

# VARIOUS

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## Various

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### THE AUNT AND THE NIECE

AUNT RUTH was only nine years old, while her niece Mary was nineteen. But Ruth, being an aunt, felt she must keep up the dignity of one; and so she used to treat Mary as if Mary were a little girl.

They had not seen each other for nearly a year; and, when they met, Mary, who was fond of mischief, acted as if she were really younger than Ruth, though she well knew she was nine years older.

"Aunt Ruth," said Mary, "have you any objection to my going out in the grove to swing?"

"None at all, my dear," said Ruth; "but I will go with you, lest you should get hurt."

"Thank you, aunty," replied Mary. "Now let us see who can run the faster."

Mary started off at a run towards the swing; but Ruth called her back, and said, "Stop, my dear, you will wet those nice new shoes in the damp grass; and then your mother will blame me for not taking better care of you. We will go by the gravel road to the grove."

"Yes, ma'am," answered Mary, turning her head to hide her smiles; and then, seeing a flower, Mary cried, "Oh! what a beautiful flower! Tell me what it is, aunty. I think I never saw one like it before. What a heavenly blue! And how nicely the edges are fringed!"

"Yes, my dear: that is a fringed gentian," said Ruth. "It is one of the latest of our wild autumn flowers; and I am not surprised that you admire it."

"It is indeed lovely," exclaimed Mary. "You must teach me all about these wild flowers, aunty; for we city girls have few opportunities of seeing them."

"Yes, my dear niece, I will teach you," returned Ruth. "I want you to learn a lesson of some kind every day you are with us."

Mary burst out into a laugh that she could not control.

"Why, what are you laughing at, my dear?" asked Aunt Ruth.

But Mary, to escape replying to the question, ran and took hold of the swing. "Now for it, aunty!" said she.

Mary sat down in the swing, and Ruth pushed her from behind; and, after she had swung enough, Ruth took her to the barn. But here, I regret to say, the sight of a pile of hay on the barn-floor was too much for Niece Mary. She seemed to lose all her reverence at once.

Seizing Aunt Ruth, she threw her on the hay, and covered her up with it, crying out, "You precious little aunty, I must have a frolic, or I shall die. So forget that you are an aunt, and try to remember that you are nothing, after all, but a darling little girl."

Ruth, though at first surprised, was too sensible a girl to be offended. Papa came in; and, seeing aunt and niece on the hay, he covered them both up with it, till they begged to be let out, and promised to be good.

He was just from the garden, and had thrown down his hoe, rake, and watering-pot, and taken off his straw-hat. But the hat suddenly disappeared, and papa wondered where it was. Niece Mary had slipped it under the hay.

*Emily Carter.*

## DREADFULLY CHEATED

"Uncle," said George, "what makes you call that great clumsy dog 'Watch'? A watch goes 'tick, tick,' as busy as can be all the time; and this dog is a lazy old fellow."

"I know that," said Uncle Henry; "but he is called Watch, because he acts the part of a watchman, or guard, to keep off thieves and stragglers."

"Don't you know how he barks when any one comes here whom he does not know? He will not let a stranger come near the house after dark, without giving notice. I do not suppose it would be possible for any of us to come into the house without his knowing it."

"I mean to try," said George, "and see if I cannot cheat you, old fellow." And Watch looked up in his face with a very knowing wink, which seemed to say, "Don't try to be too smart, or you may get into trouble."

Now, for all George called Watch "clumsy" and "lazy," he was very fond of him; and many a nice frolic they had together.

That very afternoon, while they were enjoying a grand tumble on the grass, George's mother called him into the house to do an errand for her.

George had quite a long walk to take; and, when he got back, it was quite dark. Just as he reached the garden-gate, he remembered what his uncle had said that morning about Watch.

"Now," said he to himself, "I'll just see if I cannot get into the house without your knowing it, Master Watch; and, if I cannot, you are smarter than I think."

So George took off his shoes, and went stealing along on the soft grass, looking like a little thief, until he came to the broad gravel-walk, which he must cross to get round to the back of the house.

He stopped for a minute, while he looked about for Watch, and soon spied him lying at the front-door, with his black nose resting upon his great white paws; and he seemed to be fast asleep.

Then George very cautiously stepped upon the gravel-walk, first with one foot, and then with the other. As he did so, Watch pricked up both ears; but it was so dark, that George did not see them.

So, thinking that the old dog had not moved, he went on very quickly, and, as he thought, very quietly, when all at once, just as he was beginning to chuckle at the success of his trick, he heard a gruff "Bow-wow," and found himself flat upon the ground, with the dog upon his back, and two rows of sharp white teeth very near his throat.

Although George was hurt by the fall, and was a good deal frightened, he had his wits about him, and said, "Watch, Watch, don't you know me, old fellow?"

I wish you could have seen Watch then, when he found that he had mistaken his little friend for a thief. He jumped up and down, and cried and whined as if he had been whipped, and was so mortified, and ashamed of his mistake, that it was a long time before George could persuade him to go into the house.

At last they both went in, and George told his story; and when the laughing was over, and old Watch had been patted and comforted by every one, Uncle Henry said, "Well, George, we shall have to say that you were both dreadfully cheated."

*Aunt Tutie.*

## SUMMER'S OVER

Summer's over, summer's over!  
See, the leaves are falling fast;  
Flowers are dying, flowers are dying,  
All their beauty's gone at last.  
Now the thrush no longer cheers us;  
Warbling birds forget to sing;  
And the bees have ceased to wander,  
Sipping sweets on airy wing.

Winter's coming, winter's coming!  
Now his hoary head draws near;  
Winds are blowing, winds are blowing;  
All around looks cold and drear.  
Hope of spring must now support us;  
Winter's reign will pass away;  
Flowers will bloom, and birds will warble,  
Making glad the livelong day.

*T. C.*

## A BAD BLOW

Little David came running home from school one winter afternoon. As he passed through the yard, he saw the door of the cellar-kitchen standing open, and heard some one down in the cellar, pounding, thump, thump, thump.

Little David ran down the steps to see who it was.

He saw a great blazing fire in the wide fireplace, and three big pots hanging on the crane over it; and his mamma, Leah, Jane, and Aunt Jinny, making sausages; and John Bigbee, the colored boy, with a wooden mortar between his knees, and an iron-pestle in his hand, pounding, thump, thump, thump, in the mortar.

Little David ran to John, and asked, "What's in there?" but did not wait for an answer. He drew in his breath as hard as he could, and blew into the mortar with all his might.

A cloud of fine black pepper flew up into his mouth, nose, and eyes. How he did sneeze and strangle and cry!

Leah ran for a basin of cold water. His mamma got a soft linen cloth, and washed away all the pepper and most of the pain.

When he stopped crying, she said, "Little David, don't meddle."

*D. D. H.*

## **THE ANVIL CHORUS**

Clink, clink, clinkerty clink!  
That is the tune at morning's blink;  
And we hammer away till the busy day,

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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