

**MARGARET
COULSON
WALKER**

LADY HOLLYHOCK AND
HER FRIENDS

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Lady Hollyhock and her Friends / A Book of Nature Dolls and Others:*

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Margaret Coulson Walker

Lady Hollyhock and her Friends / A Book of Nature Dolls and Others

To My Mother

*Who has always known how to help little people enjoy
themselves*

*O the fluttering and the pattering of the green things
growing,
How they talk each to each, when none of us are
knowing;
In the wonderful light of the weird moonlight
Or the dim, dreamy dawn when the cocks are crowing.*

*I love, I love them so—my green things growing,
And I think that they love me, without false showing,
For by many a tender touch they comfort me so much
With the soft mute comfort of green things growing.*

—Dinah Mulock Craike.

Foreword

THIS book has a purpose beyond that of mere amusement. Its aim is to aid parents in furnishing not only entertainment but profitable employment as well, for their little ones—profitable, in that work under the guise of play, makes for character. The value of the things made is not in their finish, but in the training which they afford—a value ethical rather than intrinsic.

Children throw aside as uninteresting the finished toys from the shops when they have once learned to make playthings for themselves. To an imaginative child the possibilities of green things growing, of other materials provided by the changing seasons, and of the apparently useless trifles to be found in any home, are endless, and far surpass in permanent interest the realm of magic. In giving tangible form to the creatures imagined, thought is ripened into action and childhood's natural desire for expressed imagery satisfied.

In making use of these apparently inappropriate materials in the construction of their own toys resourcefulness is engendered, practical intelligence stimulated, the inventive faculty cultivated, sympathetic acquaintance with nature broadened, and manual dexterity increased—all of which will later in life prove of inestimable value.

Then, too, such employment strengthens, or in some instances, creates the ability to get pure enjoyment out of the near

at hand little things, which makes for permanent happiness.

The whole nature of a child cries out for self activity. Producing by his own efforts something that satisfies his own needs gives him the keenest possible pleasure, and puts into him that energy which results in love of work.

There is no more interesting study for grown ups than that of children at play with dolls and animals of their own making. The more imaginative children prefer the flower dolls which fade or die quickly and then go to take their places in the sky to which they give the beautiful colors on sunset evenings. Others, natural little gad-a-bouts, always play "come to see," while in some practical little souls the spirit of motherhood is so strong that, to them, every doll is a baby doll, and everything they play with, from a clothes-pin to a poker, must be mothered—sung to and cared for, petted and rocked.

Boys, with their more belligerent tastes, prefer to make Indians and soldiers out of the same materials that their sisters would convert into the most peaceful of citizens. Those in whom the sense of humor is strong make every face a comic one, while others put into the faces drawn by them the demure, trivial, or rugged features and expressions harmonizing with their ideas.

An effort has been made to furnish in these pages suggestions for all sorts and conditions of children. The songs and jingles are for those who like to make rhymes, or to sing about everything that they do.

Only a few of the dolls and animals children can make for

themselves have been suggested. The possibilities of the subject are by no means exhausted.

Margaret Coulson Walker.

Des Moines, Iowa.

Lady Hollyhock and Her Daughter

Hollyhock Place was as beautiful a spot as children ever had for a home. Hollyhocks were blooming everywhere. All about the house and along the lane leading to it were great stalks bearing satiny blossoms of all shades, from delicate shell pink to the deepest, richest red. Besides, there were countless white and golden yellow ones.

When the little Wests came to live there it seemed like fairy land to them. All their lives they had lived in the city with its severe looking houses and hard brick and stone pavements. There their playthings, even, were made of wood and china and tin—all ready made and finished.

Here everything was so different. There were flowers and vines everywhere about their cottage home, shading the windows and trailing over the fences. In the garden at the back were beds of tender radishes and rows of tomatoes, cabbages, potatoes, corn and other vegetables, while over the fence grew vines bearing green and yellow gourds.

In the city the children had never seen these things growing; here they could not only see them, but could help them to grow, by watering them and stirring up the ground about their roots. And afterwards, they could have them for their very own. It was just the place to be perfectly happy in.

Cousin Charlotte was to live with them. She was fifteen and

knew how to do many things to help children enjoy themselves. The little Wests thought it was because she had always lived in the beautiful country. Perhaps it was.

She knew how to make the most wonderful dolls out of almost anything and could make rhymes and stories about them. The first doll she made for them Eugenie had named Lady Hollyhock. Eugenie had always liked stories of lords and ladies and knights and other great folk so the others were not at all surprised that their new visitor was a Lady.

A most wonderful lady she was with the daintiest of satiny gowns of the most beautiful shade of pink. In her hair—or on her head—she wore a bow of green, while round her neck was a great pointed green collar such as Queen Elizabeth might have envied. The pink and green were wonderfully becoming, for, being a lady of high degree and having excellent taste, she was careful in choosing colors which not only harmonized with each other, but with her complexion.

Lady Hollyhock's complexion was a marvel—different from anything the children had ever seen in that line,—being a peculiar light shade of green. This was not to be wondered at though, when you know that Lady Hollyhock's head was nothing but a green tomato, her body another, the green bow in her hair the stem and calyx of the tomato, and her collar the fuzzy double calyx of a hollyhock. Her gown—waist, sleeves and skirt—was of the beautiful flower cups of hollyhocks tied in at the waist by a long blade of grass.

Her piercing black eyes were glass headed pins, her nose a bit of a match, and her pearly teeth white headed pins. Tooth picks served for neck, arms and legs. Of these last it took three to support so great a personage.

The daughter of this noble lady looked much like her mother though she was dressed somewhat differently. The face was the same but the cap and gown were just a little different. There was no sash about the waist of the daughter—her gown hung loose from the shoulders making her look younger. Having but one leg, this strange child was always compelled to stand with that in a slice of potato to keep from tumbling over.

After a time other members of the family joined these two—some wore gowns of red, some of white, and some of yellow, but none were more charming than the first Lady Hollyhock and her daughter.

The Cucumbers

During the summer and the winter following many friends visited with Lady Hollyhock and her family.

From Cucumber Hill came a most dignified Englishman. At a glance one knew him to be English for he wore a single eyeglass. A large brass headed furniture tack occupied the place of one eye while the other was filled by a small black carpet tack. Though a trifle stiff in his manners, this gentleman always wore an agreeable smile.

The lady who came with him could not be called beautiful. Her neck was too thick for that, but she smiled so pleasantly and wore such a becoming gown that one hardly noticed her neck. This gown was a loose flowing one of white. With her rather sallow, bumpy, green skin she could not have worn colors.

And the children from Cucumber Hill were much like their elders—a little stiff and awkward but so cheerful that they were always welcome.

After their visit, the members of this happy family were usually caught and devoured by Florence, Tom and Bunnie who played “Bear” sometimes to please Tom.

Like little Russians the children ate their cucumbers with the skins on, just as they would eat apples.

Radishes and Corn

The beautiful red radishes from the garden made the most charming of babies, with their leaves turned down for clothes and tied around with blades of grass. These and the corn babies were Florence's favorites.

When the tender roasting ears were brought in from the garden the children all agreed that they were such dainty babies, just as they were, that it would spoil them to change them in any way.

All they needed to do was just to open the green husk a little and there lay the most beautiful creamy white Corn Baby wrapped in the daintiest of silken garments.

Florence hugged the Corn Baby close in her arms and as she rocked it to sleep sang to it a soft crooning little lullaby which she and the others had made up. Charlotte—and Mamma, too, had helped them a little with both the tune and words. As Florence sang to the baby in her arms the others joined her, singing softly always, and letting the song fade away almost to a whisper at the end that the baby might not miss the music when it was heard no more.

Then the Corn Baby was tenderly laid in a cradle Tom had made by gluing two semi-circles of wood for rockers to a pasteboard spool box. The wooden circle which he had cut in two had once had a bolt of ribbon wrapped around it in a store.

The Radish Baby's Song

(Tune: "The Corn Lullaby")

Dear little red faced
Baby in green,
You are the brightest child
That ever was seen,
Though 'tis for your brightness
That others may greet you,
'Tis for your goodness
That Mother will eat you.

Radish Babies

SOMETIMES Radish Babies too were put to sleep in spool box cradles, but more often they were eaten by their fond mothers, for Radish Babies were not only good to look at, and good to play with, but good to eat, as well.

The Corn Lullaby

Rock-a-by hush-a-by. Corn baby mine.
Wrapp'd in your garments of silk, soft and fine.
Rock-a-by, hush-a-by, little one, dear.
No one can harm you while mother is near.

When you have closed your eye-lids in sleep.
Angels will over you tender watch keep.
They will bring dreams to you, little one, dear.
Now they are coming, now they are here.

Pansies

“I am thinking of you” is what pansies say
When they come to you from a friend;
And “I am thinking of you” is what they say
When you the blossoms send.

No need of words when pansies are near
To carry the message for you—
Just send a bunch of the blossoms fair,
They’ll speak plainly as you could do.

All over the world in their simple way,
No matter where they go,
“I am thinking of you” is what they say,
And all people their language know.

Pansy Ladies

Pansy dolls were made in several ways—and pansy verses with them. Of these dolls the easiest to make were the paper ones, folded and cut as all children cut rows of doll dresses. Then a small hole was cut in the top of each dress, and the pansy stem put into it. Without further work there stood a pansy lady with a paper body and blossom head.

Other pansy dolls were made by covering tiny pill bottles with grass blades, or leaves, putting one end of each leaf in the bottle, turning them all down, and tying them in place with a grass blade sash. When the bottle was filled with water and a pansy put into it, the children had a pansy lady who would live a day or two.

“Rich purple hued velvets the pansy maids wear,
While cunning caps rest on their long yellow hair,”

quoted Mamma when she was invited out to see a row of these visitors of Lady Hollyhock’s.

Poppy Maids

GREAT beds of poppies grew at the end of the cottage at Hollyhock Place. To make poppy blossoms into dolls is the easiest thing in the world. All you have to do is to turn down the soft, silky petals, tie a blade of grass round them, and there you have a poppy maid, all finished and growing on a stem—a real flower fairy. There is a small green seed pod inside, you know, and that is the poppy maid's head.

After making a number of these without breaking their stems the children often laid a cucumber, or radish baby in the poppy bed and sang to it a soothing lullaby—one they had made up themselves. Perhaps they had a little help—I cannot say as to that.

Poppies are the flowers that bring sleep you know.

Before long, the poppy maids would fade away and others would take their places. The dead ones were quietly buried near their friends, and soon after, at sunset, their colors were seen in the sky, as were those of many dead and gone, hollyhock and morning-glory ladies. None of these ever lived to be very old.

Poppy Lullaby

Dainty Poppy maidens,
From Dreamland far away,
Gather round baby's cradle
In your garments gay.

Gentle Poppy maidens,
Call the Sandman near,
With his dreams from Dreamland
For our baby dear.

Gentle Poppy maidens,
Whisper what you would
Baby will heed your message
Bidding her be good.

Acorn and Burdock Eskimos

ALONG the orchard fence grew great broad leaved burdocks crowned with purplish pink tipped burs, which early in the season were made into all sorts of useful and beautiful objects—baskets, hanging baskets, cradles, sofas, chairs, tables and many other things.

In autumn, when the large acorns with fringed cups began to fall, the children gathered them and made them into Eskimos. One acorn was used for the body, and one for the head, with the point on the end for a nose. Twigs of the oak served for arms and legs.

The warmest of fur overcoats was made of the ripened burdock burs, while the furry fringed cup of the acorn made a cap that would have delighted the heart of any Eskimo.

Then Eskimo huts or igloos were made of the burs or “furs” as the children called them. Of course every one knows that real igloos are made of blocks of ice or snow, not of fur, but ice was not to be had at that season of the year and would not have been comfortable to work with anyway.

As the bur Eskimo was in immediate need of a home the little Wests made him the very best one they could of the materials at hand. A very neat round hut was made of burs and that it might appear more real, both it and the ground were covered with cotton snow, making a real arctic landscape.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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