

The Orphans' Friend.

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We want every father and mother to read the following simple story, and remember, while reading it, that the Orphan Asylum was organized to insure a happier fate to the friendless orphans than that which befell "Little Dud," and will accomplish its object provided they will lend a helping hand to the work:

ONLY A LITTLE DUD.

She was such a wee thing that, as she stood on the wooden stool before the table, the little bare, cold, blue arms rested heavily on the edge of the pan where she was washing dishes; and, oh! so slowly the little, blue hands lifted the heavy plates and washed them one by one.

I think she thought it a part of "Little Dud" to wash dishes, just as it is a part of the sun to shine, or the clouds to rain; for didn't she stand hour after hour on her stool, and make them all clean, ready to be done "over and over again?"

Sometimes she forgot, and the eyes stole out of the window, not down the narrow street where the snow whirled and swished around the corners, snatching the breath of the pinched, hungry mortals who, hurrying past with chattering teeth, cursed the cold and storm; ah! no, not there did she look, but up, up, up above the housetops, where the little patch of blue sky used to be. To-day she could not see the spot of blue, but she knew it was somewhere; and that made her think of something else—she couldn't remember much—it was so long, long ago—"twenty or a hundred" years. It was a room that was warm, and there never seemed any dishes to wash. A little vine went up like Jack the Giant-Killer's—away up the window. The fire made a fairy-dance of flames for her. And then somebody used to sew and sew, until it grew quite dark, and then she would take this same little Dud in her arms, and hold her close, and tell her wonderful stories until she fell asleep. There was one she liked best of all—about a Baby with the horses and sheep in the barn; and the shepherds came to see it; and there was a star, and a flock of angels that sang a beautiful song; and the Baby grew up to be a great big man, and he had no home, and he made the sick folks well, and some folks loved him, and some—

One day that somebody could not hold her little girl, and she did not sew, but lay upon the bed a long time. One day she called her little girl to her, and told her she was going away to the beautiful city, where the good Man had gone before to make her home ready for her, and now he was calling her, and she must go and leave her little, brave girl for a time, but she, too, could come some time. Then the face grew white and still.

The child's hands were quite idle now in the water among the dishes, and the tiny lips trembled as they whispered:

"I wish the Christ-man would come now—right now!"

She stopped suddenly, as a rasping voice said:

"Here, ye little Dud, what be

ye gazin' an' idlin' wid the dishes for? Be gettin' me this pail of water now, and be spry."

The child glanced down at her bare feet, and faltered:

"O—h! it's so cold!"

"Don't be fine, miss. If it warn't for me a takin' of ye, ye wud' a been froze stiff in the strate long ago."

As she spoke, she shuffled from her feet two big shoes, and pushed them toward the child. She stepped into them, lifted the great wooden pail, and went clattering down the stairs.

She grasped the key pump-handle, and worked with all her might, till a ragged boy came trotting up, crying out:

"Halloo, you thar! Where'd ye get them gumboats?" looking down at her shoes.

Here he kicked the edge of the pail, and the water went splash, splash, all over the shoes and the feet in them. She gasped and shuddered with the cold. Just then another boy came, who said a few kind, rough words, and set her safely on her way. The steps seemed miles and miles away, but by-and-by she reached them. One by one she climbed them, making a splash of water every time. It froze as it fell. She grew so stiff—one shoe dropped off—she turned to look after it her foot slipped, and she went bump, bump, bump, down the stairs.

A door opened above, and a frowzy head was thrust out, then a woman with a scared face came pattering down and lifted the motionless form in her arms, and groaned bewailed,

"O the baby! and it's kilt! Lad, run quick for the docther. Tell 'ims he fell the len'th 'o the stair," to the boy who helped little Dud with her burden, and stood looking on.

She tenderly carried the tiny form to her room, and laid it on the homely bed. The hard lines in the woman's face were softened, the warm Irish heart was deeply moved.

"Had she a heart?"

Oh! yes—under the poverty and ignorance and unloveliness, so far down it seldom came to light. Delicate means could not find it. A tragedy could.

Jack came breathless up the stairs, followed by a thoughtful-faced man, who stepped to the bed where the woman, moaning and weeping back and forth, chafed the little, cold hands.

He examined the bruises in a silent way. He wrapped her in a blanket, and forced a draught between her teeth. Soon her eyes wearily opened. He held her pulse, and, looking quickly up, asked:

"Is she your child?"

"Arrah, no; her ma was a leddy born, but she come poor as the rist 'o us—she kept a bright bit 'o a room till she died. God save her soul! She had only the one chick, and I had me own four childher to mind after; then I took this one—ease a spare pe-tate is better nor none for it. I have daa what I eud, doether."

The eyes in the blanket were wide open, looking up in the docther's face, and a faint voice chirped:

"Is you the Christ-man come to take me? Mamula said yeh would come. I know where your house is—see!" And the little finger pointed out the window, away up where the spot of blue lay between the white clouds.

"The gate was all shut up just now; you left it open when you came through, didn't you?" She lay upon his breast, and he held her closer.

"Will you take me up? I se noffin' but a little Dud, but I want to see my mamma. I wait to—." And the eyes grew heavy, and the voice stopped, and the breath went out.

The tears rolled down the strong man's face. The awestruck woman sat motionless, and the boy lay sobbing on the floor.

Something had gone out of the house forever.

Out of the cold, out of the soil, out of the harsh words, out of the unlovely, into the beautiful mansions.—*The Christian Weekly.*

Grandma's Story.

"Just one more story grandma; about when you were a little girl and lived in the woods," said Frank.

And grandma drew off her spectacles and shut her book. She leaned her head back against the large easy-chair, and shut her eyes, thinking.

I remember as if it were only yesterday, she said, raising her head and looking at the children who had gathered around her. I was only seven, and my little baby brother wasn't a year old. 'I'm going to the spring-house,' said mother, 'and you must stay in the room and rock baby, if he wakes.' So I took my knitting, for I had learned to knit, and was very proud of the stocking that was growing under my hand.

It was a cool day, late in the fall, and the doors were all shut. Baby slept and I knitted for half an hour. Then he awoke and began to cry. As I got down from mother's great easy-chair, where I had been knitting, I thought I heard a strange noise outside. It wasn't Lion, for he had gone off with father to the mill. Something rubbed against the door and made the latch rattle. I felt afraid, and went to the door and fastened the bolt. I stood still, listening, with baby in my arms—he had stopped crying—and I could hear my heart beat, thump, thump, thump!

All at once there came a short cruel kind of bark, and then a snap. A moment after the window broke with a loud crash, and I saw the long head, open jaws and fiery eyes of a wolf glaring in upon me. An angel sent by our good Father in heaven must have told me in an instant of terror what to do. The wolf was climbing in through the small window, and to have lingered but a second or two would have been death. Moved as if by a power not my own, and without thinking what best to do, I ran, with baby held tightly in my arms, to the stairs that went up into the loft. With a savage growl he sprang after me. As he did so I let the door which shut like a cellar door, fall over the stair-way, and it struck him on the nose and

knocked him back. A chest stood near, and something told me to pull this over the door. So I laid baby down, and dragged at the chest with all my strength. Just as I got the corner over the door, the wolf's head struck it and knocked it up a little. But before he could strike it again I had the chest clear across. This would not have kept him back if I had not dragged another chest over the door, and piled over so many things on top of these. How strangely he did growl and snarl! But I was safe.

And now I grew frightened about mother. If she should come back from the spring-house, he would tear her to pieces. There was only one window or opening in the loft, and that did not look toward the spring-house; and so there was no way in which I could give her warning, or let her know, if she had seen the wolf, that we were safe.

For a long time the wolf tried to get at us, but at last I could hear him going down the stairs. He moved about the room below, knocking things about for ever so long, and then I heard him spring up to the window. At the same moment I heard my father's voice shouting not far off. Oh, how my heart did leap with gladness! Then came Lion's heavy bark, which grew excited, and soon I heard him yelping down the road in the wildest way. The wolf was still in the window. I could hear him struggling and breaking pieces of glass. Lion was almost upon him, when my father called him off in a stern command. All was silent now, but the silence was quickly broken by the crack of a rifle, which sent a bullet into the wolf's head, killing him instantly.

"Father! father!" I cried, from the loft window. He told me afterward that my voice came to him as from the dead. He ran around to that side of the house. Mother was with him, looking as white as a sheet. I saw them both clasp their hands together, and lift their eyes in thankfulness to God.

When I tried to pull the chest away, I could not move them an inch. In my great danger God had given me strength to drag them over the loft door, but now that the danger was past my little hands were too weak to remove them. So father had to climb up a ladder to the loft window, and release baby and me from our place of refuge.

Mother did not know anything of our danger until she had finished her work in the spring-house. Just as she came out she saw the wolf's head at the window, and at the same moment father and Lion appeared in sight.

Presence of Mind.

It is a great gift to have full possession of one's wits in a time of danger; to know what to do, and to have nerve and courage to do it. A miner recently showed a cool head and rare bravery.

A short time ago, in the bottom of the new shaft of the Woodville mine, three men had just prepared a three-fuse blast, had lighted the fuse, jumped into the bucket and started for the surface, when,

through the carelessness of the engineer, the engine caught on the centre and refused to move. Here the three men hung, within six feet of the blast, for some little time; but it seemed like hours to them. At last one of the party, Benjamin Kendall by name, realizing that something must be wrong on top, jumped from the bucket, and proceeded to extinguish the slowly-burning fuse.

Two pieces were put out without difficulty, but the third he found it impossible to reach, as it had already burned in the drill hole. Then he turned to climb back to the bucket, but it was too late; his companions were then being hoisted to the surface. Who can imagine the mental agony endured by that man when he saw that he had been left to his fate, and was liable at any moment to be blown into eternity?

With a desperate resolve, he started to climb up the timbers, but he had not gone more than five or six feet on his way when the blast exploded, throwing a shower of rocks and dirt far above his head.

Fortunately, Kendall was but little injured, receiving merely a few slight scratches on his hands. It was a very close call, and one that will long be remembered. The engineer was discharged.

A STRANGE STORY.—A curious incident is reported in the American papers. About ten years ago a Jew in straitened circumstances left Transylvania for America to improve his position in the New World. He left a wife and several children behind, and promised that as soon as it was within his means he would send them some money from America. There fortune smiled on him, and when he had amassed a sum of 60,000 florins he resolved to return home and surprise his family with his wealth. He started without having apprised his family of his intended return, and on his way home he arrived at Hamburg, where he was seized with so dangerous an illness that he made a will bequeathing all his property to his wife. He recovered, however, only to find that during his illness his money had been stolen from him by a man who had nursed him. A few benevolent persons, sympathizing with his misfortunes, collected about one hundred florins, wherewith the unfortunate Jew resolved to return to America in order to retrieve his fortunes. In the meanwhile the nurse had decamped with his booty to America, where, shortly after his arrival he died suddenly. The American authorities sent the coffin, with the 60,000 florins, to Transylvania, and as the will was also found in the coffin, the authorities at the same time acquainted the relatives with the death of the testator. After the usual period of mourning, the wife contracted a second marriage. The first husband had, however, again saved a considerable sum of money and eventually returned to his native country to find his wife married to another man. It is stated that a conference of rabbis is about to be held to determine to which of the two husbands the woman belongs.—*Jewish World.*