't raise them alone. I just couldn't possibly do that . . . the Lord and I did it."

"I'd like a bushel of those fine tomatoes, too. They're the biggest, best slicers anywhere around. How about three bushel for canning purposes? Do you have that many?"

"I certainly do, Madam, and you may have them. There's a lot more out in the field when these are gone."

Morris looked down at his scrawny, shriveled ears of corn and the small, dried-up-looking tomatoes he was offering for sale, then slowly began gathering them together and tucking them away, out of sight, in the bushel baskets at his feet behind the counter.

"What's the matter, Morris? Don't hide your vegetables. Somebody may want some. Mine are almost gone already."

"It's plain, Maurice Mother and father told us we could have whatever we earned from the vegetables we cared for. I've gotten my pay . . . I worked little and got less. It's only fair, I see it now. My poor vegetables were nearly smothered by weeds and almost died for lack of water, but I felt they would survive and produce without my care. I've really learned the lesson Father and Mother have been trying all these years to teach me and it's been good for me. Well, I'll be different next year, if the Lord tarries and spares my life. We'll really be identical, Maurice! Really, really identical!" And he smiled his usual sweet smile at his brother.

"We're still identical, Morris; and to prove it I'll giving you a big part of my earnings after the tithe is taken out."

"I couldn't accept it. I'm to blame for this poor crop of vegetables. Weeds! After this there won't be a single weed showing down my rows of vegetables either, Maurice."

"To stay really identical we will share and share alike. So I insist you take a part of my earnings this year. Who knows, you may have to help me out some time!"

"Not so long as you and the Lord stay in partnership, 'Identical.' " And he laughed sweetly as his brother's vegetables were being quickly sold.

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May, 1970

Story 5

MOTHER'S SPECIAL GIFT

"Do hurry, Annette. Mother will soon be home, then it won't be a surprise at all" And Lynette put the finishing touches to the freshly-baked, temptingly frosted coconut cake she had mixed together all by herself.

"I'm working as fast as I can, Lyn," Annette answered her twin sister, "but I can't hurry the baking time on these rolls or they'll be doughy and not good at all." She laughed pleasantly as she finished washing the dishes she had dirtied.

For ten-year-olds, the twins were out of the ordinary they took great delight in all the many household chores and always washed and dried the dishes for Mother when they weren't in school. Mother had supervised them in the baking of cup-cakes and many varieties of cookies and brownies, but this was their first attempt at baking something really big, important-like, and wonderful -- alone!

"Do you think Mother will like my cake?" Lynette prodded as she finished licking the frosting bowl.

"I'm sure she will, Lyn. It looks like Mother has made it herself and it looks good enough to eat." And Annette eyed the tall cake with pleasure. "I hope my rolls turn out as good as your cake has."

"This cake should be good. I used Mother's fresh coconut cake recipe. It does smell temptingly good, doesn't it?" and she stood back and surveyed the finished product. "However, are we going to hide all these fragrant odors, though?"

"Oh, dear! I never thought of that," and Annette's countenance fell slightly. After some moments of hesitation she laughed gleefully, "Oh, Lyn, I know what We'll do; let's prepare supper for mother, too! We'll fix steak and fry onions, a big, big skillet of them .. for Daddy and the boys. The onions will cover up most of the good baking odors."

"That's a wonderful idea, Annette. I'll start peeling the potatoes and onions right now."

"We'll fix green beans and wilted lettuce, too," and Annette hurried to the garden where the lettuce was all green and fresh and tender.

The girls worked diligently and happily at their pleasant surprise for Mother and when Father came in before Mother had returned from sitting by Mrs. Curry's side in the hospital he said proudly to his two little housekeepers, "My! My! My! What fine little mothers you will make some day if the Lord tarries and spares you. This will be a surprise indeed for your mother. That supper smells wonderful and I'm simply starving. I know James and Jeff are too. So you'd better get it on the table as soon as possible. Your mother will be home any minute now, for it's Mrs. Bunty's turn to sit with Mrs. Curry from five till eleven tonight. But what are all those rolls doing going into the pantry? And that cake! It's a real beauty! Who did all this fancy, super looking baking? Do I get a bite now or must I wait till supper like Mother makes Jeff and James do 2"

The girls blushed slightly, then faced their daddy. "These rolls and the cake are a special surprise for Mother tomorrow, the Lord willing. That's Mother's Day! Remember?"

"Do you mean I'll have to wait till tomorrow till I get to eat any of that wonderful looking baking? It looks good enough to eat now!" And Father laughed pleasantly, his eyes laughing and matching the upturned curve of his mouth.

"Well..." Annette began, going into the pantry after one of the still-warm pecan rolls she had tried to hide safely away before anybody but she and Lynette would know they were there.

"I'll get you a piece of my cake," Lynette said, heading for the place of hiding.

"Of course you'll not," Father laughed, coming near to his twins and stroking their silken braids proudly. "We'll wait till Mother's Day, then we shall all have a part in the surprise. That is Mother's special surprise and we must not spoil it."

The girls hugged Daddy soundly, then hurried back to their supper preparations.

The kitchen table was decorated with a bouquet of early spring flowers and a clean white tablecloth showed off the tender, green, wilted lettuce, amber-colored onions, spicy pickled beets, tender simmered steak with gravy, creamy yellow-white m a s h e d potatoes, home-made bread and butter and rosy-pink apple jelly when mother stepped inside her spotlessly clean kitchen and found the meal all ready and waiting for her.

"What wonderful girls I have!" she exclaimed happily, gathering them tenderly into her arms. "Mrs. Curry's out of danger now and it looks like I'll not need to stay with her any more. I praise the Lord for her improvement. I almost feel like I've neglected my family."

"Oh, but you haven't," the girls exclaimed happily. "We have been so happy to keep house for you and Father and the boys. It's been fun.., lots and lots of fun," and they winked at each other.

Everyone proclaimed the supper a great success and when the dishes were all done and the little family had had family worship and retired for the night the twins could scarcely sleep over the excitement of the hidden rolls and the beautiful coconut cake that was just waiting to be sampled m first of all by Mother!

It wasn't quite daylight the following morning when the girls rushed into their parents bedroom.

"Happy Mother's Day!" they said softly into Mother's ear, as they held the tall, tall white cake and the fragrant pecan rolls before her. "A Mother's Day surprise for you, dear Mother, from us; made by us alone!"

Mother sat upright in bed and could hardly believe what she saw. Then, while tears of joy spilled down across her pretty cheeks she reached her mother arms out and encircled both girls. "And this is the most wonderful Mother's Day present I have ever had! This present was fashioned out of love. That makes it most wonderful of all!"

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June, 1970

Story 6

JOBIE

"Jobie Jobie, Jobadiah, What a funny name! Jobie, Jobie, Jobadiah. Where'd you ever get that name?"

Sam and Tim were at it again It seemed as if teasing Jobie was their favorite pastime

Sam tossed a bit of clay he had just fashioned into a marble at Jobie. It lay at the boy's bare feet.

"Like to play?" he teased Jobie. "Come over and help Tim and me. We're making a great batch of clay marbles today," and his dexterous hands rolled the stick clay-mud into a perfect round Carefully he laid it beside the others to dry in the sun.

Jobie stood inside his yard fence watching Sam and Tim. Oh, it looked like so much fun to make clay marbles and other objects from the mud-clay. Jobie wished ever so hard that a crooked little stream ran through his back yard .... a crooked little stream with yellow-orange mud-clay on its banks He'd show Sam and Tim what perfect objects his little hands could make!

"Say, where did you get such a funny name?" It was Sam again.

Jobie swallowed hard. A big tear was dangerously close to sliding down his fat ruddy cheeks and that must never happen

"What a funny name!" Sam teased, as Jobie made a quick getaway.

He walked into the big sunny kitchen and sat down in the rocking chair. Mother had always said a rocking chair was the best place in the whole wide world to have your heart healed and your problems solved. He'd try it.

Back and forth Jobie rocked. Back and forth. Somehow, the big comforting chair didn't have the same effect on him as when mother held him close to her breast and rocked with him.

"I will forget! I must forget!" Jobie repeated in perfect rhythm with the rocking chair. Suddenly, his face contorted in an up-sidedown smile and he felt stubborn tears racing like mad down his chubby little face

"And what's the matter with my little boy?" Mother asked, coming into the kitchen from cleaning the upstairs.!"Why, Jobie darling! You're wearing an upside-down smile and you're not nearly so pretty as when you wear it right-sideup."

Quickly mother set the vacuum cleaner down and rushed over to Jobie. In one glorious swoop she had him out of the rocking chair into her loving arms. Then she settled herself in the old rocking chair and with Jobie in her strong arms and on her lap, she began rocking gently back and forth.

By now the big tears were raining torrents down Jobie's fat little cheeks Jobie took his fist and tried to rub them away, but the daring little things raced madly on .... even into Jobie's mouth How salty they tasted!

"Jobie! Jobie!" Mother exclaimed, kissing the full round cheeks "Smile Don't you know that your face belongs to others?" She coaxed softly.

"It does?" Jobie sat suddenly straight "Does it, mother? Why, why did I ever get the name Jobie? I hate it! I hate it!" There, he had said it .... and just as he said it, there was that up-side-down smile again, all wrinkled and frowning. "Jobadiah! Why couldn't I have a name like 'Sam' or 'Tim' or 'Tom' or .... ?"

Mother was laughing softly into Jobie's ear and stroking his hair ever so gently as the dear old rocking chair rocked back and forth, back and forth. Somehow, the dear chair was magic when mother was in it!

"Jobie's your nick-name, dear; Your 'Pet' name from daddy and me."

"I hate it Mother! And Jobadiah! Ugh!"

Mother's face was wreathed in laughter "Jobadiah! What a funny name! whoever heard of Jobadiah?"

"Sam and Tim call me that," Jobie defended, his face a mass of frowns.

"Well, that's not your name. They're teasing you, Jobie. Now look at me. Remember what I told you awhile ago about your face? How would you like to see daddy and Mary and me going around looking like this?" and mother frowned Ugly, hard-looking lines and creases suddenly appeared in mother's ordinarily-sweet face. It didn't look like mother. No sir! Not at all like mother!

"Don't, Mother!" Jobie said. "You don't look like Mother unless you smile"

"All right, Jobie, I'll smile again. But remember, dear, your face belongs to all of us, too. You don't see how ugly and hateful you look when you frown and cry; but daddy and Mary... and Sam and Tim . . and I see it. So does Jesus, Jobie."

"Oh, Mother, if Jesus sees me He knows how I feel inside of me, too. It's a wicked feeling . . a want-to-get-even-feeling I'm sure He's displeased with the frown and anger lines in my heart; for I feel it inside of me before it shows in my face."

"And that's why it's important that Jonathan David . . . Jobie, to us, get sanctified Jesus saved you on Sunday, Jobie, but you need that nature taken out of your heart that wants to 'get-even' with Sam and Tim. Only as the sweet Holy Spirit cleanses and purifies your nature, your heart, from the 'carnal mind' will you ever have complete victory over this. Then if you walk in the Light as He is in the light, you will be able to live a completely victorious life"

"An... and can I smile at Sam and Tim instead of frowning when they call me Jobadiah?"

"You'll be able to smile then, Jobie; and pray for them, too. I know, dear little boy."

Jobie's arms . . . stole lovingly around Mother's neck. "I want Jesus to sanctify my heart, mother," he said, sliding off her lap to kneel at her knee.

As Jobie and mother prayed, the big tears had another time of somersaulting down Jobie's cheeks.

"Take this feeling out of my heart, dear Jesus," he prayed. "Give me a clean and pure heart; a heart that will love Sam and Tim even when they call me Jobadiah and ....."

Jobie began laughing for joy. "He's come, mother. The Comforter has come and cleansed my heart. I'm clean inside and I'm filled with a wonderful love for Sam and Tim. I'm going down to the stream to tell them all about it," and away he ran, down the hill as fast as his legs would carry him.

"I love you, Sam! I love you, Tim!" he shouted happily. "Jesus just sanctified me. You may call me Jobadiah all you want to now. I won't mind. I don't get at all bothered anymore ....."

Sam and Tim were dumbfounded; simply dumbfounded. Whatever would they do for pastime now?

Mother, watching from the kitchen doorway, said a hearty "Praise the Lord," then hurried back to her many duties.

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No Children's Page for July 1970

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August, 1970

Story 7

THE BUSY BEES

Randy looked at Grandfather with a deep love and admiration. He was a sure enough lucky boy. Yes, sir! A lucky, lucky boy. How many other boys had a grandfather who was a bee-keeper? None, so far as Randy knew.

He tucked his hand tightly in Grandfather's big, strong hand and tried to smile exactly like Grandfather smiled, as they hurried to the orchard where the long rows of bee hives stood.

"As I was saying at breakfast, Randy," grandfather began, chewing leisurely on a long timothy straw he picked up on the way, "God has a work for each of us to do, just like the bees. It's amazing what miracles take place as each of us does his assigned task and fills his God-ordained place in life."

"You mean like Joshua and his men going around Jericho? And Gideon and his three-hundred obedient soldiers?" Randy asked, nearly running to keep pace with Grandfather.

"That's right," Grandfather answered. "Let's sit here on the grass and watch the bees shall we?"

"I'd love that!" Randy exclaimed, seating himself by Grandfather.

"They're busy little creatures, aren't they?" he said.

There was continual motion around the hives. The bees were constantly on the move, either entering or leaving the hives.

"Tell me about the bees, Grandfather," Randy said. "I wish I could see what's inside."

Grandfather laughed softly. He drew his knees up near his chin, at the same time drawing Randy's hand into his strong one.

"Bees are interesting little creatures. They act almost like people. They work very, very hard and have a busy schedule.

"Early in the morning they leave the hive to collect nectar."

Do they go far?" Randy asked his eyes big and round with wonder.

"They often go many miles, flying from blossom to blossom. They never waste time. Just as soon as they've collected all the nectar they can carry, they fly high enough to get above the trees and bushes and make a 'beeline' for home."

"Is that what making a 'beeline' means?" Randy was laughing now.

"That's it, son!" Grandfather exclaimed, laughing with him. "Those busy little bees don't linger a single minute anywhere, after they've gathered that nectar. They hurry home to the hive."

"When they get to their respective hives, they see the guard bees outside. These guard bees make sure that no strange bee enters their hive."

"Oh, Grandpa, do they have a password?" Randy was greatly excited now.

"Bees can't talk; but they do have some method of communication. The guard bees know their own and admit them quickly into the hive. There are as many as fifty-thousand bees living in one hive. Randy. Yet if one strange bee from another hive tries to enter, the guards know this and attack the stranger-intruder."

Randy's body was tense with excitement. He wished he could see one of the intruders try to take up residence where he didn't belong. As the bees entered and exited, Randy thought of a Scripture he had learned in Sunday School; "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Genesis 131. He could easily see how each bee filled his particular place. God had made it this way!

"If you could see inside the hive, grandfather was saying, "you'd see the waxmaker bees. They make this wax from a substance that comes from their bodies. While the waxmakers are busy, the engineer bees work industriously at making the little honey-comb Cells from the wax. Next, the filler bee takes the nectar from the bees "who gather this, and puts it in a cell. Along comes a carpenter bee and puts a lid on the cell so the honey won't spill. While all this work is going on many, many other bees stand around and flap their wings."

"Why, Grandpa? Are they excited?"

"They're not excited, Randy Not in the least. These are the air-conditioning bees."

"Are you teasing?"

"Not at all, dear boy. Each bee has his respective job to do. These bees use their wings to keep the air circulating so the hive stays fresh and cool and the wax doesn't melt. You know how wonderful a fan can feel on a hot day when the house feels sticky and humid, don't you?"

"I guess I do!" Randy exclaimed, remembering how hot his bedroom was part of the summer.

"These bees use their wings for a fan."

"Don't they get tired?"

"I'm sure they do. But one gets a great deal of satisfaction out of doing a job well, even though that job may be tiring."

"This is wonderful!" Randy said, clapping his hands together joyfully,

"Let me tell you more!" Grandfather's eyes twinkled merrily. "In another section of the hive is the queen bee. She's busy laying thousands of eggs. When the eggs hatch, there are nurse bees who bring the tiny new babies a special diet of 'bee bread' to eat. These little babies grow and thrive on their diet.

"In the same hive are a few large bees. They're not doing a single thing. They just stand around and watch the other bees at work. Soon the worker bees get tired of these lazy 'drones.' So they throw them out of the hive and sting them to death."

Randy's mouth opened wide. Did bees know Scripture? he wondered. "Why, that's like a verse you read for family worship some time ago, Grandpa!" he exclaimed, in utter astonishment.

"Something about a man not eating if he was too lazy to work."

"You're right, Randy. That's found in II Thess. 3:10. Paul the apostle wrote, 'This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.' God certainly has no place for laziness. Even bees won't tolerate this in their hives."

"Where do the bees go in the winter? We never see them. What happens to them?" Randy was full of questions.

Grandpa laughed softly. He reached over and put a strong arm around Randy. "God took care of even this, dear boy. You see, the bees make their own furnace."

"Do they build a little fire, Grandpa? Do they?"

"Nothing like that, Randy. They just hug each other up real tight and get into one great big ball. Then they work their little muscles so hard that their bodies heat the inside of the hive. They wouldn't dare get angry and let go of each other. They'd freeze if they did. They must all stick closely together and keep working their muscles if they want to live. It looks like we might all take some lessons from the busy little bees. doesn't it?" Grandpa said, patting the boy's blonde hair.

"It sure does!" Randy exclaimed, getting suddenly to his feet. "I'm going to begin practicing right now. My room needs tidied up and I forgot to water Grandma's petunia's like she told me to do. I'll be back just as soon as I've done my work. I'm going to be a 'worker bee.' " And away he ran toward the house.

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September, 1970

Story 8

BUDDY'S BATTLE

"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven," Buddy counted aloud, pointing his index finger at each tomato plant. "They're all living, Daddy!" he exclaimed, jumping up and down for joy. "And

the watermelon seeds are up! Look!" He pointed to the pale-green plants that were just beginning to show where the soil was cracked.

"The Lord is mighty, son," Father said, as he looked at the plants. "Only God can make trees, plants and grass. It's up to you now to see that weeds don't choke the tender plants out. If you expect your little garden to produce you'll have to keep working at the job of weeding."

"Don't worry, Daddy, I want that tent too badly to neglect this garden."

All summer Buddy worked, hoed, weeded, and kept the little garden clean. The Lord sent the rain and the sun as needed and the tomato plants grew tall and stout and soon hung heavy with green tomatoes. The watermelons ran dark-green vines along the brown earth and sported plump, solid melons.

Buddy was so happy he could scarcely conceal his feelings. For the umpteenth time he took the big catalog from the shelf and turned to the page on which the little tent was. "You're as good as mine;" he exclaimed aloud.

"Better not be too sure," Mother teased. "You'll have to sell your produce first." Buddy smiled. Mother was right, of course, he knew, but he could sell the tomatoes and the watermelons! He had to have that tent for the camp-meeting next summer.

The days became dreadfully hot and sticky. Even the nights were humid and stuffy and Buddy all, most wished for some of the snow 'they had the past winter. I "I sure wish we'd get some snow, Mother," he said, one hot, sultry day. "I can hardly stand this heat."

"Look out at the corn," Mother said softly. "See how tall and stout and green it is? God made these hot days and nights so the corn would grow tall and stout and produce big ears on the stalk. He made it hot so your melons and tomatoes would ripen, too. He's a wonderful Heavenly Father Who knows just what we need down here to make crops for us to harvest. Right now, snow would hurt the crops."

"Oh!" Buddy exclaimed.

Some few days later a little stand stood near the mail box in front of Buddy's house. "BUDDY'S FRUIT STAND," it read. He beamed with inner satisfaction at the black and white lettered sign as he arranged the solid redripe tomatoes in long rows on the stand.

All day long cars stopped in front of the stand and bought the nice tomatoes and watermelons from Buddy. OH! He was so glad he had cared for the plants like he did. It was paying off now. For many days Buddy displayed and sold his produce.

Quite suddenly summer seemed to be fading. The nights were now nippy with cold and his breath came out in smoky vapors. Buddy's tomato plants and watermelon vines looked funny and black. The little fruit stand was moved into a corner of the shed for the winter. Buddy sat on the

living room floor to count his money. Father and mother smiled at each other as they watched their boy.

"Do you have enough?" Father asked, looking at the coins spread out upon the carpet.

"I'll have two dollars and thirty cents over!" Buddy exclaimed, beaming with pride.

"What about your tithe, son? Did you take it out each day as you made the sales?"

"I thought I'd pay God back next summer, Dad. He knows I want the tent for camp meeting."

"You... you... Buddy!" For a long while father didn't know what to say, so shocked was he.

"I . . . I can hardly believe what I just heard you say! You mean you'd rob God of the tithe?"

"Oh, no I'd pay Him back next summer. I promise I will."

"The Book of Malachi says, 'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me . . . in tithes and offerings.' You should have taken the tithe out of each day's earnings and put it in a tithe envelope and dropped it in the offering plates at church each Sunday, Buddy. God must have the first of all things, son., always."

Buddy's countenance fell. He wanted that tent worse than he had ever wanted anything in his life. But daddy was right. Why, he wouldn't think of robbing God literally or deliberately. Yet, in a very real way he would be robbing God if he put the tithe that belonged to God and His cause on the tent. For a long moment the battle raged.

"Obedience brings blessing," Father said simply.

"And I want God's smile and His blessing more than any tent, Father," Buddy said, brightening up. "I thought that God would understand if I told Him I'd pay it back later; but I just remembered some of the Bible verses we've been reading in family devotions about bringing the First fruits to God. The tent can wait. My tithe can't! I'll pay my tithe and another one on top., just because I even entertained the thought of having God wait till after next summer's crop was in to pay Him."

"That's right!" Father said, slapping Buddy on his shoulders. "Only, the second part won't exactly be another tithe; that will be an offering unto the Lord. This is the right way to win the battle and to be an overcomer. You're growing, Son, big and tall on the inside. I know Someone Who's smiling down upon you."

Buddy smiled as he counted out the tithe and offering. It was so good to do the right thing and to obey God's Word. He felt like shouting for joy.

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October, 1970

Story 9

## BAD COMPANY

"Dad, come quick! The crows are back in the cornfield again. A big flock of them!" Jackie was breathless with excitement.

"Oh, no! Not again!" Mr. Smith jumped off the tractor and hurried to the house.

"I've never seen so many before!" Jackie said.

"I'll take care of them. At least some of them," his father answered, getting the shotgun down from the gun-rack in his office and heading for the field.

Jackie, casting a lingering look at his father's neatly kept farm office and the gun rack, stacked with seven shiny, new looking guns, trudged quickly along-side his dad.

"We'll have to be quiet," Mr. Smith warned. "Those crows are smart. Wary, too. Just one glimpse of us and they'll be gone."

"I... I know," Jackie answered. He had been with his father before. He knew how shrewd and wary the shiny blue-black crows could be and he didn't want a single one to get away. They were destructive to his father's corn.

An indigo bunting flitted over their heads and settled in a dignified way at the very top of a wild plum tree and, raising his handsome deep-blue head toward God and heaven, he trilled one of the happiest, brightest, most joyful songs of thankfulness that Jackie had ever heard. At the same time, several wild canaries dipped and rose into the air above them, giving forth a happy twittering song.

Oh, it was wonderful to live on the farm. And especially was it wonderful to go with father to the cornfield after the naughty crows. Not only did they destroy corn, they destroyed the nests of the pretty happy songbirds, Jackie knew, too. This was bad.

"Sh-h!" Mr. Smith cautioned, putting his finger over his lips. "We'll have to move in slowly and cautiously now. You know how, Jackie."

Jackie nodded. He didn't have to speak. That was the nice thing about his father and himself, he thought. They understood each other. Oh, it was such a good feeling . . . a good, solid, down-to-earth feeling, this that he and his dad shared.

Mr. Smith stole silently down the long corn rows. The crows were having a feast on the long ears of still milky corn.

A loud shot rang out as Jackie's dad discharged the gun. The living crows, frightened greatly by the blast of the gun, rose clumsily upward, then soared into the heavens and scattered quickly in all directions. Only the dead remained . . . grim reminders of bad deeds.

Jackie rushed down the corn rows to take in the situation. Suddenly, from low on the ground, there was a loud flutter of wings. Jackie hurried to the bird.

"It... it's Polly!" he exclaimed in utter disbelief and astonishment. "Dad, you shot Polly!" He picked the wounded bird up and pressed her to his bosom gently.

"Um-m. That's too bad!" Mr. Smith said, stroking his chin with his free hand. "Too bad," he said again. "Ah, Polly," he added sadly, petting the wounded bird, "this is the result of keeping bad company."

"But father, how did she get down here?"

"Your mother..., or one of your sisters . . . must have let her out of the cage for exercise," Mr. Smith explained, "and when one of us opened the door she followed."

"Maybe . . . she followed us!" Jackie said sadly. "Or... or maybe... she flew ahead of us!"

"She always has been foolish about following any one of us anywhere," Jackie's father said.

All the way home, Jackie stroked Polly gently and comfortingly. "Poor, poor Polly!" he crooned. "Poor, hurt Polly!"

"Poor, poor Polly!" the wounded bird squawked in a low, painful way.

When Jackie stepped on the porch, Melissa met him. Tears were shining in her big blue eyes.

"Polly's gone, Jackie! Polly's gone!" she wailed, weeping as though her heart would break any minute.

Seeing the crippled pet nestled in Jackie's arms, she rushed forward. "What happened, Jackie? Oh, what happened to our Polly?"

Raising her head and opening her eyes to face Melissa, Polly exclaimed loudly, "Bad company! Bad company!"

"Bad company I Why, Polly Parrot! How dare you say that! You're living in a Christian home with fine Christian people living in it!"

"Bad company! Bad company!" Polly insisted, almost shouting it. Then, just as quickly, she tucked her aching head back under Jackie's arm as if ashamed of herself.

"What happened, Jackie? Please, tell me," Melissa begged.

"BAD com-pan-y!" Polly exclaimed in another loud squawk of affirmation, acting half-peevish that Melissa wouldn't believe her.

"She's right," father asserted. "She flew in among the crows and we didn't know she was there. When I shot the crows Polly got wounded. Fortunately, it doesn't seem to be anything serious."

"Oh, Polly. You poor, dear bird. Why did you do it?"

"Poor, poor Polly!" the bird squawked softly but pitifully as she drew her head out from the security of Jackie's arm. "Poor, bad Polly I Bad company!"

"It's a sure enough good lesson for me," Jackie said, handing Polly over to Melissa who headed for the kitchen and mother.

" 'Evil communications corrupt good manners,' " Mr. Smith quoted to his son.

"And evil companions can get you into trouble," Jackie added, soberly. "By God's grace, I shall always choose Christian friends, Dad."

Crossing the porch, he entered the kitchen, eager to see what he could do to help ease Polly's misery and pain.

"Bad company!" Polly squawked loudly, thankful to be back in the safety and security of the house she knew so well. "Bad company!" Then, remembering a little verse Susanne had quoted once long ago, she added, "Touch not, Taste not! Handle not! Bad company!"

They all laughed. But it did make sense..., good sense!

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November, 1970

Story 10

THE THANKSGIVING TALENT

Jill was singing as she skated down the slippery sidewalk toward home. She was just going through the gate when Millie minced by.

Everybody in the neighborhood knew Millie. She lived in the big house with the towering stout pillars at the very edge of Pinecrest. Millie's folks were rich and Millie had the very, very best of everything that money could buy.

Millie cast a look of scorn at Jill. "I don't see what you have to be happy for!" she exclaimed sarcastically. Her head was held high in pride.

"Look at the shoddy little house you live in!" she went on. "And you have to skate in your boots! I have real skates!" she boasted. "You don't even have sensible mittens. I have a pretty fur muff." She raised her muff high, as though Jill hadn't seen it.

"But I am so happy!" Jill exclaimed sweetly, smiling warmly into the little rich girl's face, who had few if any, little girl friends of her own. "I have „Jesus in my heart," Jill said softly. "He makes me full of happiness on the inside This is why I sing."

"Happiness! Huh! You should live in our house, then you'd have something to be happy over!" Millie exclaimed. "My mother mustn't take in ironings and I never wear second-hand clothes like you, and...."

"Come inside with me, Millie.

Will you?" Jill asked, her childish eyes misty.

Millie didn't know what to say. She didn't know how to answer Jill. She shifted her weight uneasily from one foot to the other. Seldom was she invited into anyone's home, except when she went with her father and mother to the homes of their very rich friends Even then she wasn't really happy. Everyone compared his things with what the other had.

What should she do? Should she accept Jill's kind, sincere offer and go inside? No doubt about it, Jill was always pleasant and happy! Many times, Millie wished she were allowed to go to the Christian Day School in the village like Jill, instead of the snobbish boarding school she had to attend.

"Please come inside with me, Millie dear," Jill invited again. 'Well, I . . er ....., ' Millie stuttered. She couldn't tell Jill that her mother would worry if she wasn't home on time, for her mother was seldom ever home to greet her when she returned from school. Her mother was always too busy with socials, teas, and charitable organizations to be home so early in the afternoon. Only Martie the maid, and the kitchen, servants would be there, and they didn't care what time Millie came home.

"Thanks, Jill," Millie said, suddenly making up her mind. "I'll go inside with you; though I must admit that I'm not used to such little houses as yours."

"But you'll love our house, Millie! It's clean and sunshiny all over and it's big and wonderful with love." And Jill led the way to the door.

"See who's come with me. Mother dear!" Jill exclaimed, ushering Millie into the humble kitchen that sparkled and gleamed with cleanliness and sunshine.

"Welcome to our house, Millie!" Mrs. Warmheart exclaimed. "We are so happy to have you here," whereupon she hugged each little girl tightly to her mother breast. "Get out of your coats and hang them in the closet," she ordered, just like Millie always belonged there. "I have cookies just begging to be cut and baked. How would you like to help?" she teased.

Millie's mouth opened wide in utter astonishment and disbelief. Always, in the big kitchen at the edge of the village, Millie was ushered out of the kitchen. 'Your mother hired me to cook. Get out!' the cook would scold.

"You... you mean I may help? Honestly, Mrs. Warmheart? Me?" Millie just had to know.

"Yes, you!" Mrs. Warmheart exclaimed, hugging the little girl soundly again. "But run along and get those coats hung up; then wash your hands and face good!" she laughed as she shooed the girls out of the kitchen.

Millie liked this! In fact, she felt more at home here than in the big house. There was a wonderful feeling in this little house. She wished she knew what it was so she could take some of it home to her house.

She watched, fascinated, as Jill hung the coats carefully in the closet off the hallway, and just as carefully, she put those old worn mittens on the top shelf! Always, Millie threw her coat and hat and muff just anywhere she pleased. Martie was being paid to keep things in order. Watching Jill, Millie felt funny on the inside. She had been missing something, she felt.

"Cookie making time!" Mrs. Warmheart called from the kitchen.

The girls dashed into the bathroom, where they scrubbed their hands and face till they shone, then they scampered merrily down the hallway to the kitchen where Jill's mother tied pretty aprons around their waist. Millie felt terribly important. Never before had she worn an apron nor helped in the kitchen. Baking cookies! It hardly seemed possible that it was real.

Millie forgot all about the little bungalow in which Jill and her mother lived. She had never had such a wonderful time . . . not in all of her life. She forgot, too, that Jill's dress sported patches in several places. This house was indeed different from any other that Millie had ever been inside of. Love ruled here! Love was king and Thanksgiving was one of his subjects!

Millie listened in wide-eyed wonder as Mrs. Warmheart praised the Lord for sending her the flour to make the cookies. "The Lord knows what we need and when we need it the most!" Jill's mother was saying. "Why, only today, He sent me another customer who has a big ironing for me to do Praise His dear name!"

"But why doesn't He send you the money instead?" Millie blurted out. "And why did He allow Jill's father to be killed in daddy's big manufacturing plant if He's such a good God?" Millie was trembling now.

Mrs. Warmheart smiled warmly into the girl's questioning eyes. "I shall answer your first question, Millie dear. You see, God does send me money sometimes; but He gave me two good hands and arms with which to work, too. So... He sends me work to do so I can earn money for Jill and me. Work is good for everybody, Millie. It gives you a feeling of great satisfaction to do a thing well and then survey that work."

Mrs. Warmheart paused and Jill spoke now.

Millie, since God took father Home, Mother and I have felt the Lord's presence surround us more than ever. Father is waiting for us in Heaven. It's wonderful to know you are a Christian and that your Heavenly Father is caring tenderly for you!"

"Yes, and He has given Jill and me this warm little house in which to live and serve Him; and we have enough food to eat and good warm clothing to wear. Oh, Millie, He is so good to Jill and me!"

"You see now why I'm so happy all the time, Millie," Jill said sweetly. "I am rich.., on the inside of me!"

Tears ran down Millie's cheeks as she started to leave the little house. Suddenly, she wished she could stay.., forever and ever... with Jill and Mrs. Warmheart. Their house was different . . . in a wonderful, wonderful way.

"I . . . Jill . . ." she stuttered. "I'm sorry that I said all those nasty things to you. Please forgive me. I,..I...may I come back again? This has been the most wonderful day of all my life!

Thank you, Mrs. Warmheart and Jill."

"It was so pleasant having you here," Jill's mother said. "And of course you must come back.. anytime you wish."

"Maybe... the next time I come, you and Jill can show me how to be kind and happy and thankful. You have "Thanksgiving hearts."

"Jesus made us this way!" Jill exclaimed, waving to her little friend.

"I'm going to find Him, then!" Millie declared earnestly, as she started homeward in the evening dusk.

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December, 1970

Story 11

THE SURPRISE QUILT

Patty dashed down the sidewalk in a mad rush. Taking the steps two at a time, she was soon inside the living room.

Grandma's silver-white hair glistened and shone in the late evening sunshine that filtered through the west window. Her dexterous fingers worked busily away on a quilt in a frame before her.

"Oh, Grandma, what a beautiful, beautiful quilt!"

"It is lovely, isn't it, Patty? And it's a very special quilt, too."

"Special? How, Grandma?" Patty's eyes were big and round with wonder and awe.

"This quilt goes to some of our missionaries. What we give to Jesus must be only our very best."

"Oh!" Patty's voice fell. What could a little girl do to help in making such a very, very special quilt? she wondered.

Grandmother must have known how badly Patty wanted to help.

"I could really use some help from you, Patty," she ventured, with a merry twinkle lighting up her blue eyes.

"Me, Grandma? Do you mean I could help?" Patty jumped up and down with glee.

"Today... and every day hereafter . . . will be a special day for you. You have always been good and kind, but I shall observe you more carefully than ever until this quilt is finished. I shall let it be to you to decide how to help me."

"Oh!" was all Patty could explain. What could a little girl do to help her grandmother make a very special quilt? she wondered. She walked to the porch to think. A gentle "tap, tap" on the sidewalk made Patty forget all about the beautiful quilt.

"Here, Mrs. Brown," she said, hurrying to the feeble old woman and lifting the heavy sack out of the poor woman's arms, "I'll carry those groceries for you. You take a good grip on that cane of yours and steady yourself by resting your other hand on my shoulder."

"Oh, but you are so good, my dear little Patty! So good!" the old woman exclaimed, brushing the tears quickly away. "The Lord will bless you for this."

"I'm repaid already, Mrs. Brown. I love doing nice things for others," Patty said softly. "It makes me feel good and happy deep down inside of me."

She helped Mrs. Brown safely inside her small cottage then hurried outside in time to see Billy Ross leaning hard against a big tree and crying like his heart was broken.

"What's the matter, Billy? Do tell me," Patty urged, taking her own soft handkerchief and wiping the tears from the little boy's eyes.

"I . . . I..." was all Billy could say.

"You'll have to stop crying so I can understand you, Billy," Patty said softly. "Now tell me just what happened."

"It's...Buzzy. He...he ran away an . . . and I can't find him. I love him, Patty. He has two bright eyes, a black tail and one spotted ear and he's not much bigger than a little toy dog ....."

"I'll find him for you," Patty promised. "Stay right here by this tree. I'll bring Buzzy back to you in short order."

Billy, satisfied with Party's promise, sat down on the ground and waited.

In a very little while Patty was back, with the furry little Buzzy snuggled up tight to her heart.

"Here's your dear little Buzzy," she laughed. "Hold him close to you and don't let him get away again. He's a right cute little fellow and makes friends with everyone he meets."

Billy's broad smile was all the pay Party's heart needed. Filled with happiness and joy, she started down the street when she saw old Ben Harper stumble and fall. Ben was out on his daily walk.

She rushed up to the aged man and called his name. He made no answer.

Acting quickly, she ran to the nearest neighbor and had them call an ambulance which soon had old Mr. Harper safe inside the walls of the big hospital.

Patty hurried back to grandmother. She sat down in the very first chair she saw.

"I'm tired," she exclaimed, "but happy, Grandmother. And I forgot to think what I could do to help you with the quilt, too!" Her damp curls fell in ringlets round about her face.

Grandmother looked with pride on the girl before her. "You don't need to think of anything more to do to help me with the quilt, Patty. You've done your share of good deeds and kindnesses. And to think that the blessed Jesus saw each and every act of mercy and deed of kindness you did! He has a record, too!"

Patty smiled. "But I like to do nice things, Grandmother. It helps my day to be bright and sunny . . . even when it rains outside, and it makes me feel real, real good way down deep inside of me."

"Right you are, honey. Here, take this leaf pattern and trace three big leaves from that piece of gold cloth lying on the table. Then cut the leaves out very, very carefully. I chose gold purposely for you. It represents the golden deeds of kindness and acts of mercy you have bestowed upon others. Your leaves shall be extra-special for I shall embroider your name on the stem of each leaf."

Very carefully the little girl traced and cut the leaves. Beaming radiantly, she took them to Grandmother.

"You shall put the very first stitches in them," Grandma said patting the still-damp curls.

Working neat stitches into her leaves under Grandmother's careful supervision, Patty looked full into the aged woman's face.

"Oh, Grandma, I'm going to always live for Jesus and do my very best for Him and store up golden deeds of goodness, kindness and love in Heaven."

"And your name will be written down in God's great book, in gold, methinks," Grandma said, her eyes misty-bright with tears.

Patty knew this would be the nicest Christmas Missionary quilt ever.

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THE END