

Three Short Stories

Dorothy Day

My Doll House

Chicago Daily Tribune December 4, 1910, pg. H2

Dear Aunty Bee: I want to tell you about my doll house. It is made out of crate boxes, and when it was calcimined it looked much better. I named the doll that occupied it after fictitious and historical characters, such as "Antony," "Cleopatra", "Rebecca," and "Ivanhoe." There are six rooms in the house—a dining room, a ballroom, a waiting room, parlor, bedroom, and boudoir. My sister and I play these games together. Balls and weddings occur often, and are lots of fun. Of course disasters are frequent, and the horse runs away with the chariot often (the horse being my little Peggy). There is a knight or prince for each fair lady, and always a villain or two.

DOROTHY DAY

The Picnic

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Edna and Mary had just started out on a picnic in the woods. Two nicely filled baskets rested on their arms, and the sunbonnets were like little houses 'neath which their faces dimpled with delight at the pretty sights around them. Crossing the meadow they entered the cool, shady woods. Little patches of sunlight danced on the path before them and a little brook gurgled blissfully alongside. But after a while the little brook bubbled no longer by the side of the path, but swerved to one side, right into the deepest and darkest part of the forest. And the little girls followed it. It was a long time before they found a place that suited them, for they had wished to find a fairy circle. It is said, you know, that plenty of them are to be found in deep forests. They found none, however, and had to content themselves with a pretty little nook. It was surrounded by giant trees and a few moss covered stones made chairs fit for a queen. At this place the little brook was calm and still, and the cool water was refreshing. After resting a few moments they spread forth the feast, a feast that made one hungry even to look at. Mary brought a large bunch of lilies and other wild flowers, and after filling their tin cup full of water arranged them prettily in it and set it on the cloth. Then they sat down to begin the feast. Instantly a tinkling of a bell was heard and

little fairies sprang from the flowers and running across the grass perched themselves on the little toadstools that appeared around the cloth. As soon as they had arranged themselves comfortably they sang the following song:

"Oh, while the day is sunny,
Let us be happy and gay.
Bring out the cups of honey,
And drink unto the day."

Immediately hosts of little elves appeared bearing flower cups of honey. While daintily sipping this one cried out:

" Oh, come little gnomes with your hammer
and tongs,
And favor us with a few of your songs,"

Here Edna interrupted the fairy. "Are we really going to see some gnomes from underneath the earth?" she exclaimed.

The fairies frowned darkly upon her and one said, "We thought that we could trust you two mortals to be silent if we favored you by making ourselves visible, but now I see we can not. Any child speaking in the presence of a fairy without being spoken to is punished. Therefore—"

But her speech was interrupted by a loud rumbling and then a crash. Edna found herself in bed: with her mother bending over her. A terrible thunder storm was raging without. Every now and then a flash of lightning would light up the room.

" Are you afraid, Edna dear," her mother asked.

"Oh, no, mother. I just love thunder storms," she answered. "But I have had an awful dream. The first part of it was nice, though." And then she told her mother about it. Her mother comforted her and before she left the room Edna was deep in the land of Nod, judging by the happy smile on her face, she was dreaming happy dreams.

DOROTHY DAY

A Bird Story

Chicago Daily Tribune September 3, 1911, page H2

A bird family had a nest in the top of an elm tree. Four speckled little eggs lay in this nest until one happy day came when there were four chirping little mouths to feed. Then the bird mamma and papa were very happy. But one sad day when the parents came home from

worm finding the nest was empty and the poor birds almost gave way to tears. But they decided to fly at once to the fairy queen and ask her what had become of their little ones. If she could not find them she could at least punish the one who stole or killed them.

So they flew, never pausing until they reached the house in which the queen dwelt. She greeted her friends kindly, and, on hearing the sad misfortune, agreed to help them. She sent elfin spies out into the world to search for the culprit. The elves found the naughty boy who stole the birds and made him bring them to the father and mother, even dead as they were. The parents wept bitter tears at the sight of the dead birdlings and the fairy queen, moved at their grief, gave the parent's tears the power of bringing the babies to life. The mamma and papa birds, unwilling to live again in the cruel world, built a nest in fairyland and lived happily there ever after.

The naughty boy cried and wanted to go home, so the elves, instead of punishing him as they intended to do, made him promise never to harm the birds or any other living creature. He willingly promised this and the elves brought him home, a better boy for the lesson he had learned.

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