

The Book of Real Fairies by Alma Kunz Gulick

The Book of Real Fairies

by Alma Kunz Gulick

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To C.W. Leadbeater
In Appreciation of His Love for Children

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A RAINY DAY

Out of doors it rained and rained. Indoors Evelyn wept and wept. Altogether, it was a damp and dreary time. All the plans had been made for a nice picnic on the hills, when this rain had come and prevented the plans from being carried out.

I wish it would *never* rain! I just despise it!" sobbed Evelyn, as she knelt on the window-seat, staring out of the open window into the drenched gardens.

Kerflop! That was poorly aimed," said a voice so suddenly that Evelyn jumped and looked hastily around the room.

You are looking in the wrong direction," continued the voice, whereat Evelyn turned hastily back again to the window.

Seems to me those big brown eyes aren't of much use to you," went on the little voice contemptuously, "Here I am, as plain as day, on the window ledge."

Sure enough, there *was* something on the window ledge, but it wasn't surprising that the little girl hadn't seen him, for he was the tiniest man she had ever seen, no bigger than a drop of water, and oh, so round and fat!

Where - when - " began Evelyn.

"That's not my name," briskly responded the surprising manikin, "Glitter, at your service, Miss."

"Oh - yes, sir - Mr. Glitter," stammered Evelyn, wondering if she were awake or dreaming.

"Right," chirped Glitter, "I came to find out how anyone could be unhappy on such a beautiful day."

Evelyn stared. "You don't mean today, do you?" she asked.

"Certainly I mean today," returned Glitter, impatiently. "Isn't this a delightful rain?"



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“But I wanted to go to the picnic,” sighed Evelyn, “and now this horrid rain has spoiled everything!”

“ ‘ Horrid rain!’ ‘Spoiled everything!’ “ positively shrieked Glitter. “Now isn’t that just like a human being? If it hadn’t been for this rain there wouldn’t be any picnic grounds before long. They would have been dried up completely very soon. And no bread, for the grain was dying for want of rain. And no milk, for the pastures are nearly deserts. No flowers, either, in that garden of which you are so proud. ‘Horrid rain,’ indeed!”

The little fat man snorted with rage. He was so angry that he spluttered and shook, and Evelyn perceived that he was transparent - that, indeed, he was composed of water - a raindrop, in fact.

“Oh, Mr. Glitter,” she cried, “I do beg your pardon, but really - you know - I didn’t know that raindrops were alive.”

“You didn’t suppose we were dead, did you?” inquired Glitter, still somewhat peevishly inclined.

“N-no.”

“The fact is,” said the raindrop, “you human beings know so many things that aren’t true, and deny the things that are true and very important. Now I am only a raindrop, yet I know a lot more than you do. For instance, where do clouds come from, and who arranges for their coming and falling?”

“I don’t know,” faltered Evelyn.

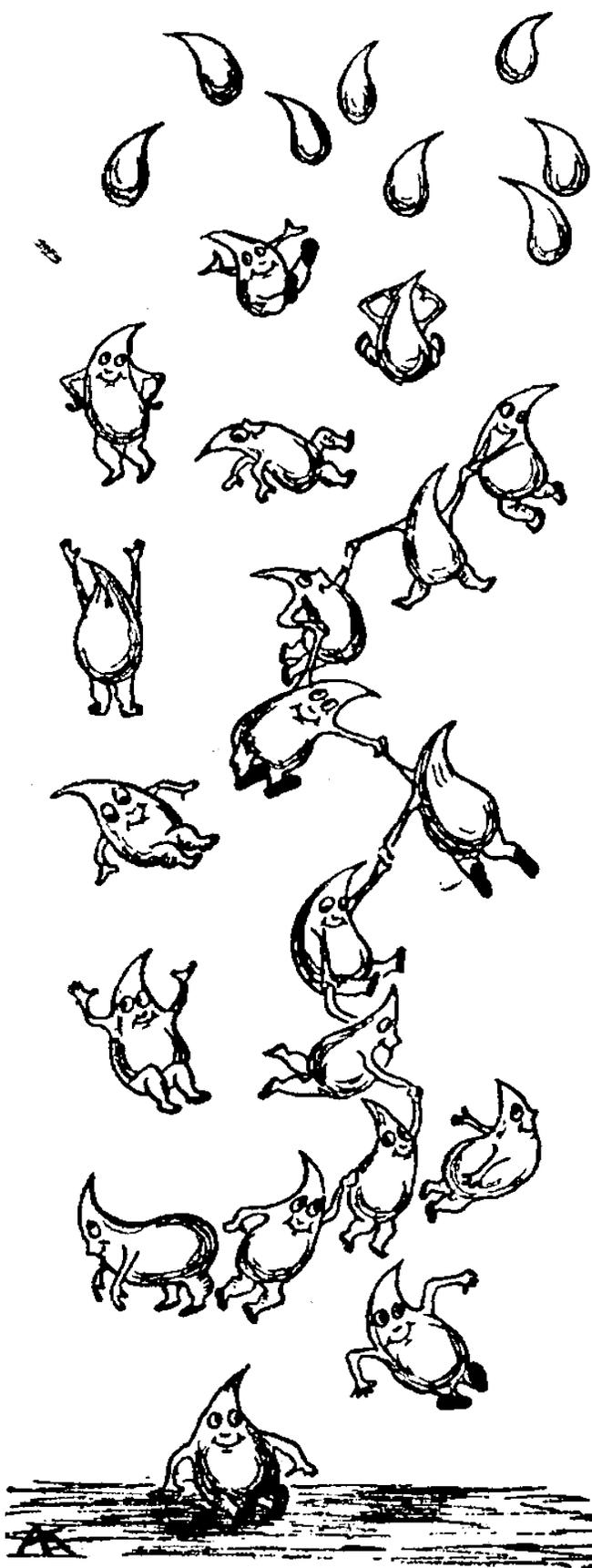
“There!” cried the raindrop triumphantly. “I knew it! And how many kinds of water are there? Can you tell me that?”

“Why, I thought all water was alike,” returned Evelyn.

“Exactly! *exactly!*” ejaculated Glitter, sarcastically. “Isn’t the sea water salty? Isn’t spring water different from rain?”

“So it is!” replied Evelyn, in surprise, “and as you are a raindrop, you must have been a cloud.”

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“Very well, indeed,” exclaimed Glitter, “you are *beginning* to think. I was part of a cloud for the last two days. Millions of my brothers and I were sailing half a mile above your head. Our Captain gathered us from the sea, as moisture, and led us to this spot because rain was so badly needed. It’s great fun to come hurtling down through the air. The plants are very grateful to us . . . They eat us,” he added.

“Mercy!” cried Evelyn, “do you like that?”

“It isn’t always what you *like* that is good for you,” said Glitter, “but in this case it happens that we do like it, my brothers and I, for when the plants absorb us, we become flowers or grain or some such thing. Isn’t that worth dying for?”

“Oh, yes,” cried Evelyn, who began to understand. “Those of us who are not absorbed by the plants filter through the earth and finally come out again as spring water.”

“Isn’t it cold and dark in the earth?” inquired Evelyn.

It is very interesting down there,” replied the raindrop. “If you could see the minerals growing and all the strange creatures that live in the earth, you would forget to notice whether it was dark or light. I’m sure I forget it.”

Evelyn looked very thoughtful.

You see, my dear,” explained Glitter, “no matter where we may be, there is always something to learn and someone to help, if we will only look for the opportunities.”

“I know what you mean, sir,” cried Evelyn, “you mean I should have been much happier if, instead of crying about the weather, I had helped mother, who has a headache today.”

“Perhaps I meant that,” said Glitter, with a little smile.

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“And I am going out now to the kitchen, to wipe the dishes,” she added, jumping down from the window-seat.

“Then I’ll be going,” laughed Glitter, “ but I think I will need some help to get away.”

Leslie watched him signal with his tiny hands to the falling raindrops, and very quickly one of them landed on the ledge beside Glitter.

“What’s up, Glitter?” inquired the newcomer.

“I want to get away,” responded Evelyn’s little friend, “and I can’t run off this ledge.”

Then both the little manikins waved their hands and the next moment a tiny breeze spring up, carrying to the ledge a group of laughing, tumbling raindrops. Thus reinforced and joining hands with their merry brothers, the two drops on the ledge, with a gay “Good-bye” to Evelyn, ran swiftly off over the edge of the window ledge into the garden below.

POPPY

Evelyn was working in her garden as usual. She seemed always to be in the garden, lovingly tending the bright flowers and green plants. A new poppy had opened up this morning and she could hardly leave it, she admired it so much.

“You are so beautiful,” she murmured, as she bent over it to look into its dark centre, “I just love - “

She never finished the sentence, but sat staring into that poppy without moving. And I am sure we should have done the same, had we suddenly found ourselves as she did, gazing into two very bright and very black eyes that belonged to a fairy!

Evelyn sank down on her knees. How long she might have remained looking, I do not know; but the little creature, looking up at her suddenly, burst into a little tinkle that was a fairy laugh.

“It isn’t very polite to stare, is it?” she asked, “ but under the circumstances, I suppose it *is* excusable.”

“But -but I didn’t see you at first,” stammered Evelyn. “Where did you come from so very quickly?”

“Come from?” echoed the fairy, “but I didn’t ‘come’. I’ve been here all the time. I made this flower. I *am* the flower or it is I, whichever way you like. When it was a bud I was hidden in it, weaving, weaving the petals. And when I go away, the flower will wither and die. If I hadn’t made myself visible just when I did, you would surely have poked your little snub nose right away through me and never known the difference.

Evelyn blushed. “I’m sure that would have been dreadful for you,” she cried.

The fairy tinkled again.

“Not at all, you sweet child”; she laughed. “Why, you are a flower yourself, dear, with your rosy face and your sweet, gentle ways. No fairy in the world would object to your coming near.”

“Wouldn’t they, really? Asked Evelyn, much relieved.

“You see, its this way,” said the mite, crossing her little knees and folding her tiny hands on them. “We fairies are very busy building flowers and things, so busy that we haven’t much time to bother with humans. Of course, we are pleased when you water the flowers and take good care of the plants, for that helps us very much. Now, when you planted the seed from which the poppy grew, there I was, hidden in

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it! You never knew that of course; neither do other mortals, but it's true."

"Do you mind having your flowers picked?" inquired Evelyn timidly.

"Not very much," responded the fairy briskly. "Sometimes, even, we like it, when it is done with proper care. But we do *not* like to have our branches broken and flowers torn off and then carelessly thrown away. It's just wasting our work."

"That's true," said Evelyn thoughtfully. "I never could bear to see it done."

"Yes," said Poppy, "and because you are so careful, the fairies have done their best to make your garden beautiful. Doesn't every one stop and tell you that your garden is the finest for miles around?"

Evelyn glowed with pleasure.

"Are there more of you in my garden? she asked.

"More? Look about you, little mole," said the fairy. And then she tinkled merrily, for the sight of Evelyn's round, astonished eyes as she looked about her was very funny. But no wonder her eyes widened, for her dear familiar garden was completely changed! Scarcely a flower could she see, for on everyone was a tiny lady or gentleman, and each one was bowing and smiling to the confused little mistress of the garden.

"How strange," said Evelyn rather breathlessly, "that I never saw any of you before!"

"Not when you know that we didn't wish to be seen," returned Poppy, smiling.

As the days passed, Evelyn's garden became more and more interesting, for she became great friends with the fairies and learned much about the hidden side of flower growing.

It was a few days after her first meeting with Poppy that a strange thing happened, which at first Evelyn thought was going to be very sad, but which really turned out to be lovely.

She had come out to say good morning to Poppy and the others as usual, when she noticed that Poppy's lips, usually so very scarlet, were quite pale, and she seemed not to notice Evelyn's presence.

"O, Poppy, dear," cried Evelyn, kneeling down beside her. "Are you ill?"

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Poppy opened her eyes languidly.

“Oh, not at all,” she returned, “I am just dying.”

“Dying?” cried Evelyn in alarm, “Oh, what shall I do?”

“I forgot,” said Poppy with a funny little expression on her face, “that most human beings are afraid to die. It is different with a fairy, for to us it means work done and freedom in sight.”

“What happens when you die?” inquired Evelyn. “We just pass out into another shape and are free to fly about once more. When the poppy is quite faded, I shall pass out. Sometimes we come back to build more flowers, sometimes we are permitted to become higher things. I have been graduated from flowers,” said Poppy, her black eyes sparkling as of old. “When I pass, I shall become a butterfly.”

“Will you like that?” asked Evelyn.

“Wouldn’t you?” returned the fairy.

“Really, I hadn’t thought about that, said the little girl, “but I would make a rather large butterfly wouldn’t I?”

“Really, I hadn’t thought about *that*,” said the fairy in turn, “but so you would. What *does* happen to humans when they pass?”

“Mother says we simply go out of our bodies and find ourselves in fine ones in a beautiful place. Why!” she exclaimed, “that’s just what you said you did. We go from one shape to another, too.”

“Perhaps you are right,” said Poppy languidly, “but this sun is too hot for me, I am afraid I shall be obliged to die at once. Good-bye, little one; we shall meet again, never fear.”

Her voice sounded very faint and far away, and the little girl, anxiously watching her, saw her grow more and more faint in outline, until, though Evelyn could not tell just when it happened, Poppy just wasn’t there any more, and a soft breeze coming up shook the petals of the flower and dropped them gently on the ground beneath.

Evelyn’s eyes filled with tears. She might have cried but for the fact that she happened to look up just then and saw all the flower fairies standing up on their flowers and gently dancing and swaying in the breeze. Surprise dried her eyes, and when she heard this song which they were singing in one soft chorus, she went laughing and happy into the house:

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“Our sister is gone, tra la, tra la,
Her work is done, tra la, tra la.
How happy are we,
That she is set free,
Can be heard in our merry song, tra la,
Can be heard in our bright merry song.

“No more a fairy, tra la, tra la,
Will sister tarry, tra la, tra la.
But a butterfly, she
Henceforth will be,
How pleased are we all for her sake, tra la,
How pleased are we all for her sake.

UNDER THE OCEAN

“I wish that I could go way down under the ocean,” said Norman to himself, as he paddled about in the shallows near Santa Monica Canyon; “it must be full of strange and beautiful things; it would help me in my nature studies at school, too.”

“Well, why don’t you go, then?” abruptly inquired a sea-nymph who, all unobserved by Norman, was sitting near by.

Norman peeped over the edge of the big rock to see who had spoken. When he saw the nymph, he came round to her side and sat down.

One reason why is that I can’t breath under the water,” he explained.

“Well, *why* can’t you?” inquired the nymph again.

“Because when I breathe under the water, the water goes into my lungs, mother says, and I have to have air in *my* lungs in order to live, while, when a fish breathes under the water, it all runs out again through his gills behind his ears.”

The nymph laughed.

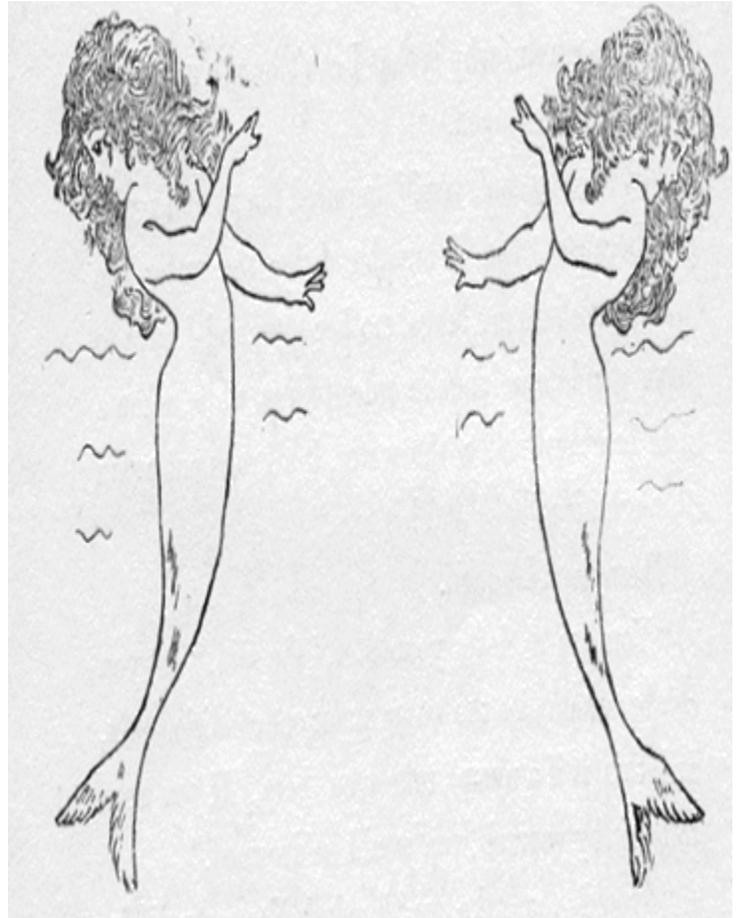
“You are a clever youngster,” she said, “but you *can* breathe under the water under one condition only, and this is if a nymph takes you there. If you were to try it yourself, you would be drowned.”

“Would you take me?” asked Norman politely. “I would like to go, if Evelyn could go, too.”

“You might ask her,” observed the nymph, as she wound some kelp balls into her hair; “we fairies are all very fond of the dear child.”

Norman skipped over to where Evelyn was dabbling her feet in the foam.

“Oh, what fun!” cried Evelyn, when Norman told her what the nymph had said; and together the two



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children returned to the nymph.

“Give me your hands,” said the nymph as she began to swim out towards the deeper water with the children wading beside her, “and for goodness sake don’t be afraid.”

As she spoke, she made a quick dive under the waves, dragging the two with her. They couldn’t help gasping as the cold water closed over their heads, but they soon became accustomed to it. At first they could not see very well in the dim light, but they presently began to make out strange shapes floating about.

Once the nymph suddenly dragged them behind a big coral pillar.

“Mind that shark,” she cried, as she flattened herself against the pillar, while the children did the same. “That’s the one sea-creature I am afraid of,” she explained, “he is a treacherous brute.”

“We stop here,” she announced presently, “we must pass the sentinel before we may go any deeper with humans.” She put her hands up to her mouth and called: “Woo-hee! Woo-hee! Auntie, Auntie.”

The children jumped when “auntie” appeared, for they had expected nothing less than a pleasant, spectacled old lady, but instead it was a fish, whose strange appearance made them smile.

“Auntie is the reception committee because she is the only fish with hands,” explained the nymph. “Her name is really Antennarius Pictus, but we call her Auntie for short.”

“I’m not a beauty and that’s a fact,” observed the fish, “but I’m good-natured; and that is more than can be said of some.”

“It’s a great deal, Mrs. Pictus,” remarked Evelyn consolingly. “Mother often tells me it doesn’t in the least matter what one’s face is like, if one’s heart is good.”

“Oh, Auntie’s heart is all right,” stated the mermaid, “but now shake hands and let’s be getting on. We want to visit the submarine gardens at Catalina.

In a very few moments the children found themselves on the bottom of the sea. They cried out with delight at the beauty and wonder of it all. There were great coral castles, pink, white and red; starfish, sea-flowers, strange-looking fish weaving in and out. And over all hung a soft, fairy-like light.

“What makes the light?” inquired Norman, who always liked to know about things.

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"I never thought about it," said the fairy, "but it *might* come from the lantern fishes you see hanging all about."

In the dance-hall they stopped a moment to listen to the orchestra, which was composed of fiddler-crabs.

The nymph motioned one of them to come over to her and he promptly began to run away.

"Oh, he's leaving us," cried Norman.

"Not at all," said the nymph, "but when *he* wants to run forward, he's got to run backwards." She giggled at that, and so did the children.

When the crab had completed his circle and got to a stand before the nymph, she told him that the children would like some refreshments, and he backed away to get them.

"You will please stop here," said the nymph, "while I go and report that I have come back." She floated away.

Evelyn seated herself obediently on a flat rock, but Norman, always restless and curious, wandered away to feed the sea urchins and stir up the star fish lying in the sand.

Perhaps he wandered farther than he had intended to do, for he presently found that he could not remember which way he had come. He turned hurriedly to go back to the dance-hall, but he was puzzled and did not know which way to turn.

Queer-looking and awful creatures sailed up to him, staring at him with round eyes, and he was growing more frightened every moment.

Presently he came to an open passage and decided to try that. But as he entered it, he was halted by two enormous eyes that looked straight into his frightened ones.

"Oh dear," thought Norman, "if I had only obeyed the nymph." And, do you know, I have often noticed that when children disobey those older and wiser than themselves they usually regret it soon afterwards!

The dreadful eyes looked the little boy through and through, and he sank on a ledge of rock, too scared to move. Suddenly he began to feel a curious change stealing over him, and to his horror he found that he was changing shape. Yes, it was only too true. The nymph had warned them not to be frightened and this was what she meant. Norman was quickly changing into a sea-anemone growing fast to the rock whereon he had sunk.

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The little boy struggled hard against the feeling of numbness, but it was useless. He tried to scream, but only succeeded in opening his round, flower-like mouth, whereat small creatures floated into it and he was obliged to swallow them. It was really too dreadful for words!

Meanwhile Evelyn, having obediently awaited the return of the nymph, was fed on sea berries and fruits by the quaint fiddler, and when the fairy returned they set out for the submarine gardens near Catalina.

On the way they passed an enormous whale. He came directly up to Evelyn and looked at her with his little eyes.

"I never swallowed Jonah," he cried, beginning to blubber.

"Of course you didn't," soothingly replied the nymph, "why *nobody* believes that story nowadays."

"Oh, don't they?" inquired the whale, evidently much relieved. "Well, I am glad my reputation is once more restored." And he sailed ponderously and pompously away.

"We shall ride on the sea-horses first," said the nymph, when she reached the gardens. She gave a shrill whistle and up came two sea-horses. The nymph helped Evelyn on to one.

"The other one was meant for Norman," she said. "This one is named Hippo, and the other Campus; you don't often find one of them alone."

"I do wish Norman were here," said Evelyn wistfully, "and I do hope he is quite safe."

"Oh yes, he's quite *safe*," remarked the nymph meaningly.

They passed a beautiful sea-anemone and Evelyn exclaimed over its beauty. Alas, it was the very anemone which had been Norman, and he struggled so hard to make his sister recognize him, but she merely admired his lovely purple mouth and sailed past.



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When Evelyn had seen and admired all the beauties of the Catalina gardens, including the strange flying fish and many other wonders, she was ready to return to the surface.

“But first I must find Norman,” she said.

“Well,” said the nymph, “I don’t mind giving you a hint, but even then it won’t be easy. You remember I told him to stop where I had left him, and I told him not to be frightened? Since he *didn’t* stop and he *was* frightened, the result is what it always is under the sea. He has been changed into a sea-anemone.”

Evelyn was horrified.

“Oh my little brother!” she cried in distress. “I must find you.” She jumped down from Hippo’s back and set resolutely forth. “Won’t you please help me?” she pleaded, turning to the nymph.

“Sorry, but it’s against the rules,” returned the nymph. “He had his warning, hadn’t he? And isn’t it his own fault, if he breaks laws, that he gets hurt?”

“Ye-es,” said Evelyn, “but then Norman doesn’t seem to know that he should obey.”

“Well,” remarked the nymph coldly, “this will teach him, then.” And she swam off, leaving the little girl all alone at the bottom of the sea.

Evelyn looked sorrowfully after her. Then she turned away to hunt poor Norman. Horrible creatures swam close to her and stared into her face and opened their big mouths, but she was so intent on looking for Norman that she never noticed them. She did not know that a strong, loving heart is a better protection than a sharp sword, but it is true nevertheless. In her tender heart there glowed a bright, rose-coloured flame, and all the sea creatures saw it and turned away from their evil purpose.

She walked on, looking carefully right and left. She spoke gently to every anemone, hoping it might be Norman and that it would make a sign, but when she came to Norman, though he opened his purple mouth his widest and tried - Oh, how he tried - to cry out: “Here, sister, here, *this* is Norman!” not a sound could he make, and Evelyn walked away. Norman’s head drooped low, for he felt that his last hope was gone. But just then Evelyn turned and saw the drooped head; she came running back.

“This is Norman,” she cried; “I know it, I know it. Oh Norman *dear, come out.*” And so strong is unselfish love that she actually drew Norman out of his tight prison and he was once more changed into a little, flaxen-haired boy!

Oh how the two children clasped one another close, and how Norman clung to his sister’s hand!

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“Now,” said Evelyn, “we must not be afraid, and then we are safe. Let us both wish hard that we are at the top of the ocean, and I am sure we will be.”

So they both wished hard, and the next instant they found themselves on the yellow sand below the Palisades, with the blue sky shining down upon them; and there was mother lying asleep under the old umbrella where they had left her - Oh, such a long time ago.

Norman drew a long, *long* breath and looked about him.

“Oh!” he exclaimed, “I will never, *never* disobey again.” And his mother, who was not really asleep, heard him, and she smiled to herself under the old umbrella!

THE CLOUD FAIRIES

The two children had climbed up Eucalyptus Hill to gather seed-pods for Mrs. Park. Norman soon tired and threw himself down to watch the clouds sail by. When Evelyn had filled her apron with the pretty pale green seeds, she came and sat down beside her little brother.

“See those big clouds, Evelyn!” remarked Norman; “doesn’t that big one look just like a fierce lion?”

“Yes, it does,” agreed Evelyn. “And see that dear little fat baby! Isn’t it charming?”

“I wonder what makes the clouds get into those queer shapes?” murmured Norman, who was a bright boy and liked to know about things. “I suppose the wind does it.”

Evelyn was silent for a moment.

“Well,” she said, “the wind may help, but there might be fairies up in the sky, too, just as there are fairies in the sea, you know. *They* might build those funny men and things.”

“Bravo! Bravo!” cried a sweet voice behind them, causing the children to jump quickly to their feet and turn round to see who had spoken.

Seated on the hill above them was a beautiful lady, and Norman quickly took off his cap to her.

“You are a wise little girl, my Evelyn,” said this lovely lady as the children came close up to her. “*I am a Cloud Spirit, or Fairy, if you prefer the word.*”

“If you are a Cloud Fairy, why are you on the ground and not in the sky?” asked Norman.

“Well asked, my boy,” laughed the Fairy. “I am down here because before long I shall not be a Cloud Spirit any more, but a Sylph, for I have learned all the lessons of Cloud Land and am ready to pass into a higher grade.” Then she turned to Evelyn and asked: “Did you have a pleasant journey under the sea?”

“Oh yes,” exclaimed Evelyn, “a perfectly lovely time; and there was so much to learn.”

“And you,” asked the Fairy, turning to Norman, “did you, also, learn much?”

Norman hung his head.

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“Yes,” he replied, wriggling his toes in embarrassment, “I did.”

“And *what* did you learn?” pursued the Fairy.

“I learned to obey,” replied Norman in a very small voice.

The Fairy patted his head and Norman felt better. He could even smile a little back at the Fairy.

“Then,” said she, “if you are quite sure that you have learned that very useful lesson, perhaps we might have another adventure, this time up instead of down.”

“I’m quite sure I have learned it,” said Norman earnestly, “and Evelyn has known it always.”

The Fairy rose to her feet and Evelyn looked up at her admiringly. She was very tall and graceful. Long, pale golden hair like sunbeams hung about her. She wore the palest of blue dresses - “like the sky,” thought Evelyn. Over the blue was draped a fluffy white garment.

“Yes,” said the lovely creature, “I am sure my sister Undine taught you thoroughly. Before I became Cloud Spirit,” she explained, “I was a Water Fairy myself, so you see I know all about the ocean.”

“Shall you always be a Sylph after you have become one?” asked Norman.

“Oh dear no,” exclaimed the Fairy, “by and by, I shall be something very beautiful and wonderful - a Deva. But first I must learn to be a very, very good Sylph. It all depends upon that.”

“I know what a Deva is,” cried Norman. “My mother told me a Deva is an Angel. A great, beautiful Being who does good all the time - I don’t suppose I could ever be an Angel,” he added sadly.

The Fairy put her soft, warm arms around him and held him close.

“There is nothing like trying,” she said, “and by and by you find it easy to better, and then to be good, and finally to be very, very good. We are so much happier when we are good, aren’t we?” she asked Evelyn.

“Yes, indeed,” cried Evelyn, “and truly Norman is getting better every day.”

“I am sure he is,” laughed the Fairy, “and you are the dear little sister who helps him to become so. But now stand quite quiet for a moment.”

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She raised her long, beautiful arms, and from her finger tips there flowed delicate silver threads such as the spider weaves. As they floated out from her hands the threads spread out fan-wise in the air and, winding round the children, completely covering them with fleecy, white clouds, though they could see quite plainly.

“Now,” said the Fairy, “follow me”; and she sprang into the air.

“But I can’t fly -“ began Norman, when he suddenly remembered that he had learned to obey, so he added quickly: “But I can *try*.”

He found to his great surprise that he could rise into the air quite easily. The clouds around him lifted him lightly and he floated after the Fairy and his sister.

“Look, Evelyn! he cried, “ see Walter and Irene down there! They are playing at housekeeping.”

Walter and Irene looked up at the three clouds sailed by so close to their heads, little dreaming that hidden in two of them were their playmates!

Up, up and up they went, until Hollywood became a mere speck in the valley below. It was not long before they reached the same clouds at which the children had been looking a moment before. Their guide helped them to alight on a small cloud close to a lovely Cloud Spirit, who looked up inquiringly at her sister.

“Here are two human visitors, who wish to learn something about Cloud Land,” she explained. “What can you tell them, Cumulus?”

Cumulus, who was dressed in a fluffy white dress and whose head was covered with woolly curls, smiled down at the children.

“So you are the little girl who suspected that there might be fairies hidden in the clouds?” she asked Evelyn.

“Yes,” returned Evelyn, “my mother told me that everything has life, that means that it is alive, and so I was sure there were living things up here too.”

“Well,” said Cumulus, “as soon as I have finished this task, we will play at making cloud-men.”

The children watched her as she moulded the billowy white clouds into balls and tossed them out into the sky, where they floated about like big balloons.

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“Now,” she said, as she tossed the last downy fluff away, “you shall play with me.”

She collected a mass of woolly clouds for them to play with and showed them how to make cloud figures.

“You see this is my work,” she explained. “Whenever you see big, funny shapes in the sky, remember that Cumulus is at work. Sometimes Fracto, who is a great mischief, breaks my figures up into small pieces, but I don’t mind, for I can easily build them up again.” She laughed.

“See my fierce elephant!” exclaimed Norman, who had formed a good figure. “I wonder if Walter can see him?”

“Wait a moment,” smiled Cumulus; “I will make him look.”

With quick fingers she fashioned a figure of a boy, and Norman laughed aloud when he saw that it looked exactly like himself.

“Now listen,” said Cumulus.

Away off down in the valley they could hear Walter’s pleasant, rippling laugh as he cried: “Look, Irene, *do* look; doesn’t that big cloud look exactly like Norman?”

“It does, it does,” exclaimed Irene, and they could hear her little laughter quite plainly.

“I am making a beautiful dolly,” explained Evelyn, “wouldn’t it be fun to take it down and give it to Irene to play with?”

“It would,” laughed Cumulus, “but I am afraid it wouldn’t last very long down in the valley. Clouds are meant for the sky, not for the damp earth. See my pretty sister Cirrus up there above us; she could not live down here, even where we are now.”

The children looked up at the beautiful Cloud Spirit above them. Her fine long hair streamed out all about her and her feathery dress was made of the most delicate clouds.

“Cirrus does like to comb her long hair and stick feathers into it,” said Cumulus looking fondly up at her fair sister. “My hair is like a woolpack,” she laughed, “and wouldn’t look very well decorated.”

“I think you are beautiful,” said Evelyn.

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Cumulus kissed her tenderly.

“Those beautiful blue eyes see only good,” she said. “Now look down below,” said Cumulus; “that is Stratus you see at work. She is a very prim old lady. She likes to have her clothes hang in straight lines. Her dresses are too heavy to permit her to come up here. You can tell what kind of work we do by looking at our clothes,” Cumulus explained to the wondering children. “Cirrus collects the first fine clouds on a clear day; I thicken and puff them out; Stratus darkens and dampens them, and then Nimbus collects all the moisture in the sky, makes the clouds dark and very wet, and it begins to rain from them.

“Are all Cloud Spirits so large?” asked Norman.

“Yes,” replied Cumulus, “we are all very large, for we have big work to do. But here comes Sylvia, who brought you up, and so I fear it is time to go.”

Sylvia floated gracefully along, until she reached the cloud on which the children were playing.

“Time to go home,” she said cheerily; “did you have a pleasant visit?”

“Oh, so *much* fan!” cried both the children.

“All the children are fond of Cumulus,” said Sylvia, smiling at her woolly-haired sister. “And here is Nimbus, who is to take you home on a scud-cloud.”

Nimbus was a dark-faced, merry-looking Cloud Spirit. When she saw the children, she laughed a low, rumbling laugh.

Sylvia placed the youngsters into her arms.

“Now, no nonsense, Nimbus,” she warned, “remember they are children of the earth, and do not handle them roughly....Nimbus is a dear, and doesn’t mean any harm, but she is so full of life that sometimes she blows things about a bit too briskly.”

“I’ll be very careful of the darlings,” Nimbus promised, as she hugged the two close to her. “Now don’t be afraid, that’s all.”

Cumulus and Sylvia kissed them both good-bye, and then - whizz - Nimbus went scudding off so quickly that they screamed with delight. Over hill and valley they rushed, and Norman laughed to see the people below them run quickly under cover, as Nimbus gaily pelted them with warm raindrops.

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“Those drops are alive, aren’t they?” asked Norman; “my sister once told me a story about a raindrop named Mr. Glitter.”

“Yes, everything lives,” agreed Nimbus.

Now Nimbus began to drop lower and lower towards the earth, and faster and faster she sped along. Eucalyptus Hill came in sight.

Bang! - and they had run against the hill and both the youngsters were spilled out of Nimbus’ arms. The Cloud Fairy laughed until the tears rolled down her cheeks, for she had been careful not to hurt the children.

“It’s raining, Evelyn,” screamed Norman; “run, run.”

“Of course it’s raining,” laughed Nimbus; “it always rains when I’m about, be sure of that.” And now she began to pelt the two children harder with the warm drops of rain; and laughing and calling good-bye to Nimbus as they went, they ran swiftly down Eucalyptus Hill into the shelter of their mother’s little brown cottage below.

THE GNOME

Norman had been out in the hills several times to see if the holly was ripe. He meant to surprise mother-dear by bringing her the first to be found. Today he had gone very far, and so, before turning back to go home, he sat down to rest against a little knoll. But when he leaned back he felt a stinging pain in his side.

“Don’t seem to find a place without nettles,” he said to himself.

“Nettles! nettles!” snarled a voice close behind him, “nettles, indeed! It’s I Boy, trying to get you to move out of my light.”

“Gracious!” exclaimed Norman rising quickly, feeling sure he must have been annoying a fairy, “I didn’t know there were fairies in the ground.”

“Fairies!” sneered the creature who had spoken, and who was a tiny misshapen little man, standing just inside the hillock against which Norman had been leaning, “do I *look* like a fairy?”

“No sir,” returned Norman, for all the fairies he had seen were very beautiful, and this little fellow was most ugly in face and form, “you don’t look *quite* like a fairy.”

“Well, I’m not one either,” said the fellow; “I’m a gnome, and my name’s Klaade.”

Norman, who had never before seen a gnome, bent closer to look at him.

“Don’t blow your breath in my face,” snapped the gnome so angrily that the little boy straightened up again very quickly, with an apology.

“Little enough light I get,” grumbled Klaade. He kept running back into his cave every moment, as if to assure himself of something.

“Couldn’t you come outside?” asked Norman. “Its very nice out here.”

“I’d like to,” said Klaade, after another trip into the hillock; “but if I did, the others would get my things.”

“What others?” inquired Norman.

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“The other gnomes, of course, silly,” growled the man.

“What kind of things are they?” asked Norman again - “things to eat or to wear?”

“No,” said Klaade, “you can’t eat or wear ‘em”

“To play with?”

“No-oo, not that either.”

“Then what *are* they good for?” asked Norman.

“They’re good for nothing,” cried the dwarf angrily; “I don’t want ‘em.”

“Well,” cried Norman in astonishment, “if they are good for nothing and you don’t want them, whatever in the world do you *keep* them for?”

“I keep them,” explained Klaade peevishly, “because the others want them.”

“But that is silly,” said Norman; “can’t you see how foolish you are? You are watching those things that you don’t want, and that keeps you away from the air and sunshine which you *do* want; when, if you would let the others have your things, you could come out into the sunshine and be happy. Surely you aren’t happy in that damp, dark hole?”

“No, I’m not,” admitted Klaade; “do you mean that if I just let the stones go I can come outside and stay there?”

“Just that,” Norman assured him.

Klaade considered this for a time.

“I believe you are right, Boy,” he exclaimed at last - “can’t eat’ em, can’t wear’ em, can’t play with ‘em - only serve to keep me in a dark hole. Let ‘em go, I say!”

He started to come out of the hillock, and then ran back and gathered up a handful of the brightest of his stones and thrust them into his little tunic. Then he resolutely turned his back on the rest of the stones and came out without a backward glance.

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At once inside there was the sound of a scramble. Squeals and squeaks issued forth from the little cave and then there was silence.

Klaade's brown face had grown a shade less brown at the sounds, for the pebbles had been very dear to him.

"They've taken 'em all," he said in a sad voice, looking forlornly up at Norman, "and they've gone way down where it's very dark and hidden 'em forever from me."

Norman took the gnome's claw-like hand into his own.

"Never mind," he said consolingly; "you don't want them, you know; and now look around and see how beautiful it is in the light. Aren't you glad you came out?"

"I am! I am!" cried Klaade; "I'm glad you came and got me out of the hole, Boy."

"You will be much happier now," said Norman.

"How do you know?" snapped Klaade, who didn't seem able to be agreeable for a very long at a time.

"We-ell," stammered Norman, "my mother says so."

"What's that to me," growled Klaade; "I don't know your mother. Didn't she give any reason? I go only by reasons."

Norman thought for a while, then he began to laugh.

"Don't be silly," screamed the dwarf impatiently; "that's no reason."

"Excuse me," said Norman, sorry to have offended him, "but I know the reason, and I never knew I knew it before."

"Knew, knew, knew, mew, mew, mew," shrieked Klaade. "That's right. Make noises like a cat and give me no reason."

"The reason is this," explained Norman, very slowly, so as to get it just right: "when you *keep* things, you can't be happy; but when you *give*, you feel big and broad inside your heart." He laid his hand on his

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heart to show Klaade what he meant. "You feel small and shrunken when you take things away from people and keep them. It might be that that is why you are so small. Why don't you try giving for awhile; you might grow."

Klaade studied this.

"Sounds like reason," he admitted very grudgingly at last; "I might try it. I couldn't give much away in one day, could I?" he asked Norman, very anxiously.

Norman laughed heartily. He just couldn't help it, for it sounded just like the way he used to think long ago, and he could see how silly he had been. His laugh was so sweet and merry that - would you believe it? - there came a little grin on the snarly face of the Gnome and his bent shoulders straightened ever so little.

"I'll try it!" exclaimed Klaade suddenly. He put his hand into his little tunic and slowly drew forth a red stone which he held out to Norman in a hesitating, cautious fashion.

"You - you may have this garnet," he said, putting it into Norman's outstretched hand.

Norman was delighted.

"Oh, thank you so much," he cried. "Oh, how pretty it is! I shall give it to Evelyn, she will be so glad."

"I feel pretty good after that, announced Klaade, and now a *real* smile spread over his ugly little face, making it far less ugly than before. "Here," he cried, "take this, and this, and this! With every word he thrust stones into the astonished Norman's hands. "Give, give, that's the way, give 'em all to Evelyn, give 'em, give 'em!"

He jumped to his feet and began to skip and dance wildly about on his hillock.

"Oh, how light I feel," he cried. "It was those heavy stones that bent my poor back. I can dance! I'm happy! O, you dear, clever little Boy, you!" And Klaade skipped from hillock to hillock in a very ecstasy of joy and gladness.

"I really think you will grow now," said Norman.

"Think, think?" said Klaade. "What is that - to 'think'?"

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“To think -“ began Norman, and then he stopped, for he found that here was something which he had been doing every day and never knew how it was done. “To think,” he began again, “is to have your soul make things go inside your head. You see, it’s this way: I am a soul and I live inside this body. When I want to think I use the head, and when I want to walk I make the feet go, and so on. I, the Soul, always think right, but I can’t always make the head of my body understand it, and so my body does wrong things. But Mother says the more I make my body listen to the Soul - that’s me - the plainer the Soul will speak; that means I can think more clearly and do what’s right.”

This was a long, hard speech for Norman, and he was very proud of himself when he was done, for Klaade seemed to have understood him quite well and said:

“Then I take it that that body of yours is something like a coat. Can you take it off?”

“Of course I can,” cried Norman, “and I *do* every night when I go to sleep. Then my body rests on the bed and I am dressed in a thinner body and have a fine time. I don’t mean the body *looks* any thinner,” he explained, “but it’s made of stuff that isn’t thick and hard like this one. When we go to sleep, we call that slipping out of the physical body.”

The Gnome nodded.

“I see,” he said; “but it’s different with me. I have no physical body. Mine is made out of ether, that’s why I can slip through the earth and you cannot.”

“I can slip through the earth too, when I’m out of my physical body,” said Norman.

“Do you think I could ever be less ugly?” inquired Klaade presently, his ugly-looking, squinty eyes looking wistfully up into Norman’s

“I’m *sure* you could,” encouraged Norman, “and if Sylvia were here she would tell us how you might set about it. And here she comes, now!” cried the little boy, for sailing gracefully towards them came the beautiful Sylph Sylvia.

At her approach Klaade ran hastily back into the hillock in a panic, but Sylvia’s soft voice called him to return and he crept out again and hid behind Norman.

“Don’t be frightened, little one,” said Sylvia; “I am here to tell you how you may grow to both tall and beautiful.”

“Like yourself?” whispered Klaade in awe, coming forward.

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“More beautiful, if you wish,” smiled Sylvia. “You have but to do good instead of evil, to give instead of taking, and you will find yourself growing in many, many ways. Down there in the dark, damp earth your brothers do not even know how beautiful the sunshine is and how much happiness awaits them out here.”

“I might go down and teach them,” ventured Klaade.”

“Oh, look, Miss Sylvia,” cried Norman, “see how pretty Klaade got when he said that.”

Sylvia took a leaf, and brushing it softly with her hand, held it out to Klaade. It shone so that he could plainly see his reflection. He was a very decent looking little man!

Sylvia smiled into his astonished and pleased face.

“If you will go down and teach your brothers how to be less greedy, you will find that before long you will be larger and prettier; and they in turn will grow more useful. Could you give up the sunshine for that?” she asked.

“Yes,” said Klaade, very slowly, “I think I could. It would mean that, instead of one, many would be happy and grow beautiful, wouldn’t it?”

“It would,” agreed Sylvia.

“Then I am going at once,” exclaimed Klaade, eagerly. “Goodbye, Boy, I am glad I met you. Give the stones to Evelyn with - my love.” He looked up at Sylvia, questioningly. “What does that mean, that word ‘love’?”

“ ‘Love is the greatest thing in the world,’ “ said the Sylph, “it makes hard tasks light, and sinful people good. It makes the sun to shine and the flowers to grow. Love is God, and the more one has of love in his heart, the more happy and the more beautiful one grows. Look at Klaade, who has only just the beginnings of love, how much he has changed for the better. Love is strength and courage, and indeed it is all that is beautiful.”

The little boy and the Gnome could not quite understand all that Sylvia said, but in their hearts they felt that what she said was true.

“Then,” said Klaade, “I am going down to teach the other Gnomes about Love, and that will be to teach them all the rest.” He bowed to the beautiful fairy and waved his hand to Norman, and in a moment he had disappeared.

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“He is such a nice Gnome,” said Norman with tears in his eyes, “that I would like to have seen him again.”

“And so you will,” comforted Sylvia; “don’t forget that you can visit him in your ‘night-body,’ for that can slip through the earth, too. You can help him and teach him many things, make friends with the other gnomes and learn much while teaching them. And now good-bye, Norman, my good, brave little friend.” And the beautiful Sylvia sailed softly away into the clouds, leaving a happy, useful little boy looking after her.

THE SALAMANDER

“Fairies,” murmured Evelyn to herself, “are all so nice and kind.” She was lying on the thick rug before the fireplace. The cool, rainy California winter had come and it was so pleasant to bask in the fire just before going to bed. “I wish one lived in the house with me.”

“Ziz-ziz,” hissed the fire.

“And they all seem to like human beings, too,” the little girl mused on.

“Ziz-ziz-ziz-crackle, ziz,” spluttered the fire.

“Silly old fire!” laughed Evelyn; “it almost sounds as if you were trying to contradict me.”

“Well, so I am,” said the fire hotly. It brought Evelyn to her knees in a moment. “What do *you* know about the fairies anyway?” added the fire.

“There *is* a fairy in my house,” cried Evelyn excitedly, “it’s in the fireplace. I never knew they lived in fire too.” She crept near to the hot blaze and stared fearlessly into it. An angry, red face glared back at her from the coals. It was a curious, triangular-shaped face, completely surrounded by flame-coloured hair that floated and curled all about the fireplace.

“Didn’t I tell you you knew nothing about fairies?” inquired this ruddy creature. “Besides,” it contradicted itself, “I am not a fairy at all.”

“Not a fairy?” said Evelyn wonderingly.

“Bah!” cried the creature. “Don’t you know a Salamander when you see him? “He sprang up suddenly and made a snatch at Evelyn with his long tapering fingers, whereupon the little girl almost fell over backwards in her haste to escape his warm grasp. Her two blonde braids fairly danced in the firelight. The Salamander laughed mockingly.

“So you still think all fairies like human beings?” he inquired.

“What a horrid creature you are!” cried Evelyn indignantly, as soon as she had regained her balance and placed herself at the far end of the rug. “Would you hurt me?”

“Put your hand over a bit nearer and see whether I would or not,” sneered the Salamander.

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The now thoroughly frightened Evelyn drew still further away. "No, thank you," she said, "I know that fire burns and it hurts."

"Right-O," said the Salamander. "It burns. Just let me out of this brick prison, and you will see a merry blaze and your home will disappear."

"So long as you have such wicked thoughts, you will be kept in a prison," said the practical Evelyn.

"I'd be more wicked if I could," snapped the Salamander viciously.

"But why?" exclaimed Evelyn. "Why do you want to hurt people?"

"I enjoy destroying things," explained the Salamander. "Before I got caught and put in here I had great fun burning down houses and even forests. Do you remember the day we burned the dry grass on Vine Street hill?"

"Yes," said Evelyn, "but Mr. Ensor put it out."

"He did," agreed the sprite; "but do you remember how I paid him back for that trick?"

"Yes," responded Evelyn sadly, "you burned his hands and feet very badly. It was very, very wicked of you."

The Salamander sprang up in a rage. Sparks flew up the chimney and out on the rug.

"Please," urged Evelyn, "I am sure you can't be happy. Being so cross makes you hot and uncomfortable, though it is very nice to have you warm the room."

"Is it?" inquired the Salamander sullenly. "Well, understand that I am not going to warm your old room another minute." He burrowed down among the ashes and looked out spitefully at Evelyn.

"How cool the room has grown," said Mother, who had been dozing near the fire. "Do, dearest, do stir the fire up a bit, it has gone too low."

"Oh, Mother, dear!" cried her little daughter, "I just wouldn't dare to do it. There is a Salamander in there and he wants to burn me."

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Mother laughed and sat up. She was a most satisfactory kind of mother, for she knew all about fairies and such things. She now picked up the long iron tongs. "Where is your 'Sally Mander'?" she asked.

"There he is, Mother, sulking in the ashes; but do, oh do be careful, he is so very angry."

Mother laughed again. She pushed the tongs down where Evelyn had pointed, and poked the Salamander in the ribs.

"Wake up, old man," said she, "and give us a little more heat."

The Salamander sprang up furiously, roaring with rage. He tried to reach mother's hand, but she, though she could not see him, evidently knew all about salamanders, for, as Evelyn admiringly noted, she kept just out of reach of the snatching, writhing fingers.

"I'll teach you, *you!*" roared the Salamander. "Oh, if I could only reach you."

But he could not, for Mother leaned back to finish her interrupted nap.

"If he gets sullen again, dear, " she murmured drowsily, "feed him with paper. Salamanders like paper as much as you do candy."

"Do they?" asked the astonished Evelyn. "Then I shall give him some, and perhaps he will get a bit better natured, poor fellow. I am sure I shouldn't like to be poked in my ribs."

"That's just it," whined the Salamander, "everyone is so mean to me. You saw what that horrid woman did to me."

"Oh, no, they aren't," answered Evelyn quickly, "and my dear mother wasn't horrid, she was just making you do your duty."

"What's that?"

"Duty is what you know you should do," explained Evelyn.

"I don't care about that," said the Salamander.

"Didn't you promise to feed me with some paper?"

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“I’ll get some,” said the generous Evelyn, quite forgetting that a moment before the Salamander had tried to injure her. She tore an old newspaper to bits and, very cautiously and at arm’s length, she tossed it to the waiting sprite, who sprang upon it greedily and eagerly licked off all the white, leaving only a crisp, black speck, which floated lightly up the chimney.

“Why don’t you feed me with the whole paper at once?” asked the crafty Salamander. “I can scarcely taste such small bits.”

“I don’t mind,” said the innocent little girl, and threw the loose sheets of paper into the grate; but oh, what a fright she got. The Salamander with a roar and a yell seized the paper, and in a moment fierce flames were leaping out of the grate, almost reaching Evelyn, who screamed madly for mother to wake up. Mother saw at a glance what had happened. She ran into the dining-room and returned with a pitcher of water. She threw the water into the fireplace, and the Salamander, though he hissed savagely and blew a steamy breath into mother’s face, suddenly grew very pale and fell back into the ashes.

“Oh Mother,” exclaimed Evelyn, “look, look, he’s dying.

“That is a very, very mischievous and dangerous salamander, and we must be careful not to encourage him with more paper, dear.”

“Oh mother, please let us not let him die. Just see how pale and thin he is getting. Mayn’t I put just a wee bit of paper in to revive him?” Evelyn could not see anything suffer without trying to help.

“I will give him some fresh coals,” said mother, taking some from the scuttle; “he will have to be satisfied with that.”

The Salamander, who had really grown alarmingly pale, received the coals languidly, and at first Evelyn thought he was not going to recover; but presently he was glowing again.

“Why are you so foolish, Salamander?” asked Evelyn when he seemed himself again.

“It *is* foolish, I know,” returned the Salamander with surprising meekness, “and I am very tired of destroying things. I want to *build* something.”

“Poor fellow!” said Evelyn compassionately. “I shall ask Mother what can be done. Mother knows everything,” she explained earnestly.

“Yes,” replied Mother, after Evelyn had explained all about the Salamander’s troubles. “Some day he will be allowed to leave the fireplace; but he must first learn how to keep up a nice, steady fire all winter, and

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then perhaps he will be transferred to a big mine furnace when he will have hundreds of playmates - salamanders like himself. There he will smelt silver, lead and other ores, and these will later be made up into useful things, so that he will be helping to *build* things. It will be the greatest fun for him to skip and jump about in the beautiful colours, and after he has learned that task well - “ here Mother paused and the Salamander and Evelyn listened carefully -“ after that,” continued Mother, “he may become a sylph and be free to wander where he wishes and to do good.”

“Oh, I know all about sylphs!” cried Evelyn eagerly. “There is Sylvia, you know.”

“Yes, dear,” smiled Mother, “you tell Salamander the rest.” And Evelyn did.

She was in the midst of telling him all about Cumulus and jolly Nimbus, when Norman suddenly burst into the room.

“Oh, what a splendid fire!” he cried. “How jolly the room looks!”

“Yes, that is because my new friend is busy.”

“Friend?” asked Norman blankly.

“Yes, this Salamander, here in the fire.”

“Oh, I say,” exclaimed Norman, after he had greeted the sprite in the fire, “I say, but you *can* hop about, can’t you?”

The Salamander looked gratified. “I am trying to do my duty as she said I should, and it’s not half bad.” He nodded towards Evelyn, who grew almost as rosy as the sprite himself.

Just then Mother awoke with a start.

“Dear me,” she remarked Sleepily, “it is bedtime. You had better say goodnight to the Salamander. I shall cover him up so that he will keep warm until morning.”

The Salamander looked gratefully up at Mother as she carefully covered him with coals. He sank down and cuddled himself snugly among the ashes as she took the two children and led them off to bed, where they in turn cuddled down among the blankets and were soon away in the pleasant Land of Dreams, which, everybody knows, is just beyond the silver gate with the sapphire pillars at the end of the Drowsy Gardens. And as to what befell there, dear hearts, you shall hear, if you like, another time.