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The Fairy Who Believed in Human Beings



Written and Illustrated by
Gertrude Alice Kay

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The Fairy Who Believed
in Human Beings

Written and Illustrated by
Gertrude Alice Kay



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To
A Real Fairy in Disguise



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Introduction

WHEN I was a child I wondered and wondered about a great many things, but most particularly about fairies. In the stories that were told and read to me fairies did strange and wonderful things but—the stories were always too short, and stopped too soon, without telling whether the fairies had fathers and mothers and grandmothers and what they ate and where they lived.

But now I am no longer a child, and since that pleasant time I have learned a few simple things, among them more about fairies. So, in this book, I will try to relieve the wondering minds of the children who *would* like to know more about them.

But, before I begin, you must promise not to ask too many questions. Especially you must not ask, "Is it true?" For, you see, I am a timid person, easily embarrassed, and questions frighten me, particularly the one—"Is it true?" I will forget what I started out to say if you embarrass me, and the result will be that very suddenly the printing in this book will stop altogether, and the pictures too, and there will be pages and pages without anything on them—not even a comma.

If I tell you what I have learned about one Gundy, a certain little he-fairy, I think it will give you an idea of all fairies.

The very first and most important thing about fairies is Moonlight. They are born in the Moonlight, work and play in the Moonlight—and hide in daytime. I cannot exactly say that fairies are born either, but rather that they just happen in the Moonlight. That is, they are found by a certain mother-fairy and father-fairy when the moon is bright enough to see. Maybe it will be in a flower, or jump-

ing out of the spray of a fountain, or under a cucumber vine—almost anywhere; you never *can* tell. But it must be true that the Moon causes fairies, draws them out of their hiding places, just as the sun draws the buds and little shoots of plants out of *their* hiding places. Surely it *is* the Moon, for almost no one ever, *ever* sees a trace of a fairy in daylight—no one excepting one old lady and a couple of children who *thought* they saw one.

Now, a baby fairy when he first happens is very like a common, every day baby, only, of course, he's a thousand times smaller—and has wings. That is what makes him a fairy—being so small and having wings! He can talk from the very first, and about his first remark will be that he does not believe in Human Beings. And not until he has gone to school will he admit that there are Human Beings, no matter what his father and mother say.

Fairies grow up very fast. But being born with teeth and knowing how to talk

gives them a good start of course. They go on living their little lives till something happens to their wings—then it is all over, and they vanish as if they had never happened at all.

There are just as many kinds of fairies as there are kinds of folks, so, if I were to start and keep on and on telling about this one and that one, this book would be a very thick book and look very important on the book shelf; and maybe the dictionary would lean against it to keep its balance. But I do not intend to go on and on telling about this one and that one; I am going to tell about Gundy only, and what happened to him.



Chapter I. Where Gundy Was Found.



ON the night that Gundy was found by his Mother and Father many things happened because the Moon was so wonderfully bright. In the first place the birds did not believe that it *was* the Moon at all. They thought it was the Sun because it *was* so bright, so they started their best early bird songs. And on that bright night ugly people looked almost beautiful in the moonlight and common-place things appeared fine and mysterious and the whole world seemed a different place. Human Beings walked about and talked in a friendly way, forgetting the petty things that

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they quarreled about in broad daylight or under electric lights. Poets and musicians and artists grew happy and had sudden new ideas and were sure that the ideas would bring them fame sooner or later.

Now, Gundy's Father and Mother—I have never been able to learn their real names, or just why they called him Gundy the minute they laid eyes on him—on this particular night were out with all the other fairies, as well as the Human Beings, to enjoy the wonderful white Moonlight.

Very early in the evening, when they first saw the Moon, over in the East, beyond the High White Fence, they knew that it was going to be a very, very big white Moon by the time that it could climb a quarter of the way up the Sky.

Indeed, all the fairies had their eye on that Moon. And more than one Mother-fairy said to a Father-fairy that it would be wise to keep a sharp lookout for fairy-babies, because a Moon like that one over there was

sure to coax the little rascals out of their hiding places.

So, Gundy's Father and Mother, after talking it all over, decided to set forth and see what they could see, and find what they could



Testing her wings

find. They put on their second-bests and looked very neat and tidy. Fairies are always rather nervous about their wings, for, as I have told you, when they lose them it's the end and they vanish. On this night—but it happened really every time they went anywhere—Gundy's Father gave Gundy's Mother's wings a gentle little pull to see if

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they were all secure and in good trim. She tested his in the same way and they agreed that they were a pretty husky pair of fairies and had no need to worry about old age for many a long day.

If they had known, for sure and certain, that they were really to find Gundy that night they would have put on their very bests instead of their second-bests but, as I have said, they looked very neat and tidy as they set forth.

Neither of them was beautiful, as you naturally expect fairies to be, but in the Moonlight they looked their best and said many pleasant things to each other as they went along.

Now, I must tell you something about Gundy's parents before we come to him, for after that the story will be mostly about him and what happened *to* him. On the whole they were of a very good sort. Their dispositions were good, but of the two possibly Gundy's Father had the better, though he

was rather a lazy fairy. But Gundy's little Mother was industrious and quick-witted, if she did have a sharp tongue. I have noticed, a number of times, that industrious people usually do have sharp tongues—but for my part I think it all right, for they *do* get things done. And there were very few things that Gundy's Mother could not do, or at least would not try to do. There were times when Gundy's parents said pretty sharp things to each other, but I think that they were like a great many other fairies, as well as Human Beings, they really enjoyed a quarrel because it was *SO* nice to make up again. To-night, however, they were in very fine spirits with not a sign of a quarrel in sight.

But, I nearly forgot to tell you where they lived. It *was* a humble place. Gundy's Mother was always hoping and planning that some day they would have a better home—over beyond the High White Fence, maybe. She was ambitious as well as industrious and liked very much fine people and fine things.

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On the other hand, Gundy's Father was well pleased with their home, which was nothing more than a Cabbage House.

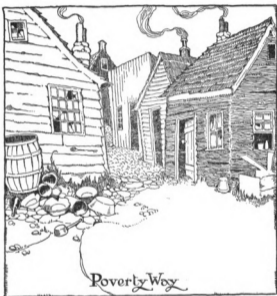
Ah, but it was very neat and cozy, for Gundy's Mother was a beautiful house-keeper. I wish you could have seen it!

But Gundy's parents were lonely in their Cabbage House. They felt that they were growing older and wanted a little fairy about to keep them lively. But they never, never had any luck on Moonlight nights in finding the hiding places of fairy-babies. They had come near finding one, several times, but more clever fairies had always spied the baby first. Sometimes they would come home, after a long search, sadly out of humor with each other and every one else in fact. They would accuse each other of making blunders and being stupid in allowing some other couple to bear away the prize.

But all of this was forgotten now as they went along, hand in hand, through the grass.

Far over on the road they could hear the murmur of Human Being voices. But they kept a safe distance. They met other fairies, some very important and fine-feeling ones from the Flower-Garden, who seemed bent on finding fairy-babies too. To-night every one seemed to be out for the same purpose. This worried Gundy's parents, for it did not seem likely that a humble couple from a Cabbage House, dressed in their second-bests, could stand a chance against these other aristocratic fairies. However, they hastened forward, hopping, sometimes flying, not missing a flower, lifting all the big leaves to look beneath, and scanning every nook and corner where the treasure might be found. But it happened that they were always just too late. Suddenly, near by, some voices would be heard and they would fly toward the sound to find a couple of fairies chuckling over a tiny, tiny fairy-baby whom they had discovered swinging on a cobweb or in a holly-hock or in a knot-hole of the

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Big-Tree. It was strange, but try as they
would, Gundy's parents were always too—
too late.



On this particularly fine Moonlight night
they had started out feeling so hopeful, but
after repeated disappointments their courage

failed and they were about to turn their faces back toward the Cabbage House.

But suddenly Gundy's Father had an idea, and proposed that they go over Poverty Way for there they might have better luck.

"Who wants a fairy-baby from Poverty Way?" said Gundy's Mother crossly. But Gundy's Father was determined, so she followed him, grumbling all the way. Poverty Way was indeed ugly. No wonder Gundy's Mother felt as she did, for the streets were mean and narrow, the houses low and small, and rubbish and filth were everywhere. But Gundy's Father pushed ahead without stopping till he came to the Dump.

Now, most every one knows what a dump is—it is a hill-side where old boxes and bottles and shoes and broken plates and tin-cans appear to be sliding down, down forever, but never reach the bottom. And no one ever goes near a dump but bad boys and the Trashmen.

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Whatever led Gundy's Father there none will ever know—least of all Gundy's Mother. And without once stopping he made straight toward a certain battered tin-can. Before she knew what to expect he lifted a fairy-baby out and held him up in the Moonlight.

Did you ever wish for a certain thing ever so hard, then suddenly get that very thing that you had wished for? And did it happen that you couldn't find words to say how happy you were inside? Well, that's the way those two little fairies felt when they found the fairy-baby in the tin-can. All they could say was, Gundy! Gundy! Gundy!

I do not know any words small enough to make you know how small Gundy really was. Of course, you and I, being Human Beings, could not have seen him, and would probably have said that he "wasn't at all"—I suppose that is why Human Beings never find the fairy-babies on Moonlight nights. But some time *I* intend to go out with my magnifying glass and look about—and hope for luck.

Of course they were happy, those fairy-parents. But Gundy's Mother scarcely knew what to *say*, for she was ambitious and had always hoped to find a fairy-baby in a flower or in the fountain-spray, and she wondered if she could feel just the same toward a tin-can baby. But Gundy's Father was perfectly satisfied, only he *did* feel like saying "I told you so" to Gundy's Mother because she had not wanted to come to the Dump.

They were both so excited over their find that they were a little quarrelsome. Each parent wanted to carry the fairy-baby and each was sure that the other did not know how.

Gundy's quick-tempered Mother said she hoped that the baby would have more wit than his Father. And after some time, for Gundy's Father *was* a bit slow, he said that "Gundy looked exactly like his Mother, which was a pity!" This was not a very nice thing to say, for I must confess that if you could have seen poor little Gundy you would have said that he was very, very homely.

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They were arguing in this way when they met some other fairies, some of the fine-feeling ones who had just found a little jewel of a baby in a flower. They were feeling very proud and patronizing, and stopped to see what Gundy's parents were talking about. They spied Gundy in his Father's arms. And, as Gundy's Mother had feared, they asked where he had been found. She quietly pinched Gundy's Father, but he failed to understand and blurted out the whole truth about the tin-can on the Dump—everything!

This, of course, caused a great laugh and much shrugging of aristocratic shoulders.

"On the Dump!" they exclaimed. "Well, let's have a look at him!" And poor little Gundy was held up, turned over and over and round and round and his little wings tweaked and twisted.

The fine-feeling fairies said what they thought about a fairy-baby, as ugly as this one, found in a tin-can, on the Dump over Poverty Way. It was oh, terribly rude, and

you would have thought that Gundy's poor parents were deaf, for all of these unkind things were said *before* them.

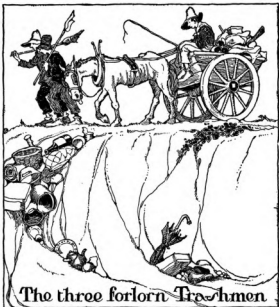
Suddenly a tiny little voice said, "Please take me back to the tin-can; I'm only a Dump-baby. Take me back to the Trash-men!"

"What does he mean?" asked all the amazed fairies. "Who are the Trash-men? Can it be those dreadful Human Beings who drive a cart and haul trash to the Dump?"

Just here I must tell you about the Trash-men. They *were* rather dreadful—but they were so terribly poor and forlorn. There were three of them, brothers, and they had a little sick sister in their shanty-home over on Poverty Way. They made a-few-pennies-a-day hauling garbage and trash in their broken down cart. But, oh! you should have seen their horse.

Now, when the baby Gundy spoke of the Trash-men, who *were* really Human Beings, every one was of course surprised, and one of

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the fine-feeling fairies who had just found
the little jewel of a baby in a flower, spoke up



and said that Gundy should not be allowed to
live. Now this Altogether Mean fairy went
on to say that since Gundy had been found in

a tin-can on the Dump, over Poverty Way, and was so ugly, and believed in Human Beings, as no natural fairy-baby should, some one ought to pull out his wings and put an end to him.

“Out with his wings!” cried the Altogether Mean fairy, a horrible look in his eyes.

There was silence and it seemed as if the others might agree to do as the Altogether Mean fairy had said. Gundy’s Mother trembled like a leaf and she hugged poor little Gundy tight to her, for now she did not care if he had come from over Poverty Way and if he were ugly—he was her own fairy-baby and no one should harm him!

But the others gathered around more closely and the Altogether Mean fairy pushed forward as if he would snatch Gundy from his Mother’s arms.

Then a surprising thing happened; and it happened very quickly too. An arm shot out, again, then again, and the Altogether Mean fairy fell sprawling in a heap and Gundy’s

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Father stood over him, very red in the face. But that was not all. With some handy-snippers Gundy's Father trimmed the Altogether Mean fairy's wings till they were a disgrace. Then he sent him on his way. The other fine-



*The Altogether-mean
Fairy*

feeling fairies followed after and not one of them had another word to say about Gundy or Gundy's Father and Mother.

So the new fairy-parents and their fairy-baby turned their faces toward the Cabbage House, as happy as could be.

CHAPTER II

GUNDY'S HOME

GUNDY'S happy parents hopped and flew and raced along, sometimes one carrying him, sometimes the other, and sometimes carrying him together on a chair made with their hands.

They discovered that he held a tiny pipe in his tiny hands. But where he got it I do not know. They concluded that he must be a musical fairy and quite marveled at his ability, although they had never heard him play on his pipe.

When they reached the Cabbage House Gundy's Father handed him to Gundy's Mother while he went ahead to make a light. Now he didn't have to hunt a match—oh, no indeed; all that he did was to clap his hands, and a dozen fire-flies opened their sparks and

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took their places, one over the door of the Cabbage House, the others inside, so that when Gundy's Mother laid him down in his little crib, which had always been ready for him, he looked around and found himself in



The Cabbage House

a very cheerful, snug, little place. Now, the Cabbage House wasn't a real Cabbage—tight and hard—but it was a house made of big cabbage leaves nicely fitted together. Some very large ones formed the roof, the

crinkling edges overhanging like eaves, which gave quite a pretty effect. There was a door of course and little windows and a chimney made of a pea-pod.

When Gundy's parents built the Cabbage House they hid it away back in the corn-patch where it was not likely to be seen or stepped on.

You see Gundy's parents were plain fairies and lived in the Vegetable Garden. On the other side of the High White Fence was the Flower Garden, growing in orderly rows round and round the fountain. It was very beautiful. And fairies lived there too—the fine-feeling ones.

Up some stone steps, from the Flower Garden, stood the great Human Being house—but I'll tell you more about that, later, and also of the people who lived there.

Many of the Vegetable Garden fairies moved about, living one day in the corn husks, the next under a spreading cucumber vine, and so on. But Gundy's Father and

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Mother wanted a real little home, so they very carefully built the Cabbage House way



She put him in his little crib

back in the corn-patch, as I have told you.

Inside the Cabbage House was very quaint indeed. It would have made you laugh.

Gundy's cradle was a small bean-pod, swung from the ceiling with corn-silk. Fairies use corn-silk for many, many different purposes. There was a tiny stove in one corner, made out of a little yellow gourd. Tables and chairs, made from odds and ends found in the Vegetable Garden, were shaped and twisted and tied with corn-silk in the most clever way. And when the place was well lighted with fire-flies, almost any one would have said that it was a very nice little home to live in.

On that first night of all, Gundy, sitting up very straight in his crib, looked around at everything and was greatly pleased in his small way. It was so very different from the Dump.

Now, Gundy, who had heard only Trashmen talk, very often used some of their dreadful words,—but of course he did not know that they were at all dreadful.

So, as he looked around at the cozy Cabbage House, he clapped his little hands to-

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gether and made a Trash-man remark. Oh, it was quite rough—it never would do to tell, and Gundy's parents were quite horrified. But they understood that poor little Gundy was not to blame, for he had never heard anything else.

"We must send for Grandmother at once," said Gundy's Father.

"But no," said Gundy's Mother, "not till I make him some clothes." They had a few words about this, but Gundy's Mother had her way.

Now, probably you do not know it but little fairies always go to school to their Grandmothers. I think it rather nice—and quite sensible too, for the older a fairy grows the more it knows, and so, of course, a Grandmother-fairy is wiser than any of the others.

Some of the very old fairies know a great many things—common, everyday things about Human Beings, also about animals and bugs and birds and bats. They know about the

wind, where it starts and where it goes. But the most wonderful thing that they *do* know is Magic. That is, the very, very old ones know Magic and they try to teach it to the young ones; but so often the little rascals are mischievous and won't pay attention, and so grow up to be rather stupid. When the time comes, when they should be able to perform a deed of Magic, they don't know how and stand open-mouthed and dumb. You see fairies *are* like Human Beings, in some ways.

Gundy's Grandmother was very old indeed. Her wings were almost as thin as air and you could see through them. She lived alone in a nearby Mole-hill, because she thought it was warmer than the Cabbage House. Everybody was very careful of Grandmother, for she was very frail—a sudden gust of wind and she might vanish.

On this first day of Gundy's life with his parents his Mother set to work with her nimble fingers and a happy heart. She made him

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his first suit of clothes. As I have told you fairies use corn-silk for many purposes, especially for their clothing; that is the everyday Vegetable Garden fairies do. The Fine-



She went to her chest

feeling Flower-Garden fairies of course use rose petals and cobwebs and such things for *their* clothing.

This thrifty woman always had a large supply of corn-silk on hand. She went to her chest, drew out an armful and began in the most surprising way to form a little gar-

ment. Surely she knew some Magic too, for it took shape so rapidly that before you knew it she was holding up a tiny pair of trousers for Gundy to see.

Then she scampered over to one corner and dipped them up and down, up and down in a big gourd. When she came back Gundy saw that they were a beautiful blue color.

Fairies all know how to make and use colors. They get them from flowers and fruit and mix them with dew. Human Beings very often wear crude ugly colors, but fairies—oh, never, never!

While the new blue trousers were drying, after their dipping, Gundy's busy little Mother made him shoes and a round-about. The shoes she colored from a dandelion, the round-about from a blackberry.

When everything was ready she called Gundy's Father, and together they pushed little fat Gundy into his first clothes. They were so happy that they spun about in circles, for Gundy, homely as he was, looked so

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very, very cunning. He was so fat and his stiff little wings stuck out so prettily. He did look a little uncomfortable, but you know he had never worn clothes before.

"How do like yourself, Gundy?" they cried.

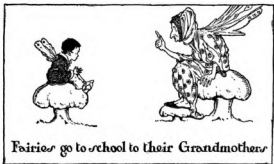
And poor Gundy made another dreadful Trash-man remark, in reply.

"Go quickly for Grandmother," cried Gundy's Mother in alarm, for this must not go on. Gundy would disgrace them if he continued to talk like the Trash-men. So Gundy's Father took to his wings, out the door and over to the Mole-hill to fetch Gundy's Grandmother-school-teacher.

CHAPTER III

GUNDY AND HIS GRANDMOTHER

GUNDY'S Mother bustled about to prepare the School Room. She dragged a very large toad-stool out into the middle of the floor and



placed a little toad-stool directly in front of it. Then she picked Gundy up and set him on the little toad-stool and told him to fold his hands and look straight in front of him.

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Very soon Gundy's Father returned with Grandmother on his back. My, how frail and wizened she was! They carefully put her on the big toad-stool, and she looked very solemn indeed. Then and there began Gundy's first day at school.

"Say good-morning, Grandmother," said Gundy's parents anxiously.

"Say good-morning, Grandmother," repeated Gundy, eager to please everybody. Then they all shook their heads and said, "No, no, that is not right." And poor Gundy thought he had done something very wrong and his lip trembled.

Few children are afraid of their Grandmothers, but, at first, Gundy *was* afraid of his, for she was so very queer looking, and she didn't seem to love him very much. But that probably was because she didn't know him and suspected him of being stupid.

The first lesson that a fairy-baby has is on Human Beings, for as I told you in the beginning no baby believes in them, so he must

be taught that there *are* Human Beings, which ones are harmless and which are not, how to avoid being stepped on by them, and so on.

The Grandmother-teacher always says on the first day at school—"Do you believe in Human Beings?"

The fairy-baby always answers, "No, Grandmother."

The Grandmother shakes her finger and tells him that he must, while all the time he is perfectly sure in his own small self that there are no such creatures. If he is a good, respectful little scholar he will hold his tongue and let her talk on, no matter what *he* may think; but sometimes, generally in fact, these little scholars are not good and have to be spanked a little before they will say that they *do* believe in Human Beings.

But after the first day in school, after they begin to believe in Human Beings, the Grandmother teaches them many things about their big neighbors. She tells them that they

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must be very kind to Human Beings, for they are not as fortunate as fairies, often being very foolish and unwise. They are so big and clumsy that they cannot live in nice, little, cozy, ready-made places, as fairies do. They are not such good friends with the little animals and bugs as the fairies are and they do not understand Magic.

But Gundy knew something about Human Beings to start with, so when his Grandmother asked if he believed in them he gravely answered that he believed in Trash-men. Although this was not quite the right answer it was allowed to pass and she went on to tell him all about Human Beings and he listened very carefully. You would have smiled to see him sitting there in front of his Grandmother on his little toad-stool behaving like a little gentleman.

Day after day they had lessons on Human Beings and finally they began to study squirrels and moles and rabbits and grasshoppers and snails and all the others. Gundy liked

these lessons, oh, very much indeed, and he used to beg his Mother to allow him to go, after school, and play with the little animals. But she always answered that he was too lit-



He used to beg to play after school

tle, something might happen to him. Then she would hug him tightly, for now Gundy's Mother loved her homely fairy-baby very much indeed.

But one day when school time came and Grandmother sat waiting on her big toad-

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stool, Gundy was nowhere to be found. His parents were greatly alarmed, and so was Grandmother, for she had grown to love good-natured Gundy too.

They hunted him high and low and finally found him away off in the weeds playing on his little pipe—and this was the first time they had ever heard him play. The crickets from all over the garden had come pell mell to hear him. It was indeed a droll sight to see him sitting there in the midst of all those crickets, dressed in his little blue trousers and round-about, piping away for dear life.

The music was very pretty, but of course Gundy *had* to be scolded for every one knows that it is quite naughty to run away and worry your elders. Gundy didn't know it—but he must be taught! He never pouted or was cross when his parents scolded and I must say that he always wanted to be a good boy.

Now that his parents knew that he could make music on his little pipe, his Father used to take him on his knee in the evenings, and

seated in front of the little gourd stove, he would play tune after tune for his happy parents.

But the sweet sounds reached beyond the Cabbage House, for the crickets and squirrels and rabbits, all the little animals, came to listen. They sat about on the outside while Gundy played his solemn little airs.

Gundy's Father was greatly alarmed one day when he discovered that something had taken a big, big, bite out of the roof of their Cabbage House. He looked and looked all around to see how it could have happened.

"I know how it happened, Father," said Gundy, who no longer talked like the Trashmen. "A big rabbit who comes to hear me play bit the hole in the roof." And his parents were greatly pleased at his cleverness.

So, the next night when Gundy sat on his Father's knee in front of the gourd stove playing on his little pipe, they could hear all the little animals coming from every direction to hear his solemn little airs.

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But—but—but—all of a sudden Gundy started to play the most ticklish little dance tune, and my! what a squeaking and chirping there was outside. They rushed to the door to see that squirrels, chipmunks, moles, crick-



Gundy made him skip

ets and the big rabbit, every last one of them, were dancing wildly. Gundy stopped his playing, which of course stopped the dancing, and he shook his finger at the big rabbit, who had bitten the roof, and he told him that he must not spoil their house by taking greedy big bites out of it. All the other animals

joined in and said sharp things to the big rabbit, who hung his head and seemed to hate himself. Then to punish him Gundy played another ticklish dance, just to him, and made him skip so fast, so fast, that he was ready to drop, and panted that he never, never would bite another roof.

After that Gundy played a really nice little dance and there in the Moonlight, in the corn-patch, Gundy's parents and all the little animals danced together.

Gundy was a very obedient boy and did exactly what he was told to do. But more than that, he really found things *to do*, and helped his Mother in many, *many* ways. Now that the corn was getting ripe he gathered great bunches of corn-silk for her. He would come in with his small arms full and dragging it along behind him. He grew every day and was now able to drag a bean, from away over where they grew, to the Cabbage House. All the little animals were very fond of him and they loved to help him with his

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little tasks. He had many friends, but among
them not a single little fairy-play-mate!

One day when he was toiling along with an
extra large bean-pod he heard a merry laugh
and looked up to see three pretty little fairies
watching him. He stopped, smiled and drop-



They pushed him rudely away

ping his bean skipped over toward them,
meaning to take their hands and be good
friends as he was with all the little animals.

Ah, but they pushed him rudely away, and
hooted and yelled and called him "Dump-
baby." Alas, poor Gundy, who had only
kind feelings toward every one!

And for the first time in many a day Gundy remembered that he *was* only a Dump-baby and that his Father had had to fight with the Altogether Mean fairy to keep him from pulling out Gundy's wings. He felt very sad and meek as he picked up his bean and went slowly home. He told his busy little Mother all about it, just as little human boys do, and she tried to comfort him, making sweet cakes and a new round-about for him.

But Gundy was a happy little fairy and always busy, so his wrongs did not worry him long; and he still had a good will toward everybody.

Grandmother was now teaching Gundy how to make corn-silk ropes and swings, wound so strongly that no fairy living could break them. She also taught him how to toss his corn-silk rope in the air, then run nimbly up the rope before it had time to fall back on the earth. Ah, that *was* a pretty trick! Then he could stretch it between two corn-stalks and walk as surely and lightly along its length

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as he walked on the ground. Most every
day he learned a new trick.

He was also learning more facts about
Human Beings. The Gardener, he was told,
was not the fairies' friend and could destroy
them at any moment with his sickle or hoe or



That was a pretty trick.

his enormous boots. Gundy had never seen
the Gardener; indeed he had never seen much
of anything since he came to this corner of the
Vegetable Garden. But one day he deter-
mined to climb to the top of the very tallest
corn-stalk and look about him.

So, without saying a word to anybody, he

started to climb. It took a long time, for the corn-stalk was very, very tall. He rested on every other leaf as he came to it, but finally reached the top which waved so proudly in the breeze.

Oh, how beautiful the world was! Could that be the Flower Garden over there where all those gay blooms tossed their heads? Gundy thought of the aristocratic, fine-feeling fairies whom he had heard of who lived in the Flower Garden. How he would love to be friends with them, but he knew that they would call him "Dump-baby" and laugh at him. Then it came into Gundy's mind to wonder if they some time would grow to like him if he were always kind and knew Magic and helped them in every way that he could. Poor Gundy who had a good will toward everybody and wanted to be friends!

He stayed a long time on the tall corn-stalk, for there was so much to be seen.

A huge creature, somewhat like the Trashmen, was moving about over in the Flower

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Garden. It must be the Gardener, for he wore a big hat, as big as the Cabbage House, just as Grandmother had said.

And high above everything towered the great Human Being House, but Gundy could see no one moving there. Some time, he thought, I may go there—but how, that was the question.

At last Gundy started to climb down. Then he thought of his corn-silk rope which he carried with him everywhere. He tied it securely to a leaf and dropped easily and lightly to the ground.

His Father and Mother had missed him and were scurrying here and there, looking frantically for him. They were a bit cross but forgot to scold when he told them of the thousands of interesting things to be seen from the top of the corn-stalk. They hung on every word that he said and thought him a brave boy to climb so high and see so much.

It now came to be a regular habit with Gundy to climb the corn-stalk every day after

school. He sat up there alone and thought and thought. He kept saying to himself, over and over, how fine it would be if in some way he could get over into the Flower Garden and up to the Human Being House. His wings, of course, were not yet strong enough to carry him so far—but surely there was some other way.

And one fine day Gundy had an idea; it came all of a sudden, like a flash, and he lowered himself on the corn-silk rope with a quick jerk. Gundy was right. When you *have* an idea hurry, hurry before it can get away, for it's a very precious thing and must not be lost. They do not come every day.

I cannot quite explain Gundy's idea, for there was some of Grandmother's Magic in it—and you must remember that I'm only a Human Being. All that I know is that when he reached the ground he darted quickly into the Cabbage House, dipped his pipe into the blue dye, the rose and green, and came flying out again to raise his pipe to the sky and blow

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with all his might and main. A strange thing
to do, you'll say; but a very wonderful thing



happened, for a sparkling, gleaming little ball
which grew rapidly larger rose from Gundy's
pipe and floated in the air.

Gundy had invented the bubble! Gundy, the ugly Dump-baby from Poverty Way, had invented the bubble. With a quick movement he flew after it, jumped in and floated up, up and away.

His Father and Mother and Grandmother standing together in front of the Cabbage House held their breaths with feelings of delight and alarm. Could it be their own little Dump-baby, whom they had found in a tin-can over on Poverty Way, who was now sailing far over their heads in the beautiful sparkling bubble? Ah, if they could have known how long it would be till they should see him again they would have been greatly distressed.

But Gundy in his bubble rose higher and higher, over the waving corn and away toward the Flower Garden. He strained his eyes for some trace of the Cabbage House and his parents, but they were lost to sight. He felt a touch of homesickness and wondered if he had done right when he invented this

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bubble-thing that was to carry him so far from his happy home.

But there was no stopping and turning back now, for the bubble floated steadily on and on. Gundy noticed, however, that it was growing very, very thin, like Grandmother's wings, and he held his breath, wondering what he would do if it were to break suddenly.

By this time the Vegetable Garden had fallen far behind with its familiar corn-patch, cabbages, cucumbers, beans and the rest. He had sailed over the High White Fence and now hung directly above the Flower Garden. The bubble had grown so very thin that Gundy knew it could only last a very short minute more.

What he expected soon happened; the bubble burst on a tall yellow lily and simply went to nothing at all, just like fairies when something happens to their wings.

And there Gundy found himself on the tall lily, with no bubble in sight and everything different and strange about him.

CHAPTER IV

THE FINE-FEELING FAIRIES

GUNDY felt a strange sinking feeling inside when he realized that he was now far, far from home. He wished heartily that he knew enough of his Grandmother's Magic to put himself back where he belonged—in the Cabbage House. But he must make the best of it, for his bubble had burst, and his little wings were not strong enough to carry him home.

Looking around, he discovered that there were lilies all about him, wonderfully tall and proud-looking, and, if you'll believe it, fairies were peeping out of every one of them.

And oh, *such fairies!* It made Gundy's heart tick like a watch to look at them, they were so very beautiful. And their costumes! —I wish I knew some magic words with

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which to describe them. They looked like
sprays of jewels—such colors and so wonder-
fully made!

Gundy was delighted with the beautiful
sight, but the Flower Garden fairies only



seemed surprised at seeing him there. This
soon gave way to mirth and they laughed and
laughed. Now every one knows how uncom-
fortable it is to have people laughing when
you do not know what they are laughing
about—you always feel that it must be your-
self; maybe your hat is crooked or your face

smutty! Poor Gundy felt so and finally dropped his head and stood there looking very stupid.

But, suddenly, he heard deep breathing behind him and managed to turn around to face the angriest fairy he had ever beheld. His eyes bulged, his face was crimson and he showed his long teeth dangerously.

Alas, poor Gundy! It was the Altogether Mean fairy, that was glaring at him there in such a rage that Gundy didn't know what to expect next. The other fairies seemed greatly interested in what was about to happen. They liked to see the Altogether Mean fairy angry, for something, always, was sure to follow. The Altogether Mean fairy knew Gundy the instant that he blundered onto his lily, and intended to make him pay well for the time that Gundy's Father had beaten him and clipped his miserable wings.

Grabbing poor little Gundy by the collar of his round-about, he cried in a loud hoarse voice for all to hear—then he told what a com-

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mon little out-cast Gundy was, found in an old tin-can on the Dump, over on Poverty Way, found by Vegetable Garden parents who lived in a ridiculous Cabbage House. He jeered at Gundy's simple little garments and homely face, and the crowd continued to laugh and laugh. No one protested and no one had a kind word for poor little Gundy.

Then the Altogether Mean fairy lifted Gundy by his ears and held him far out over the edge of the lily—and dropped him. Not having time to save himself or spread his wings, Gundy fell head-long, down, down. He could hear the others still laughing as he struck the ground and crumpled one of his poor wings most painfully. Poor, gentle, generous-hearted Gundy could not understand why he had been treated so unkindly. His crumpled wing tingled with pain and he thought of his Mother and longed to cry on her shoulder. The big tears ran down his cheeks, but there was no one there to feel sorry.

But, suddenly, he heard a most welcome sound—a cricket. Maybe it was one of his good friends who liked his piping. The



tears stopped and he picked up his little pipe and played his best cricket song—one that all the crickets knew and loved well. He played

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it once, then again, but all was silent and the cricket answered never a sound.

Then the fairies, who are all very *curious*, came walking by to see what had happened to him. They pointed and stared when they saw his crumpled wing, but not one of them offered to help him or said that they were sorry. The real reason for this was that they were so dreadfully afraid of not always being aristocratic and proper, for it would *never* do in the world for Flower Garden fairies to have anything to do with this outcast from the Dump who lived in the Vegetable Garden in a ridiculous Cabbage House!

And that too was the reason why the cricket answered never a sound when Gundy played the cricket-song—he was afraid of not seeming an aristocratic and proper cricket—I am sorry to say—but you see for yourself—that there are snobs everywhere.

Everybody has had the toothache, and knows how it grumbles and jumps, and jumps and shoots. Well, that is just how Gundy's

crumpled wing felt and he didn't know where to go or what to do. He dared not think of his home or his parents, for it made the pain worse and his tears blinded him, but he did think of his Grandmother and wished, oh how he wished, that he had paid better heed to her lessons in Magic.

He hopped very slowly and painfully about among the flowers. How beautiful they were, but how unfriendly they seemed, just as a row of tall fine houses seems in a strange city, where you haven't a single friend. There were roses and lilies and snap-dragons and lark-spurs and asters and zinnias and, oh, ever so many others, all perfect in their own way.

But finally he came to a place among the beautiful flowers where a little wild climbing-bean grew. It had found its way into the Flower Garden by mistake.

"Here is where I may rest," said Gundy, with a sigh. And the little climbing-bean waved its leaves in answer, for no doubt it was lonely too, in this Flower Garden where it was

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so out of place. And Gundy stayed quietly there, eating the little pink beans and playing sadly on his pipe. He tried, oh very hard, to be brave, but sometimes, when he could not help it, he thought of his parents and the big tears would run down his cheeks. Then the climbing-bean would rustle its leaves as if it were trying to comfort him.

But one day, when he sat there playing on his pipe to comfort himself, he heard a tremendous noise. The ground seemed to rock and sway. He peered out to see what could be the matter. Coming directly toward him—oh awful sight—was the Gardener, and in his hand he held his hoe.

It flashed through Gundy's mind that the Gardener was coming to dig up the little climbing-bean, which did not belong in this aristocratic Flower Garden. And Gundy was right, for that was exactly what the Gardener intended to do.

Gundy's heart stood still in terror. Oh, if he only knew some Magic! Then a thought

came to him: if he could make the big rabbit dance with his pipe, he could make the Gardener do so too. And he played the most ticklish dance tune that ever was played—oh, it was very lively indeed! He could see the Gardener's enormous boots get into step, then



It was very lively indeed

faster, faster, faster they flew till one could scarcely see them.

Gundy stopped a moment to get his breath; the Gardener slowed down his wild dance and made a furious movement toward the little climbing-bean—Ah, but suddenly Gundy started the music again, and faster than ever.

This ridiculous performance continued un-

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til the Gardener was nearly dead and was glad to creep away from that corner of the Garden where the climbing-bean grew. He was Irish, was the Gardener, and believed the bean to be haunted—and he allowed it to stay where it was!

News of Gundy's act traveled like wild-fire from one end of the garden to the other. All the fairies, more curious than ever, came trooping past to stare at him, but they no longer laughed. And his name could be heard in every fairy household and some of the fairies thought that he should be better treated because he had done a Clever Thing. But there were others, especially those who lived in the lilies, who said, "Never, never could a fairy, found in a tin-can, live on equal terms with them!" And so the matter stood.

Gundy's wing pained him less and less, but it would always be a crumpled wing and he could never do more than half fly. But he made the best of it and still had a good will toward every one. When he felt stronger he

ventured out from beneath the friendly bean to look about. He discovered that he was quite near the beautiful, marble fountain that sent up a clear, slender stream of water which broke and fell back in millions of jewel-drops. The sight made Gundy almost happy. In a way it repaid him for some of his sad hours in the Flower Garden. Every day he went there to sit on the marble ledge and please his eyes with the beautiful sight. And he wondered and wondered why it was that so much unkindness could be found in so beautiful a place. Could Magic change it? If so, something *must* be done. Maybe, some time, he could go back to Grandmother and she would tell him what to do.

One day as he sat there in his favorite spot, watching the glorious fountain, he spied some Very Little Fairies floating past on a delicate fern-leaf. They saw him at the same time; and he smiled, then they smiled; and he waved his hand, then they waved theirs. Then he beckoned, and they sailed over and

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sat beside him on the fountain-ledge. Now, these Very Little Fairies belonged to the aristocratic and proper Flower Garden fairies, but like real children they didn't care whether he came from the Dump or not. The important thing was that he smiled and waved his hand and was willing to play with them.

He played on his pipe and they loved it. He told them about the Cabbage House and the big rabbit who bit the roof—and their jaws dropped open-wide, for they were so interested. But the trouble was, when Gundy talked about the Cabbage House the big tears always rolled down his cheeks, which of course worried the Very Little Fairies.

Day after day they used to go there to meet on the Fountain Ledge and sometimes Gundy would do tricks for them with cob-web ropes as his Grandmother had taught him to perform with corn-silk. And the Very Little Fairies never grew tired of Gundy's tricks. His name was heard very often now in all the fairy households, for all the Very Little

Fairies talked constantly to their parents of Gundy's kind ways and clever tricks.

But one day he did something that surprised the whole garden, Very Little Fairies and big ones; even the Altogether Mean fairy was amazed.

This is what happened—Gundy had done all the tricks that he knew with the cob-web rope, and the Very Little Fairies, who were never satisfied, were calling for a new trick, so he had a notion. He dipped his little pipe into the fountain spray and blew and blew till a splendid big bubble rose from the pipe into the air. It sailed lightly upward and glided round and round the fountain and finally broke in the spray.

Gundy reasoned that if he and the Very Little Fairies were to hop in and ride about in one of these beautiful big bubbles, that he blew so easily with his pipe, no harm would be done. So he blew another one. When it grew big and fine and glistening, in they all hopped. Round and round the fountain

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they sailed. It was wonderful. The Very Little Fairies could not speak, they were so happy. When they finally came floating gently down, and the bubble broke in the spray near Gundy's favorite spot, and it was all over, the Very Little Fairies cried, "Do it again"—"do it again!"

So Gundy had to do it again and again. He was very patient with the Very Little Fairies and they loved him a great deal.

The last time that he came down he found that all the Fine-feeling fairies were out in their most gorgeous garments. They intended to make a party of it. These were the very same fairies who had laughed loudly at Gundy, allowed the Altogether Mean fairy to drop him off the lily and had not had a kind word to say about his poor crumpled wing. But these Fine-feelers had changed their minds and decided that it was entirely proper and aristocratic to notice Gundy's cleverness, and so they clapped their hands for all they were worth.



All of the fairies were out

And poor, simple-minded Gundy had never been quite so frightened in his life as when he saw all of those Fine-feeling fairies, in their most gorgeous garments, clapping their hands. He didn't understand what it all meant and he wanted to get away quickly. So he dodged slyly out of the crowd and hurried to his climbing bean and hid himself far up out of sight.

But hiding is lonely business and he missed the Very Little Fairies, so when he thought that the Fine-feeling fairies had surely forgotten all about the bubble, he scrambled down from his perch. But he found that wherever he went they were watching and waiting for him. They tried to put a crown on his head, to make him presents and take him home to dinner. Indeed they quarreled among themselves as to who should do these things for him.

Poor Gundy, who had never felt quite so uncomfortable in his whole life, was so nervous that he didn't know which way to turn

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to get away. The fairies had caught hands
and made a ring around him so that he could
not get away and hide again. He stood there
in the center—oh, so embarrassed—for he still
wore his outgrown, Vegetable-garden clothes.
But the fairies did not laugh at them now, but



He was so embarrassed

said they were quaint and rather droll and
had a style all their own!

But finally Gundy could stand it no longer.
It was rather rude, but he broke through the
ring and flew and ran and ran and flew till he
was once more safe far up on the climbing-
bean.

The Fine-feeling fairies hunted and called, but Gundy, like the cricket, answered never a sound and they concluded that he must have left them altogether. They were in great distress, for now they knew how clever and kind Gundy was, even though he was found on the Dump and lived in a Cabbage House in the Vegetable Garden.

The Altogether Mean fairy was in black disgrace. No one would speak to him because it was he who first started to be unkind to Gundy. But the Altogether Mean fairy retorted that they had all laughed when he dropped Gundy off the lily, which was almost as bad. They were all ashamed of themselves. The Magic thing that Gundy had wished for had happened. They all went home and each one made a vow that never, never would they be so unkind to another as they had been to Gundy, the great and good!

Gundy stayed in his hiding place till the Moon had dropped out of sight and before the morning star appeared in the East. All

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was dark when he slipped to the ground, and bidding the climbing-bean farewell he felt his way over to the fountain, guided by the sound of its gentle splashing.

As he passed along he could hear some of the Very Little Fairies crying themselves to sleep, murmuring, "Gundy, Gundy." Never, never would he forget those Very Little Fairies who had loved him from the first and not because they found that it was the aristocratic and proper thing to do.

He dipped his pipe into the spray and blew and blew and when he could feel a strong big bubble tugging he managed to hop in and was carried swiftly away by a fresh morning breeze that had sprung up.

CHAPTER V

THE HUMAN BEING HOUSE

GUNDY fully expected the bubble to carry him back over the High White Fence, to the Cabbage House in the Vegetable Garden where he would find his parents and his Grandmother waiting for him.

But as the pale morning star appeared in the East he could dimly see that everything about him looked strange, stranger even than the Flower Garden. He grew alarmed and tried to force the bubble to go the other way, but the morning breeze, which carried them along, was fresh and strong and he could do nothing. Alas, alas, poor Gundy was not to see his home for many a day!

Looking ahead, he saw that they were coming toward something very huge and dark. His poor little heart trembled. But as they

drew nearer, the morning star came out quite clearly, and Gundy saw that it was the Human Being House which he had seen so long ago from the corn-stalk in the Vegetable Garden. It looked so big and solemn there in the faint morning light.

He didn't know just what to expect, but he soon found out, for the bubble carried him directly through an open window of the Human Being House, broke suddenly, and left him sitting on a broad window-sill. When he recovered somewhat from the surprise of finding himself there, his thoughts were very sad. It was a keen disappointment that he could not go home. What would his parents think had become of him? The more he thought the sadder he grew, till finally he burst into tears and sobbed out loud.

He was sure that there was no one near so he cried and cried. But a nice, gentle, little voice from away over in a dark corner interrupted him and said, "Who is crying?" Then Gundy stopped short and sat up very straight

—for boys never like to be caught crying. After a long silence the same gentle, little voice said, “Where are you?”

Gundy knew that he should answer; it would only be polite, but he didn't know what to say, and then his voice was choky from crying. So he took out his pipe and played the best that he could.

But now, very slowly it was beginning to get pink all over the sky outside. And the pink light was creeping inside the Human Being House and Gundy could see that he was in a room where everything seemed, oh very large! And away over across the room in a big bed was a little child, with spread-out curls. It must have been he who had spoken so gently to Gundy.

It made Gundy a bit nervous and he said to himself, “Here I am in a Human Being House—what am I to do?” His Grandmother had given him a great many lessons about Human Beings, but to save himself he could not remember anything except that he

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must never show himself, and how not to be stepped on. Oh, why had he not learned his lessons better!

He decided, as it grew lighter and lighter, that he had better hide himself somewhere, so he skipped up the lace curtain, just as Grandmother had taught him to run up a corn-silk rope. At the top he found a comfortable place to sit where he could look all over the huge room and not be seen at all.

It was a wonderful sight to Gundy who had never been in a Human Being House before. He could see that the room was very beautiful, as the shadows gradually fell away before the morning light and slipped quietly into the corners.

The child in the big bed sat up and turned his curly head this way and that.

I'll play a cheerful little tune, thought Gundy to himself—and he did, his very best, with nimble trills all up and down. Gundy never missed a chance, you see, to do something nice for somebody.

The child ran over toward the window and stood looking up toward Gundy's hiding place, laughing and clapping his little hands.

Ah, thought Gundy, drawing back, I must be careful; he might see me and Grandmother told me never to let a Human Being do that. It had now grown quite light and Gundy made himself very small and rolled up into a little ball as every fairy knows how to do.

But now I must tell you something about the people in the Human Being House, into which the bubble had carried Gundy.

It was a very solemn house. There were only two people in it who really ever, *ever* laughed. One of these was the Child in the big bed, who had talked to Gundy; the other was the Child's little Irish nurse-maid, who was the Gardener's daughter.

There was a Grandmother here too, but oh, very different from Gundy's grandmother, for she never tried to teach the Child anything; in fact, she thought very little about

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him—only that he was there. She was very tall, very thin and very yellow. She wore stiff silk dresses, piles and piles of gray hair on top of her head and many rings on her fingers. It is unfortunate for any child to have a



Grandmother like this, but I am glad to say that very few have. She played cards, alone with herself, a great part of the time, but sometimes she went, all wrapped in furs, and rode in a shiny black carriage. She never took the Child along.

Next, there was the Uncle. He was short and wrinkled and a little deaf, and was never known to do anything but read crackly newspapers from morning till night. Sometimes he wouldn't be there, and then he was at the



Club. And when he was not at the Club he wore a purple dressing gown and slippers and sat in a big chair, behind his paper, and never said a word to anybody. He read and read and did not seem to care if there were no pretty pictures in his crackly papers.

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Then, there was the Child, who had happy eyes and could always laugh no matter how solemn and glum the others might look. His eyes seemed full of little brightly-burning lights, and soft curls covered his fine head. His Mother would have loved those curls, but no one ever spoke of his Mother and Father, and he was too young to begin to ask questions. Probably they were dead—I do not know.

The little nurse-maid, who was the Gardener's daughter, was also Irish, and she was the other one beside the Child who could laugh. But she was very careful and only laughed when she was alone with the Child.

There were other persons, servants, who moved silently about, in and out of the rooms, never smiling and always looking the same, day in and day out.

But the morning that the Child nearly discovered Gundy's hiding place up over the window was the beginning of a happier time, for him as well as for the entire household.

As he stood there looking up to where the sound of Gundy's pipe had come and hoping that he would hear the sound again, the little nurse-maid opened the door and stuck in her merry little head.

"Quick, quick, quick, Nursie," said the Child, jumping up and down in delight. "There is a fairy in the room. He came before it was light, and sat on the window-sill and cried to himself, and finally he played on a little pipe. I heard him. And now he is hiding up over the window."

"Why, the little rogue!" said the nurse-maid. She thought that the Child had started their old game of "Pretend." They often played "Pretend," one of them beginning it, the other falling in line at once. Its a fine game for two persons. "Where can the fairy be?" said the Nurse, shaking the curtains violently. Had she known it, she almost scared Gundy to death and he thought every moment that he would fall on her head.

Then, while she dressed the child they

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talked and talked about the fairy; they de-
cided to call it "our little fairy" and that it be-
longed to Nursie and the Child. Then the



nurse-maid told the story of what had hap-
pened in the Flower Garden when her Father,
the Gardener, had tried to dig up the climb-
ing-bean that had grown in among the flowers

by mistake. And Gundy, up over the window, heard it all and feared that he would laugh out loud and be found out.

“Was it a fairy?” asked the Child.

“It must have been a fairy,” said the nursemaid, “for no one was to be seen at all, at all.”

“Maybe it was our little fairy,” said the Child, “for he plays on a pipe.”

But it was breakfast-time and Nursie led the Child away and Gundy was left alone on his high perch.

CHAPTER VI

GUNDY USES HIS PIPE

GUNDY, left alone, unrolled himself, for he had been wadded up into a tight little ball. He stood up and looked all about the room. It was a very grand place, but everything seemed so big, so *big* to poor little Vegetable Garden Gundy. He began to wonder what was on the other side of the door which the Nurse had left open a wee little crack. He decided to see for himself. He shot down the curtain and half scampered, half flew across the floor and peeped through the crack. To his astonishment, he saw, on the other side, another room, bigger even than the one he was in. He determined to see more of it so slid through the crack. What a huge place it was—and there were steps leading down into still more big rooms. Gundy thought those

steps very queer indeed; he had never before seen a stairway. He looked over the edge. It was even bigger and grander below than it was up here. Down he started—he found it great sport leaping and half-flying down the steps.

Finally, when he reached the floor below he was rather startled to see two Human Beings. He hid behind a velvet curtain and watched them. They were moving slowly about, with long grave faces. One was dusting with a big feather duster, the other was straightening rugs and chairs and folding Uncle's papers.

My, how stiff and glum they looked. To his own amazement Gundy suddenly found himself playing a ticklish dance tune on his pipe. If you had asked him why he did it, he never could have told you, unless it was because those Human Beings looked so solemn. You can guess what happened next, of course. The Human Beings started to dance. It was a droll sight. Round and

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round they circled, but suddenly crash went
a large, costly vase. It fell to the floor in a
thousand pieces. One of the dancers had



knocked it over. The whole household
rushed in to see what had happened. Every-
body looked scared. Gundy stopped playing

his pipe as suddenly as he had started, but not soon enough, for the Child cried, clapping his hands, "Oh, there's our little fairy again, playing his pipe!"

Grandmother and Uncle were in a rage as they turned to the Child and asked what he meant by "our little fairy?" Then he told them in his happy way about the little fairy, who had come in the window that morning before it was light, and sat on the sill and played his pipe. And he told them about the Gardener and the climbing-bean.

When he had finished Grandmother and Uncle seemed crosser than ever and said that it was all ridiculous nonsense and that he was an absurd child, and never again to let them hear him say another word about fairies. He was sent to his room and scolded at till he was out of sight. Then *everybody* was severely scolded, and the day started in this solemn Human Being House with everybody in a bad humor and feeling hateful.

Grandmother slammed her door and Uncle

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got behind his crackly newspaper and the glum servants carried away the broken bits of the costly vase.

Gundy felt rather ashamed of himself, for he had made those Human Beings dance and upset the costly vase and it was his fault that every one was severely scolded and put into a bad humor. But yet, he knew that something had to be done; some Magic was needed to waken these glum people and cheer this solemn Human Being House.

His Grandmother could have told him what to do, but she was far away, so he must do the best he could, all alone. And, then and there, he made a vow that he would, somehow, change matters in this gloomy home.

Alone with Uncle, Gundy decided to begin on him. He climbed up the back of the big chair and sat there, thinking about the vow that he had just made. Finally, he took out his faithful pipe and played a little cricket song—just to see what Uncle would do. And Uncle, who was a little bit deaf, said some-

thing desperate under his breath and slapped savagely at the air, for he thought a mosquito was bothering him. Then Gundy moved a little closer where he could see better. My, what a lot of cross, grouchy, scowly wrinkles Uncle had!

Gundy, of course, didn't know much about newspapers, but he did discover that Uncle was holding his paper upside down and was not reading at all—just pretending. The truth was that poor Uncle was awfully bored with everything and didn't know how to put in his time.

But Gundy decided that the first thing that Uncle needed was exercise, and he took his faithful pipe and holding it very close to Uncle's ear, played his most ticklish dance music.

It was really too bad that there was no one there to look on but Gundy. How Nursie and the Child would have enjoyed the sight, for it was very funny to see Uncle jump up out of his big chair, his glasses fly one way,

his paper the other and his wig straight up in the air. He danced so furiously that his purple dressing gown stood out straight and his slippers nearly flapped off. Round and round the room he spun like a top, then into the hall and finally rushed out of the door to get away from that tiny pipe which was making him do this strange, absurd thing.

He darted down the marble steps into the Flower Garden looking frantically behind him to see if the piper were following. But no, all was quiet. He sat down on the edge of the fountain to mop his brow and get his breath. Uncle had never moved so fast in his whole life and he didn't know what to make of it. And strange to say he was too surprised to be angry!

After he had cooled off a bit, he spied the Gardener at the other end of the garden and beckoned wildly at him, for he recalled the Child's story about a strange happening down here among the flowers.

And he fixed the Gardener sternly, with his

eye, and asked him if he had ever heard a strange piping which had made him dance ridiculously, against his will.

The Gardener answered, "Sure, sir, it's a fairy!" And Uncle half believed him though he did not say so, and they both talked at once, each telling the other what had happened to *him*. They forgot all about everyday affairs, for nothing else seemed important but this strange fairy who seemed able to make the most solemn person dance—and keep on dancing. They sat on the fountain ledge side by side and talked on and on.

Gundy, left by himself, sat in Uncle's big chair and laughed and laughed himself into another idea. He decided to hunt Grandmother. He did not, of course, know where she had gone, but thought he could find her, for he remembered hearing her door slam after she had scolded everybody.

He set forth on his search, looking in one big gloomy room after another, and finally he crawled through a crack and found her

with her cards spread out before her. Poor Grandmother had nothing to do either and must have been as bored as Uncle was, to be wasting the precious hours this way. But she had fallen asleep over her stupid game. Gundy decided to put in the time until she awoke by building a card house. My, what solemn looking Kings and Queens and Jacks these were, but what could you expect in this house?

If you've ever tried to build a card house you know how hard it is to make the cards stand up, and finally when you do and think that you can make it still higher—a puff, and over it all goes. Well, I *do* wish that you could have seen Gundy building. You would have laughed with pleasure, for it was such a very clever card-house. He grew so interested that he blinked and panted and forgot all about Grandmother. Now this was very dangerous for a fairy to be doing in broad daylight, for she might at any moment open her eyes and see him. And that is ex-

actly what *did* happen. Gundy, who was on the top-most top of the house, had to jump for his life. But he was not quick enough, for Grandmother saw him—or thought that she saw him.

My, my, my, she hadn't been so excited in years and years. Her cheeks grew flushed and she rushed downstairs to find some one to tell it to. There was no one to be found, so she ran down into the Garden and there to her surprise saw Uncle and the Gardener seated side by side on the ledge of the fountain. So she sat down with them—for, she had to tell *somebody* what had happened in her room. She told them, then they told her, and pretty soon everybody was talking at once.

But finally, Uncle raised his voice above the others and said, "Let's find the Child, for this morning he seemed to know all about this piping fairy and called it 'our little fairy.'" So they went to find the Child but they could see him nowhere. Then Grandmother remembered that she had sent him to

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his room to be punished for believing in fairies—and her face grew more flushed as she thought about it.

When they opened the door the Child and Nursie looked from one face to another in surprise, for it was plain that something very unusual had happened. Then Grandmother and Uncle and the Gardener told their stories, and when they had finished, all that Nursie and the Child said was, "Of course, *we* always knew that there were fairies."

The news of what had happened traveled all over the house and every one was excited and happy. They decided to try to find the little fairy who had caused it all. Not knowing much about fairies they little realized what a hard task that would be. Everybody joined in the merry game, Grandmother, Uncle, Nursie and the Child, the Gardener and all the others.

Then Gundy, hiding behind a picture, played a little tune on his pipe, and when they all came running toward the sound he

dropped like a flash to the floor and scurried under the piano. When they tried to find him there he was far out in the hall, then upstairs, then down again. There was surely Magic in that chase, for they never could quite find him, because when they thought they had him, he was always somewhere else.

The house rang with laughter, which, as you can imagine, was a great surprise to the house itself.

Finally, though Gundy had not been found, the end of the day came. It was the first really happy day that any one in the Human Being House could remember, but there were many, many more to follow, for a Magic thing had happened—the solemn grown-ups had learned how to laugh.

After everybody had said good-night and the house was all quiet, Gundy came out of his hiding place and sat on the broad windowsill in the Child's room—and wondered *what* would happen next.

The Moon came out and the whole world

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turned silvery and misty, and Gundy looked
down into the beautiful Flower Garden and
away toward his old home, the Vegetable Gar-
den. While he sat there, thinking about his
parents, he noticed three bent forms moving



very slowly and carefully and without a sound
through the garden and up toward the
Human Being House. He watched them
breathlessly, for somehow he had the feeling
that he had seen them before. On they came,
creeping stealthily till Gundy could stand it
no longer. He started to climb down the
vines on the side of the house. The three

bent forms were now close by the wall, so Gundy dropped onto the broad hat brim of the first one. And at that very moment he discovered that these were his old friends, the Trash-men from the Dump.

Ah, but why were they creeping so slowly and quietly around the Human Being House in the dead of night? Gundy decided to wait and see.

Suddenly, one of them said, "hist," and they all stopped. Then the second one lifted the first one on his shoulders and the first one tried to push open one of the windows of the Human Being House. And then oh, awful thought—Gundy knew that his old friends, the Trash-men, were about to become robbers. Again Gundy wished that he knew more Magic—for something must be done! All he could think of was his faithful pipe, so he raised it to his lips and piped a ticklish dance.

The unfortunate Trash-men lost no time in starting to dance, there was no help for

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them. They danced and danced and made an awful scuffling noise.

First, Uncle's head, without his wig, then Grandmother's, in a night-cap, then every other head, popped out of a window. They had heard the noise below. Then Gundy realized that the poor Trash-men would much rather run than dance. So he stopped his piping and away they started, faster, then faster, much faster than any bubble could travel.

Gundy clung to the broad hat-rim of the first Trash-man. He had to hold on as tightly as he could or surely he would have blown off.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRASH-MEN

OVER hedges and fences and brambles and streams went the Trash-men at top speed. Gundy did not know that anything could go so fast. But finally they went a bit slower, then still slower till they got down to a tip-toe just as they turned into a narrow, dark, alley which was Poverty Way. When they came to the meanest little shanty of them all, they gently opened the door and crept quietly in.

A feeble sputtering candle made a little circle of light in the black darkness. At first Gundy, who still clung to the first Trash-man's hat, could see nothing, but he blinked his eyes hard and discovered that near by a small child lay in a little bed.

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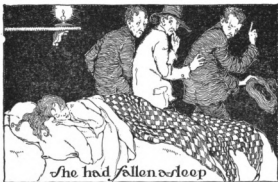
She stirred, and in a weak voice said, "What did you bring me?"

The poor Trash-men stood there empty handed and shook their heads sadly from side to side. And the Little Sick Sister buried her thin face in the pillow and softly cried.

Ah, thought Gundy, it's my fault, for I made the Trash-men dance so that they would not turn into robbers, and steal from Grandmother and Uncle and the others. But something must be done to help these poor miserable creatures. Yet how can I, a stupid fairy, do it? He left the Trash-man's hat and crawled far up in the darkness where he sat on a nail that had been driven into the wall. And he tried to think of some way in which he could help these Poverty Way folks. Nothing short of Magic would do; he knew that. Ah, if his Grandmother were only here; she would know what to do!

With the first faint streaks of the morning the three sad Trash-men rose from their dark

corners and set forth on their garbage rounds. How gentle and quiet they were as they passed the Little Sick Sister's bed. She had fallen asleep, the tears still resting on her pale cheeks. It would have melted your heart to



see the poor child. But Gundy's problem of finding a way to help was soon to be solved for him in a most unexpected way.

While he was sitting up there on his nail in the darkness, wondering and wondering what could be done to help these poor miserable Poverty Way folks, the people back in the

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Human Being House were stirring about in great excitement. They were all sure that they had heard strange noises and seen robbers below in the Garden. They were *sure* of it.

Down they came to see about it—all looking very dangerous, indeed. Uncle came first, a candle in one hand, his big umbrella in the other. He wore his usual purple dressing gown and slippers, and had forgotten his wig. Then came Grandmother, all bundled up in a pink comforter and wearing a night-cap, with a big feather duster in one hand and a candle in the other. Then came Nursie and the Child and all the others. Every one carried a candle and some terrible weapon, such as a yard-stick or an egg-beater or a fan.

They looked here and they looked there—but no robbers. It was like their hunt for the fairy had been the day before. Finally, though, they found foot-prints—robber-foot-prints, three complete sets of them.

Well, well, they would certainly follow and

see where the hiding place was! It was a nice moonlight night—nothing could be pleasanter than a robber-hunt! So, off they started, Uncle leading, Grandmother next, Nursie and the Child, the Gardener and all the others following. It looked like a procession, everybody carrying a candle and marching single-file. The way led over hedges and fences and brambles and streams—but who cared? They stumbled and tripped, but everybody had learned how to laugh, so it made no difference at all. Finally they came to the narrow, dark alley, which is Poverty Way, and they all sniffed and stopped short. It did not smell very nice. But the robber-footprints went on, so they followed till they came to the meanest little shanty of them all—and here the footprints stopped.

And Gundy, on the inside, heard their whispers and knew at once who they were. He was thrilled with joy, for he knew that his friends from the Human Being House would help him with the Poverty Way problem.

Ah, how happy he was, and before he knew it he was playing quite the happiest tune that he knew, on his pipe. They heard him.

"What, what, what!" sputtered Uncle in astonishment.

"My, my, my!" exclaimed Grandmother, her cheeks getting pink.

"It's our own little fairy," cried Nursie and the Child.

And they all went into the shanty, pell-mell, eager to hunt fairies *or* robbers, whichever the case might be.

But inside they found only darkness and misery and the Little Sick Sister. They stood there speechless. Could it be that human beings lived here? They had not known; no one had ever told them about this Poverty Way.

Nursie was the first to move, and bending over the Little Sick Sister she soon understood and said, "She is hungry."

Then Grandmother began to give sharp, quick orders and every one stepped around

as if to the tune of Gundy's most ticklish dance music. They opened the windows and let in the fresh morning air and the Gardener started at top speed on an errand back to the Human Being House. And to make him go still faster Uncle trotted along behind.

They were back again almost before you could think it, and they came in Grandmother's black shiny carriage, which was piled high with big baskets of good things and clothes, and Uncle had thought to bring a beautiful bouquet of lilies from the Flower Garden. Gundy, high up on his perch, seeing everything, wondered what the fine-feeling fairies would think if they could see the lilies in this mean shanty.

Uncle and the Gardener had brought enough of everything for a dozen Little Sick Sisters instead of just one. Nurse and Grandmother put things in good order and fixed the Little Sick Sister all comfortable and nice.

But in the meantime Uncle had been looking around and scowly wrinkles had puck-

ered his face all up into a knot, and he shook his head and said that "Poverty Way was all wrong, *all wrong*—never do at all, never do *at all*. Something must be done."

And when Gundy, on his high perch, heard those words he could have shouted with joy, for it was just what he had said to himself, "Something must be done." How fine it would be to have a big, kind Human Being to help him with these miserable Poverty Way folks.

Then something else happened. The Trash-men came blundering home. Every one looked surprised; then every one seemed to understand—and not a soul said a word about robbers. Uncle hid his umbrella behind him; everybody put their terrible weapons out of sight. The poor Trash-men almost trembled, they were so polite that their teeth chattered. They said, "Yessum, lady, thank you, lady," to all of Grandmother's questions. Then Grandmother had an idea. She asked the Trash-men if she could take the Little Sick

Sister home with her to the Human Being House, so that she might grow well and strong. The three big Trash-men hung their heads and looked rather sad, but said, finally—"Yessum, lady, thank you, lady," so the Little Sick Sister was lifted into Grandmother's black shiny carriage and away they all went—all but Uncle, who stayed behind to talk Business.

I don't know what he said or anything about the matter, except I *do* know that Uncle bought Poverty Way. Imagine if you can what anybody wanted with dirty, black, dismal Poverty Way? He bought the Dump too—the very Dump where Gundy had been found, where tin-cans and old shoes and broken plates seem to be sliding down, down forever but never reaching the bottom. And though it's hard to believe—Uncle was as pleased with his purchase as most people would be with a bargain gold mine. He fairly skipped as he went back home, the way

he had come, over hedges and fences and brambles and streams.

Then began a busy time for Uncle; he bustled about from early till late, and he grew so happy and fat that he had not a *single* wrinkle. Nowadays he had never a moment to read the paper—upside down. The first thing he did was to put the Poverty Way folks to work. They cleaned away all the ugliness and built—oh, very cozy little houses—as nice even as the Cabbage House, only different of course. And when the little houses were finished Uncle told the Poverty Way folks to live there, in them. And they did, and after that there was not a single one of them who did not believe in fairies, but the joke was that they all thought that Uncle was a fairy. But for that matter, Gundy had begun to suspect him of being, at least, part fairy. He rode around with him, most everywhere, tucked comfortably under his coat-collar.

While all of this was happening on Poverty

Way, the Little Sick Sister was growing stronger every day, where she lay in a big soft bed in the Human Being House. She and the Child had become fast friends and played together all day long, with their toys spread out on the bed. After they had played a long time they often called Nursie to beg for a fairy-tale and they would listen without making a sound. They would not even blink their eyes, or they might miss something—they were so anxious to know *more* about fairies. At other times, they would coax Uncle to tell them what he knew about fairies. His stories were wonderful, for of course he knew a great deal about fairies—having one right under his coat-collar most of the time—but he didn't know *that*.

They all spoke often of "our little fairy," meaning Gundy, but no one knew his real name or anything about his parents or the Cabbage House. They had all heard his pipe, and Grandmother was sure that she had had a

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glimpse of him—but that was all. Every one
hoped that some fine day something would
happen that they might know more about the
little fairy who had done so much for them all.

CHAPTER VIII

THE END OF THE CABBAGE HOUSE

WHILE all of these things were happening Gundy's Father and Mother were hoping and watching for his return. They spent most of their time out of doors watching the sky—for at any moment Gundy's bubble might come floating along. But day after day passed and the bubble did not come.

Poor Grandmother was growing weaker, each day, from worry and she blamed herself for not teaching Gundy more Magic. She was sure that he was being held a prisoner somewhere and if he but knew enough Magic he could escape and come home. They tried in vain to comfort her. All the little animals and insects brought her gifts but all that she wanted was to hear the music of Gundy's little pipe. Her wings had grown so delicate

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and thin that one could barely see them—they were liable to drop off at any moment!

But one bright morning when Gundy's parents carried Grandmother's breakfast, in a little basket, over to the mole-hill, they found the place all empty—*empty*. And they bent down and picked up her frail delicate wings, for she was through with them, and this was the end. But, as I have told you, fairies are wiser than human beings in many ways, and instead of being sad about it they agreed that it was well, for now Grandmother would worry no more about Gundy; so they carried the delicate wings back to the Cabbage House.

These days the Cabbage House seemed very quiet and lonely—worse than *before* Gundy had come there to live. In the evenings there was no one to play on a pipe to cheer them, but Gundy's good friends, the little animals and bugs, were faithful and came to comfort and amuse the lonely parents. And they brought their noisy babies along

and even offered them as gifts to take Gundy's place. The big rabbit who had bitten the roof was particularly generous, and offered them a little rabbit or two, indeed as many as they could use, but Gundy's parents shook their heads. Not wishing to hurt his feelings they said it would never do for little rabbits to live in a Cabbage House, for they might eat the roof and make themselves sick. The fact was no baby could take Gundy's place and there was no use trying. Instead of going out to hunt a new one, on moonlight nights, Gundy's parents sat sadly at home and talked of him.

Gundy's busy little Mother made one garment after another, for she used to say, "How shabby his round-about must be by this time and surely his shoes are nothing but holes. Some day when he comes home he will be happy to find these new things ready and hanging in rows." And most every day she made little sweet cakes for him, hoping that on *that* day he *would* come. But when he did

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not come she would feed the sweet cakes
sadly to the little crickets who were always
hanging around. I think the little crickets
were pretty wise, for crickets!

Ah, but one day a *very* alarming thing



They were talking about Gundy.

happened! The Gardener came down into
the Vegetable Garden and walked along the
row, next to the Cabbage House row. The
ground rocked and trembled and every mo-
ment they expected to have him step over
into their row and crush the Cabbage House with

his enormous boots. To think that they had ever imagined themselves safe here! They were in great distress.

But the sound of voices—merry young voices—caught their ears. What did they say? Could it be they spoke about a fairy, and called him “our little fairy”? They were children who were talking, a boy and a girl from the Human Being House, and they carried a basket into which the Gardener dropped his corn. As they drew nearer more could be heard about the little fairy who played on a pipe, and they all seemed to love him dearly. Gundy’s Mother, who was very quick-witted, soon understood and forgot her fright and crept very near, so that she would not miss a single word of what was said by the Human Beings. She *knew* that they were talking about her Gundy.

“Ah,” she sighed, “Gundy is alive and safe and doing good—The Human Beings said so. And everybody loves him.” Well, his parents could be patient then, for well they

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knew that Gundy never, never would forget
them. They were very happy, happier than
for many a long day.

But the next day a dreadful thing hap-
pened. The Gardener came down the row
where the Cabbage House was, and stepped
on it! Gundy's parents only had time to fly
for their lives or they too would have been
stepped on.

What a sad wreck it was! All of the furni-
ture was crushed—all of Gundy's new clothes,
the gourd stove, the chimney, everything
spoiled! It seemed the end of everything for
them, and they wept bitterly.

But their good friends the crickets were
soon on hand to comfort them, and showed
them a cozy place under a pumpkin vine,
where they could live till they should build a
new house.

It was a bad time for all Vegetable Garden
fairies, however, for no sooner was the corn
gathered than the stalks were cut down and
piled in stacks. Then the pumpkins were

gathered and Gundy's poor parents no sooner settled in one home than they had to leave it in haste and seek another. These were sorry times, made worse by the frosty nights, which are always dreaded by fairies. But the thought that Gundy still lived and was safe, somewhere, kept them from bitter despair.

And one cold, dreary day three big men came to clear up the Vegetable Garden. They raked everything into a pile and made a huge bon-fire. After that there was no Vegetable Garden.

But Gundy's shrewd little Mother managed to hear every word they said; their rough speech was familiar. Ah, she remembered, they were the Trash-men from the Dump. Their little Gundy had talked so when they had first found him, long ago.

And they, too, talked about fairies. They spoke of the fairy who played on a pipe—Gundy again!

How happy she was that her fairy-baby was out in the world making Human Beings

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dance and speak well of him! Life was good after all, even though the Cabbage House had been stepped on.

But they grew sad again as darkness came on, for the Trash-men had cleared everything familiar away and it was all burnt black in the bon-fire. Gundy's parents were no longer young, their wings were getting thin and summer was gone and the wind was cold.

The Trash-men had scared all their old friends, the little animals and bugs, away, so Gundy's parents were all forlorn and alone where they shivered under a dandelion which the Trash-men had overlooked.

To comfort each other they kept saying, "Gundy will come back to us; Gundy will not forget." And the night wind blew bitterly cold.

As they sat there shivering they noticed in the cold moonlight something coming slowly across the space where the Vegetable Garden had been. It proved to be a strange cricket. He looked so tired and cold that

they asked him to come under the dandelion, out of the night wind. This he did, and very soon they began to tell him their troubles—glad of a strange ear into which to pour them.

The cricket heard all about the splendor of the Cabbage House, now a heap of ruins. And he heard about their son, a piper, who left home in a wonderful bubble and had never been seen since.

At these words the cricket grew greatly excited and shouted, "Did you say in a bubble?"

"Yes, in a bubble," answered Gundy's parents together.

"Why, I know him *well*," said the strange cricket proudly. "He's a great man." And Gundy's parents eagerly agreed to this.

This strange cricket, as you may have guessed, was the very cricket who had snubbed Gundy in the Flower Garden long ago, before it was considered aristocratic and proper to notice a humble Vegetable Gar-

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den fairy who was found on the Dump. But that time had passed and the cricket hoped to be known as a friend of Gundy's. He went on to tell of all the wonderful things that Gundy had done—of how he had made the Gardener dance and of the bubbles he made of the fountain's spray. Then he told them of Gundy's sudden disappearance one night, and how badly they all felt and how the Very Little Fairies cried themselves to sleep every single night after that.

And Gundy's happy parents listened with open mouths and glistening eyes. Had there ever been such a smart boy as Gundy? Too bad, too bad, that Grandmother had not lived to see this happy day. They couldn't hear enough and asked a thousand questions and made the cricket tell it all over again. What difference if the Cabbage House were gone? What difference if they were cold and hungry and homeless? Gundy, their son, was the most wonderful fairy that had ever lived!

Then they wanted to know what more the

cricket knew; where Gundy had gone; when he left the Flower Garden, and did he go in a bubble, and so on and so on. But the cricket was getting drowsy and said he had told them all he knew—then he fell asleep.

When morning came the cricket was gone, so Gundy's parents could ask no more questions, but had to content themselves going over and over what he had told them.

Then Gundy's quick-witted little Mother decided that, somehow or other, they must find another place to live, so that when Gundy finally *did* come home he would find a cozy little place waiting for him—and she would make him some more clothes and some sweet cakes.

But looking about over the old Vegetable Garden, now so bleak and bare, their hearts sank. Where *could* they go?

Unless you've been a fairy, at some time or other, without a home, and with winter coming on, you cannot imagine how forlorn Gundy's parents felt as they looked about them.

CHAPTER IX

FLOWER-GARDEN TILDY

YOU will remember that the last you heard of Gundy he was spending most of his time with Uncle, safe and comfortable under that gentleman's coat collar. Gundy had grown very fond of Uncle and felt as if he owned him, or at least as if he had made him over, for certainly he was a different Human Being from what he *had* been. Gundy strongly suspected him of being part fairy and kept a sharp lookout for wings under his collar—*any* day they might punch through.

Whenever Uncle went about his business of helping the poor and needy, there Gundy went too, under his coat collar. And Gundy was the only one who could have told you of the many, many generous acts which Uncle did so quietly.

And although Uncle never succeeded in actually seeing Gundy, close as he was, he was perfectly sure that the little fairy was there.

One of the reasons that Gundy thought Uncle was part fairy, was that he had a magic laugh—some persons would have called it a chuckle—Uncle being such a fat man! But, anyway, when he laughed it did every one good to hear him, and in the end every one joined in and was laughing with him before they knew it.

One evening when it was almost bedtime for the Child and the Little Sick Sister, and after both of Uncle's knees had gone sound to sleep because he had held the children on them all evening, he said, "Let's have a game of tag through the Garden to make my knees wake up."

So they slipped into their cloaks and things, because it was nippy cold outside, and the three of them started pell-mell. I should have said four of them, for of course Gundy was

under Uncle's coat collar as usual. It was a bright, bright moonlight night, frosty and fine, and Uncle's knees soon woke up. Neither of the children could catch him. In and out among the flower beds he went, round and round the fountain, sometimes here, but mostly over there—and always laughing his magic laugh.

But finally he said that it was time for them to go back to the Human Being House. The children begged and begged for just a minute more to stay and look at the fountain. Uncle laughed, and the children knew that that always meant "yes."

Gundy decided that he would crawl out from his hiding place and look at the fountain too. It seemed a very long time since he used to sit there and do tricks for the Very Little Fairies.

Then a strange thing happened.

But first, I must tell you how fairies find their mates. As I have said before, they are wiser and do not do half as many foolish

things as Human Beings do. Now, instead of wasting time and money as the Human Beings do, having all sorts of ups and downs and keeping everybody anxious and the gossips working over time, while they vainly try to find their proper mate—the fairies have a better way. If two fairies find that their wings are exactly alike, the same in pattern and color—that's all there is to it. They are mates. And they know it at once, for there never were more than two sets of wings that *were* exactly alike.

A fairy may be scampering along, thinking about his supper or the stars in the sky, almost anything but of his future mate; and he may suddenly turn a corner and bump right into her. They will probably stop to say "beg pardon," catch sight of each other's wings—then possibly give a surprised squeal or two—and scamper away together. That's all there is to it—no bother and fuss!

Now Gundy had always been much too busy to give the matter of his mate any

124 Fairy Who Believed in Human Beings thought. As you already know, he was always trying to straighten out some problem for somebody—and that *does* take time. But there really was only *one* thing that Gundy wanted, and wanted badly—that was to get back to the Cabbage House and his parents.

Ah, but I started to tell you what happened while Uncle and Gundy and the two children stood there in the moonlight watching the fountain. Gundy, who had not been in the garden for so long, looking this way and that spied a fairy on one of the tall yellow lilies that seemed to shiver in the frosty night air. He looked at her, then he looked again for there was something about her that gave him a start. Then his heart did some queer tricks. It seemed to jump up in his throat and turn over and over—but no wonder, for the fairy on the tall yellow lily had wings exactly like his own. Two looks were enough; he was perfectly sure, for every fairy knows his own wings by heart.

To tell the truth Gundy was bored with the

idea. He didn't need a mate and moreover he didn't want one—all that he wanted was to get back to the Cabbage House. This was asking too much, and the thought crossed his mind to crawl back under Uncle's coat collar and pretend that he had not seen her at all. But Gundy was an honest fairy and he knew it would not be right to pretend—anyway she had seen him first. He well knew that this was the end of his pleasant days with the Human Beings. No more happy hours for him under Uncle's coat collar, for henceforth wherever he went his mate would expect to go too—and there would not be room for two fairies there. Anyway, she was probably a flighty little fairy who had not gone to school very much, and only half believed in Human Beings.

Gundy was terribly perplexed. He knew what he ought to do, but he was very reluctant. But finally he decided to do his duty and with a sad heart and many misgivings he turned and jumped off Uncle's shoulder,

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landing among the larkspurs, and disappeared from sight.

“Why, what was that?” said Uncle, turning quickly.

“It was a fairy,” cried the Children. “We saw him jump—yes we did.” And the three



Her name was *Tildy*

of them hunted and searched through the larkspurs but found nothing at all. So they went slowly up to the Human Being House, each wondering if it really was “our little fairy” who had jumped into the larkspurs.

And now I will tell you about the fairy

whose wings were exactly like Gundy's. First, her name was Tildy. Second, she was a very beautiful little fairy—so lovely that if she were put in the ugliest, meanest place on Poverty Way it would have somehow seemed nice. She was, in that way, something like a fresh bouquet. Third, she wore exquisite little garments of flower petals and cob-webs, and from morning till night she thought of those same little garments and of nothing else. Gundy's Grandmother would have said, had she gone to school to *her*, that Tildy didn't know enough to keep from being stepped on. Of course she had gone to school to *her* Grandmother, but every one thought her so very pretty that she need not learn her lessons—so of course she did not.

But with all, Tildy was a gentle little fairy, which you will find hard to believe when I tell you that her Father was the Altogether Mean fairy who had pushed Gundy off of the yellow lily, so long ago. He had found Tildy in a rare flower on the very moonlight

that Gundy was found on the Dump. Of course the Altogether Mean fairy loved his little daughter and was wonderfully proud of her and gave her everything that he could steal from the other fairies. He made a very good Father, indeed!

When Tildy spied Gundy and saw that his wings were exactly like hers she was neither sad nor glad. She knew that he was her mate and she had no opinion of her own about the matter. Tildy never had opinions. She went in and told her Father of what had happened and he of course was greatly excited, thinking that it must be a very Fine-feeling fairy indeed who was coming to claim Tildy. The news spread like wild-fire and almost every fairy in the Flower Garden came rushing out to see beautiful Tildy's mate.

Ah, but when Gundy appeared—what a shock! He was still homely, of course; he had always been so. And shabby—indeed he wore the same round-about and trousers that his Mother had made him long ago, so of

course they were full of holes and *much* too small for him. The poor fellow hung his head and felt, oh terribly, embarrassed. He expected them to laugh and jeer at him as they had once done. But no, they did not laugh and jeer. These Flower Garden fairies had learned a lesson about treating strangers unkindly; for who can tell—they may be very good, and clever, and gifted in Magic, as one certain visitor was long ago. There they stood in silence, all eyes on Gundy. The Altogether Mean fairy was pale with rage and disappointment but he dared not say a word, for it was against the new Flower Garden rules. And gentle Tildy did not say a word—but *that* was because she could not think of anything to say.

Ah, but suddenly the Very Little Fairies, who now were not quite so little as they once were, recognized their dear old friend who did tricks for them, and rode them in a bubble round and round the fountain.

My, oh my, what a time! Everybody was

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excited and everybody wanted to grasp Gundy's hand. They decided to place a crown on Gundy's head, but he objected, and said he preferred his hat because he was used to it.

The Altogether Mean fairy, when he realized who Gundy really was, suddenly got over his rage and disappointment and made a long speech full of big and fine-sounding words. But beautiful Tildy said nothing at all; that probably was because she could think of nothing *to* say.

But now it was time for Wedding Presents. Tildy gave Gundy a beautiful cloak—which she really wanted herself. It was made of black pansy petals embroidered in silver cobweb. But poor Gundy was, oh, terribly embarrassed again, for he had nothing to give Tildy—and there she stood expecting something. That is, he had nothing but his faithful pipe that had proved so valuable, time after time. Ah, he *had* to do it! So, brave boy that he was, he handed Tildy his pipe with a low bow—and a big tear splashed on

the ground. Then they formed a procession, which was a grand spectacle, and marched around and around the fountain.

After that a precious drop of honey, stolen from a careless bee, was brought forth and Gundy and Tildy were supposed to drink it. But Gundy objected, saying that he didn't care much for sweets and would prefer instead a pink bean that could be found on a certain climbing-bean which grew in the Flower Garden by mistake. The quickest fairies went for the beans, and when they returned everybody ate beans, for politeness' sake, but they found them very good indeed. Then they began to talk about vegetables and the Vegetable Garden and Vegetable Garden fairies, and everybody decided that a big mistake had been made and that *all* the fairies should be friends and that the High White Fence meant nothing at all.

Gundy told them about the Human Beings up in the big house, who had once made the same mistake, but now things were different

132 Fairy Who Believed in Human Beings with them and on Poverty Way too. And he surprised himself by making a very nice little speech about having a good will toward everybody.

While he was talking a cricket came hurrying along in great excitement and pushed his way through the crowd till he stood beside Gundy. And without even saying, "Beg pardon," he asked him if he were Gundy. And Gundy answered, "Gee." Then the cricket told the story of how the Vegetable Garden had been destroyed, how all the little animals had been scared away by the Trash-men—and the fairies scattered, homeless and forlorn. And without pausing for breath, he went on to tell about two old fairies he had found shivering under a dandelion, how they had lost their home and had no place to go—and he added, coming closer to Gundy, "They are your parents."

Gundy's heart nearly stopped beating. To think that his parents were in such great distress while he was wasting time at a foolish

wedding, eating pink beans and wearing a pansy-petal cloak!

"Take me to them—take me to them," cried Gundy in distress.

The other fairies murmured and said he should stay with them, for now he was to be their leader; but Tildy, his mate, said never a word, and Gundy was glad, *glad* that she couldn't think of anything to say. She might have proposed to go along, but that never entered her pretty head.

So, Gundy and the cricket started away in great haste. Their journey lay under the High White Fence, over the rough ground which had once been the Vegetable Garden, to find at the end two shivering old fairies who were Gundy's parents.

CHAPTER X

GUNDY FINDS HIS PARENTS

GUNDY and the cricket had many trials on their journey. The moon went under a cold cloud and they could not see *where* they were going. The way was rough and they stumbled and slipped miserably.

The wind grew colder and colder and suddenly a sharp gust of it brought the first snow flurry and the poor travelers shivered and shook. Gundy wrapped his wedding cloak tightly about him; and they went bravely on.

Ah, if he only had two good wings so that he could fly! This half-flying, half-hopping was tiresome and slow. He missed his faithful pipe that had gone with him everywhere and had been so useful when he was in trouble. If he had it now he could cheer himself and the cricket and perhaps his parents

would hear it and know that he was coming.

The wind clouds in the sky were sailing fast and soon uncovered the pale moon, but only long enough for the cricket to see that they were traveling in the right direction. On and on they toiled. But now the moon had disappeared altogether and in the distance they heard a rooster crow and knew that daylight would come soon. Another sudden snow flurry almost took their breath and they had to stop and cover their heads until it was past.

When they started forward again daylight was coming fast and the cricket thought that he could see the dandelion, which the Trashmen had missed, far, far ahead.

They were nearly exhausted and could barely crawl. And finally, when it seemed that they had taken their last step, they reached the dandelion, but its fuzz had blown away and its leaves were covered with snow. The cricket could not be sure whether or not it *was* the right dandelion. But anyway

there were no shivering old fairies there—Gundy's parents were gone! He fell to the ground and burst into tears. He was sure he would die and he asked the cricket to try his wings and see if they were not very loose. But the poor cricket was so stiff with cold that he could not tell. Ah, this was too sad! Gundy thought of all the things that he had ever done and wondered if he were being punished for his wickedness; just as if Gundy had ever done a wicked thing in all his good little life!

And, as if to prove that Gundy had never done anything wicked, a very happy thing happened right then and there. An old friend of his boyhood, a red squirrel, came scampering along, looking busy and fit. To see him one would think that all was well with the world, and winter the best time of the whole year. His eyes were sharp and bright and his fine tail bristled with success. He had a big store of nuts for the long winter; why should he not be happy?

Suddenly his sharp eyes spied Gundy and the cricket, looking utterly forlorn, under the dandelion.

"Well, well, well!" he said, "we were just talking about you; indeed we talk of nothing else these days, now that we all live together in the Big Tree."

Gundy was too cold to think. His teeth knocked loudly together and he couldn't understand what the red squirrel meant. Finally he managed to ask him, and the squirrel explained how he had found Gundy's poor old parents shuddering and shaking under that very dandelion and of how he had loaded them on his back and taken them with him to his cozy home in the Big Tree.

Gundy was too weak and cold to talk, but the big tears of joy chased each other down his cheeks and his wings felt tighter now after hearing the good news.

"Come, come, come," said the busy red squirrel, waving his fine tail briskly; "hop on my back and we'll be there ourselves in a

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minute." So off they went at a great pace and
shot up the tree and out over the branches
like a flash.

As Gundy drew nearer the place where
he would at last see his parents, his *heart*



Gundy, Gundy, Gundy

ticked like a watch. To be getting back,
after this long, long absence, was what he had
wished so much. Would his Father and
Mother know him, and would they look the
same? Had they missed him and would they
be glad to see him? Oh, foolish Gundy!

I cannot begin to tell you, for I'm only a

Human Being, what a time they had when the brisk red squirrel almost dumped Gundy into his parents' arms. All that they could say was, "Gundy, Gundy, Gundy," just as they had said it on that moonlight night, so long ago, when Gundy's Father, lifting him out of the tin-can on the Dump, held him up for his Mother to see. And the red squirrel looking on thought that they *never* would stop hugging each other.

Of course everybody asked questions and talked at once—everybody but the cricket, and he, poor fellow, had gone to sleep.

One of Gundy's first questions was about Grandmother. Where was she? Ah, they told him, Grandmother had lost her wings and vanished, but it was better so for she had missed all their worries and the cold winds. But never, never would they forget Grandmother who knew so much Magic.

Then Gundy's quick-witted Mother spied his pansy-petal cloak and asked him if he had become a Fine-Feeling fairy. To prove that he

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had not, and never would be a Fine-Feeling
fairy, Gundy threw the pansy-petal cloak
aside and his Mother saw that he still wore
the out-grown, corn-silk round-about and
trousers which she had made for him, long



She asked him where he got it

ago, before he left home in the bubble.

Then Gundy's fond parents asked him to tell them what a great man he was now.

Gundy was greatly surprised and answered that some mistake had been made, that he wasn't a great man at all, but that he had many good friends out in the world beyond

the Vegetable Garden. And he told them about Uncle and Grandmother and the Trash-men and all the others. But his parents insisted still that he *was* a great man, for the cricket, now asleep, had said so; and then, too, they had heard the Human Beings talking about him as if he were a very great man.

"But, great man or not," said Gundy's busy little Mother, "you must have some new clothes." Then she examined his gorgeous wedding cloak, turning it over and over and admiring its elegant texture. And Gundy stood there trembling like a leaf in the wind, for he had not told them a single word about Flower-Garden Tildy.

Finally his Mother, who had asked him every other question at least twice, asked him where he got his cloak. Gundy truthfully answered that it was his wedding gift from his mate.

Ah, what a shock it was to Gundy's parents to learn that he had found a mate. They had felt that now, with Gundy safely home, they

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would build another Cabbage House and start life all over again and live happily till the end of time.

“Oh, why did you do so, Gundy?” wailed his Mother. “Why didn’t you look the other way when you saw her wings?” But Gundy with bowed head did not tell her that he had thought of looking the other way, but was too honest.

After a while Gundy’s Mother’s curiosity got the better of her grief and she began to ask a great many questions about Flower-Garden Tildy. And Gundy answered the best that he could, saying that she was very beautiful, wore rose petal and cob-web garments and didn’t know enough to keep from being stepped on. He told them, too, of giving his faithful pipe to Tildy for a wedding present, and they shook their heads, thinking it the first mistake Gundy had ever made. But what else could the poor boy do?

Then after thinking the matter over Gundy’s Mother, who had really very good

sense, said that Gundy must go back to where Flower-Garden Tildy lived, for she was his mate, or else their wings would not have been exactly alike. But Gundy shook his head and refused to go alone—his parents must go too. But this they did not wish to do, to leave the dear old Vegetable Garden and go over into the Flower-Garden where only Fine-Feeling fairies lived, for, as they said, they were only plain fairies and would be out of place there. But Gundy told them how kind the Fine-feeling fairies were nowadays and how they wished to be friends with the Vegetable Garden fairies. Then the red squirrel spoke up and said that Gundy was right about the matter and that his parents ought to go with him and help him to build a new home over there.

So, one fine bright evening they packed up and the red squirrel agreed to take them as far as the fountain, on his back. They all had new winter clothes of soft fur made of odds and ends that their good host, the red

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My, what a fine, swift ride they had through the frosty night air. They were sorry when Gundy spied the fountain, not far ahead, and said that they would soon be there.

But where were the Flowers? They had expected to find them standing there in chilly rows, as Gundy had last seen them, but not a flower was in sight and the fountain was empty, dry, without a single sparkling drop of water.

The Flower Garden was ready for winter. And where were the fairies? Where was Tildy? Suddenly, at that moment, Gundy decided that he very much liked little Flower-Garden Tildy who never could think of a word to say. Alas, she was *gone*.

CHAPTER XI

UNCLE COMES TO THE RESCUE

GUNDY, his parents and the cricket were greatly alarmed at the state of affairs in the Flower Garden—flowers all gone, fountain frozen dry and not a fairy to be seen. They scarcely knew *what* to do or where to look and they spun about rather aimlessly, till Gundy's Mother, who had really very good sense, said, "Look *under* everything." She knew, for she had been out in a snow storm herself. And she was right, for that's exactly where the unfortunate Flower-Garden fairies were, huddled under a drift of autumn leaves which had been carried over from the Big Tree by a gust of wind.

And there they found them, weak from cold and worry as to what would become of them. Many of their wings were loose, about

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ready to drop out, and some of the fairies had vanished altogether—the Altogether Mean fairy among them. They were really a miserable lot of fairies and I am very sure that if Gundy had not come along when he did all of their wings would have dropped out and they would have vanished entirely. They had nothing warm and their fine clothes were in tatters.

They were rejoiced to see him, of course. He had a way of always appearing at the right moment to help some one. Every one wanted to shake his hand and stroke his nice, soft fur clothes that the red squirrel had given him. But Gundy was eager to find little Flower-Garden Tildy, and his heart ticked like a watch as he looked this way and that in the crowd, in search of her.

Ah, but when he did find her his heart ached, for she looked so very frail. And she held out her empty hands, and Gundy saw that she had lost his faithful, magic pipe that



he had given her for a wedding gift. But he did not scold, for Tildy looked so very beautiful. And she said never a word, but allowed Gundy to wrap her in his warm fur round-about.



The pipe was gone

Gundy's parents were almost afraid of Tildy, because she *was* so beautiful. They had never seen anything quite like her before. But she smiled gently at them, which is almost the same as speaking, and they stood closer, and Gundy's Mother put more warm

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things over her and patted her as if she were
a little child.

But everybody was calling for Gundy. They wanted him here and they wanted him over there and they hung on him and crowded about him. But finally he asked them to be quiet and tell him what had happened in the Flower Garden after he left them to go in search of his parents.

It seemed, on the very night that Gundy went with the cricket to find his parents, it grew colder and colder. Before they knew it a strange thing happened—the fountain froze over. Yes it did. And a cold cloud sailed over the Moon and an icy wind came bringing the first flurry of snowflakes. My, oh my, what a night it was! And through it all there stood the poor flowers. They shuddered and shook and their sad heads drooped.

When morning came they were dead. To think that the tall lilies that had been so proud, the gay snap-dragons, the smart-look-

ing verbenas, the sturdy zinnias—all, all dead! It was indeed a solemn, sad sight.

Then came the Gardener and the Trashmen, who now worked together every day, getting things ready for winter. They came with hoes and rakes and big baskets, and the poor dead flowers were cut down and carried away—but the roots and bulbs were covered over with straw—for summer *would* come again. Ah, but it looked all drab and cheerless and the poor little fairies had no place to go.

When the story was finished they turned to Gundy and wailed—"What *shall* we do?"

Poor Gundy, who was always trying to straighten out other people's problems, was indeed at a loss to know what to say. He looked about him. They could not go to the Human Being House or over to New Poverty Way, of course, for most of the Flower-Garden fairies knew little or nothing about Human Beings and probably would die under foot, the first thing. The red squirrel

150 Fairy Who Believed in Human Beings couldn't take them *all* in—there would not be room. And it was too cold to live under the leaves—anyway the leaves were liable to blow away at any moment.

But something fortunate happened, just as it had before over on New Poverty Way. Uncle solved Gundy's problem for him.

And this is how it happened. When the children up in the Human Being House looked out of the window, the morning after the terrible night of the first snow, they saw the frozen fountain and the poor dead flowers. They said to each other, "Oh, where is our little fairy?" For you remember that Uncle and the children were quite sure that their little fairy had left them the night before and jumped into the lark-spurs. Uncle missed him somehow, and the children were certain that they saw him jump.

They went to find Uncle, and there he was by *his* window, looking down into the garden at the frozen fountain and the poor dead

flowers, and saying to himself, "Oh, where is our little fairy?"

They talked it all over and decided that something must be done. Then Uncle had one of his finest ideas. He went to his work-room—he had one nowadays. But you do remember—don't you—when he had nothing to do but read the papers upside down? That was all changed now, however, thanks to Gundy!

And this was Uncle's idea, getting his tools together, he started to build *Bird-houses*. That is, he *called* them Bird-houses, but he knew, the children knew, everybody knew that they were really Fairy-houses. There they worked all day long, the children helping as best they could.

My, what trim, neat little houses they were—cute as cute! They were something like the houses Uncle had built over on New Poverty Way for the Trash-men and all the other folks—only they were a thousand times smaller. And when they were all done Uncle

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tucked a handful of straw into each one to
make it cozy.

Then he and the children put on their coats
and things. One carried the nails, the other



the hammer and Uncle waddled along behind
with his arms full of Fairy-houses.

Of course the fairies heard them coming.
They stuck their heads boldly out from under
the leaves and a great cheer went up, for they

knew that they were saved by their good friends, the Human Beings.

The three Human Beings, hearing the cheer, stopped short and said, "What was that—what was that?" Then they all agreed that it *must* be the fairies, for there was not another Human Being in sight that cold day.

But they made haste, for it was growing colder and later. They fastened some of the fairy-houses to the High White Fence, some to the Big Tree, and one—oh, a very nice one, was fastened right under Uncle's window. Can you guess whom that one was for?

The fairies watched every move from under the leaves in the fountain. They could scarcely wait to live in their new homes. Oh, what fun it would be—better even than the flowers, or the red squirrel's nest—or the Cabbage House. And Gundy's busy little Mother had a head-full of plans about how she would fix this and how she would fix that.

After the fairy-houses were all in place, and the three good Human Beings had gone,

154 Fairy Who Believed in Human Beings and the Moon was up, who should appear but the red squirrel with a bag of nuts—all nicely cracked with his own cracker. He zipped in and out of every fairy-house leaving behind a nice little pile.

“Ah,” said Gundy to the others, “the whole world has a good will toward us,” and they moved into their new homes and were very happy fairies indeed. Every one decided that Gundy and Tildy and Gundy’s parents should live in the fairy-house right under Uncle’s window, for Gundy it was who had invented Uncle or at least had made him over. And Gundy was very willing, for then he and Uncle could look after fairy affairs together.

But the only objection to the new houses was that some forward sparrows took it for granted that Uncle had made the houses for them. Of course that was a mistake, just as it was for the sparrows to think that the crumbs which Uncle and the Children sprinkled about were for them.

But, they all agreed that Gundy could solve the sparrow-problem sooner or later, and life in the fairy-houses, as well as the Human Being House, went happily for every one.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTMAS FAIRY-BABY

"CHRISTMAS is coming, Christmas is coming," sang the Children one day, in the garden, as they worked on a fat snowman, who looked somewhat like Uncle, but did not have his Magic laugh.

"What *is* Christmas?" said the curious fairies who heard the Children's words. "Can Christmas be a strange Human Being or what can it be?" They couldn't explain it and were greatly puzzled, and decided that they simply *must* know what Christmas was. They scampered about from house to house asking each other what they knew about Christmas—but every one shook his head.

So, of course, Gundy, who always had to work out all the problems, that is unless Uncle did it, was asked to find out about Christ-

mas. The fairies *must* know—Christmas might be something dreadful, although the Children when they spoke of it seemed, oh, very happy indeed. Now, of course Gundy knew more than any of the others about Human Beings and he was in the habit of slipping over into the Human Being House whenever he saw fit. Usually he went in at night, when everybody was asleep. All that he had to do was to jump in through Uncle's open window. He always went around to make sure that every one was well covered up and not in a draft or taking cold. And if they seemed to be having bad dreams he would stand by and whisper pleasant things to them and stay till the bad dream had gone entirely. He liked to feel that he was doing something for the Human Beings; they had done so much for the fairies—and then besides he loved them all very much.

But now he must find out about this Christmas-business. So the very next night after the Children had been overheard talking

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about Christmas, Gundy slipped over into the
Human Being House to see if he could
gather any news on the subject.

Uncle seemed to be sound asleep. Gundy tucked the covers all snugly about his ears and pulled one corner of the comfort a little higher to cover his bald head. But Uncle suddenly began to sputter and Gundy decided that he was about to talk in his sleep, so he kept perfectly still and waited. Finally he said, "Christmas on Poverty Way! I'll buy a car load of candy, one million dolls, two million sleds, three million tops"—then the words trailed off and Gundy couldn't tell what he *was* saying.

Well, thought Gundy, I didn't learn much about Christmas from him, but I'll try the Children. So he went into the nursery.

Everybody must be talking in their sleep to-night, thought Gundy, for the Children were chattering like magpies. They talked about Christmas and still more about Santa

Claus, but their words soon trailed off too and Gundy could not tell *what* they said.

Then he slipped into Grandmother's room. She too was talking in her sleep, and about Christmas, like the others. But she said a strange thing that kept ringing in Gundy's ears long afterwards. She said, "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Ah, thought Gundy, those are very fine words—it's always been in my heart, but being only a stupid fairy I couldn't say the words.

Then he left the Human Being House, for there was nothing more said by the sleepers, and when he reached home he told all that he had heard to the curious fairies who were waiting there for news. They listened to every word but did not know much more about Christmas than they had before. They were not satisfied and urged Gundy to go back, this time in daylight, when people were not talking in their sleep. You never *can* believe what you hear sleepers say!

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So, the next day Gundy went back to the Human Being House. He was almost caught by a servant who, after hanging a



holly wreath in Uncle's window, banged it shut—just as Gundy jumped through. Fortunately she did not see him.

Well, things were in a flutter! The House was all hung in green garlands and wreaths and a huge evergreen tree stood in the hallway. Gundy couldn't understand about the tree or why the Children were hanging the beautiful glistening balls on it. He had never seen anything quite so pretty as those balls. They were gold and silver and blue and green, and they made him think of the bubbles which he used to blow with his faithful pipe. He couldn't understand, either, why Uncle stood, in great danger, on top of a tall ladder, fastening a silver star to the top of the big tree.

But whatever it was all about, surely it was nice, for every one seemed so very happy and kept saying over and over, "Christmas is coming to-morrow!" They told secrets behind their hands and winked and laughed and hid big, square packages under the sofa.

After Uncle had fastened the star in place on top of the tree, he climbed down the ladder, put on his coat and things, and went away. When he came back he was carrying

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so many bundles that you could scarcely see him. You only knew that he was there because of his Magic laugh behind the bundles.

And when Gundy saw him he wondered if Uncle really was talking in his sleep last night when he spoke of the million dolls and the rest of it. He really looked now as if he had them all right there.

But all day long the children talked about Santa Claus and peeped up the big chimney in the hall, and counted again and again the long stockings—everybody's, that hung in the chimney. The whole House had a fine smell—it made Gundy hungry—for every time any one opened the doors leading to the kitchen, a wonderful breeze blew out and every one smacked his lips and said, "Christmas is coming to-morrow!"

At last bed time had come. Grandmother said so as she led the Children into the nursery. She had promised to read them a story before they went to bed, so Gundy, listening by the door, heard the beautiful Christmas

Story which closed with the words he loved so much—"Peace on Earth, good will toward men." He had come to the conclusion that Christmas was something very, very good, for everybody was so happy about it. He would rush back and tell all the other fairies about it as soon as Uncle opened his window and went to bed. And finally when everybody was in bed and fast asleep, and Gundy had very lovingly tucked in the covers around his good Human friends, he jumped out of the window and went home.

All the fairies were waiting—anxious to hear the news about Christmas. Gundy sat down and told them about everything he had seen and heard. He told of the green garlands and wreaths, and the big evergreen tree hung with the beautiful glistening balls so like his fountain-spray bubbles. Then he spoke of the silver star on top of the tree; in fact he told it all, and the fairies concluded that after all Christmas must be something

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very nice. Their curiosity was satisfied, and they went each to his own fairy-house.

When everything was quiet Tildy asked Gundy if he would *please* take her into the Human Being House and let *her* see the beautiful Christmas garlands and wreaths and the big tree trimmed in a silver star and glistening balls.

Now Gundy was greatly surprised at Tildy and scarcely knew what to say. Of course poor little Flower-garden Tildy knew very little about Human Beings—still all the Human Beings were safely in bed so there was no danger of her being stepped on. And Tildy did *so* love beautiful things—Yes, she should go—Gundy would take her!

So they started, hand in hand. But as they left their fairy-house they beheld the moon, which was wonderfully bright to-night. Ah, but what else did they see! A fat man, with a huge pack on his back, whom at first they took to be Uncle, was crawling down the chimney of the Human Being House. Could it be

Uncle? They would jump through his window and see. But no—Uncle was fast asleep in his bed.

Gundy was alarmed—robbers again! He grasped Tildy's hand and together they flew into the hall to see if the big tree and the beautiful balls had been stolen.

There they had a surprise. The fat man with the huge pack was filling the long stockings with gifts. He had come down the chimney. Ah, this was Santa Claus—why, of course! Now he remembered what the Children had said about Santa Claus as they peeped up the chimney and counted, again and again, the stockings which hung in a row by the chimney.

Gundy and Tildy liked Santa Claus' looks so much that they almost ran out to speak to him. Maybe it was because he looked so much like Uncle and had a laugh like his! And my, what a lot of presents he left! He filled all the stockings with presents, he hung them on the tree and piled them under the

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tree—everywhere. The fairies thought that he never *would* get through. There were toys of every kind for the children, gifts for Grandmother and Uncle, for Nursie and the Gardener and all the others. And he lit all the candles on the tree. But, finally when there was no room left anywhere, for another present, Santa Claus, looking well satisfied, scrambled off up the chimney.

Then Gundy and Tildy scampered about and looked at all the beautiful gifts. My, this *was* fun! But of all, they liked best the lovely glistening balls that hung on the big evergreen tree. There was something almost magic about them.

But while they stood there looking in delight, one of the biggest balls, a beautiful silver and blue one, dropped from a high branch and broke in pieces on the soft rug. The fairies rushed over to see what had happened. And when they saw what *had* happened their little hearts ticked like watches—and yours will too when I tell you.



There, in the beautiful silver and blue ball which had dropped off the Christmas tree, was a tiny, tiny fairy-baby. Yes, there was! It was a Christmas fairy-baby, and I think that Santa Claus must have known that there were two fairies in the room and so left this little present for them.

Now you know, as well as I do, that Flower-Garden Tildy rarely ever had a word to say, because she couldn't think of anything *to* say. But my, oh my, *how* her tongue did fly when this happened. You never heard the like! Gundy was afraid she would waken the entire household. Any one would think, to see her, that it was the first fairy-baby ever found! Finally Gundy coaxed her to come along home quietly, and they gathered up their Christmas present and started. Then Tildy thought she *couldn't* wait till she got home to show the fairy-baby to Gundy's parents. Gundy really thought she'd talk her head off—her tongue went so fast. When they finally reached home she made him call all the

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other fairies to come and see what they had and she was sure that the reason all the Human Beings were so excited, and the house in such a flurry, was that they all knew that Little Christmas—for that was the fairy-baby's name—was coming. Had not the Children said over and over again, "Christmas is coming?" Indeed, *all* the Human Beings had said so. And to Tildy this meant only one thing—"Little Christmas is coming." Of course Gundy knew better but he allowed Tildy to believe it for it made her so very happy.

And now I have come to the end and it is time to leave Gundy and Tildy and Little Christmas and the others. I have kept my promise and told you all that *I* know about Gundy. Maybe, some time, I will be able to tell the rest of the story, tell all about Little Christmas' school days, what became of the Children in the Human Being House and how Uncle and Santa Claus went into busi-

ness together. Of course one *could* go on and on, for there is lots more to tell, but that is what I agreed not to do in the first part of this book.

The End of the Story



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human beings

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