

FICTION

Laura Lee Hope

**Bunny Brown
and His Sister
Sue on
Grandpas
Farm**

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FICTION

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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**BUNNY BROWN
AND HIS SISTER SUE
ON GRANDPA'S FARM**

BY

LAURA LEE HOPE

AUTHOR OF
THE BUNNYBROWN SERIES, THE BOBBSEY
TWINS SERIES, THE OUTDOOR GIRLS
SERIES, ETC.

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BOOKS
By **LAURA LEE HOPE**

THE BUNNYBROWN SERIES

BUNNYBROWN AND HIS SISTER SUE
BUNNYBROWN AND HIS SISTER SUE ON GRANDPA'S FARM
BUNNYBROWN AND HIS SISTER SUE PLAYING CIRCUS
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Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue on Grandpa's Farm



**THE PAIL WENT RIGHT OVER THE
TURKEY'S HEAD.**

Frontispiece (Page 130.)

Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue on Grandpa's Farm.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. A LETTER FROM GRANDPA	1
II. THE RUNAWAY MONKEY	10
III. THE BIG AUTOMOBILE	21
IV. A QUEER SLIDE	30
V. OFF TO GRANDPA'S FARM	42
VI. JUST LIKE GYPSIES	51
VII. THE WOODLAND CAMP	62
VIII. A NIGHT SCARE	70
IX. THE LOST HORSE	80
X. AT GRANDPA'S FARM	89
XI. IN THE GARDEN	98
XII. BUNNY'S WATERFALL	108
XIII. THE TURKEY GOBBLER	117
XIV. LOST IN THE WOODS	129
XV. THE OLD HERMIT	141
XVI. LOOKING FOR THE HORSES	150
XVII. IN THE STORM	159
XVIII. THE PICNIC	169

XIX. THE TRAMPS	179
XX. THE MISSING CAKE	187
XXI. BUNNY'S BIG IDEA	198
XXII. OFF TO THE CIRCUS	210
XXIII. THE GYPSIES	219
XXIV. BUNNY AND SUE ARE SAD	230
XXV. GRANDPA'S HORSES	239

**BUNNY BROWN AND HIS SISTER
SUE ON GRANDPA'S FARM**

CHAPTER I

A LETTER FROM GRANDPA

"Bunny! Bunny Brown! Where are you?"

Bunny's mother stood on the front porch, looking first in the yard, then up and down the street in front of the house. But she did not see her little boy.

"Sue! Sue, dear! Where are you, and where is Bunny?"

Again Mrs. Brown called. This time she had an answer.

"Here I am, Mother. On the side porch."

A little girl, with brown eyes, came around the corner of the house. By one arm she carried a doll, and the doll was "leaking" sawdust on the porch. Mrs. Brown smiled when she saw this.

"Why, Sue, my dear!" she exclaimed.

"What is the matter with your doll? She is 'bleeding' sawdust, as you used to call it."

"Oh, well, Mother, this is just my old doll," Sue answered. "It's the one I let Bunny take to play Punch and Judy show with, and he hit her with a stick, and made her sawdust come out. Did you want me, Mother?"

"Yes, Sue, and I want Bunny, too. Where is he?"

"He was here a little while ago," the brown-eyed girl answered. "But oh, Mother! you're all dressed up. Where are you going? Can't I go with you?"

"Yes. That is what I called you for. And I want Bunny, too. Have you seen him?"

"No, Mother. But shall I go in and wash my face, if I'm going with you? Where are we going?"

"Just down to the store, and then I'm going to stop in the post-office and see if there are any letters for us. Yes, run in and wash your face and hands. Your dress is clean enough. I'll look for Bunny."

Mrs. Brown walked out to the front gate, and again called:

"Bunny! Bunny Brown! Where are you?"

No one answered, but a nice old man, limping a little, and leaning on a stick, came around from the back yard. He looked like a soldier, and he had been in the war, many years ago.

"Oh, Uncle Tad!" Mrs. Brown asked, "have you seen Bunny?"

The nice old man laughed.

"Yes, I've seen him," he replied. "He went off down the street in his express wagon. That dog, Splash, was pulling him."

"I hope he hasn't gone too far," observed Mrs. Brown. "When Bunny gets to riding with his dog he doesn't think how far away he goes."

"I'll see if I can find him for you," offered Uncle Tad, with another laugh. "That Bunny Brown is surely a great boy," he murmured, as he limped off down the street.

He did not have far to go, nor did Mrs. Brown have long to wait, for, in about a minute, a barking was heard. Then came a rattle of wheels on the sidewalk, and a boy's voice called out:

"Gid-dap, Splash! Gid-dap! Go fast now! Go as fast as you can! Hurrah! That's the way to do it!"

Up dashed a small express wagon, drawn by a big, fine shaggy dog, that seemed to be having almost as much fun as was the blue-eyed, curly-haired boy who rode in the cart.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny! Don't go so fast!" cried his mother. "You'll spill out and hurt yourself! Don't go so fast!"

"Have to go fast, Mother!" said Bunny Brown. "We have to go fast; don't we, Splash?"

The dog barked, but he slowed up, for Uncle Tad held out his hand to pat the big fellow, and Splash dearly loved Uncle Tad.

"We're a fire engine, and we're going to a fire," Bunny Brown explained. "Fire engines always have to go fast; don't they, Splash? Old Miss Hollyhock's house is on fire, and we're going to put it out.

"Only make-believe, of course!" cried Bunny quickly, for he saw that his mother looked a bit frightened when she heard him speak of a fire. "We're just pretending there's a blaze. Here we go! Got to put out the fire! See, I've got a can of water all ready for it!"

Bunny turned to show his mother and Uncle Tad where, in the back of his express wagon, he had set the garden sprinkling-can full of water.

Just as Bunny did that Splash, his big dog, started to run. Bunny fell over backward off the seat, out fell the sprinkling-can full of water, splashing all over Uncle Tad's feet. Then Bunny himself fell out of the wagon, but he landed on some soft grass at the edge of the sidewalk, so he was not in the least hurt.

Splash ran on a little way, pulling the empty wagon, but Bunny, jumping to his feet, called out: "Whoa, Splash!" and the dog stopped.

For a few seconds they all stood there, Uncle Tad looking down at his wet feet, Bunny looking rather surprised at having fallen over backward, and Mrs. Brown hardly knowing whether to laugh or scold. As for Splash he just stood still, his long red tongue hanging out of his mouth, while his breath came fast. For it was a hot day, and he had been running with Bunny.

"Oh dear, Bunny!" said Mrs. Brown at last, "see what you've done! You've made Uncle Tad all wet!"

"I didn't do it, Mother. It was Splash," said the little boy. "He started before I was ready. I--I'm sorry, Uncle Tad. Will it hurt your rheumatism?"

"No, I guess not, Bunny boy. It's a hot day, and a little water won't do me any harm. But it's all spilled now, and how are you going to put out the fire?"

"Oh, I guess we'll make believe the fire's out," said Bunny. "I was going to stop playing, anyhow. Where are you going, Mother?" he asked, for he saw that his mother was dressed as she usually was when she went down town.

"I am going to the store," she said, "and I was looking for you and Sue to go with me. Sue is getting washed."

"If that water had splashed on Bunny, instead of on me, he would have been washed too!" said Uncle Tad with a laugh.

"Oh, Mother! I'll go and wash myself right away!" Bunny cried. Going down town with their mother was a treat that he and Sue liked very much. "May Splash come, too?" Bunny asked.

"Not this time, dear. Now hurry. I'll wait for you on the porch."

"And I guess I'd better go and put on dry shoes," said Uncle Tad. "I didn't know I was going to be the make-believe fire, and get put out, Bunny."

Bunny laughed. Then he drove Splash into the yard, put away the sprinkling-can, unhitched the dog from the express wagon, and put the wagon in the barn, where it was kept.

Splash went off by himself to lie down and rest in the shade, while Bunny hurried into the house to wash his hands and face. Soon he and Sue were walking down the village street with their mother.

As the children passed a little toy and candy shop, kept by Mrs. Redden, Bunny looked in the window, and said:

"Oh, Mother! She's got a new kind of candy in there!"

"So she has!" cried Sue, pressing her little nose flat against the glass.

Mrs. Brown smiled.

"Perhaps we may stop and get some on our way back," she said. "We haven't time for candy now. I want to see if we have any letters in the post-office."

A little later they passed a house, in the side yard of which was a lady, weeding the flower garden.

"Good-morning, Miss Winkler!" called Mrs. Brown.

"Oh, good-morning!" was the answer. "Won't you come in?"

"No, thank you. We haven't time now."

"Oh, Mother, do go in!" begged Bunny. "Sue and I want to see Wango!"

Wango was a little pet monkey, which Mr. Winkler, an old sailor, had brought home with him from one of his many ocean voyages. The monkey did a number of tricks, and Bunny and Sue liked him very much, and often petted him.

"No, dears. We can't stop to see Wango now. Some other time," Mrs. Brown said.

And so she and the children went on to the stores. When they reached the post-office, Mrs. Brown found three letters in her box. She opened one, and read it, she called to Bunny and Sue:

"Oh, my dears! I have good news for you. Here is a letter from Grandpa Brown, who lives away out in the country, on a farm. He wants us to come and stay all Summer with him!"

"Oh, goodie!" cried Sue, clapping her fat little hands.

"May we go, Mother?" asked Bunny. "Oh, let's go to grandpa's farm!"

"Perhaps we may go," said Mrs. Brown. "We'll keep right on down to papa's office now, and ask him."



CHAPTER II

THE RUNAWAY MONKEY

Mr. Brown, who was the father of Bunny Brown and his sister Sue, was in the boat business in the seaside village of Bellemere. Mr. Brown rented fishing, sailing and motor boats to those who wanted them, and he had his office on the dock, which was built out into Sandport Bay.

"Oh, Mother! Do you think daddy will let us go to grandpa's farm?" asked Bunny, as he and his sister Sue walked along the street, on their way to their father's office, after having gotten the letter from Grandpa Brown.

"Please ask him to let us go," begged Sue.

"Yes, I think he will," said Mrs. Brown.

The children clapped their hands in joy. Once, some years before, they had gone to their grandfather's farm in the country, and they remembered what fun they had had. Now they were older, and they were sure they would have many more good times.

"Well, well!" cried Daddy Brown, as he saw his wife and the two children come into his office on the dock. "What brings you all down here? Do you want some fish, or is Bunny looking for another big lobster claw, so he can put it on his nose and play Mr. Punch?"

"No, I don't want any lobster claws now, Papa," Bunny said. "But can we go to grandpa's farm in the country?"

Mr. Brown looked at his wife.

"What has happened now?" he asked. He was almost sure that something had happened, because Bunny and Sue looked so excited.

"Oh!" cried the little girl, "Bunny went to a fire, and he was upset, and Splash spilled the water all over Uncle Tad, and we got a letter, and----"

Sue had to stop. She had talked so fast she was all out of breath.

Mr. Brown laughed.

"What is it all about?" he asked his wife.

Mrs. Brown told him how Bunny had been playing fire engine in his express wagon, with the dog, and about the upset, when the water was spilled on Uncle Tad.

"But what we came to see you about, Daddy," she went on, "is this letter from father." Grandpa Brown was Mr. Brown's father, you see, and Mr. Brown and his wife always spoke of the children's grandpa as "father."

"Father wants us to bring the children, and spend the Summer on the farm," went on Mrs. Brown. "I think it would be nice, if we could go."

"Oh, let us, Daddy!" cried Bunny and Sue.

Mr. Brown looked thoughtful.

"Well," he said slowly, "I suppose we could go. I could have the business here looked after all right, and I guess I need a little rest myself. Yes, I think we'll go," he said. "It will take me about a week to get ready. You may write to father that we'll come," he said to Mrs. Brown. "Was there anything else in his letter?"

"Well, yes," and Mrs. Brown spoke slowly. "It's some bad news----"

"Bad news!" Bunny interrupted. "Can't we go to the farm?"

"It isn't that," Mrs. Brown said quickly. "It's about grandpa's horses. It seems," she said to her husband, while Bunny and Sue listened with all their might, "that there was some Gypsies camping near the farm."

"Did the Gypsies--did they take grandpa away?" asked Sue, for she had often heard of Gypsies taking persons off with them. But, really, this hardly ever happens.

"No, dear. The Gypsies didn't take grandpa, but they took his best team of horses," answered her mother. "That's

what he says in his letter. Some of the Gypsies' horses were taken sick, and they could not pull the Gypsy wagons, when they wanted to move their camp. Some of the Gypsy men borrowed grandpa's team and said they would pay him for the use of it a little while, until they could pull their wagons to a new place."

"And did father let them take his horses?" asked Daddy Brown.

"Yes. He says in his letter that he wishes, now, he had not. For, though the Gypsies promised to bring the horses back, they did not do so."

"Oh, did the Gypsies keep Grandpa's horses?" asked Bunny.

"Yes. That's what he says."

"Then we can't go to the farm!" and Bunny looked very sorry.

"Why can't we go? What have the horses to do with it?" asked Bunny's mother.

"Because, if he hasn't any horses, grandpa can't come to the station for us, and drive us out to the farm."

"Oh, well, I guess he has more than one team. Though he says it was his best one the Gypsies borrowed, and did not bring back," said Mrs. Brown to her husband. "It will be quite a loss to father, and he was so proud of that team of horses!"

"Yes," answered Mr. Brown, "it's too bad!"

"Oh, dear!" sighed Sue. "Aunt Lu lost her diamond ring, and now grandpa has lost his horses. But maybe you can find them, Bunny, just as you found Aunt Lu's diamond ring!"

"Huh! Aunt Lu's ring was in my lobster claw! How could a team of horses get in a lobster claw?" asked Bunny, with a laugh.

"Oh, I don't mean that!" said Sue. "But maybe you could find the horses in the woods, same as you found the ring in the claw."

"Maybe!" agreed Bunny. "But when can we go to the farm?"

"Next week, perhaps," answered his mother. "It depends on your father."

"Yes, we can go next week," Mr. Brown said.

"Even if Grandpa Brown doesn't get his horses back from the Gypsies?" asked Bunny.

"Yes, I think we can manage to reach the farm without grandpa's horses. I have a new plan for going out there--something we have never done before," and Daddy Brown nodded at his wife, and smiled.

"Oh, what is it?" Bunny asked eagerly.

"It's a secret," said his father. "I'll tell you after a while."

The children begged and teased to know what it was, but Mr. Brown only laughed, and said they would have to wait.

Then Mrs. Brown took Bunny and Sue home, and on the way the brother and sister talked of nothing but what fun they would have on grandpa's farm, and of how sorry they were about the Gypsies having borrowed the horses, and keeping them, instead of bringing them back, as they should have done.

"But maybe you'll find them," said Sue. "I hope so, anyhow. I'll help you look, Bunny."

"I hope so, too," replied Bunny. "We did find Aunt Lu's diamond ring, when she thought she never would."

I will tell you a little about that, though, if you like, you may read of it in the first volume of this series, which is named: "Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue."

In that I told how the Brown family lived in the seaside town of Bellemere, on Sandport Bay. Bunny, who was six years old, and Sue, who was five, were great chums and playmates. They were together nearly all the while, and often got into trouble; though of course they had fun, and good times also.

Their Aunt Lu came to visit them from New York, and the first night she was at the Brown house she lost her diamond ring, when she was helping Mrs. Brown make a salad from a big lobster that was brought ashore in one of Mr.

Brown's boats. A lobster is a sort of fish only it has legs and claws to pinch with.

Aunt Lu felt sorry about losing her ring, and Bunny and Sue promised to help her find it. They looked, but, for a long time, could not discover it. Finally Bunny found it in the queerest way.

Besides finding Aunt Lu's diamond ring, Bunny Brown and his sister Sue did many other things, which are told of in the first book. They had good fun with their friends Charlie Star, Harry Bentley, Mary and George Watson, and Sadie West and Helen Newton, children of about their own age.

Bunny and Sue got locked in an empty house, and thought they would have to stay there all night, but they did not. They went on a trolley ride, and got lost, and wandered into a moving picture show, and up on the stage, where they made everybody laugh.

Bunny Brown was always thinking of new things to do, and Sue was always ready to help him do them. The children were not naughty, but they did get into trouble and out again more easily than any tots of whom I ever heard. They had many friends, and everybody in town knew and liked them.

"And now we're going to have more good fun!" said Bunny, on the afternoon of the day when Grandpa Brown's letter came. "Oh, I just love it on the farm."

"We can play in the hay, and go after the cows, and hunt eggs," said Sue.

"But you mustn't fall into any hen's nest, as you did once in our barn, and get your dress all egg," said Bunny.

"I won't," promised Sue. "Oh, Bunny, I can hardly wait!" and she jumped up and down, she was so excited and happy.

"Neither can I," said her brother. "I'll tell you what let's do!"

"What?" asked Sue.

"Let's go down to Mrs. Redden's and get a lollypop. We have our penny, and mother said we could each spend one this afternoon."

"All right," Sue replied. "And then shall we go in and see Wango, the monkey?"

"I guess so. But we'd better eat our lollypops first, or he'll beg them away from us."

Wango was very fond of candy, and if the children stood in front of him, eating any, he would beg so hard for some, and hold out his little paws in such a sad way, that they could not help sharing their treat with him.

Wango was sometimes kept in a big cage, but he was also often allowed to be outside, on the porch, with a chain fastened to his collar, and then snapped to a ring in the porch post.

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue bought their lollypops at Mrs. Redden's store, and then went on to Mr. Winkler's house, to see the monkey. Mr. Winkler, the old sailor, lived with his sister, Miss Winkler. The sister did not like her brother's monkey very much.

"Shall we tell Miss Winkler about going to grandpa's farm?" asked Sue, as she and Bunny walked along the street, hand in hand, eating their candy.

"Yes, and we'll tell her about the Gypsies taking grandpa's horses. Maybe she might see them, and tell the bad men to give them back."

"Maybe," agreed Sue. "Is your lollypop good, Bunny?"

"Awful good. Is yours?"

"Yep."

The two children walked on, and soon were within sight of Mrs. Winkler's house.

"There's Wango, tied on the porch," cried Bunny.

"I see him," answered Sue. "And oh, Bunny! Listen! I hear music!"

"Oh, it's a hand-organ!" Bunny exclaimed.

"Oh, see, he has a monkey!" Sue cried, pointing to a little furry creature on top of the music box.

Wango saw the strange monkey at the same time. Wango jumped up, and ran toward the organ grinder as far as the chain would let him. Then Mr. Winkler's monkey chattered and screamed loudly.

All at once the Italian stopped playing, for his own monkey suddenly jumped down to the sidewalk, gave a hard pull on the string that was about his neck, broke loose and ran away, far off down the street, while Wango chattered louder than ever.



CHAPTER III

THE BIG AUTOMOBILE

"Bunny! Bunny! Look! Look! The hand-organ man's monkey has run away!" cried Sue.

"Yes!" answered Bunny. "Let's run after him! Maybe we can catch him, and the man will let us play the organ!"

That was all Bunny Brown and his sister Sue thought about--doing whatever they happened to think of first, and this time it was racing after the runaway monkey.

For the hand-organ man's monkey was really running away. He was frightened at Wango, I think, for Wango was larger than he, though Wango was quite gentle, even if he did make lots of trouble, such as upsetting the jars in Mrs. Redden's candy store.

"Here! Come back! Come back!" cried the Italian to his monkey, speaking in what sounded to Bunny and Sue very queer talk. But then the Italian could speak his own language well, even if he could not talk the kind Bunny and Sue used.

"We'll get your monkey for you, Mr. Organ-man!" cried Bunny. "Come on, Sue!"

"Well, don't run so fast--I can't keep up to you!" called the little girl. "Wait for me, Bunny!"

Bunny turned and clasped Sue's hand in his own. He did not want to leave his little sister behind. Each child still held a half-eaten lollypop.

The hand-organ man set down his music box, and he, too, raced down the street after his runaway monkey. Of course the man could run faster than could Bunny and Sue.

All this while Wango was jumping about on the porch, chattering and squealing. He tried to break the chain that was fast to the collar around his neck, but it was too strong for his efforts.

Once, after Mr. Winkler had fastened his pet out of doors, Wango broke away, and hid in Mrs. Redden's candy shop. And, oh! how he did smash the candy jars, and what a lot of lollypops he took! But his master, Mr. Winkler, the old sailor, paid for them, so it was all right. Then Mr. Winkler put a stronger chain on Wango. And that is why the pet monkey could not now get away.

But he tried very hard, for he wanted to run away also, I think, and have a good time with his friend, the hand-organ monkey. Only the hand-organ monkey seemed to be afraid of Wango.

"But he didn't need to be," Bunny said, as he trotted on with Sue, "for Wango wouldn't hurt him."

"Of course not!" said Sue, "any more than our dog Splash would have hurt the little yellow dog he ran after one day."

I have told you about that in the first book, how Splash ran away with Bunny and Sue, hurrying down the street to make friends with a little yellow dog, that once had had a tin can tied to his tail.

And, also in the first book, I told you how Bunny and Sue got their dog Splash. Bunny and Sue were carried away in a boat, and landed on an island in the river. There Sue fell in, and the big dog pulled her out. As no one came for the dog the Browns kept him, and Bunny and Sue named him "Splash," because, as Sue said, "he splashed into the water to pull me out."

On ran the hand-organ man after his monkey, and on ran Bunny Brown and his sister Sue after the hand-organ man. But Wango had to stay behind. He made so much noise, though, with his chattering and screaming, to say nothing of rattling the chain, that Miss Winkler came running out. She was making a cake, and her hands were all covered with flour, while there was a white spot on the end of her nose.

"Oh, what is the matter? What is the matter?" she cried.

"The hand-organ man's monkey ran away because Wango scared him," said Bunny, "and we are running after him."

"After Wango?" Miss Winkler wanted to know.

"No! After the hand-organ monkey," answered Bunny. "Come on, Sue!"

They turned the corner, and there, half way down the street, they saw the hand-organ man standing under a tree.

"Oh, maybe the monkey is up the tree!" cried Bunny.

"Yes, ma monk--he up-a de tree!" said the Italian, in his funny way. "He no comea down! Jacko! Jacko!" he called. "Comea down--pleasa!"

But, though the hand-organ man held up his arms, and begged his monkey to come down, the little furry creature would not come. He sat perched on a high limb, looking with his bright eyes at Bunny, Sue and the man. Several boys and girls, as well as some men, came over to see what was going on.

"I'll climb the tree and get him," offered George Watson.

"Better not. Monkeys can bite and scratch," said Mr. Gordon, who kept the grocery store. "What happened to him, Bunny?"

Bunny told him how Wango had frightened the organ monkey.

"Maybe if you play, Mr. Italian man, he'll come down!" exclaimed Sue, after a bit.

"Ha! That's a good idea!" said Mr. Reinberg, who sold drygoods in Bellemere. "Go get your hand organ, Mr. Italian."

"Sure. Me maka de nicea de music!" agreed the man. "Maybe Jacko comea down den!"

Off he ran to get his organ, which he had left on the grass in front of Miss Winkler's house. But, even when the organ was played, the monkey up in the tree would not come down. He chattered, and climbed farther up.

"Oh, I know what let's do!" suddenly cried Bunny Brown.

"What?" asked his sister Sue.

"Let's give him our lollypops--that is, what we have left of 'em. Wango likes lollypops, you know, and this monkey ought to like 'em just as well. I'll give him mine," and Bunny looked at his half-eaten candy.

"And he can have mine, too!" exclaimed Sue.

"Better let the hand-organ man give him the candy," said Mr. Gordon. "The monkey will know him better. I guess it's a good idea, though--offering him the lollypops."

"Much-a thank-a you!" said the Italian, smiling, as he took the pieces of candy on the sticks, which the children gave him. He held them up to Jacko, and said something in Italian. The monkey chattered, just as if he were talking back, and then he began slowly climbing down the tree.

"Oh, Bunny! He's coming! He's coming!" cried Sue.

"He much-a like-a de candy!" said the Italian organ-grinder, who was now smiling. "Come on, Jacko! Come on!"

The runaway monkey did not seem so much afraid now, or perhaps he was very hungry for the candy. Anyhow down he came, until he could jump to his master's shoulder. Then he put one little hairy paw around the Italian's neck, and, with the other, held the lollypops, which he at once began to eat.

"Say, that's the time you and Sue did it, Bunny!" cried Mr. Gordon. "It was a good trick. But the monkey will eat all your candy."

"Oh, I don't mind," Bunny said. But he did care, just a little, and so did Sue. However the Italian was so glad to get his monkey back that he gave Bunny and Sue each a penny, so they could buy new lollypops. Then the organ-man fastened the string on the monkey's collar again, and started off up the street.

"Let's follow him," said Sue to Bunny. "Maybe the monkey will run away again, and we can help get him out of a tree."

"No, we'd better go home," Bunny said. "Mother may be looking for us."

So home they went, and just in time, for Mrs. Brown was about to ask Uncle Tad to look for the children.

Every day, for the next week, Bunny Brown and his sister Sue would ask when they could start for grandpa's farm. And their mother would say:

"Pretty soon now. Daddy hasn't his surprise quite ready."

"Oh, why can't you tell us?" begged Sue.

"Because, then it wouldn't be any surprise," said Mrs. Brown, with a laugh.

Bunny and Sue had some good times while they were waiting, but they were anxious to have fun on the farm. And, one morning, soon after breakfast, they went out in the yard to play, and saw a strange sight.

Into the drive rumbled a big automobile, almost like a large moving van. Bunny and Sue ran out of the way. The big automobile came to a stop. The man on the front seat jumped down, and, going around to the back, opened the doors. Bunny and Sue peeped inside the van.

"Oh, look, look, Bunny!" cried Sue. "It's just like a play-house inside. It's got beds, and a table and even a stove! Oh, what is it all for?"

"My, what a big, queer auto!" said Bunny. "And it's even got windows in it. Why we could camp out in it! Is it ours?" he asked the man.



CHAPTER IV

A QUEER SLIDE

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue stood looking at the queer, big automobile. They had seen some like it once before passing through the town, loaded with tables, chairs, a piano and other things, when someone was moving. But this automobile was different.

Inside, as the children could see, were four small beds--"bunks" they were called, as Bunny knew, for that was what a bed was called on a ship, or big boat. And a bunk was like a shelf, sticking out from the side of the wall.

Besides the bunks, inside the big automobile van, there were chairs, a table, and a cupboard, in which, through the glass doors, could be seen dishes.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue. "We're going to eat! We're going to eat! I see the dishes. We're going to eat in this auto!"

"Yes, and we must be going to cook, too," said Bunny. "I see an oil stove, and some pots and pans. That is we are going to eat if this is our auto," he went on, looking again at the man who had steered it into the yard of the Brown house. "Is it ours?" Bunny asked.

"Well, your father told me to bring it up here, and leave it, so I guess it must be yours, or his," and the man smiled at Bunny and Sue.

"Oh, goodie!" cried the little girl, dancing up and down for joy. "It's our auto! It's our auto!"

"Fine!" exclaimed Bunny, with eyes that sparkled almost as brightly as did Aunt Lu's diamond ring, which was found in the lobster claw. "And are we going to have a long ride in it?" Bunny asked.

"Well, as to that, I don't know," answered the man. "Your father told me to bring the auto up here and leave it. He'll be home pretty soon, I guess, and tell you all about it. I'll be going now."

The man had put the brakes on, so the wheels could not turn, and thus let the automobile run away. Now he waved his hand in good-bye to the children and walked off. Bunny and Sue raced into the house.

"Oh, Mother!" cried Sue.

"Oh, Mother!" cried Bunny.

Then both together they fairly shouted:

"Come on out and look at the big auto!"

Mrs. Brown smiled, and went out with the children. She did not seem as much surprised as they had been.

"What's it for, Mother?" asked Bunny. "The man said papa sent it up. Are we going to take a long ride in it?"

"Well, I think so, Bunny."

"But if we go riding in this how can we go to grandpa's farm?" Sue wanted to know.

"You had better wait until your father comes home, and he'll tell you all about it," her mother replied.

"May we go inside and look at it?" asked Bunny.

"Yes, come along," and Mrs. Brown led the way up the little pair of steps that were fastened at the back of the big automobile.

Once inside Bunny and Sue thought they had never seen such a fine place. It was just like a little house of two rooms, one room being shut off from the other by heavy curtains.

The first room they went into was where they would eat and cook, and, when the table was cleared off, they could sit around it and read, or play games. There was a hanging lamp over the table.

There were two windows in this room, with nice, white curtains draped over them. And along the sides of the room were cupboards, and little places where dishes, pans and other things could be put away. There was even a clock on the wall, to tell the time.

In the next room, as Bunny and Sue could see through the curtains, which were pulled back, were four beds, two little ones, Bunny's and Sue's, and two larger beds, or bunks, for Mr. and Mrs. Brown. In this room were also two boxes, or chests.

"That is where we shall keep our clothes when we are traveling," said Mother Brown. There was a lamp in this room, and windows, with pretty, flowered silk curtains over them.

"Then we are really going to travel in this auto?" asked Bunny eagerly.

"Yes," answered his mother with a smile.

"But I thought we were going to grandpa's!" remarked Sue. She did not know what it all meant.

"Well, I think this is papa's secret," went on her mother, "and you will have to wait until he comes home when he can tell you all about it."

Bunny and Sue shook their heads. They did not know what it all meant, but they thought the automobile was fine, and they could hardly wait for the time to come when they should travel and live in it.

"It's just like a sleeping car on the railroad train," said Sue.

"It's better!" Bunny cried. "You can eat in it too. Once I ate on a train, but my milk all spilled in my lap when I tried to drink out of my glass."

Bunny and Sue had once traveled all night on the railroad, and had slept in a bed on the car, and had also eaten in the dining coach, so they knew something about it.

For some time the two children looked about inside the queer, big automobile that was made into a little house, and then they climbed down the steps again.

"And it's real, too. It isn't make-believe!" said Bunny, as if that were the best part of it.

"Shall we have real things to eat?" asked Sue.

"Oh, I think so," her mother told the little girl.

"I--I feel hungry now," observed Bunny, with a sigh.

"Well, run to the house and get some cookies," his mother said. "Then you and Sue may go off and play for a while. But don't go too far. It will make the time pass more quickly, and when you come back daddy will be here, and will tell you all about the big automobile."

"Come on, Sue!" cried Bunny. "We'll have some fun."

Soon the children, a cookie in each hand, were racing about the yard, playing with Splash, the big dog. Splash liked cookies, too, and I think he had almost as much of Bunny's and Sue's as did the children themselves.

Mrs. Brown had gone into the house, and Bunny and Sue were left in the yard. They soon grew tired of playing with Splash, and, as the dog himself was rather hot, he went to lie down in the shade.

"I know what let's do!" said Bunny, after a bit.

"What?" asked Sue, who was always ready to go where her brother led. "What can we do, Bunny, to have some fun?"

"We'll go over to the pond and catch frogs," answered Bunny. "I'll get my net, and you can take a tin can to keep 'em in."

"But we won't hurt the frogs; will we Bunny?"

"No. We'll just catch 'em, and let 'em go again, to watch 'em hop. Come on!"

Bunny had made himself a little net out of a bean pole, with a bent wire, in the shape of a hoop, and some mosquito netting pinned over it. Not far away from the Brown house was a pond where there were many frogs and tadpoles, which are little frogs before they have any legs.

The pond was in a hollow place, where the clay had been dug out to make bricks, for near Bellemere was a large brick factory. The water rained into the pond, and stayed there for some time, as it could not run out or soak down through the clay. Bunny and Sue were allowed to go to the clay-pond because it was not deep, and not far away. But

Mrs. Brown always told them to be careful not to slip down in the wet and sticky clay or muddy water.

So now, with the net and the tin can to catch frogs, away the two children started. They had not been frog-hunting since Aunt Lu went back to New York.

"There ought to be lots of frogs now," said Bunny.

"Yes," agreed Sue. "I hear them singing every night."

"Frogs don't sing!" her brother said.

"Yes they do too!"

"No they don't!"

"Then what do they do?" Sue wanted to know.

"They croak!" said Bunny. "Frogs can't sing, they just croak."

"Well, they can hop then!" Sue was sure of that. "Cause the ones George Watson let loose at our party hopped."

"Oh, yes, frogs can hop," Bunny knew that well enough.

"All 'ceptin' pollywoggles," went on Sue. "They jest wiggle."

"That's right," said her brother. "Pollywogs can't hop, 'cause they've got no legs. Come on."

The two children were soon at the frog pond. They could hear the frogs croaking, or "singing," whichever you call it, and with his net Bunny was soon scooping around in the water, to catch some of the hopping, swimming creatures.

"Oh, I've got a big one!" the little boy suddenly cried, as he lifted the net into the air. "Where's your can, Sue?"

"Here it is, Bunny!"

Sue held up an old tomato can, with the cover off, while her brother turned his net upside down over it. Some black mud and water splashed from Bunny's net, some splattering on Sue's dress. She looked eagerly into the can.

"There isn't any frog at all, Bunny!" she exclaimed, much disappointed.

"No frog?" shouted Bunny. "Of course there is!"

With a stick he poked in the mud on the bottom of the can. No frog was there.

"Well, he must have hopped out," he said.

"Maybe you didn't have one, Bunny."

"Yes I did. But he got away. He was a big one, too. But I'll get another."

A little later Bunny did catch two frogs, though they were small ones. He put them in Sue's can. She looked at them for a while and then asked:

"Oh, Bunny, oughtn't I to put some water in the can, so the frogs can swim? They won't like us if we don't let them swim."

"Well, put a little water in," said Bunny.

With the frogs in the can, Sue dipped it into the pond, at the water's edge. Then she gave a sorrowful cry.

"Oh, Bunny! The frogs hopped out! They got away!"

"Oh, dear!" the little boy said. "What made you let 'em go?"

"I didn't. They wented themselves! They swimmmed right out!"

"Oh, well, never mind. I can get more." Bunny was real nice and cheerful about it; wasn't he? Some boys would have made a fuss if their sister let their frogs go, but Bunny Brown was different.

Soon he caught four more frogs, and this time he helped Sue put water in the can, scooping it up with his hands. So the frogs did not get out.

But catching frogs gets tiresome after a while, and, after a bit, Bunny and Sue were ready to stop. They looked about for something else to do. Not far from the pond was a high bank of clay, partly dug away. It was like a little hill, and sloped down to the edge of the pond.

"Oh, Sue, I know what let's do!" cried Bunny.

"What?"

"Let's go up to the top of the clay-hill and roll stones down into the water."

"All right--let's!"

Sue set down her can of frogs, and Bunny laid aside his net. The clay-hill was too slippery to climb, so the children went around to the side, on a part where the grass grew. Soon Bunny and Sue stood at the top of the hill. It was not very high, nor very steep, and at the top were a number of stones.

"We'll roll 'em down, and watch 'em splash in the water," said Bunny.

Down the slippery clay slide the children rolled the stones, watching them splash into the little pond at the bottom of the hill.

All of a sudden, as Sue rolled one stone, larger than any of the others she had yet played with, she gave a cry.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny! I'm slipping! I'm falling!" she called.

Bunny gave a jump toward Sue, hoping he could catch her. But he, too, slipped on the smooth clay at the top of the hill.

And the next second Bunny and Sue went sliding down. Right down the clay-hill toward the shallow pond at the bottom they slid, like Jack and Jill, who went up the hill, after a pail of water, and then tumbled down.



CHAPTER V

OFF TO GRANDPA'S FARM

"Bunny! Bunny!" cried Sue, as she slid along. "Oh, Bunny! I can't stop!"

"I--I can't, either," answered her brother. "But don't be afraid! You won't get hurt, Sue!"

"No, but, Bunny, if I go into the water I'll get all--all wet!"

"Well, I'll get wet too, and then *mamma* will know it was an accident. Say, we're sliding fast, Sue! Aren't we?"

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue were certainly sliding fast. The clay-hill was wet with rain that had come down in the night, and the clay was as slippery as glass. The little boy and girl dug their heels in, or they tried to, but the clay was hard, as well as slippery.

Down and down they went, faster and faster. Sue tried to dig her fingers into the clay, but she could not, any more than Bunny, neither of them could stick the heels of their shoes in. On and on they slid, faster and faster.

"Oh, dear!" cried Sue. "I wish our dog Splash were here!"

"He couldn't stop us!" replied Bunny. "He'd slide too, same as we're sliding."

"Well--well, anyhow!" said Sue, almost ready to cry, "he--he could pull me out when I fall in the water--an'--an' I'm goin' to fall in, Bunny! I know I am! I'm goin' to fall in! Oh, dear!"

"Never mind, Sue. I'll fall in with you, and I'll pull you out. It isn't deep."

"No, but it's aw--awful muddy, Bunny!"

Bunny did not have time to answer. He only had time to yell:

"Look out, Sue! Here we go in!"

And--"splash!" in went Bunny Brown and his sister Sue. Right in the shallow pond of muddy water they slid, sitting down. It did not hurt them, for the clay was soft and smooth where the water covered it. But, though the two children were not hurt--oh, so dirty and muddy as they were! They had made such a hard splash into the puddle that the water was sprinkled all over them, like a shower from a fountain.

For a moment, after sliding in, and coming to a stop, Bunny and Sue looked at one another, not saying a word.

"Well," said Bunny, after a bit, with a long breath, "you didn't get hurt; did you, Sue?"

"No, not hurt, Bunny--but--but look at my--my dress!"

Sue's lips quivered, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Don't care," said Bunny kindly. "I'm all mud, too."

"Le--let's go home," Sue went on. "I must get a clean dress. And I don't want any more frogs, Bunny."

"I guess I don't, either. We'll let 'em go."

Bunny tried to get up from where he was sitting in the puddle of muddy water and clay, but it was so slippery that, almost as soon as he stood on his feet, he went down again.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Sue. "You're splashing me more, Bunny!"

"I--I couldn't help it," he said. He looked at Sue and laughed.

"What are you laughin' at?" she asked.

"At you. You do look so funny! There's a lump of clay right on the end of your nose!"

"Oh, is there?" Sue reached for her pocket handkerchief to wipe off the mud, for she did not like a dirty face. But she found that her pocket was under water, and of course her handkerchief was wet through.

"Lend me yours, Bunny," she begged. And Bunny, who had his handkerchief in his waist pocket, up above the

wetness, wiped the clay from his sister's nose. Then, by being careful, he managed to stand up. He helped Sue to her feet, and the children waded to shore. The water was not more than a few inches deep, but it was very muddy.

Bunny and Sue emptied the frogs out of the can. The little green fellows seemed glad to hop back into the pond again. Then the two children started for home.

"Oh my goodness me! what has happened to you?" cried their mother when she saw them coming through the gate.

"We--we fell in," said Sue.

"No, we slid in," Bunny said.

"Oh, dear! Well, however it happened, you are perfect sights!" gasped Mrs. Brown. "I never saw such children!"

Bunny and Sue told how it had happened--their sudden slide down the clay-hill--and, as they had not meant to get in the mud puddle, Mrs. Brown did not scold very much. It was an accident.

"But you must be more careful next time," she said.

"We will," promised Bunny.

He was always ready to promise.

"Anyhow," said Sue. "If we're going to grandpa's we can't go to play near the frog pond any more."

"That's so," agreed Bunny. "Or even if we go for a ride in the big automobile. We won't get muddy any more, Mother."

Mrs. Brown and the cook took the muddy clothes off the children, and then Bunny and Sue each had a fine bath in the clean, white tub. Soon they were as nice and neat as ever.

"Now don't go away from the house," said their mother. "Stay in the yard and play. It will soon be time for your father to come home to supper, and then----"

"Then he'll tell us about the big automobile!" cried Bunny.

"And about the secret!" said Sue.

Sue played with her dolls, while Bunny spun a musical top his Aunt Lu had sent him from New York, and, almost before they knew it, the children heard some one at the front gate ask:

"Well, how do you like it?"

"Oh, Daddy!" they cried, and they raced down the walk to meet their father.

"What's it for?"

"Is it for us?"

"Are we to live in it?"

"When are we going to grandpa's farm?"

"Can we take the auto with us?"

Bunny and Sue asked so many questions of their father, and they asked them so fast, that he could not answer them. He could only laugh. Then, catching Sue up in one arm, and Bunny in the other, Mr. Brown carried them into the house.

"Well, Mother," he asked his wife, "how do you like it?"

"I think it's fine," said Mrs. Brown.

"And do you think you could live in it, and sleep in it, for three or four days on a trip to grandpa's farm?"

"Why, yes, I think it would be very nice."

"Oh, Daddy! are we going to grandpa's in the big auto?" asked Bunny.

"Yes, I think we shall."

"And is that the secret?" Sue asked.

"It is," her father answered. "I'll tell you about it. This automobile is an old moving van. I bought it from a man, and I thought it would be nice if it could be fixed up like a Gypsy wagon, so we could travel in it, and eat and sleep in it. I had it made into a sort of little house, you see, with beds, a table, chairs and an oil stove. I thought we would take a little vacation in it this Summer.

"Then, after grandpa sent us the invitation to spend the Summer at his farm, I thought how nice it would be if we could go there in our big auto, instead of in the train. Would you like that?" he asked Bunny and Sue.

"Oh, of course," Bunny replied. Sue clapped her hands and nodded her head. She liked it, too.

"Well, then, that's what we'll do," Mr. Brown went on. "We will make the trip to grandpa's in the big auto. We'll live in it just as the Gypsies live in their wagons, that are drawn by horses, and we can camp out if we want to."

"But we won't take anybody's horses, and not bring 'em back, the way the Gypsies did to grandpa," said Bunny. "Will we?"

"Oh, no, of course not!" echoed Sue.

"Well, then, if it's all settled, we'll have supper, and talk more about our trip afterward," said Mr. Brown.

That night, when the table was cleared, the little family gathered about it talked about what fun they would have.

"Can I steer?" Bunny wanted to know.

"Oh, no. I'm going to let Bunker Blue do that," his father said. Bunker was a big, strong young man, with red hair, who helped Mr. Brown in the boat business.

Bunny and Sue could hardly sleep that night, thinking of the fun they were going to have in the big automobile, and on grandpa's farm. The next morning they helped their mother get ready to start.

Bed clothes were put on the four bunks, the oil lamps and the stove were filled, and things to eat were put in the cupboard. On the way they could stop at stores along the road, and buy more things, when they were hungry.

Very soon all was in readiness. Two days later, the house having been locked up for the Summer, Bunny Brown and his sister Sue, with their father and their mother, took their places in the little house that was made inside the big automobile. Bunker Blue was out on the front seat to steer, and make the automobile go.

"Are you all ready?" asked Bunker of Mr. Brown.

"All ready, Bunker. You may start now!"

"Chug! Chug!" went the automobile, and away it rolled, out of the yard and into the street.

"Hurrah!" cried Bunny Brown. "We're off for grandpa's farm!"

CHAPTER VI

JUST LIKE GYPSIES

Away down the road rumbled the big automobile, which was just like a little house on wheels. Bunny Brown and his sister Sue sat, one at each window, on cute little chairs, and looked out.

"Oh, isn't this fun?" cried Sue.

"The best fun we ever had," agreed Bunny. "It was more fun than when we were shipwrecked on the island; 'member?"

"Yes. When we played Robinson Crusoe," went on Sue, "and we couldn't find Mr. Friday because it was Thursday," and she laughed.

"And you fell in," added Bunny.

"And Splash pulled me out!"

"Oh, Father!" suddenly cried Bunny, as Sue mentioned the name of the pet dog, "couldn't we take Splash with us?"

"Well, I don't know," said Mr. Brown slowly. "You know we weren't going to take him down on the farm, because grandpa has a dog. But I guess, if you want Splash very much, we have room for him. What do you say, Mother?" and he looked at Mrs. Brown.

"Oh, let the children have their pet," said Mother Brown.

"Fine!" shouted Bunny.

"We'll stop at Mr. West's and get him," said Mr. Brown.

When the Brown family decided to go away, they had not planned to take Splash with them, and he was left at the home of Sadie West, a little girl with whom Sue played. Sadie said she would take good care of Splash. But now Bunny and Sue wanted him with them.

So the big automobile was steered down toward the West home, and a little later, Splash was barking joyously inside the little room, and trying to kiss, with his red tongue, Bunny, Sue and Mr. and Mrs. Brown, all at the same time.

"Oh, I'm so glad we're going to take you!" cried Sue, hugging her pet. Half of Splash belonged to Sue, and half to Bunny. They made believe to divide the dog down the middle, lengthwise, so each would have part of the tail, which always wagged so joyfully when Splash saw either of the children.

Once again the automobile--a little house on wheels--set off.

"Good-bye!" called Sadie West to Sue, waving her hand.

"Good-bye!" echoed Bunny and his sister.

Down the main street of the village they went, many of Mr. Brown's friends stopping to wave their hands or hats to him. Such an automobile, fitted up inside so a family could live in it, was seldom seen in Bellemere.

"There's Charlie Star!" called Bunny, as he saw a boy on the street.

"Yes, and there's Helen Newton," added Sue. "Oh, I wish they were going with us!"

"We haven't room, my dear," said her mother, for sometimes Sue would invite her friends to stay to dinner or to supper without knowing whether her mother thought it best. "Besides," went on Mrs. Brown, "you will find many playmates, and enough to do, on grandpa's farm."

"Yes, I guess we will," said Bunny. "I'm going fishing."

"And I'm going to pick flowers," Sue said. "I don't like fishing, 'cause the worms on your hook are so squiggily."

Mr. and Mrs. Brown sat in easy chairs in the little dining room of the automobile. It was also the sitting room, when the table was not set. And it was the kitchen when the cooking was being done on the oil stove, so you see it was three rooms in one.

Beyond the dividing curtains was the bed room, with the four bunks against the wall. There were windows in that room, but the Brown family seemed to like best sitting in the one nearest the back doors of the automobile.

"It's just like being in a railroad train," said Bunny, as he looked out of the window, and waved to Harry Bentley, one of his friends, whom he saw, just then, on the steps in front of Harry's house.

"Yes," said Sue. "It's like a train, 'ceptin' it jiggles you more," for the street was a bit rough, and the car bumped unevenly along, and swayed from side to side.

"It will run more smoothly when we get out on the soft, dirt country road," Mr. Brown said.

A little later they had passed out of the village. On the front seat Bunker Blue steered the machine, and made it go faster or slower, just as he needed to.

Inside Splash walked about, feeling a little strange at first, perhaps. But he saw Bunny and Sue, and Mr. and Mrs. Brown, so of course he knew it was all right, and that he was one of the family.

"Mother, I'm hungry," said Sue. "Could I have something to eat?"

"Maybe a jam tart," added Bunny. "The kind Aunt Lu used to make, with the jam squashing up through the three little holes on top."

"Yes, I have made some of them," Mrs. Brown said. "I'll give you some. You must be hungry, as we had an early breakfast."

Mrs. Brown knew how to make jam tarts just like those Aunt Lu used to bake. A little cupboard was opened, and a plate of the nice tarts set on the table for the children.

"Oh!" murmured Sue.

"Ah!" said Bunny.

"And would you like a glass of cool milk?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"But how can we have cool milk, on a hot day, when we have no ice?" asked Bunny.

"Oh, but we have ice!" said Mrs. Brown, laughing. "See, Daddy had a little ice box put in, and I keep the butter, milk and other things that need to be cool, in there."

And, surely enough, in one corner of the dining-sitting-room and kitchen was a little icebox, out of which Mrs. Brown took a bottle of milk. So Bunny and Sue were having a nice little lunch, which tasted all the better because they were eating it as they rumbled along in the automobile-house-on-wheels.

Splash looked on hungrily, until Mr. Brown tossed him a dog biscuit. Sadie West had bought some for him, thinking she was going to keep the dog, but she had put the biscuits in the automobile when Bunny and Sue came for their pet.

Mile after mile, along the road, rumbled the big automobile van, like a circus wagon. Bunny and Sue sometimes sat near the back doors, looking out, or else they climbed up on boxes near the side windows. Mr. and Mrs. Brown sat and talked, and laughed at the funny things the children said. Out on the front seat Bunker Blue held the steering wheel.

"Could I ride outside, with him?" asked Bunny, after a while. "I want to ride outside, Daddy!"

"No, indeed, little man," answered his father. "You might get bounced off, and hurt. This auto isn't like Mr. Reinberg's, in which you once had a ride. It would not be safe for you or Sue to ride outside."

"But I want to talk to Bunker," persisted the little boy.

"Well, I think I can manage that," Mr. Brown went on. "There is a window in the front part of the auto, right close to the back of Bunker's seat. I'll open that window, and you can talk to him through it. Go into the bed room."

Bunny and Sue walked into the front part of the automobile, through the hanging curtains. And, surely enough, when Mr. Brown opened a window he had had cut in the front of the van, there was Bunker's smiling face looking in. He saw Bunny and Sue, and laughed.

"Oh, Bunker! Isn't this lovely?" asked Sue.

"Well, it's better than rowing a boat full of fish, anyhow, Sue."

"And we had something to eat," went on Bunny. "Are you hungry, Bunker?"

"Well, no, not real hungry. I had some chewing gum a while ago."

"I can give you a sandwich, Bunker, if you'd like it," said Mrs. Brown, looking out of the window, over the heads of Bunny and Sue. "Chewing gum isn't good to eat."

"Oh, I didn't swaller it," said the red-haired young man. "But I'm not hungry. I'll wait until dinner. I couldn't eat and steer this big auto at the same time. I'll wait."

"It will soon be time for dinner," said Mrs. Brown.

On went the car, and at noon it came to a stop in the road, near a shady bit of woods.

"Here's where we'll eat," said Mrs. Brown. "Shall we set the table inside, or out on the grass?"

"Out on the grass!" cried Bunny. "Then, we'll be just like Gypsies at a picnic."

So Mr. Brown lifted the table out of the automobile, and he and Bunny and Sue helped put on the dishes and the knives and forks. Mrs. Brown cooked the dinner on the oil stove. There were meat and potatoes and green peas, besides tomato soup, which Bunny liked very much.

There was milk for the children, and tea for the older folk, and they sat on chairs, under the trees, and ate what Bunny said was the best dinner he had ever had. Sue liked it too, and so did Bunker Blue.

Then, after a little rest, they went on again. Oh, I forgot to say that of course Splash had his dinner, also. He ate the scraps of meat, and the bread and potatoes left over when all the others had finished. He liked his dinner very much.

On rumbled the big automobile over the country roads. Many persons who passed it--some in other cars, and some in carriages--turned to look at the funny house-on-wheels. Perhaps they wished they had one like it.

"And are we going to sleep in it to-night?" asked Sue, when the sun began to go down.

"Yes," answered her mother. "I'll make up your little beds just as I do at home."

"But I can't sleep if it jiggles and squiggles so much, Mother!"

"We'll not travel at night," said Mr. Brown. "We'll find a nice place beside the road, run the auto under the trees, and stay there until morning. Then the auto won't jiggle you, Sue."

"All right, Daddy. That's nice!"

Just before dusk they stopped for supper. This was just as much enjoyed as was the dinner. Mrs. Brown made lemonade, when Bunker found a spring of cold water.

Just as supper was over, and they were sitting about the table, which was out on the ground near the back of the automobile, Mrs. Brown pointed to some smoke that was to be seen coming up through the trees, not far away.

"That looks like some one camping over there," she said to her husband.

"Maybe it is. There are several bands of Gypsies around here," he said. "It may be some of them."

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue looked at one another. They were both thinking of the same thing. Could these be the Gypsies who had taken grandpa's horses?

The smoke rose higher and higher through the trees, as Mr. and Mrs. Brown, with the help of Bunker, began to wash the supper dishes. Bunny and Sue walked a little distance away from the car, toward the smoke.

"Don't go too far!" their mother called to them.

"We won't," answered Bunny.

CHAPTER VII

THE WOODLAND CAMP

The two children walked slowly down the road, at the side of which, under some big willow trees, the automobile was drawn up for the night, which would soon come. Mrs. Brown was busy making up the beds. One for Bunker Blue was to be made on the ground, right under the automobile itself. An extra cot had been brought along for him, but it was folded up in the automobile.

Mr. Brown was busy looking over the machinery of the engine, or motor, that made the automobile go. He wanted to be sure it had not broken, so they would be able to go on again in the morning, and finally get to grandpa's farm.

"Where are you going, Bunker?" called Bunny, as he and Sue saw the big, red-haired boy start down the road with a pail on his arm.

"I'm going for water," Bunker replied.

"Why, we have some in the ice box," cried Sue, for she had had a glass a little while before. "You can drink that water, Bunker."

"Oh, I don't want a drink, Sue. It's the automobile that wants one," Bunker answered.

"How funny!" laughed Sue. "Automobiles can't drink."

"Oh, yes, they can," replied Bunker. "I have to pour water in ours so the engine won't get too hot. It doesn't exactly drink it, but it needs it to cool itself off. That's why I'm going for water now."

"I'll come with you," offered Bunny. And of course where Bunny went, Sue went too. So the brother and sister were soon walking with Bunker down to the spring.

There he filled the pail with water, and, coming back with it, he poured it into what is called the radiator of the automobile--the place where the water itself is kept cool so it will cool the hot engine.

"There!" exclaimed Bunker, when he had finished. "Now the auto has had a good drink, and it can go to sleep when it wants to."

"Oh, do autos go to sleep?" Sue wanted to know.

"Well, they stay nice and quiet all night," her father told her. "At least I hope ours will, and that is almost the same as going to sleep. Now, Mother, have we everything ready for the night?"

"I think so," said Mrs. Brown. "Bunker, if you'll get out your cot, I'll make it for you, and then you can slide it under the automobile."

"Oh, thank you, Mrs. Brown," replied the big boy, "but I can make my own bunk. I'm used to it."

Mrs. Brown looked through the ice box, and in the cupboard. She wanted to see if she had everything she needed for breakfast. And, as soon as she opened the ice box she exclaimed:

"There! The milk! We won't have any for the children. There's only a little bit left. Where can we get any?"

Mr. Brown came back from having looked at the engine, which he found was all right.

"Milk?" he said. "Why, there's a farmhouse a little way over on that road," and he pointed to it. "I guess we could get milk over there."

"Then we'll have to do it. Bunker--no--you're making up your bed; aren't you? You can't go. You and I will go for the milk," she said to her husband.

"And take Bunny and Sue with us?"

"No, I think not. They seem to be having a good time and they'll be all right here with Bunker until we come back. There might be cross dogs at the farmhouse, and it may be too far for them to walk. You stay here, Bunny and Sue," she went on, "while daddy and I go for some fresh milk. Don't go far away now."

"No'm," promised Bunny again.

He and Sue saw many things to look at near the place where the automobile had stopped for the night. There were some flowers and ferns growing in the grass and Sue made a nice bouquet. Then Bunny found a place where he could break off long, willow branches from a tree, and he had fun playing he was the ring-master in a circus, cracking the willow whip, and making the make-believe horses jump over "pretend" elephants.

Sue looked up from her flower gathering, and said to her brother:

"Oh, Bunny! Look what a lot of smoke!"

She pointed to where the smoke had been seen before, curling up through the trees of the woods.

"It is a lot of smoke," said Bunny. "Maybe the trees are on fire! Let's go and look!"

Bunny did not stop to think that if the woods were on fire it was not a very good place for him and his sister to go. But the trouble was with Bunny Brown, that he did what he wanted to do first, and thought about it afterward.

"If I had my fire engine here I could put out the fire," said Bunny. But his fire engine was only a toy, and though it did squirt water when he turned the handle, it only sprayed out a little--about a tin cup full. So I guess it could not have put out a very big fire.

"We'll go to see what it is," decided Sue. She was always willing to go where Bunny led her.

Bunny looked back toward the automobile. Bunker Blue was not to be seen. He was under the big van fixing up his cot for the night, that would soon be turning everything dark. Down a side road Bunny could see his father and mother, going to the farmhouse for the milk.

"We'll just walk a little way and look at the fire," said Bunny. "Mother or father won't care about that. And maybe we'll have to tell 'em there is a fire, so they can telephone for the engines."

"There aren't any telephones here in the woods," said Sue.

"Well, then they can holler for the engines," Bunny remarked. He did not care much about that part--he wanted to see the fire. "Come on!" he called to his sister.

And so the two tots started toward the place where they could see the smoke curling up over the trees. If Bunker Blue had seen the children, he would have called to them to come back. So would their father and mother.

But Mr. and Mrs. Brown were hurrying toward the farmhouse, and Bunker was under the automobile. And just then he had struck his head on a piece of wood, and his head hurt so that Bunker had to rub it. And tears came into his eyes, though he did not exactly cry; but the tears did not let him see very good. That is why he did not see the children set out toward the fire.

So Bunny and Sue walked on toward the woods. The woods were darker than the road, and reaching the edge of the trees, Sue hung back.

"I don't want to go in," she whispered. "I'se afraid."

"Oh, don't be afraid," answered Bunny. "I won't let anything hurt you. Where's Splash? He won't let any one hurt you, either."

But the big dog was, just then, racing over the fields after a bird he thought he could catch. So no one saw Bunny Brown and his sister Sue, as they went into the woods. They could see the smoke of the fire much more plainly now.

And then, all of a sudden, they came to a place in the woods where there was a camp. There were white tents, and a number of wagons, with looking glass on the sides, were standing near some horses which were eating grass. And, in and about the tents and wagons, in the woodland camp, were a number of dark-colored men, women and children. They looked like Indians, but Sue knew who they were as soon as she saw the gay wagons.

"Oh, Bunny!" Sue whispered. "They're Gypsies! Maybe they have grandpa's horses. This is a Gypsy camp, Bunny!"

CHAPTER VIII

A NIGHT SCARE

Perhaps if Sue had not spoken of grandpa's lost horses Bunny might not have wanted to keep on toward the Gypsy camp. But when his sister spoke the little boy seemed to become brave, all at once.

"That's so, Sue!" he whispered to her, as he took hold of her hand, so she would not be frightened. "Maybe grandpa's horses are here. These folks are Gypsies, sure enough."

"Just like the pictures in the books," added Sue, also whispering.

She and Bunny could see where several Gypsy women and children were standing about the fire, over which were pots, from which steam came. The Gypsies were cooking their supper.

The men Gypsies stood near the horses and Wagons, talking. Some of the men were smoking, and they all seemed to be having an easy time.

"Shall we go up and ask 'em if they have grandpa's horses?" Bunny inquired of Sue.

"Yes," she said. "But you won't let the Gypsies take me, will you?"

"Nope," said Bunny.

He and Sue had often heard their little playmates talk about Gypsies taking children away, but I do not believe this ever happens. The Gypsies have children of their own--children who like to live and travel in the queer wagons--and why should the Gypsies take other children who might be a trouble to them, and cry to come home?

Still Bunny and Sue thought the Gypsies might take them away in one of the wagons, with the shining looking glasses on the sides, or that they might be kept in one of the tents. But the two children wanted to find out about grandpa's horses, so they kept on.

By this time some of the Gypsy women had seen the two tots. One woman, who wore a bright handkerchief on her head, came up to Bunny and Sue and asked:

"Where are you going? Where do you live? Aren't you lost?"

"No'm," said Bunny, while Sue sort of slid around behind him. "We're not lost. Our automobile is over there," and Bunny pointed to the road. "We just came to see if you had our grandpa's horses."

The Gypsy woman seemed surprised, and called to one of the men, who came up, smoking a pipe.

"We are Gypsies, too," said Sue bravely. Perhaps she thought if she said that she would not be taken away. Or maybe she thought that would be the best way of finding the lost horses.

"You are Gypsies!" exclaimed the woman, smiling. Bunny thought it was queer she could speak just as he did. But most Gypsies, in this country, can talk our talk.

"We're going to grandpa's in a big automobile," said Bunny, to explain what Sue meant, "and it's got beds in, and a table and a stove, just like your wagons," and he waved his hand toward the queer carts in which the Gypsies traveled from camp to camp.

"You are funny little Gypsies," laughed the woman. "But what is this about grandpa's horses?"

"Maybe their grandfather has horses to sell--or trade," suggested the Gypsy man. "Where does he live, little chap?"

"Oh, a good way off," answered Bunny, hardly at all afraid now. "But he hasn't any horses, 'cause he let some Gypsies take his horses to pull their wagons, and they didn't bring 'em back. So my grandpa has no horses, but I thought maybe you had 'em."

Some other Gypsies, who had gathered around to hear what was being said, laughed at this. Then the man spoke.

"We have some horses," he said, "but they are not your grandfather's, little chap. But I think you had better run home, or run back to where ever your automobile is. Your mother may be looking for you."

Bunny and Sue had not thought of that.

"I--I guess we had better go home," said Sue.

"Yes," agreed Bunny. "If grandpa's horses aren't here we had better go back."

"Do you know the way?" asked the Gypsy woman. "If you are afraid I will go with you, if you tell me where your automobile is."

"I--I guess we can find it--thank you," said Bunny. He was not sure that he could, for it was almost dark now, and the Gypsy fire looked bright and cheerful. But Bunny did not want to walk along through the woods with the Gypsy woman. She might, after all, take him and his sister.

"Come on, Sue," said Bunny to the little girl, and they turned back on the path by which they had come.

"Good-bye!" called the Gypsy woman after them. "Come again and see us, and I will tell your fortunes."

"All right," answered Bunny, waving his hand.

"What's a fortune?" asked Sue, when they had walked on a little way.

"It means what's going to happen to you."

"Well, lots happened to us, Bunny. I slid down the clay-bank hill and so did you; and once I sat in a hen's nest and broke the eggs."

"That isn't a fortune," said Bunny. "That's just bad luck! But let's run, Sue. It's getting awful dark, and maybe we can't find the automobile. Let's run!"

Bunny set off, fairly dragging Sue after him. But she called out:

"Oh, Bunny! I can't run! My legs is too tired! Let's go back, and get the Gypsy woman to take us."

"No," said Bunny. "I can find our auto all right."

He kept on. He went more slowly, though, so Sue would not get tired. At first Bunny managed to keep to the path through the woods--the path that led from the main road, on which their automobile was standing. But, in a little while, Bunny found himself walking into a patch of bushes.

"Oh! oh!" cried Sue, as the bushes scratched her face. "Where are you going, Bunny?"

Bunny did not answer, for he did not know himself. He was off the path.

"Oh, dear!" cried Sue. "Let's go back to the Gypsy camp, Bunny!"

"No, I'll find the way," he said. "I'll find our automobile."

Just then there was a rustling in the bushes, and in the dried leaves under them, and Sue, somewhat frightened, exclaimed:

"Oh, Bunny! What was that?"

Once again Bunny did not answer for a moment for he did not know what the noise was. But he did not have to speak, for, a second later, there came a loud bark.

"Oh, it's a dog!" cried Sue. "Maybe it's one of the Gypsy dogs come after us!"

A dog did rush up to Bunny and Sue, but it was a good, friendly dog, and seemed very glad to see them. It jumped about Bunny, and, no sooner had the little boy put his hands on the shaggy back of the frisking animal, than Bunny cried out:

"Why it's Splash! It's our dog Splash!"

"Oh, how glad I am!" laughed Sue. "Now we're all right. Oh, you dear old Splash!"

She put her arms about the neck of Splash, and he seemed as glad to meet Bunny and Sue as they were to see him. Then a voice called from the darkness:

"Bunny! Sue! Where are you?"

"Oh, it's daddy!" Bunny cried.

"Oh you children!" another voice said.

"It's mother!" shouted Bunny. "Here we are!" he added. "We went to the Gypsy camp to look for grandpa's horses, but we're coming back now. We didn't find the horses, but Splash found us."

The next minute Mr. and Mrs. Brown were beside Bunny and Sue, while Splash frisked about and barked, as though he had done it all.

"Oh, Bunny and Sue!" said Mrs. Brown. "You shouldn't have gone away. You should have stayed with Bunker. He was quite frightened about you, and so were we."

"But you're not scared now; are you Mother?" asked Bunny. "'Cause we're not lost any more."

"But I'm tired and sleepy," said Sue. "I want to go to bed."

"Yes, I guess bed is the best place for all of us," said Mr. Brown. "Now, Bunny--Sue--you must not go away like this again. You might have been lost in the woods all night."

"The Gypsies would have brought us home," observed Bunny. "One Gypsy lady wanted to, but I thought I could get home myself. And I almost did," he added.

"Tell me about the Gypsies," said Mrs. Brown, as she looked off through the woods, where a faint glow of the camp fire could be seen.

Bunny and Sue told of their little adventure. They were sorry they did not find grandpa's horses for him.

"I guess the Gypsies who have them are far away from here," remarked Mr. Brown. A light was seen flickering through the trees, along the path, and a voice called:

"Where are you?"

"It's Bunker Blue," said Mother Brown. "I told him to come after us with a lantern."

Soon Bunker came up.

"Did you find 'em?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes," Mr. Brown answered. "They're all right."

And, a little later, they were all safely at the big automobile. Bunny and Sue had some bread, with the milk their father and mother had bought at the farmhouse. Then they were undressed and tucked in the little bunks. Bunker went to sleep in his cot, under the van, and Splash curled up on the grass near him. And, after seeing that everything was snug for the night, Mr. and Mrs. Brown went to bed also. Their first day's travel was over.

Every one had been sleeping soundly for some time, and Bunny was dreaming that he had found grandpa's horses, and was riding down a slippery hill on one of them, when, all of a sudden, in the middle of the night there came a loud yell:

"Let me alone! Get away from here!"

"That's Bunker Blue!" Bunny heard his father say. Bunny sat up, hardly awake. Sue also sat up in her bunk.

Then Splash began barking under the automobile, where Bunker was sleeping. Only Bunker was not sleeping now, for he was wide awake, and he called out again:

"Quit, I say! Oh, Mr. Brown! Mr. Brown! Somebody's trying to upset the auto!"

"Oh Mamma!" wailed Sue.

Bunny did not know what to do.

"Wait a minute! I'm coming!" called Mr. Brown, as he jumped out of bed.

CHAPTER IX

THE LOST HORSE

"What is it?" cried Bunny Brown. "What's the matter?"

"Is it a Gypsy after Bunker Blue?" asked his sister Sue.

Mrs. Brown pulled aside the light curtains that hung in front of the children's bunks.

"Don't be frightened," she said. "It isn't anything. Perhaps Bunker is dreaming, and talking in his sleep. Daddy will make it all right."

"Is Splash barking in his sleep?" Sue wanted to know.

Mother Brown laughed, and Bunny and Sue felt better after that.

Once more Bunker Blue called out:

"Hey! Quit, will you? Stop it! Ouch! I'm being tickled! Oh!"

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue laughed again. They could not help it, for it seemed so funny--Bunker Blue being tickled in his sleep.

By this time Mr. Brown had lighted a lantern, slipped on a bath robe, put some slippers on his feet and was going down the back, outside steps of the van. These steps, you remember, folded up, out of the way, when the automobile was traveling.

"What is it, Bunker? What's the matter?" Bunny and Sue heard their father ask.

"Why--why, I don't know what it is," answered the red-haired lad who steered the automobile. "But it's some big animal after me. He poked his head right into my cot, and he struck me with something sharp. Maybe he tried to bite me."

Mr. Brown flashed his lantern under the automobile where Bunker was sleeping. Only, of course, as I told you, Bunker was not asleep now. Nor was Splash, for the dog was running about and barking.

"Why, this is funny," said Mr. Brown. "I don't see anything, Bunker. Are you sure you didn't dream it all?"

"Dream it? No, sir! I felt it!"

Just then there came a loud "Moo! Moo! Moo!"

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue knew right away what that was.

"A cow!" they both cried. "It's only a cow!"

Their father, outside, looking under the automobile where Bunker Blue had his cot, heard them.

"Yes, it is a cow," he said, and his lantern flashed on a big, brown cow. There she stood, a little way back from the automobile, looking at Mr. Brown and Splash, and blinking her eyes at the lantern. She could not see Bunker under the automobile.

"Yes, it was the cow that scared you, Bunker," said Mr. Brown. "She must have been tied to a stake, in some pasture, but she pulled herself loose, and came over to see you."

"Well I didn't want to see her!" exclaimed Bunker, poking his head out from beneath the van. "She can just go right back where she came from."

"And I guess she wanted to get some of the long, sweet grass that grows under your cot," went on Mr. Brown. "That's why she came."

And that was what had happened. The cow had pulled up the stake to which she was fastened, and had wandered from her pasture, down the road, to where Bunker was asleep under the automobile. The cow had not meant to wake him up, but as she reached for the grass her horns must have poked Bunker as he slept on his cot. That was what made him cry out.

Mr. Brown took hold of the cow's rope, and led her far enough off to keep her from bothering Bunker again that night. Then Mr. Brown tied the rope to a fence, and came back to tell Bunny, Sue and their mother all about it.

"Well, I'm glad it wasn't Gypsies," said Sue, as she curled up in her bunk again, to go to sleep.

"Pooh!" cried Bunny. "Gypsies don't have horns like cows!"

They were soon quiet again, though Splash did growl once in a while, as he heard the cow moving about, a little way off. But at last even Splash went to sleep, and so did Bunker. Nothing more bothered them, and it was broad daylight, and the sun was shining, when Bunny Brown and the others opened their eyes again.

"Breakfast! Breakfast!" cried Mother Brown. "Bunny! Sue! Wash for breakfast!"

There was a wash basin and stand in one corner of the automobile bed-room, and though it was quite different from the big bath room at home, Bunny and Sue washed their faces and hands very nicely, and thought what fun it was.

While they were doing this, Mother Brown was cooking the breakfast on the oil stove, and Daddy Brown, and Bunker Blue were setting the table out under the trees. Splash was not doing anything except looking hungry.

"Where's the cow?" asked Bunny, as he came down the automobile steps.

"Did she give us any milk for our breakfast?" Sue wanted to know.

"No," answered her father. "The farmer who owned her came to get her a little while ago. He said she often strayed away from her field in the night. He might have given us some milk, if he had had a pail, but we have plenty in our ice box. Now then--breakfast!"

And what a fine breakfast it was! eaten at the table, out of doors, under the willow tree. There were oranges, oatmeal and big glasses of cool milk, with soft-boiled eggs. Daddy and Mother Brown bought the eggs at the farmhouse the night before, when they went for the milk.

Splash, too, had his breakfast, and then he went roaming off over the fields, perhaps looking for another dog with which to have a game of tag--or whatever game it is that dogs play.

"Are you going to see the Gypsies this morning?" asked Bunny. He seemed very much interested in the strange folk who went about the country, living in their gay wagons.

"No, I think we'll travel on to grandpa's farm," his father answered. "We won't go to see the Gypsies. They aren't the ones who took grandpa's horses."

A little later the automobile started, Bunker Blue sitting on the front seat to steer. Mr. Brown sat with him, to tell him the right road to take, so they would not be lost.

Mrs. Brown, with Bunny and Sue, sat inside the automobile, near the windows, which were opened to let in the breeze, as the day was quite hot. It was lovely traveling this way.

They did not go as fast as they might, for Mr. Brown wanted Bunker to go carefully. Then, too, there was no hurry. It was such fun, traveling in this new way, that Bunny and Sue would not have minded if they could have kept it up all Summer.

They stopped, that noon, near a little brook to eat their dinner. It was not far from a small town, and Bunker walked in and came back with some ice cream.

After dinner they went on again, and, as it looked as though it might rain that night, Mr. Brown said they would stop near the next village, so, in case the storm was a bad one, they could go to a hotel to sleep.

"But the rain won't come in the auto," said Bunny.

"No, but it might wet Bunker if he sleeps outside, under it," his mother said.

"Let Bunker sleep in the dining room," suggested Bunny.

"Well, we can do that, if it rains too hard for him to sleep out of doors," Mrs. Brown agreed, with a laugh.

The automobile was stopped in a grove of trees, not far from the town, and, when Mrs. Brown was getting supper, Bunny and Sue, with their dog, Splash, walked down the road.

"Don't go too far," their mother called after them. "It might rain any time."

"We'll be back soon," answered the little boy.

He and Sue walked on, not thinking they were going far. The clouds did not seem so dark now, and the children thought that perhaps, after all, it might not rain.

All at once Sue, who had gone on a little ahead of Bunny, called out:

"Oh, look! A horse! It's a horse, Bunny, and nobody's with him! Maybe it's one of grandpa's!"

"Maybe it is!" Bunny agreed. "It's lost, anyhow. I'll catch him, and we'll keep him. We'll take him to our auto, and fetch him to grandpa. He'll be real glad."

Bunny was not afraid of horses, especially one as kind and gentle as this one looked to be. Bunny had often fed grass to the grocer's horse, when it stopped in front of their house, and once the grocer's boy had held Bunny on the back of the horse, and had given him a ride.

So now, as Bunny walked up to this horse, which was coming slowly along the road, the little fellow was not in the least afraid.

"Whoa, horsie!" he called, and the horse stood still.

"Oh, I know it's grandpa's horse!" cried Sue, clapping her hands "Grandpa's horses always stand still when you say 'whoa!' and that's what this one did. Oh, Bunny! Aren't you glad?"



CHAPTER X

AT GRANDPA'S FARM

Bunny Brown walked right up to the horse. Around the animal's neck was a long rope, that dangled to the ground. Bunny took hold of this rope, and called:

"Gid-dap! Come on!"

That was what he had heard the grocery boy call to his horse, and it was what Bunny said to his dog Splash, when he wanted Splash to run with the express wagon, to which he was sometimes harnessed. Splash, who had run on ahead of Bunny and Sue, now came trotting back. He did not seem surprised to see Bunny with a horse. To Splash, everything Bunny did was all right.

The dog barked at the horse once or twice, but that was only his way of speaking, I suppose, and the horse lowered his head, and put his nose close to the dog.

"Oh, now they're friends!" cried Sue, clapping her hands. "But don't let him bite you, Bunny."

"Let who bite me?"

"That horse."

"Horses don't bite," said Bunny. "They just eat hay and grass and oats. Anyhow his head's too high up. He can't reach me to bite me."

Bunny now started back down the road towards the automobile, leading the horse by the rope. Sue followed, but she did not like to go so near the horse as her brother went. Sue was just a little bit afraid.

"Isn't it good we found one of grandpa's horses," Sue cried. "I wish I could find the other one, Bunny."

"Maybe you will, to-morrow. We'll take this one to the auto, and then we can look for the second one."

"How'd you s'pose he came to be on the road?"

"I don't know," Bunny answered. "Maybe he got away from the Gypsies."

"Oh, I hope grandpa's other horse gets away," Sue cried. "And I hope I find it. But I'll let you lead it for me, Bunny. 'Cause it might step on me."

"I'll lead it. I'm not afraid," said the little boy.

This horse did not seem to mind in the least being led along by Bunny. It walked slowly, and Splash followed behind. Perhaps the dog thought he, too, was helping drive the horse along, and, for all I know, he may have been. Dogs drive sheep, and I should think they could drive horses too; shouldn't you?

Pretty soon Bunny and Sue, with the horse they had found, came within sight of the big automobile, around a turn of the road. They saw their mother and father looking down the highway.

"We thought you had run away again," called Mrs. Brown.

"Oh, no!" answered Bunny, as if he and Sue never did such a thing as that. And really, they never, at any time, exactly intended to run away. It was always an accident!

"Well, come along to supper!" Mr. Brown said. "We're glad you're home."

Then Mrs. Brown happened to notice the horse that Bunny was leading.

"Oh my goodness me!" she cried. "That horse! Is it chasing you, Bunny--Sue!"

"No'm!" answered Bunny, quite proudly. "I'm leading it. We found it. It's a lost horse. It's one of grandpa's! We'll take it home to him!"

For a moment Mr. Brown did not speak. Mrs. Brown did not know what to say, either. She just stood there, looking at Bunny and Sue. Then Mr. Brown began to laugh.

"Well, what will you youngsters do next?" he cried. "Why, you're as bad as the Gypsies, taking horses that don't

belong to you!"

"But we found this one, Daddy!" said Bunny. "He was all alone on the road, and when I told him to whoa he whoaed."

"Just like grandpa's horses," explained Sue.

"So I took him," went on Bunny. "He's one of grandpa's horses, and to-morrow Sue and I are going to find the other one."

Mr. Brown laughed harder than ever.

"Oh, do take that horse away from Bunny!" begged Mrs. Brown. "He may run away, or bite the children, or do something! Take him away!"

"Why, he's an awful nice horse," Bunny said. "He didn't step on us, or run away, or do anything. And Splash likes him, and so do I and Sue. We're going to take him to grandpa."

"Bunny is lucky," said Sue. "He found Aunt Lu's diamond ring, and now he has found one of grandpa's horses; haven't you, Bunny?"

"Yep. But I guess the horse is hungry, Daddy. Shall I tie him to the automobile where he can get some grass?"

"No indeed!" cried Mr. Brown. "If we tie the horse to our auto he may run off with it. I'll just tie him to the fence, as I did the cow, and when the man who owns him comes along he can take him away."

"Take him away!" cried Bunny. "Why, it's grandpa's horse!"

"Oh, no, son!" said Mr. Brown kindly. "I don't like to make you feel bad, but this isn't grandpa's horse. It belongs to some one around here, and it probably strayed away, just as the cow did last night. Some one will be along after it soon, so I'll tie it to the fence."

"Oh, dear!" sighed Sue, as her father fastened the horse. "I thought it was grandpa's, and he'd be so glad; didn't you, Bunny?"

"Yes, but never mind. Maybe we can find another horse, to-morrow, that *will* be grandpa's. Anyhow I'm hungry now."

It did not take much to make Bunny think of something new.

"I'm hungry, too," said Sue. "We'll look for another horse to-morrow."

The one they had found straying down the road was now eating grass near the fence. He did not seem to mind where he was. Splash lay down near him, as though to watch, so he would not stray off again.

"Shall we eat outside?" asked Mr. Brown of his wife, "or do you think it will rain?"

"I think not. We'll have an early supper. And unless it rains too hard we won't go to the village hotel. We'll stay here."

"And let Bunker put his cot in the dining room," added Mr. Brown, "if it's too wet under the auto."

"Oh, I don't mind the rain," said Bunker, who was washing the potatoes for supper.

The little table was set out under a tree, and there supper was eaten. It was almost over when a man came along the road.

"Good evening!" he called, and he looked surprised to see the big automobile, and the little supper party. "Good evening. Have you folks seen a stray horse? One of mine ran away----"

Then he saw the one Bunny had found, which Mr. Brown had tied to the fence.

"Why, there's my horse now!" the man cried. "How'd it get here?"

"I found it," said Bunny. "I thought it was my grandpa's, but it isn't, daddy says. Is it yours?"

"Why, yes, little man, it is. And I'm glad you found him. He might have gone off a good way if you hadn't stopped him."

Then Bunny told how he had led the horse along the road, and Mr. Brown explained why it was he and his family were traveling in the big automobile to grandpa's farm.

"If you'll send over to my place," promised the farmer, as he led his horse away, "I'll give you some peaches and pears."

"Thank you," answered Mr. Brown. "We'll be glad to get them."

And, after supper, Bunker Blue went over, coming back with a nice basket of fruit.

"So it's a good thing, Bunny, that you found the horse after all," said his mother, "even if it wasn't grandpa's."

Bunny thought so too, as he looked at the nice peaches and pears which the farmer had sent over.

It did rain that night, but not very hard, and Bunker, instead of coming into the automobile to sleep, hung some canvas curtains around his cot under the car, and slept there. He said he liked to be out in the rain, and he had often been on one of Mr. Brown's boats, all night, out on the bay in a storm.

It was bright and clear in the morning, and, after a good breakfast, they started off again. Bunny and Sue, looking from the windows of the automobile, hoped to see some other horses, which might really be grandpa's missing ones, but they were disappointed.

Nothing much happened for the rest of the trip, which lasted another day. If Mr. Brown had wished to hurry he could have gone to grandpa's in two days, but he took his time.

On the afternoon of the third day Bunker Blue steered the big machine down a little hill. At the foot was a big white house, with a red barn back of it.

"There's grandpa's!" called Mr. Brown.

"Yes, and there is grandpa himself standing at the gate to meet us!" Mrs. Brown said. "Wave your hands to him, Bunny and Sue!"

The children did, from the windows of the automobile. Then Bunker steered it up the driveway. Bunny and Sue jumped out.

"Hello, Grandpa!" cried Bunny.

"Hello, Grandma!" laughed Sue.

And, a second later, they were being hugged by the dear old couple, while Mr. and Mrs. Brown got out of the automobile more slowly.

"Oh, Grandpa, did you find your horses the Gypsies took?" Bunny asked.

"No," answered Grandpa Brown. "I guess I'll never see 'em again! And it was my best team, too!" and he shook his head sadly.



CHAPTER XI

IN THE GARDEN

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue walked up the path to the house with Grandpa Brown. Sue had hold of one of grandpa's hands, and Bunny the other. Behind them came father and mother, with Grandma Brown.

"Are you glad to see us, Grandpa?" asked Sue.

"Glad to see you? Well I should say I am!" cried grandpa. "I thought you would never get here. And what a fine big auto you came in!"

"It's a moving van," Bunny explained. "You put pianos and chairs and tables in it, and you take them to the new house, when you move. Only we didn't move our things--we moved just ourselves."

"We had lots of fun!" cried Sue.

"It certainly is a nice way to travel," said Grandpa Brown. "Better than with a horse and wagon, or even the steam cars."

"Yes," agreed Bunny. "We're awful sorry about your horses, Grandpa. We saw some Gypsies, and we asked them if they had your team, but they said they hadn't."

"No. I guess the Gypsies that took my horses, to use for a little while, but forgetting to bring them back, are far enough away from here now," said Grandpa Brown. "I'd like to get my team back, though. They cost a lot of money."

"We almost had a horse; didn't we, Sue?" asked Bunny, as he told of the one they had found walking along the road.

"Yes, we almost had a horse; and we did have a cow, Bunny."

Grandpa Brown laughed when they told him how the cow had put her head under the automobile, where Bunker Blue was sleeping, and had tickled him in the ribs.

"Well, well!" laughed Grandpa Brown. "That was funny! But now you're here, and I guess you're hungry; aren't you? Mother, these children are hungry!" cried Grandpa Brown to his wife, though Bunny and Sue had not said so. But probably Grandpa Brown knew that boys and girls are almost always hungry.

"Well, come right in," was Grandma Brown's invitation, "and I'll get you all something to eat."

Bunker Blue had run the automobile up to the big red barn. The doors were open, and in the automobile went on the barn floor. The barn was large enough to take in a load of hay, and the automobile was not quite so high as that.

Soon Bunny and Sue, with their father and mother, were seated at the table, eating a little lunch, and Mr. and Mrs. Brown talked about the trip, and Grandpa Brown told more about his lost horses.

"You see it was this way," said Grandpa Brown. "The Gypsies were camped not far from here. They had been around here some time, and they had done no harm, as far as I could see. Then, one day, a Gypsy man came over and wanted to buy horses from me.

"But I needed my teams, and so I wouldn't sell him any horses. Then he wanted to borrow my two horses to pull some of their wagons, for they were going to a new camp. He said two of his horses had died.

"I wanted to help the Gypsies, for some of them are good, so I let the man take my best team of horses. He said he would bring them back the next day. But he never did. I hunted all over, and I had the police look, too, but we never could find the Gypsies, or my horses. It's too bad!" and once more Grandpa Brown shook his head.

"I found Aunt Lu's diamond ring," said Bunny, "and maybe I'll find your horses, Grandpa."

"Well, I wish you would, little man, but I'm afraid you can't. They're gone!"

"Haven't you any horses left?" asked Sue. "'Cause if you haven't I'll give you all the money in my bank, and you can buy some new ones."

"Bless her little heart!" cried grandma, giving Sue a hug.

"Oh, I have some horses left," Grandpa Brown said, "and I'll take you out to the barn and show them to you. But my best ones are with the Gypsies."

"Well, maybe we'll find 'em!" said Bunny. But even Sue, who nearly always thought what Bunny said was just right, shook her little head.

The two children, when they had finished the meal, started out of doors.

"Where are you going?" asked Mother Brown.

"Out to the barn, to see the horses," Bunny answered.

"Better get on your old clothes," their mother advised. "You and Sue might want to slide down the hay, and sit in a hen's nest again, and old clothes are best for that."

"Yes, I guess so," laughed Sue, as she thought of what had once happened to her.

A little later, wearing their play clothes, which would not be harmed, even if they rolled in the dirt, Bunny and Sue set out for the barn to see what they could find. Bunny knew his way about grandpa's farm, for he was older than Sue, and he remembered having been there once before.

"Oh, here's a horse, Sue!" he cried, as he went into the barn.

Looking over the edge of the manger, or box where his hay and oats were put, was a brown horse. He sniffed at the children, and whinnied, as if glad to see them. When a horse whinnies it is just as if he laughs.

"Hullo!" said Bunny, and, liking horses, and not being afraid, he went up and patted this one on the nose. "Come on, Sue, rub him."

"No, Bunny, I'm afraid!"

"Oh, he won't hurt you."

"Well, I--I can't reach!"

"I'll get you a box to stand on, Sue."

Bunny looked around, and found a box. He was putting it in front of the stall of the brown horse, stooping over to get it just right, when he felt some one pulling on his coat.

"Don't do that, Sue!" cried Bunny.

"I'm not doing anything," she answered.

"Yes you are, too! You're pulling my coat, and I can't fix the box."

"Oh, Bunny Brown! I am not!" And Sue stood right in front of her brother so he could see that she was not touching him. And, just then, Bunny's coat was pulled again. Certainly, this time it was not Sue.

"Why--why--what is it?" asked Bunny.

"Oh, Bunny! It's a goat! A goat is pulling your coat!" Sue cried.

"A goat!"

"Yes, look! He has hold of you now!"

Bunny turned around quickly as he felt his coat being pulled again.

"Ho! That's a sheep--not a goat!" he cried. And indeed it was an old sheep, or, rather, a ram, with queer, curling horns. And the ram had reached over a low door of the stall, next to the brown horse, and was pulling Bunny's coat.

"I thought it was a goat," said Sue.

"And I thought you were pulling my coat," laughed Bunny, "so we're even. Hello, sheep!" he called. "What do you want?"

"Ba-a-a-a-a!" bleated the ram.

"Maybe he's hungry," said Sue.

"Then we'll go and pull some grass for him, and we'll pull some for the horse, too," cried Bunny.

Out into the field, back of the barn, went Bunny Brown and his sister Sue. They pulled up big handfuls of the sweet, green grass. At least it was sweet to horses, sheep and cows, though it would not taste sweet to you boys and girls.

Then back into the barn went the children. And the horse and ram seemed very glad to get the grass. Three times Bunny and Sue ran out and got more grass. And every time Bunny would feed the horse any grass, the ram would reach over and pull on his coat.

"I guess the sheep wants you to love him instead of the horsie," said Sue. "I'll pat the sheep, Bunny. I'm not afraid of him."

So Sue rubbed the ram's black nose. He seemed glad to see her, and put out his red tongue to lick her hands.

"Oh, it feels so funny!" laughed Sue. "It tickles me and feels almost as squiggily as when you pick up a worm. Come on out and play, Bunny."

They went out in the garden, and there they saw one of Grandpa Brown's hired men stooping down between the rows of onions.

"Are you picking them?" asked Bunny. "Are you picking the onions?"

"No, little man. I'm pulling up the weeds."

"I'll help you," offered Bunny, and, stooping over, he began to pull up some tall, round green stalks.

"Don't! Oh, don't do that!" cried the man.

"Why?" asked Bunny, and Sue, who had started to do as her brother was doing, looked up, wondering what was wrong.

"Why, you're pulling up the onions!" said the man. "We want *them* to grow."

"Oh!" said Bunny. He looked, but he could not tell which were the weeds and which the onions.

"Is this a weed?" asked Sue, and she pulled up something green. "It smells like a weed! Oh, I don't like the smell!" and she made a funny face, as she brought her hands near her nose.

"That's an onion," the hired man said. "I guess you had better run in from the garden, and let me do the weeding. When you get older you can tell which are weeds and which are onions."

"I'm never going to eat onions, anyhow!" Sue said, making another funny face, with her nose all wrinkled.

"I don't like onions, either," Bunny said. "They have an awful funny smell; haven't they, mister?"

"Well, some folks think so," and the hired man went on with his weeding while the children ran away.

But they did not go to the house. Instead they walked farther on through the garden, until they came to some rows of boxes.

"Oh, look at the cute play-houses!" cried Sue. "Let's look at them, Bunny."

"All right," answered her brother.

They went up to one of the houses. A queer sort of buzzing sound came from it.

"Let's look inside," said Bunny.

"All right," agreed Sue. "There's a lot of flies in front, Bunny," and she pointed to them.

As Bunny was about to lift off the top of one of the boxes, he heard the hired man, from the onion patch, calling:

"Get away! Run away from there or you'll be stung! Run! Run!"

CHAPTER XII

BUNNY'S WATERFALL

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue, at first, did not know what the hired man meant. They did not see why they could not stay and play with the queer little boxes, which, as Sue said, were just like doll houses. She was even going back to the farmhouse and get one of her dolls, for she had brought three or four with her in the big automobile.

But now the hired man was running toward Bunny and Sue. He had stopped weeding the onions.

"Run away! Run away!" he cried again, waving his arms at the children. "Run away! Hurry!"

"What for?" asked Bunny.

Bunny was always good at asking questions.

"Why should we run?" Bunny asked.

Before the man could answer Sue cried out:

"Oh, Bunny! Look at the flies! They're buzzing all around me. I don't like them. Come on!"

At the same time a number of the "flies," as Sue called them, began buzzing around Bunny's head. He waved his hands to drive them off.

"Don't do that! Keep your arms still and come away!" cried the hired man. "If you don't run away you'll be badly stung!"

By this time he was close to Bunny and Sue. He caught the little boy up in one arm, and Sue in the other, and ran with them away from the little "play houses." Then, when they were some distance from the buzzing insects the man put the children down.

"Never go there again," he said.

"Why?" asked Bunny. "Why mustn't we go near the flies?"

"Because those are not flies, they are bees. They may sting you, and hurt you very much. You must keep away from them!"

"But don't bees give you honey?" asked Sue.

"Yes, little lady, they do, but if you go near their hives they think you are going to take their honey. They don't like that, so they sting folks to drive them away."

"We didn't know they was bee hives," said Sue, looking up to see if any of the bees were still buzzing around her.

"We thought they were play-houses," said Bunny, "and I was going to take the top off one, and look inside."

"It's a good thing you didn't," said the man. "Now remember--keep away from the bees."

"But how does grandpa get the honey out without being stung?" Bunny wanted to know.

"He blows smoke on them, from a smoking-machine," said the hired man. "The smoke quiets the bees, and then they don't sting. Of course your grandpa leaves the bees some honey for themselves. They have to have some to eat when it is winter, and when there are no flowers."

"Do flowers make honey?" asked Sue.

"The bees suck honey from the flowers," the hired man told the children. "Now run away, and don't ever again play in that part of the garden where the bees are."

"We won't," promised Bunny and Sue.

"Oh my goodness!" exclaimed Grandpa Brown when Bunny and Sue told him what had happened. "I forgot to speak about the bees. You see I didn't have any when you were here before, and now I should have told you to keep away from them. I'm glad the hired man saw you in time, or you might have been badly stung."

"Does it hurt to be stung?" Bunny wanted to know.

"Indeed it does!" his father told him. "It's worse than fifty mosquito bites made into one. So keep away from the bees."

Bunny and Sue were sure they would. They told about having fed the horse, and how the old ram pulled Bunny by the coat.

The next day Bunny and Sue started in to have all sorts of good times on Grandpa Brown's farm. Early in the morning they got up and had breakfast. Then, wearing their old clothes, so they could romp and roll as they liked, they began the day.

First they went with Grandma Brown to feed the chickens. Mother Brown also went with them. And how the hens and roosters flocked about grandma when she scattered the feed!

"And now we'll gather the eggs," she said, as she tossed down the last grains of corn.

"Oh, I know how to hunt eggs!" cried Sue. "I hunted some once for Mrs. Gordon, who lives next door to us."

"She sat in the nest!" laughed Bunny.

"Well, I hope you don't do that here," said Sue's mother, smiling.

Sue had no such bad luck. Indeed it was easy to hunt the eggs on grandpa's farm, for the hens were all kept in houses and yards, with wire fences about them so they could not fly away and hide their nests. The eggs were all in cute little boxes, and all grandma had to do was to lift up the cover, and take the eggs out.

Bunny and Sue helped put the eggs in baskets, but they did not carry them for fear they would spill and break them--break the eggs, not the baskets, I mean. For if you break a basket you can fix it, but if you break an egg, no one can mend it--you have to eat it.

After the eggs were gathered they all went to pick strawberries. That is grandma and Mother Brown and Bunny and Sue did. Papa Brown, with grandpa and Bunker Blue, went over to look at some colts, or little horses, in a field, or pasture, far from the house.

"Oh, I wish I could see the ponies," said Sue. Bunny wished so too.

"The next time you may," his father said.

"We'll have fun getting strawberries," said Grandma Brown, and the children did.

They picked the big, red, sweet berries, putting them in baskets. They would have some of them for dinner, with cream and sugar.

"And for supper I'll make a strawberry short-cake," promised Grandma Brown.

Bunny and Sue thought it was great fun to pick the berries. Of course they ate almost as many as they put in the baskets, but that was all right, and just what grandma expected.

"Strawberries were made for children to eat," she said with a smile. "Now see, I'll show you how to string them on a piece of grass, to keep them from crushing."

With a little pointed stick Grandma Brown would make a tiny hole through a strawberry. Then through the hole she would put a long thin grass. In this way she strung the berries on the grass stem just as you string glass beads on a string. Then when Bunny and Sue had a string of strawberries, they could sit in the shade, and pull them off, eating them one by one.

"Oh, what fun this is!" said Sue, when she could eat no more. Her hands and face were red with the juice of the strawberries.

"Yes," said Bunny, "grandpa's farm is the nicest place in the whole world, I think."

And how good the strawberries tasted at the table, when sugar was sprinkled over them, and covered with rich, yellow cream, from one of grandpa's cows. And with some of grandma's bread, covered with the golden-yellow butter--

Oh dear! I'll just have to stop writing about it, I'll want to go to Grandpa Brown's farm myself, and have some strawberries. And if I do that I'll never get this book finished, I know.

Anyhow, I'll just say that Bunny and Sue thought they had never tasted anything so good as those strawberries.

And then the short-cake at supper that night! There I go again!

Well, anyhow, it was the nicest cake you can imagine.

"Aren't you glad we came here, Sue?" asked Bunny, when he had been given a second, and very small, piece of the strawberry short-cake.

"Oh, aren't I just, though!" sighed Sue.

The sun was shining brightly when Bunny Brown and his sister Sue awakened the next morning, and went down to breakfast.

"What can we do to-day, Bunny?" asked Sue. She always waited to see what Bunny was going to do before she began her play.

"Oh, I think we'll go over by the brook," he said.

"Fishing?"

"No, Sue. Not fishing. Mother won't let me have a regular fish hook. She's afraid I'll get it stuck in my hands. And you can't catch any fish on a bent-pin hook. So we won't go fishing."

"I'm glad!" Sue exclaimed, "'cause worms, for bait, is so squiggily in your hands."

Over to the brook went the two children. Their mother had said they might play near it, if they did not get wet, and they had on their old clothes.

At first, after reaching the bank of the little brook, which rippled over green, mossy stones, Bunny and Sue had fun just tossing in bits of wood and bark, making believe they were boats. Then Bunny thought of something.

"Oh, Sue!" he cried. "I'm going to make a waterfall!"

"What's that?" asked his sister.

"Well, you put some mud and sticks and stones in the brook, all the way across. That makes a deep place, for the water can't run away. And, after a while, the water runs over the pile of mud and stones, and makes a waterfall. Will you help me build one?"

"Yes," said Sue.

"Then take off your shoes and stockings, 'cause we got to wade in the mud and water. And roll up your sleeves. We'll build a big waterfall."



CHAPTER XIII

THE TURKEY GOBBLER

Bunny Brown had seen some of the older boys, near his house, build a sort of wall across a brook, so that the water was held back, making a little pond. And then, when the pond was full, the water ran over the top of the mud wall, and down on the other side. That was why it was called a "waterfall."

"Now I'll put some stones down first," Bunny explained to Sue. "You get some pieces of grass, with the dirt on the roots, and put them on top of the stones. That's good to hold the water back."

"Shall I get wood, too?" asked Sue.

"No. Wood will only float away on top of the water," Bunny said. "We have to have something that will sink, like stones and dirt."

The two children were soon making the waterfall. They splashed about in the mud and water, but they did not mind. For they had taken off their shoes and stockings, though their mother had not said they could do so.

"But she wouldn't want us to go into the water with our shoes and stockings on would she, Sue?" asked Bunny.

"No, I guess not."

"So we'll have to take them off."

That was all there was to do. The children rolled up their sleeves, for they had to reach down in the mud to get the stones and clumps of grass to make the waterfall.

Pretty soon Bunny and Sue had built such a high wall of stones, mud and grass across the little brook, that no more water ran down the little stream. The water had gathered into a sort of pond, that was getting larger all the while, as it rose behind the stones.

"Oh, now it's running over!" cried Sue.

"Yes, now it's a waterfall!"

The water was trickling over the edge of the top of the wall. In a moment it ran down in quite a stream on the other side.

"If I only had a water-wheel the water would make it go around," said Bunny.

"Can't you make one?" Sue wanted to know. She was always anxious to see something new and different.

"I guess water-wheels are hard to make," Bunny said. "But I'll ask Bunker Blue when we go home."

Bunker Blue had also stayed on grandpa's farm. He helped with the work, and he said he liked it almost as much as going out in boats, or helping catch fish.

But as they did not have a water-wheel, and as Bunny could not make one there, the children had what fun they could. They floated sticks, and bits of bark from the trees, on the little pond that was made at the waterfall, and they watched the tiny "boats," sucked over the edge of the fall by the current. The fall was about a foot high, about as far as from Bunny's knee down to his toes.

"If we had a real boat we could go for a ride on the pond," said Sue, for the water back of the fall looked like a little pond now, though of course it was not large enough for any boat bigger than a make-believe one.

"Maybe I could make a boat," Bunny answered. He began looking in the woods on either side of the brook for some boards, of which to make a boat, but of course he could not find any.

"I could make a raft, like Robinson Crusoe did, if I could get some big pieces of trees," Bunny said to his sister. He tried to pull down to the water's edge some big tree branches that had been broken off in a storm, but he was not strong enough.

"Maybe we could fish in our pond," suggested Sue, when she saw that her brother could not build a raft, on which to go sailing.

"We haven't anything to fish with," replied Bunny. "And, anyhow, I guess there wouldn't be any fish. They won't come where you play in the water. They're scared to come. But, oh, Sue! I know what we can do!"

"What?"

"We can go wading in the water. It's real nice and deep, now."

"Yes," said Sue, as she looked at the pond of water back of the fall. "It's deep, Bunny."

"Oh, come on!" cried Bunny. "I'll go in first, Sue, and show you how deep it is!"

Bunny rolled up his little trousers as far above his knees as they would go. Then, taking a stick, to poke in the water ahead of him, to make sure it was not too deep, he started to wade.

"Oh, Sue!" he cried. "This is fun! Come on in!"

"I'm afraid I'll get my dress wet, Bunny."

"Oh, come on!" Bunny cried. "This is fun! It's just like----"

Bunny suddenly stopped speaking, and a queer look came over his face.

"Oh, Sue! Sue!" he cried. "I'm sinking down in the mud! I--I can't pull my feet loose! Oh dear! Help me out, Sue!"

But Sue was not going to step into that deep-looking water. For if Bunny was stuck fast she would be stuck, too.

"I--I'm afraid, Bunny," she called to him.

"But I have to get out, Sue! I can't get out if you don't help me!"

Bunny tried to raise first one leg, and then the other. Both were held fast in the sticky mud under the water. He almost fell over, he tried so hard to pull loose his feet.

"Oh, look, out!" cried Sue, as she saw her brother nearly fall.

"Oh, Sue! Sue!" and Bunny was almost crying. "What am I going to do? Will I have to stay here forever?"

Sue didn't know just what to answer. But finally she said:

"Wait, Bunny. I'll get a long stick, and let you take hold of one end of it. I'll keep hold of the other end, and I'll stay here and pull you out."

"All right! But hurry up! I'm sinking down deeper all the while."

Sue looked about on the bank of the stream, until she found a long, thin branch from a tree, where it had blown to the ground. She held one end of this branch out to her brother, and he took hold of it.

"Now I'll pull you out!" cried Sue, as she held her end of the branch in both her hands.

But instead of Sue pulling Bunny, it was Bunny who pulled Sue, as he was stronger than she was.

"Oh, look out, Bunny! Look out!" cried the little girl. "I'll fall in!"

"Yes," said Bunny, as he stopped pulling on the stick Sue held, "I guess you will. But oh, Sue! You'll have to help me! I'm sinking down more and more."

And Bunny was. The water was nearly up to his trousers now. He was sinking down deeper in the mud.

"I'll go and tell papa and mamma!" Sue cried, as she threw down the tree branch, and ran through the woods. "They'll know how to get you out."

Away ran Sue, but she did not go far before she met Bunker Blue.

"Well!" he cried. "I was just wondering where you were. Your mother sent me to look for you. Where's Bunny, Sue?"

"Oh, he's sinking down in the mud!"

"Sinking down in the mud? Why, what do you mean?"

"Oh, hurry, Bunker Blue! Bunny made a waterfall, and then he went wading in it, and he can't get his feet out, and he

'most pulled me in and he's scared and so am I and--and----"

But poor Sue could say no more.

"Well, well!" cried Bunker. "I don't know what it's all about, but show me where Bunny is."

He took hold of Sue's hand, and hurried back with her, and pretty soon Bunker saw Bunny in the middle of the little pond. Bunker did not stop to take off his shoes and stockings.

Wading in, with his shoes on, Bunker reached Bunny, who was just about to cry. In his strong arms Bunker lifted Bunny up out of the mud and water and waded with him to dry land.

"There! Now you're all right," he said. "What did you do that for, Bunny?"

"Well, we--we wanted to make a waterfall, and then we couldn't go sailing on it in a boat, or on a raft, so I thought I'd go wading. I did wade, but I got stuck in the mud."

"I should say you did!" replied Bunker, looking at Bunny's bare, muddy feet and legs, and at his own dripping shoes and trousers. "You sure did get stuck in the mud! It is better to keep out of these ditches, and little brooks. The bottom is almost always soft mud, and you'll sink away down in it. Now go over there, where the bottom is sandy. You won't sink there. And you can wash the mud off your legs. I'll have to wash, too, I guess."

Bunker showed Bunny a shallow place in the brook where there was no danger of sinking in the mud, and soon the little fellow was quite clean. His trousers were wet on the bottoms, but the sun and wind would soon dry them.

Bunny and Sue were telling Bunker how they had built the waterfall, when they heard a rustling in the bushes, and a noise as if some one, or something, were coming nearer.

"I guess it's our dog, Splash," said Bunny.

"No, Splash was asleep in the barn when I came to look for you," said Bunker.

And then, through the trees, came a man.

"Hello, children!" he cried. "Oh, ho! So this is the trouble; eh?" he went on. "I wondered why no water was running down into my chicken yard, and I came to see what had stopped up my brook. It's your waterfall!"

"Ye--yes, I made it." Bunny said, wondering whether he had done something wrong.

"And he got stuck in the mud," added Sue. She always wanted to tell everything.

"Yes this mud is pretty sticky," remarked the man. "But if you are done playing waterfall I guess I'll just take it away. You see it stops the water from coming down the brook--that is, it stops nearly all of it. And I need the water."

With a long stick the man began poking away the mud and stones Bunny and Sue had piled up to make the waterfall.

"This little brook goes right through my chicken yard," the man explained, "and the chickens like to drink the water. When I saw, a while ago, that there was only a little coming down, not enough for the hens and roosters to drink, I thought something had happened. And it was you children who did it all," and the man smiled.

"Well, I know you want to have fun, but please don't stop up my brook any more; will you?" he asked.

"No, sir," answered Bunny. He had had enough of waterfalls, for a while at least. Then he and Sue went back to grandpa's.

"Oh, Bunny, Bunny!" was all his mother said when she heard what had happened. "What will you and Sue do next?"

"I don't know, Mother," Bunny answered.

Two days after that, Bunny and Sue, nicely washed and combed, with Sue wearing her new red dress, started for the next farmhouse to play with a little boy and girl who lived in it. They went across the fields. Sue stopped to pick some flowers, while Bunny went on ahead.

Pretty soon he heard his little sister calling:

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny! Come quick! He's after me!"

Bunny turned, thinking it might be a goat running after his sister, as one had done, though it did not hurt Sue.

But this time it was no goat. Bunny saw a big bird, with his wings dragging along on the ground, his feathers all puffed up, and with what looked like a red tassel hanging dangling, dangling down over his beak, strutting toward Sue.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny! What is it?" Sue cried. "Take him away!"

"It's a big turkey gobbler!" said Bunny. "I'll drive him away for you, Sue! Don't be afraid."

"Gobble--obble--obble!" cried the turkey, but of course Bunny Brown and his sister Sue did not know what the gobbler was saying.

"Oh, take him away, Bunny! Take him away!" cried the little girl, dancing up and down, her red dress fluttering in the wind.



CHAPTER XIV

LOST IN THE WOODS

Bunny Brown did not just know how he was going to drive the angry turkey gobbler away from his sister Sue. He did not stop to think of that, but, like the brave little fellow he was, he ran toward Sue, ready to do something. The gobbler was closer to Sue now.

"I've got to drive him away! I've got to drive him away!" said Bunny to himself, over and over again.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny!" cried Sue. "Take him away! Take him away!"

This would have been hard for Bunny to do, for the gobbler was a very big one, and Bunny could never in the world have lifted him.

"I wish my dog Splash were here!" thought Bunny. "He'd make that old gobbler run!"

But Splash was not there. He had run off down the road with another dog, just before Bunny Brown and his sister Sue set off together.

"Gobble-obble-obble!" cried the turkey. He spread out his wings wider than ever, and the red thing that hung down over his "nose," as Sue called his beak, seemed to stand up straight, he was so angry.

"Oh, Bunny!" and Sue was screaming now. "Help me, Bunny!"

And then, all at once, Bunny thought of something.

In his hand he carried a tin pail, which he and Sue had hoped to fill with wild strawberries on their way back from playing with the children in the next house. Raising this pail over his head, Bunny threw it as straight as he could at the gobbler.

And, to Bunny's surprise, the pail went right over the turkey's head. It caught by the wire handle around the gobbler's neck, and hung in such a way that the gobbler could no longer see Sue and her red dress. And I think the little girl's red dress made the gobbler more angry than he would otherwise have been. Gobblers don't like red, for some reason or other.

"Gobble-obble-obble!" called the big turkey. Oh, but he must have been surprised! He did not know what to do. He just danced around and around, trying to shake the pail off his neck. If he had only lowered his head, as he did when picking up corn, the pail would have slid off. But the gobbler did not think of that.

Perhaps he still thought he could find Sue, and pick her legs with his sharp beak because she wore a red dress that he did not like. And it was such a pretty red dress, too, and Sue looked so nice in it.

"Gobble-obble-obble!" went the turkey, louder than ever.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny!" cried Sue, as she ran toward her brother. "What did you do to him?"

"I--I tried to hit him with the pail, to make him let you alone," said Bunny, "but the pail went on his neck. Wasn't I a good shot, Sue?"

"Yes," she said. "And now let's run before he comes after us again. Run, Bunny, run!"

"But I--I want my pail!" Bunny said, holding back. "The turkey has my pail, and we can't get any strawberries."

But though Sue was younger than Bunny she knew it would never do to try and take the pail away from the turkey now.

"You can't get it, Bunny," she said. "If you take it away from him he'll bite you. 'Sides, when he has it on him that way it's just like the blinkers on a horse. He can't see us. Come on."

What Sue said was true. The turkey could not see the children as long as the pail was on his neck in that way.

"When he drops it off we can come back and get it--maybe when he has gone to bed, Bunny," said Sue. "Turkeys go to bed early; don't they?"

"Maybe," answered her brother. He knew chickens went to bed, or to "roost" as it is called, quite early, and a turkey,

after all, was like a big chicken, or rooster.

"Well, when he goes to bed we'll come and get the pail," said Sue. "Only we can't get any strawberries then, 'cause it'll be dark."

"All right," agreed Bunny, as he hurried across the field with Sue. "We'll let him have the pail for a while."

It seemed the only thing to do, as the turkey was waltzing, dancing and strutting about, with the pail still on his neck, making his funny noise.

"Gobble-obble-obble!"

He did not try to find Sue, and her red dress, or even Bunny now. Probably the gobbler was trying to get the pail off his head. And, just as Bunny and Sue reached the fence, and crawled through, to the road, where the gobbler could not get them, the big turkey did manage to get rid of the pail.

He put his head down, and the pail handle slipped over his neck. Then, with a loud gobble, he ran toward Bunny and Sue. But they were safe on the other side of the fence by this time.

"Oh, Bunny, I'm so glad!" said Sue. "It's a good thing you had that pail with you!"

"Well, if I couldn't throw that at him I could throw a stone," said Bunny.

But I think the pail was just the very best thing the little boy could have thrown at the gobbler. Besides, it did not hurt him, as a stone might have done.

Looking back, to see where the pail lay, Bunny went on with Sue to the house where they were to spend the afternoon. They found their little friends waiting for them, and, after telling about the turkey, the children had fine fun.

"That was Mr. North's turkey," said Gladys Parker, one of the little girls. "He's real mean, that turkey is, and chases everybody."

"Well, he chased me," said Sue, "only Bunny made him stop."

"I'm glad you did," said Ethel Burke. "Maybe he'll be a better gobbler after this."

The children played many games, they had fun in the swing, and Mrs. Parker gave them all some milk and cookies for lunch.

When it came time for Bunny and Sue to go home they went past the field where the gobbler had been. He was not there now, as the children found, after looking carefully about. Maybe he had gone to bed, for it was about time for the chickens to go to roost. Turkeys like to roost in trees, you know, and not in a coop, as chickens do. And perhaps the big gobbler was, even then, perched up in some tree, with his head under his wing. And, for all I know, perhaps he was dreaming of a little girl in a red dress, and a boy who threw a pail over a turkey's head. That is if gobblers do dream.

"Oh, there's the pail!" cried Bunny, as he saw the shining tin in the middle of the field. "I'm going to get it, Sue."

And Bunny did. It was too late, then, to pick any of the wild strawberries, but Bunny and Sue knew they could come some other time.

They reached home safely, and told about the gobbler.

"My!" exclaimed Grandma Brown. "But that was quite an adventure, Bunny and Sue!"

"Oh, we have lots of them," said Bunny. "Don't we, Sue?"

"Yes, Bunny. But I don't like turkey adventures."

The next day the two children went after wild strawberries. Grandpa Brown told them of a place, not far from the house, on a little hill, where many berries grew.

"And you won't have to go near the turkey to get there, either," he said. "Though I see you haven't your red dress on, Sue, so even if the gobbler did see you, I don't believe he would chase you this time."

"I only wear my red dress when I go visiting," said Sue. "But I'm not going to visit turkey gobblers any more."

Bunny and Sue found many berries on the hill their grandpa had told them about, and soon their pail was half full. A little way off were some woods, but before one came to the place where the trees grew thick, with green moss beneath them, there was a field, and in this field Bunny saw some bushes with deep, purple berries growing on them.

"Oh, Sue!" he cried. "Let's pick some raspberries! There's lots on those bushes, and grandma can make raspberry jam, and put it in tarts, like Aunt Lu did. Let's pick raspberries! We've got enough strawberries!"

"All right," answered Sue, for she was always ready to do what Bunny wanted her to.

The two children were soon in the field, picking the purple raspberries. They walked on and on, from one bush to another, and by the time their pail was full, with the raspberries on top of the strawberries, they were close to the woods.

"Let's go in and rest in the shade," Sue said. "I'm awful tired and hot, Bunny."

"All right, we'll go in," and in they went. It was nice and cool beneath the trees, and the children found a spring of water where they had a drink, for they were thirsty.

"And I'm hungry, too," said Sue, after a bit. "Bunny, do you s'pose we could eat some of the berries? We can pick more before we go home."

"Yes, we'll eat some, Sue."

Seated on the green moss, in the shade of a tree, Bunny and Sue ate the berries, getting their faces and hands stained red and purple.

"But we can wash in the spring before we go home," Sue said, "so it will be all right."

"Yes," agreed Bunny.

After resting a while the children washed at the spring, and took another drink. Then they saw a big frog hopping along. He must have been having a bath in the spring, which was almost as large as a washtub.

"Let's see if we can catch that frog!" cried Bunny. "We won't hurt him, though."

So he and Sue followed the frog. But the frog was a good jumper, and led the children quite a chase. And then, just when Bunny thought he was going to put his hands on him, the big green fellow found another spring, and into that he went with a splash, grunting as he did so:

"Ker-ugh! Ker-ung!"

"Oh, he's gone!" cried Sue, quite sadly.

"Never mind," replied Bunny. "We'll find another."

But they did not, though they waited around the second spring for some time.

"I guess we'd better go home," said Bunny.

"Yes," agreed Sue, looking around at the trees on every side of them. The children started, but going home was not as easy as it seemed. They walked on and on, and soon Sue began to get tired.

"Aren't we at the place where we picked the berries?" she asked, after a bit.

"Almost," answered Bunny. But though he looked and looked through the trees he could not see the field and the little hill that was not far from Grandpa Brown's house.

The children went on a little farther, until, all at once, Bunny stumbled over a stone and fell.

The pail flew from his hand, and the berries spilled all over the ground.

"Oh, dear!" cried Sue. Then she added quickly: "But I'll help you pick them up, Bunny."

Bunny sat up and rubbed his knee. He wrinkled up his nose in a funny way.

"Does it hurt?" asked Sue.

"My leg does, a little, but not my nose," Bunny said. And then he laughed.

The children picked up the scattered berries. Their pail was only half full now, for they could not find all the berries that had spilled.

"We'll have to pick a lot more," remarked Sue.

"Yes," said Bunny. "We will when we find the bushes."

On they went again. But it seemed that they would never get out of the woods. After a while Bunny stopped, sat down on a log and said:

"Sue, I know what's the matter!"

"What?" asked the little girl. "Does your leg hurt? Is that what's the matter?"

"No," answered Bunny. "The matter is--we're lost. That's why we can't find the berry-bushes. We're lost, Sue!"



CHAPTER XV

THE OLD HERMIT

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue had been lost before, several times. Maybe that is why Sue was not so frightened now, when Bunny spoke as he did. As for the little boy, he seemed more tired than worried.

"Yes, Sue," he said again. "I guess we're lost. I've looked all over, and I can't see the hill where we picked the strawberries, nor the field where we got the raspberries."

"I can't either," said Sue. "And I wish we had some berries, Bunny."

"Why?"

"Cause I'm hungry right now again."

"Well, you can eat these, Sue. I don't want 'em."

Bunny Brown was hungry himself, and he did want some of the berries very much. But there were, now, only a few left in the pail, and Bunny remembered that his mother had said to him that he must always look after Sue when she went walking with him.

And the best way he could look after her, this time, he thought, like the brave little fellow he tried to be, was to give her all the berries.

"Are you sure you don't want 'em, Bunny?" asked his sister.

"Sure!" he said. "Anyhow, we'll find more when I get hungry."

"All right," and Sue began eating the berries. She was very hungry.

After a while Bunny said:

"Now I'm going to look for the field again. If we find the field we can find the hill, and then we'll be almost home."

"All right," replied Sue, putting the last of the berries into her mouth. "Do I have to wash again, Bunny?" she asked, as she looked at her stained hands. Her mouth was stained, too, but she could not see that.

"I don't know where the spring of water is," Bunny said, "so I don't see how you can wash."

"All right." Sue did not much mind. She was not very fond of washing in cold spring water, anyhow.

Once more the children went on. But though they followed many paths through the woods they did not get on the one that led out and to the field and hill.

"Oh, dear!" said Sue, in a sad little voice.

"What's the matter?" asked Bunny, stopping and turning around, for he had walked on ahead.

"I'm so tired, Bunny!"

"Well, we'll rest a while."

They sat down on a log, Bunny looking through the trees, here and there, thinking he might see some path that led out of the woods. But he saw none.

"Are you rested now, Sue?" he asked, after a while.

"A little," she answered. "I can walk some more."

So they went on again. It was getting late afternoon now, for the children had not started to pick berries until after dinner. The sun was going down, and of course it was darker in the woods, with all the trees around, than it was out in the open fields.

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue were surely lost in the woods, and they did not know how to get home. As I have told you, this was not the first time this had happened to them, and they were not as frightened as they had been other times. But still it was no fun.

Through the woods were many paths. Some had been made by cows, or horses, perhaps, while others were those taken by persons who walked among the trees. But there were no persons now in the woods; that is Bunny and Sue could see none.

All at once Bunny gave a yell.

"Hoo-oo! Hoo-oo! Hoo-oo!" he cried, as loudly as he could.

"Oh!" cried Sue. "What's the matter, Bunny? Did a snake bite you; or a mud turtle?"

"Nope. I was just hollerin' so some one would hear me."

"What for?" Sue wanted to know.

"So they would come and take us out of the woods."

"Oh," and Sue laughed then. "I'll holler too," she said.

So she did. Then Bunny called again, and he and Sue called together, as loudly as they could.

But no one answered them.

All they could hear was an echo--the sound of their own voices coming back to them, "bouncing" like a rubber ball. They had heard that before, so they knew what an echo was. But an echo only repeats the same things that are said. It does not help to find the way out of the woods, and Bunny and Sue were still lost.

They went on farther, but they did not know whether they were going toward home, or away from it. Sue, in spite of brave little Bunny, was beginning to get frightened now. Tears came into her eyes, though they did not fall.

"I--I'm so tired, Bunny," she said. "I want to go home!"

"So do I, Sue. But we've got to get on the right path, and I can't find it."

"Let's try this one," said the little girl, as they came to a place where there were two paths through the woods. One went off toward the left side, and the other to the right.

"I'll take one path," said Bunny, "and you can take the other, Sue."

"Oh, no!"

"Why not?"

"Cause then we'd both be lost."

"Well, we're both lost now."

"Yes," said Sue, "I know. But now we're both lost together, but if we were lost all alone I'd be scarer than I am now. Don't go away, Bunny."

"I won't. But which path shall we take?"

Sue thought for a minute. Then she tried a little game that the children sometimes played.

Shutting her eyes, Sue pointed her fat little hand first at one path, and then the other, while she said:

"My-mother-told-me-to-take-this-one!"

And she moved her hand back and forth, pointing first at one path and then at the other. When she said the last word--"one"--her hand was pointing at the left hand path.

"We'll take this one, Bunny," she said.

"All right, Sue. Maybe this one will take us home."

So they walked on and on. But Sue's guess had not been a very good one, even though she had played her queer little game. She and Bunny were deeper in the woods than ever.

"Oh, dear!" cried the little girl. "I've just got to sit down, Bunny. My legs is so tired!"

"Mine is too," Bunny said, too weary to speak more properly. "We'll both rest, Sue, and then we'll holler some

more."

"And what will we do if nobody comes to get us?"

"We'll go back and take the other path, Sue. Maybe we came on the wrong one."

"Maybe we did." Sue was glad to have the other path to think about. Perhaps that might be the one that would lead them home. She and Bunny sat on a log to rest, and then, once more, Bunny gave a loud shout.

"Hello! Hello!" he cried. "We're lost! Somebody come and find us!"

Sue joined in, crying in her shrill little voice. But, for a while, no one answered.

"Well, we'll go back and take the other path," said Bunny. He was getting very hungry, and he wished he would come to another place where strawberries or raspberries grew.

Before starting back, however, Bunny gave one more shout.

"Hello! Hello!" he cried.

To the surprise of himself and Sue there was an answer.

"Hello! Hello!"

Bunny and Sue looked at one another.

"Did--did you hear that?" asked Bunny in a whisper.

"Yes," answered Sue. "It was the echo!"

But, as they waited the call came again.

"Hello! Hello! Who are you? Where are you? What do you want?"

"That wasn't any echo," said Bunny, "'cause we didn't speak. It's somebody after us, Sue."

"Oh, I'm so glad!"

"So'm I!"

There was a crackling of the bushes, and through the trees came walking an old man, with long, white hair and a beard. He had a kind face, and Bunny and Sue liked him at once.

"Oh, did you come for us?" asked Bunny.

"Well, no, not exactly," the man answered with a smile. "I heard you calling, though. What is the matter?"

"We're lost," replied Sue. "Will you please take us home?"

"I would if I knew where your home was, little girl."

"Do you live in the woods?" Bunny asked. The man looked as though his home might be in some hollow tree, or woodland cave.

"Yes, boy, I live here."

"All alone?" asked Sue, looking around.

"All alone, yes, little girl. I'm a sort of hermit, I suppose. At least folks call me that, and hermits always live alone, you know." The man smiled very kindly at the children.

"Well, Mr. Hermit," said Sue, "please take us home, and give me and Bunny something to eat. We're awful hungry."

CHAPTER XVI

LOOKING FOR THE HORSES

Once again the hermit smiled at the children.

"I can give you something to eat," he said, "for I have that, though I do live in the woods. But I do not know whether I can take you to your home. Where do you live?"

"We live in Bellemere, near the ocean," said Sue.

The hermit shook his gray head.

"That is very far from here," he said. "I do not believe I could find the place. I have not been out of these woods for many years, except to go to the village. But how did you get so far from home?"

"Oh, we came to see our grandpa," explained Bunny.

"And what is his name?"

"Grandpa Brown!" exclaimed Sue. "And he's awful nice. Grandma Brown is nice, too, and she gives us cookies and milk. Can you give us cookies and milk, Mr. Hermit?"

"Well, I can give you some milk," answered the old man of the woods. "But I have no cookies. I have bread, though."

"Bread and milk is good," said Bunny with a sigh. He was hungry enough to be glad of even some bread, without the milk. But he was glad the hermit had milk.

"Where is your house?" asked Sue.

"It isn't what you would call a house," said the old man. "It is a sort of log cabin. I built most of it myself. But it is over there through the trees," and he pointed behind him.

"I can't see it," said Sue, standing up and looking through the trees.

"It's there just the same," and the hermit smiled again.

"Please take us there, give us some bread and milk, and then take us to Grandpa Brown's house," said Sue. "We're staying there, and so is our papa and mamma."

"And so is Bunker Blue," put in Bunny. "Do you know Bunker Blue, Mr. Hermit?"

"No, I can't say that I do," and the old man shook his head. "But I know your grandfather, Mr. Brown. I can take you to his farm, though it is quite a way off. You must have wandered far."

"We were picking berries, and we got lost," Bunny explained. "But we don't mind now, if you'll give us some bread and milk, and take us to grandpa's."

"Well, I can do that for you," and the old man smiled again at the two children. "Come," he said, and he held out a hand to each of them.

Bunny and Sue toddled along. They were quite happy now. They did not stop to think that their parents and their grandparents might be worried, for it was quite late. Bunny and Sue did not often worry. They just let things happen the way they would.

"Here's my house," said the hermit, after he had gone along a winding path. He pointed to a log cabin amid the trees.

"Oh, that's nice!" exclaimed Bunny.

"It's like a play-house!" cried Sue. "Don't you wish we had that, Bunny?"

"Yes, I do. But we couldn't have it; could we?" and he looked up into the face of the hermit.

"No, I'm afraid not, little boy. I need it to live in, and to keep the rain and snow from me."

"Oh, do you stay here in the winter?" asked Sue, surprised.

"Yes."

"Isn't it cold?"

"Sometimes. But I have a fireplace, and I pile on logs, and make a hot fire. Then I am warm."

"I'd like it here in winter," said Bunny. "Do you slide down hill, Mr. Hermit?"

"No, I'm too old for that, little boy. But come in now, and I'll give you something to eat. Then I'll take you home. I'll try and get you there before dark, so your folks won't be worried. They may be out hunting for you now."

"They always look for us when we get lost," said Sue.

"But we didn't know we were going to get lost this time," added Bunny.

The hermit set out two plates, with some slices of bread on them. Then from down in his spring, where he kept it cool, he brought a pail of milk. Soon Bunny and Sue were eating a nice little supper. It was lighter in the log cabin than it had been in the woods, for the trees were cut down around the hermit's home.

"Oh, Bunny!" exclaimed Sue, as she drank the last of her milk. "Oh, Bunny, we forgot to look for them!"

"Look for what?" Bunny wanted to know, as he crumbled some more bread into his bowl of milk. "What did we forget to look for, Sue?"

"Grandpa's horses. The Gypsies took them and didn't bring them back," she explained, so the hermit would know what she and Bunny were talking about.

"The Gypsies took your grandpa's horses, little girl?"

"Yes. They borrowed them, grandpa says, but they didn't bring them back. I guess maybe the Gypsies got lost, Bunny, and that's why they didn't bring the horses back. But we looked all over, and we couldn't find them, Mr. Hermit."

"I almost found one," said Bunny. "It was a horse walking along the road. But it wasn't grandpa's."

"And a cow tickled Bunker Blue in the ribs, when he was sleeping under our automobile," Sue explained. "I mean Bunker was sleeping, not the cow. The cow was eating grass, she was, and her horns tickled Bunker."

The hermit shook his head.

"You are queer children," he said. "But tell me about your grandpa's horses."

Between them, one telling part, and the other helping, Bunny and Sue told the story of the Gypsies taking Grandpa Brown's best team of horses.

"And we've looked, and looked, but we can't find them," said Sue. "Once Bunny found Aunt Lu's diamond ring that was lost. It was in the lobster claw all the while, and we didn't know it."

"But we forgot to look for the horses to-day," said Bunny. "You didn't see them; did you, Mr. Hermit?"

"Well, now, I don't know about that," said the old man who lived all alone in the woods. "Come to think of it I did see a camp of Gypsies in the woods, not far from here, the other day. I was out taking a walk, as I often do, and, down in a little valley I saw something shining."

"Oh, I know what it was!" cried Bunny, his eyes bright with eagerness.

"What was it?" asked the hermit.

"You saw the looking glasses, on the Gypsy wagons, shining in the sun."

"That was it, little man. But how did you know?"

"'Cause Sue and I saw it too, once. It was when we came in the big automobile. We went to the Gypsy camp, and we 'most got lost then. But mamma and papa and our dog, Splash, found us."

"What a queer name for a dog," said the hermit.

"We called him that 'cause he splashed into the water and pulled me out when I fell in, the time Bunny and me were shipwrecked," said Sue. "We got shipwrecked on an island."

"Like Robinson Crusoe," added the little boy.

"But we couldn't find Mr. Friday," said Sue. "You could be Mr. Friday, if we ever played Robinson Crusoe; couldn't he, Bunny?" Sue asked. "You look like the pictures of Robinson in the book. You could be him, and Bunny could be Friday--that would be better. Would you like to, Mr. Hermit?"

"Well, I don't know, my dear. I guess my play-days and make-believe days are over."

"You are just like Robinson Crusoe," Sue went on. "It's better to be him, 'cause Mr. Friday is black. You'd have to black up. I did, with black mud, and I was washing it off when I fell in and Splash pulled me out."

"You can tell me about that another time," said the old man. "I think, now, I had better start home with you. And, on the way, we will look in the valley for the Gypsies. Perhaps they are there yet."

"And maybe they have grandpa's horses!" cried Bunny. "Oh, wouldn't that be good Sue, if we could find them?"

"It would be just lovely!"

"Well, it's possible these may be the same Gypsies," said the old man, "though they may not be, and they may not have your grandpa's horses. But we'll look, anyhow."

So they set out to look for the missing horses. Bunny and Sue were not lost any more, for they felt sure the hermit would take them home to grandpa's house.



CHAPTER XVII

IN THE STORM

"Say, Mr. Hermit," said Bunny, as he and his sister Sue walked along with the nice, but strange man, who lived in the log cabin in the woods, "is it far to where grandpa's horses are, Mr. Hermit?"

"Well, little man, I'm not sure we can find your grandfather's horses," said the aged man with a smile at the two children. "All I know is that I saw some Gypsies camped over in the valley. It may be that they are the ones your grandfather is looking for. Would you know the horses if you saw them?"

"I would!" exclaimed Sue. "One of 'em has an awful nice long tail."

The hermit laughed.

"I fear that wouldn't be a very good way of telling your grandfather's horses from any others," said the old man. "Many horses have long tails. But if there are some Gypsies camping in the valley you can tell your folks, and your grandfather can come and see if they have his horses."

"Is it very far?" asked Bunny again. He was not as tired as before he had eaten the bread and milk, but still he did not want to walk any more than he had to. Sue, also, looked weary.

"Oh, no, it isn't far," the hermit said. "It's only a little way to the valley, but it is quite a long way to your grandfather's house. I don't know whether you can walk it or not."

"I'm tired," said Sue. "I want to ride."

"I'm sorry I haven't anything to give you a ride on," returned the old man. "I can carry you, though, little girl, if your brother can walk."

"I can walk!" said Bunny. His fat little legs were tired, but he was not going to say so.

"All right. Then I'll carry your sister."

"Piggy-back?" Sue asked. "Will you give me a piggy-back? That's the way my papa carries me."

"Yes, I'll take you pickaback," said the hermit, and he almost whispered. Bunny, who was looking at him, was sure he saw tears in the old man's eyes. Or was it a drop of rain? For there were clouds in the sky now, and it seemed as if it was going to storm.

The old man looked around. He saw a flat stump not far away, and up on this he lifted Sue.

"Now you can get up on my back from there," he said, "and I will carry you so you won't be tired any more, little girl."

"That's good," murmured Sue, rather sleepily, as she cuddled her head down on the hermit's shoulder. "You know how to make a nice piggy-back," she went on. "Did you ever ride your little girl this way?"

"Yes," said the old man. "Once I had a little girl, just like you, and I used to ride her this way."

"Where is your little girl?" Sue asked.

"She is up--there," and the old man pointed to the sky. This time Bunny was sure the hermit had tears in his eyes. But, a little later Bunny was not quite sure, for he felt a drop of something wet on his own cheek.

"Why, it's raining!" he exclaimed. "It's raining water!"

"So it is, I do believe!" said the hermit. He stopped, still holding Sue on his back, and lifted up his face. He felt several drops from the clouds, and then there came a pattering on the leaves of the trees. It was getting quite dark now. There were many clouds in the sky, and, every now and then, a flash of lightning could be seen. Off in the west there was a rumble of thunder.

"Oh!" cried Sue. "I want to go home. I don't want to be out in the storm."

"I like the rain," said Bunny, "but I don't like the thunder and lightning; do you, Mr. Hermit?"

"I don't mind them very much," answered the old man. "But if you are afraid I'll take you back to my cabin, and leave

you there, while I go to your house and get them to come for you in a carriage."

"I like to ride in a carriage," said Sue, "though you gave me a nice piggy-back, too. But I like a carriage and horses."

"Well, then that's what I'll do. I think it is going to rain hard soon, and if I carried you through it you'd get wet. So we'll go back, and I'll see about the horse and carriage."

"But can't we go and get grandpa's horses from the Gypsies?" asked Bunny.

"I'm afraid not this time," answered the old man. "If the Gypsies are in the valley they will stay all night, anyhow, and we can look for the horses in the morning, when it has stopped raining. We'll go back to my house now."

By this time the rain was coming down quite hard. But, as they walked along under the trees, Bunny and Sue did not get very wet, nor did the hermit. Sue was almost asleep, she was so tired, and Bunny was glad they did not have to walk all the way back to grandpa's farm.

It was nearly night, and Bunny thought his father and mother, as well as the others, might be worrying about him and Sue. But then the hermit would soon go and tell them that the children were safe in his log cabin.

Back through the woods they went. Now it lightened very often, and it thundered so loudly that Sue awakened on the back of the hermit, and began to cry.

"I want to go home!" she sobbed. "I want my mamma!"

"I'll get her as soon as I can," said the old man. "Don't cry little girl. The thunder is only a big noise, like Fourth of July, and the lightning is only a great big firefly--that is make-believe you know."

"Oh, yes, let's pretend that way!" cried Bunny, for he was not as frightened at the storm as was Sue.

She stopped crying. Sue always liked anything make-believe, even if it had to do with thunder and lightning.

"And will you get a carriage and ride me and Bunny home?" she asked.

"Yes," answered the hermit.

"All right. Then I won't be 'fraid."

Once more she cuddled her head down on the hermit's shoulder. In a little while they were back at his cabin. The aged man went in, and lighted a lamp, for it was quite dark. It was now raining hard, and the stormy wind was blowing the tree branches all about.

"Now you stay right here until I come back with your father, or grandfather," said the hermit, as he put on an old coat to go out in the rain.

"Aren't you got an umbrella?" asked Sue.

"I don't need one, little girl. Umbrellas aren't much good in the woods. They catch on the trees. I'll be all right. I don't mind getting wet. Now don't you go away. I can't take you with me, or I would, but you'll be all right here."

"We're not afraid," said Bunny bravely. "Once we got locked in an empty house; didn't we, Sue?"

"Yep. And we slid down the banister rail. It was fun."

"Well, I haven't any banister here for you to slide down," said the hermit. "But you may go to sleep if you like."

He went out, shutting the door after him, first having put the lamp on a high shelf where it could not be knocked over, if Bunny and Sue happened to be playing about the cabin.

But Bunny and Sue did not feel much like playing. They were not so frightened by the storm just now, but they were tired and sleepy. Sue saw, in one corner of the room, a sort of bed, or bunk, with blankets and pillows spread out on it.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried the little girl. "There's a bed just like those in our automobile. I'm going to sleep!"

"All right," answered Bunny. "You go to sleep, and I'll sit up and be on guard like the soldiers do in camp. I'll pretend I'm a soldier."

"That will be fun!" exclaimed Sue.

She climbed up in the hermit's bed, and put her head down on the pillow. It was a nice, clean bunk, as clean as those

her mother had made in the traveling automobile.

Bunny curled up in a chair near Sue. His eyes were wide open, and he tried to feel just as he thought a soldier on guard would feel. His mother had read him stories about soldiers staying awake all night.

Bunny was not sure he could do this.

"But I won't go to sleep until the hermit man comes back with papa, or Grandpa Brown," he thought. "Then Sue and I can go to sleep in the carriage."

The rain came pattering down on the log cabin roof. Bunny could not see the lightning now, because of the lamp which the hermit had lighted. But he could hear the thunder. It did not frighten him, though. Sometimes, when it sounded very loud, the little boy pretended it was a big circus wagon rumbling over a bridge--the tank-wagon, with water in it, where the big hippopotamus splashed about. That circus wagon, Bunny was sure, would make the most noise. So he "made-believe."

Sue was curled up on the bed. Once she roused up enough to say:

"Bunny!"

"Yes, Sue?" he answered. "What do you want?"

"Are you there, Bunny?" she asked, sleepily.

"Yes, Sue. I'm right here." He reached over and touched her hand. "What do you want, Sue?"

"I--I just wanted to know are you there," and with that Sue turned over again, and soon was fast, fast asleep.

Several times Bunny felt himself nodding. His head would bob down and his eyes slowly go shut. Then he would rouse up, and say to himself:

"Soldiers mustn't sleep when they are guarding the camp! I'm a make-believe soldier, and I mustn't sleep!"

Then he would be wide awake for a little while. But soon his head would nod again. And finally Bunny slept, just as Sue was doing, only he was asleep in the chair, and she was in the hermit's bed.

Just how long he slept Bunny did not know. But, all at once, he was awakened by a noise at the door. At first he thought it was the hermit, who had come back with his papa or mamma.

But then, instead of a knock, a scratching sound was heard. Then Sue awoke, and heard it too.

"Scratch!" went something on the door.

"Oh, Bunny, what is it?" asked Sue, sitting up in bed. "What is it, Bunny?"

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PICNIC

Bunny Brown did not answer his sister Sue right away. He was listening to the queer scratching sound. He wanted to try and think what it was.

"Scratch! Scratch! Scratch!" it went.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue, rolling over in the bunk, so she could easily slip over the edge, and be nearer to her brother. "It's something trying to get in."

"Yes," said Bunny. "It does sound like that."

"Maybe--maybe it's a wolf, Bunny!"

Bunny looked at the door and windows to make sure they were closed.

"There aren't any wolves up here," he said, shaking his head.

"How do you know?" Sue asked.

"Cause I asked Grandpa Brown if there were any bears, and he said there wasn't any--not a one. And wolves are always where bears are. So if there aren't any bears there aren't any wolves. Sue."

"Maybe," said Sue. "But what is it scratching at the door, Bunny?"

"I don't know, Sue. I could open it and look out. Shall I?"

"No," she cried. "For, if you opened the door, it would come in. Now it can't get in, or else it would. It can only scratch."

Bunny thought it would be best not to open the door. But what could that queer noise be? He wished he knew. Again it sounded.

"Scratch! Scratch! Scratch!"

And then, all at once there came a bark. Both Bunny and Sue cried out at the same time:

"A dog!"

And Bunny added:

"Oh, I guess it's Splash! I'll let him in!"

He ran to the door and opened it, for it was not locked. And, a second later, in bounded good old Splash, the big dog. He was all wet with the rain, but oh! how glad he was to see Bunny and Sue! He barked, and jumped all over the cabin, getting the children wet from his dripping coat. But Bunny and Sue did not mind that. They were so glad to see Splash.

"And I--I thought you were a wolf!" laughed Sue, putting her arms around the neck of Splash. Sue was wide awake now.

"I wonder how he got here?" questioned Bunny. "Maybe he ran on ahead of the folks. They must be coming for us now."

"I think Splash just came by himself," said Sue, and that was what had happened.

Bunny and Sue listened, but they did not hear their father or mother or the hermit coming along. It was still raining, but the thunder and lightning had stopped. The children were glad of that.

"Splash just came off by himself and found us, just as he did lots of times before," said Sue. "Didn't you, doggie?" she asked.

Splash barked, and that might have meant "yes" or "no." Bunny and Sue did not know dog language, and I don't either, so I can't tell you.

But, anyhow, Splash was there, and Bunny and Sue were very glad. It was not at all lonesome in the hermit's cabin

now. There was no clock, so Bunny did not know how late it was, though he could have told time had there been a clock.

After shaking some of the water from his shaggy coat, sending it in a shower over Bunny and Sue, and about the cabin, Splash lay down on the rug, and seemed quite happy. He looked from Bunny to Sue, and then put his head out on his paws, as if to go to sleep. It was as if he said:

"Well, everything's all right now. I'm here with you. You can go to sleep just as I'm doing."

But Bunny and Sue were not so sleepy now. They were glad Splash had come, but they also wanted their papa and mamma, and their own little beds at grandpa's house.

"I--I wish they would come for us," said Sue, after a bit.

"So do I," returned Bunny. "It must be 'most morning."

The children talked for a while. They did not feel very happy, though Bunny tried to get Sue to play some "make-believe" games.

"I don't want to," she said. "I want to go home."

All at once Splash, who had been asleep, sprang up and began to bark loudly.

"Oh, dear!" cried Sue, who had fallen into a little sleep. "What is it, Bunny?"

Splash barked so loudly that Bunny could not make his voice heard. The dog ran to the door, and scratched at it as he had done before.

"He wants to go out," said Sue.

"It's somebody coming for us!" Bunny cried. "I guess it's papa and mamma!"

He opened the door. Out bounded Splash, barking joyously. Then a voice cried:

"Bunny! Sue! Are you all right?"

"Yes, Daddy!" cried Bunny.

"Well, well! What a scare you gave us!" said another voice.

"But we didn't mean to, Grandpa!" called Sue, for she heard her grandpa's voice.

"Is it--is it 'most morning?" Bunny asked.

"Only a little after nine," answered his grandpa. "It isn't late."

Grandpa Brown took Sue in his arms, and Papa Brown carried Bunny. Splash ran along by himself. No one had to carry him. Mr. Brown thanked the hermit for his care of the children during the storm. And then, through the rain, that was falling gently now, Bunny and Sue were taken out to the carriage which was in the road, at the edge of the woods.

A little later they were on their way to the farmhouse, Splash running along beside the carriage.

"Can Splash see his way in the dark?" sleepily asked Bunny.

"I think so," answered Papa Brown. "Anyhow we haven't any room for him in the carriage. How did you get lost this time?"

"It was the frog that made us," said Bunny. "We chased after him, and we couldn't find the right path again. But the man found us."

And oh! how glad mamma and Grandma Brown were to see the children when they came home!

"Don't you ever get lost again!" said Mamma Brown, as she undressed Sue for bed.

"No'm, we won't," promised the little girl, and Bunny said the same thing.

The family had become very much worried when Bunny and Sue did not come back from having gone for berries. Supper time came, and no children. Then Grandpa Brown, his hired men, Mr. and Mrs. Brown, Grandma Brown, and even Bunker Blue, began to look for the lost ones.

They did not find Bunny and Sue, of course, for they were far away with the kind hermit. Then the storm came and the family at the farmhouse were more worried than ever.

They did not know what to do, but everything was all right when the hermit came along through the storm, and said he had found the children.

Then Grandpa Brown hitched up a horse to a big carriage and he and Papa Brown, taking the hermit with them, went to the cabin. Before that, though, Splash had gone off by himself, and had found Bunny and Sue. Then along came papa and Grandpa Brown, and that ended the little adventure. Everything was all right.

"He is a nice man--that hermit," said Sue. "He gave me a piggy-back, and once he had a little girl of his own, but she is in the sky now."

"Yes, he is a good old man," said Grandpa Brown. "I know him, though he hardly ever comes to see me. He has lived in his cabin in the woods, all alone, for many years. Once he had a wife and children, but they all died, and he became very sad. So he went to live by himself. He hardly ever speaks to any one, but he loves children. Bunny and Sue could not have been cared for by any one better than old Mr. Wright, the hermit."

"And he knows where the Gypsies are that have your horses, Grandpa," said Bunny.

That was not just what the hermit had said, but it was as near as Bunny could remember.

Grandpa Brown shook his head.

"I'm afraid I'll never see my horses again," he said. "But I'll ask Mr. Wright where the Gypsies that he saw are camping. Then I'll have a look for my horses."

This Grandpa Brown did next day. He went over to the hermit's cabin, taking with him a nice basket of good things to eat, that grandma and Mrs. Brown had put up.

"The children ate his bread and milk," said Mother Brown, "so we must give him something else in place of it."

And I think Mr. Wright, the hermit, was very glad to get the basket of good things, for of course a man, living all alone in the woods, can not make pies, and jam tarts and cake as good as mothers and grandmothers can.

The hermit showed Grandpa Brown the valley where the Gypsies had been seen, with their wagons shining with looking glasses. But the queer Gypsies were gone, though the ashes of their campfires showed where they had stopped. And of course there were no horses left behind.

"They don't stay very long in one place," said Grandpa Brown. "If they had my horses, they took them away. I guess I'll never see them again."

For several days, after getting lost, Bunny and Sue did not have any adventures. They played about the farmhouse, or in the barn, having much fun. Once they went fishing with Bunker Blue. Bunker did the fishing, and caught five or six, which Grandma Brown fried for supper.

One morning, when Bunny and Sue came down stairs, after a good night's sleep, they saw their mother and grandmother busy in the kitchen putting cake and pies, sandwiches, pickles, knives, forks, spoons, and other things, in baskets.

"What's that for?" asked Bunny.

"A picnic," answered his mother.

"Oh, are we going on a picnic?" asked Sue, clapping her hands.

"Yes, off in the woods," her grandmother replied. "It is a Sunday-school picnic, and grandpa and I go every year. This time we will take you with us."

"Oh, what fun we'll have!" cried Bunny Brown. "I just love a picnic; don't you, Sue?"

"Awful much!" answered the little girl.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRAMPS

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue watched their mother and grandmother put in the baskets the good things they were to eat on the picnic, which was to be held in a woodland grove about two miles away.

"Oh, what a big cake!" exclaimed Sue, as she saw a cocoanut-custard cake being taken from the shelf by her mother.

"Do you like that kind?" asked Grandma Brown.

"I just love it!" cried Sue, standing on her tip-toes to look over the table.

"So do I," added Bunny.

"Yes, it is their favorite cake," said Mother Brown. "I always make it when they have a birthday, and on Christmas and New Year's day."

"But I don't know where we're going to put it," said Grandma Brown. "It is a fine, big cake, but all the baskets are filled. If we crowd it in it will crush, and----"

"Oh, don't squash our cocoanut cake!" begged Sue. "Don't spoil it, Mother!"

"I'll not, my dear. Perhaps we had better not take it along," she said to Grandma Brown. "We have enough to eat without it."

"And we can eat it when we come home!" exclaimed Bunny. "We'll be hungry then. I'm always hungry after a picnic; aren't you, Sue?"

"Yes, Bunny. But, Mother, maybe we could take along some of the cake."

"Oh, we have enough without that," her grandmother told Sue. "We'll save that until we get home. I'll put it in the pantry. Now all the baskets are packed. Get ready, children. Grandpa will soon be here with the wagon, and we'll ride off to the picnic grounds. It's a lovely day."

It was. The sun was shining down from the blue sky, and there was a nice, cool wind, so that it was not too hot. There had been a little rain the night before, and the roads were not dusty. It would be cool and fresh in the woods. No better day for a picnic could be wished for. Bunny and Sue were very happy.

So was Splash, the big dog, for he ran about, here and there, barking and wagging his tail. To look at him you would have thought that he had gotten up the whole picnic, all by himself.

Clean napkins were put over the lunch baskets. Lemon juice had been squeezed into glass jars, with sugar, so that only water from a spring, or well, would have to be put in to make lemonade.

Bunny and Sue were washed, combed and dressed, all ready for the picnic. They did not wear their best clothes, for they wanted to romp about and play in the woods. Bunny said he was going to climb trees, and you can't do that if you wear your best clothes.

"But if you climb a tree," remarked Sue, "don't get your foot caught in one, as you did before, Bunny, and have to have your shoe taken off."

"I won't do that," promised the little boy. "I'll only climb easy trees."

"I'm going to take two of my dolls," said Sue. "Then if I see a little girl that hasn't any, I can lend her one of mine, and we can play together."

"That will be nice," said Grandma Brown. "Here comes grandpa with the horses."

Grandpa Brown drove up to the side door with a wagon that had three seats in it. He and Papa Brown would sit on the front one, where grandpa could drive the horses. Bunny and Sue were to sit on the middle seat, and on the last one grandma and Mother Brown would sit.

"But what about Bunker Blue?" asked Bunny. "Isn't he coming, too?" For both Bunny and Sue liked the big red-haired boy very much, and he liked them.

"Oh, yes, Bunker is coming," said Mother Brown.

"He is going to sit on a box in back of the last seat, and hold the lunch baskets, so they won't bounce out of the wagon," explained Grandpa Brown.

"And I'll hold 'em good and tight!" laughed Bunker. "I won't let 'em go overboard."

To go "overboard," means, of course, to fall out of a boat.

Now the wagon, in which Bunny Brown and the others rode to the picnic, was not a boat. But you see Bunker Blue was so used to being in and about boats that he always talked of them, speaking as sailors do. If anything is lost out of a boat, it goes "overboard," and that was what Bunker was not going to let happen to the lunch baskets on the picnic trip.

"For if the lunch goes overboard we'd go hungry," he said. "So I'll hold the baskets."

"These horses can't go as fast as my nice team, that the Gypsies took," said Grandpa Brown, when they were all ready to start.

"Well, we're in no hurry," said Grandma Brown. "The picnic will last all day."

As grandpa drove out on the road Bunny and Sue saw many wagons, from other farms, coming along. It seemed that all who could were coming to the Sunday-school picnic, which was held every year. In many of the farm-wagons were boys and girls. Bunny and Sue looked at them, wondering if any of the little folks would play with them.

Even if grandpa's second team of horses did not go very fast, they were soon at the picnic grounds, in a grove of trees, near a pretty little lake. Grandpa put his wagon and horses under a shed, with many others. The baskets of lunch were left there in the shade, and while the older folk found some benches to sit on, and talk, Bunny and Sue, with other boys and girls, walked off through the woods to see what they could find.

They found a pump, where they had a drink of water. Then they tossed sticks into the lake, to make believe they were boats. There were also swings in the shade, and in these Bunny and another boy had a fine time.

Sue said she did not care to swing just then. She had two dolls, one under each arm, and she walked about, looking for some little girl to whom she might lend one, so they could "play house" together.

Finally Sue saw a little girl in a blue dress, who seemed to be all alone. This little girl stood by herself, watching the others play "Ring-around the Rosey."

Sue went up to her and said, kindly:

"Wouldn't you like to play dolls?"

"Yes--yes, I would, but I haven't any doll."

"I'll let you take one of mine." Sue held out her best doll to the little girl. It is always polite, you know, to give company, and your friends, the best that you have, instead of keeping it yourself, no matter how much you want it.

"Oh, what a lovely doll!" exclaimed the little girl, her eyes shining bright.

"Her name is Ethel," said Sue.

"Why, that's my name!" exclaimed the little girl in the blue dress. "Did you know that?"

"No," answered Sue. "I didn't, but I'm glad it is your name. Now we'll find a place to play house."

Sue found a spot where some vines grew over an old stump, making a sort of green tent, or leafy bower, like the one on the island where she and Bunny had played Robinson Crusoe. In that Ethel and Sue had a fine time with the dolls.

When it was time to eat the lunch from the baskets, Bunny and Sue asked if they could not take theirs, and eat it with some of the other children, who were going off by themselves. Sue wanted to be with Ethel, and Bunny had found a boy named John, at one of the swings. He brought John to eat with him.

"Yes, you children may take your lunch off by yourselves," said Mother Brown. "I thought you would want to do that, so I put it up in a separate basket for you."

Bunker Blue carried the lunch for Bunny and Sue to a nice place in the woods where a number of children were going to eat the good things their fathers and mothers had brought for them.

The children had nearly finished eating, when, all at once, the bushes near where Bunny was sitting were pushed to one side, and two rough-looking men, one large and one smaller, with ragged clothes, and red handkerchiefs tied around their necks in place of collars, stepped out.

And then one of the tramps, for that is what the men were, made a grab for the lunch basket that was near Bunny Brown.



CHAPTER XX

THE MISSING CAKE

The tramps had come through the bushes so quickly, and had made such a sudden grab for the lunch basket, that, for a second or two, Bunny Brown did not know what to do. Neither did his sister Sue. Nor were the other children any better off.

They just sat there, looking at the rough men, one of whom had Bunny's basket, and was taking out what was left of the sandwiches, cake and other good things.

"Is there anything to eat in it?" asked the little tramp of the big one, who had Bunny's basket.

"Yes, some," was the answer. "But there are more lunch baskets. Grab one for yourself."

Of course that was not a nice way to talk--not very polite you know. But perhaps tramps are different from other folks. They get so hungry at times that they forget to be polite, I guess.

The smaller tramp, for one was much bigger and taller than the other, looked around to see what he could find. He saw little John Boland holding tightly to a basket. It still had some good things to eat in it, for John had not eaten all his lunch.

"Here, give me that!" cried the tramp.

"No! No!" John exclaimed, and he turned to run away, for he did not like the tramps, any more than did Bunny Brown, or Sue, or any of the others. But, as John turned, his foot caught in a root of a tree, and down he went, striking the ground quite hard. His lunch basket bounced out of his hand, and rolled to one side.

"Ha! That's what I want!" said the tramp. "I don't want you, little boy. All I want is something to eat."

But John, I suppose, thought the tramps might take him away, as some people think Gypsies will take children away (only they won't) and John began to cry.

Now it is a funny thing, but very often if one little boy or girl in a crowd of others begins to cry, why two or three more will do the same thing. And, no sooner had John begun to sob, than Tillie Simpson, Nellie Hadden, Flo Benson, Tommie Jones and Harry Kennedy all began to cry, too. About the only ones who were not crying were Bunny Brown and his sister Sue, and Sue had some tears all ready to let fall out of her eyes.

But Sue watched to see what Bunny would do. She did not want him to call her a "cry-baby" afterward, though Bunny hardly ever called his sister names, except maybe in fun.

"You let us alone! Let my basket alone! Let John's basket alone! Go on away from here!"

The big tramp, who was eating what was left in Bunny's basket, looked up and laughed.

"You're a spunky little chap," he said, "but we're not going away until we get something to eat. We're hungry!"

"That's what we are," said the small tramp, who had picked up the basket that had rolled from the hand of John. Out of this the small tramp was eating pieces of cake and sandwiches as fast as he could. John, who had stopped crying now, sat up and looked on, his eyes wide open.

"We haven't had anything to eat all day!" went on the big tramp, who was also eating fast. "We're terrible hungry! You children have had enough. We'll take the rest."

"Yes, and then maybe we'll take some of them," said the small tramp, blinking his eyes and looking around. Of course he was only fooling, but the children did not know this, and some of the little girls screamed, and ran away.

But Bunny Brown was not so frightened as were the others. He was older, and then, too, he felt that he must look after his sister. So he cried out again:

"Go on away from here, you--you bad tramps!"

The tramps only laughed. Then Bunny Brown thought of something. Turning around he called, as loudly as he could:

"Here Splash! Come Splash! Come on old dog!"

Then Bunny whistled. He had only just learned how, from Bunker Blue a few days before, and he could not whistle very loudly, but still he did very well for a small boy.

"Come Splash! Come on, old dog!" he cried, and he whistled once more.

The tramps looked at one another.

"He's callin' his dog," said the big one.

"Yes," said the little tramp, "we'd better go. Come on. We've had enough to last us for awhile. We'll empty the baskets and run."

The two roughly dressed men, with red handkerchiefs around their neck, in place of collars, quickly emptied into their pockets the sandwiches and cake that were left in some of the baskets which the children had dropped. They mixed the cake and bread and meat all up together; those tramps did. Perhaps they were so hungry they did not mind.

Then off they ran through the bushes the way they had come.

"Oh, I'm so glad they're gone!" exclaimed Sue.

"So am I," said Tommie Jones. "If they hadn't gone your dog would have bit them, Bunny Brown; wouldn't he?"

Bunny Brown laughed.

"My dog isn't here," he said.

"He isn't!" exclaimed Tommie. "Why, he called him, and whistled to him; didn't he?" he asked the others.

"Yep!" said Flo Benson. "He did."

"That was only make-believe," explained Bunny. "I thought maybe if I pretended Splash was here the tramps would be afraid. Tramps are always afraid of dogs. My papa said so. That's why I made believe to call Splash. But he isn't here. We left him back on grandpa's farm with the hired man. Mamma thought he might be in the way at the picnic, so we didn't bring him."

"Oh, that was a fine trick!" exclaimed Sue. "I forgot Splash wasn't here with us. I thought sure he'd come when you whistled, Bunny."

"So did the tramps, I guess," laughed Bunny Brown. "I'm glad I thought of it. And if Splash had been here he would make the tramps go away, anyhow."

"But they took all my lunch!" sobbed John. "And I fell down, and I bumped my nose and--and----"

But that was all the trouble he could think of just then.

"Never mind," said Sue, helping him to stand up, and brushing the dirt from his clothes. "You're not hurt very much, John, and you're not hungry; are you?"

"No, but--but I fell down!"

"Well, never mind. The tramps are gone now. And they won't come back."

But, just as Sue said that some one was heard coming through the woods. The bushes shook, and some of the little girls cried out.

"Oh, there are the tramps again!" shouted John.

But it was not. It was only Bunker Blue, who had come to find Bunny Brown and his sister Sue.

"Well, how are you all?" Bunker asked. "Why, what's the matter?" he went on, for he saw that something had happened.

"It was two bad tramps, with red handkerchiefs on their necks," said Bunny Brown. "But I made believe to whistle for Splash, and they ran away."

"They did?" cried Bunker Blue, much surprised.

"Yep. And next time I'm really going to bring Splash to the picnic, and he can keep the tramps away."

"Maybe it would be a good idea," said Bunker. "But it was a good thing you thought to pretend your dog was near

by. A very good trick. I'll see if I can see anything of the bad men."

Bunker went through the bushes where the tramps had gone, but he saw nothing of them. They must have run a long way off. Perhaps they were afraid Bunny's dog, Splash, would chase them.

It was nearly time for the picnic to be over. The children had eaten as much as was good for them, even if they had not had all they wished, and I think most of them did have all they wanted. Bunny and Sue did, anyhow.

Bunny's basket, of course, was emptied by the tramps, as was that of John and some of the others. But the grown folks still had good things left in theirs, and toward evening, when it was time to start for home, the little folks who had not had enough were given a little more.

"I didn't know there were tramps around here," said Mother Brown to grandpa, when he was backing the horses out of the shed, so Bunny and the others could get into the wagon.

"Oh, yes, we have a few tramps in the Summer," said Grandpa Brown. "They don't like to work, but they are always ready to eat. But probably we'll not be bothered with many. These two must have heard of the picnic, and come around to see what they could pick up."

And now the picnic was over. The farmers began driving home. Every one had had a fine time, and there had been no trouble except for the tramps. Oh yes, there had been another little bit of trouble.

A little boy named Sammie Perkins, in trying to catch a frog in a pond, leaned too far over and fell in. But a man pulled Sammie out very quickly, and the little boy only got wet through. Of course he cried, and was frightened. But his mother took off some of his clothes and dried them in the sun. So no great harm was done. And that was all that happened, except that every one had such a fine time that they said they wished there was a picnic every day.

"But that would be too much!" said Grandma Brown. "You would soon get tired of it."

The Brown family drove home, getting there just as the sun was going down.

Splash, who had been chained up by the hired man, so he would not follow the wagon, was now let loose. And oh! how glad he was to see Bunny Brown and his sister Sue!

Splash jumped about, barking and wagging his tail. He even tried to kiss Bunny and Sue with his red tongue.

"Oh, Splash!" cried Bunny. "I wish you had been to the picnic. Then you could have run after the tramps!"

"Well, the tramps ran anyhow, so it was all right," said Papa Brown. "Though the next time you see any rough men, Bunny, you had better come and tell me, or your mother, and not try to drive them away all by yourself."

"All right, I will, Daddy. But we'll take Splash to the next picnic anyhow. He was lonesome without us."

And I think Splash was.

"Well, now we'll have supper," said Grandma Brown. "That is if you children are hungry?"

"Oh, I am!" cried Sue, and Bunny said the same thing. The drive home had given them good appetites. But then children are very often hungry anyhow, even without picnics.

"Shall we have some of that nice cocoanut custard cake?" asked Bunny.

"Yes," his grandmother told him. "I'll get it from the pantry." But when she went there, the cupboard was not exactly bare, like Mother Hubbard's, but something had happened. For Grandma Brown cried:

"Oh the cake! The lovely cake is gone! And so are a lot of my pies and crullers! Oh, some one has been in my pantry!"



CHAPTER XXI

BUNNY'S BIG IDEA

Bunny Brown ran to the pantry where his grandmother had gone. Sue followed. The two children saw Grandma Brown looking at some empty shelves. On one shelf, before they had started for the picnic, had stood the big cocoanut-custard cake, that was too large to go in any of the baskets. That was why it had been left at home for supper.

"Oh, is it really gone?" asked Bunny sadly.

"It isn't here," said Grandma Brown.

"Could the hired man have taken it?" asked Bunny's mother.

"Oh, no! He wouldn't do such a thing as that," replied Grandma Brown. "I left his dinner in the kitchen, as I always do when we go away. No, some one must have gotten in the house, while we were gone, and taken the cake, besides some of my pies and other things."

"Was it--was they burglars?" asked Sue. She had often heard, at home, of burglars getting into houses and taking money and other things.

"No, I don't believe it was burglars," said Grandma Brown. "But I see how they got in. I left the pantry window open, though the shutters were closed. They opened the shutters and climbed in. The shutters were tied with a string, and the string has been cut--see!"

She showed Bunny and Sue, also Mother Brown, where the cut string hung dangling from the edge of one shutter.

"They climbed in that window and took the cake," went on Grandma Brown.

"Oh, my lovely cake!" exclaimed Sue. "And I wanted some for supper!"

"So did I!" said Bunny Brown. "Is there any other kind of cake, Grandma?"

"Oh, yes, I can give you cookies. But I would like to know who it was got in my pantry. We don't generally trouble to lock our doors and windows around here in the day time," she went on, "for none of us was ever robbed before. But if this is going to happen I'll have to be more careful."

She pushed open the shutters, which were partly closed, and looked out. Then she called:

"Oh, here's a box they stepped on to get in the window. Look, children, they brought a box from the barn, stepped up on it, and crawled in the window. And see! One of them dropped his handkerchief!"

Bunny and Sue, looking under Grandma Brown's arms, one on each side of her, saw, down on the ground, a red handkerchief. At the sight of it Bunny Brown cried:

"Oh it was the tramps! It was the tramps that took our cake, Grandma!"

"How do you know, Bunny?"

"Because the tramps that scared us had red handkerchiefs on their necks just like that one down there. I'm sure they were the same tramps, Grandma."

The two children, grandma and Mother Brown went outside, under the pantry window. There lay the red handkerchief on the ground, and it was twisted up in just the way a handkerchief would be twisted if it had been around any one's neck.

"Those tramps didn't get enough to eat out of our baskets," said Bunny Brown, "so they came here and took grandma's things. Let's go after 'em! I'll get Splash and----"

Bunny Brown started to run after his dog, that had gone out to the barn with Bunker Blue. But his mother caught the little boy by the arm.

"You had better stay right here," she said. "You are too small to go chasing off after tramps, even with Splash. We'll let Papa Brown and grandpa find the bad men, if they are still here."

Daddy Brown and grandpa came back from the barn, where they had been putting away the horses, and they were told of the missing cake, pies and crullers. Then they looked at the red handkerchief, lying where one of the tramps must have dropped it.

"Yes, I should not be surprised if the same tramps who scared the children came here and took your things, Mother," said Papa Brown. "They must have been frightened, and have run off in a hurry, to have dropped their handkerchief this way. We'll ask the hired man."

But the hired man had been working in the garden, some distance away from the house, and he had seen nothing of any tramps. He had come in to his dinner, and he said he had looked in the pantry then, and had noticed that the big cake was all right.

"Then the tramps came here after dinner, and after they were at the picnic grounds," said Grandpa Brown. "I must look around. They may be hiding in my barn, and sometimes tramps smoke in the hay, and set it on fire. We'll look for them."

But no tramps were found.

"Maybe they heard Splash barking, and ran away in such a hurry that they dropped their handkerchief," said Bunny.

"Maybe," agreed his mother. "Well, it's better to have them take the crullers, the pie and the cake instead of a cow or a horse."

"Indeed it is!" said Grandpa Brown. "I don't want to lose any more horses."

"I can bake you another cocoanut-custard cake, children," said Grandma Brown. "I'll make it to-morrow. To-night you will have to eat cookies with your milk."

And the cookies were very good, as was everything Grandma Brown made, so Bunny and Sue were not hungry after all.

That night Grandpa Brown went all around the house, to make sure that all the doors and windows were locked.

"For we don't want any tramps coming here in the middle of the night, waking us up from our sleep," he said.

And nothing happened. Probably the tramps ran a good way off with the fine big cocoanut-custard cake. They must have had a good feast on that, and on the pies and crullers.

For two or three days after the picnic Bunny Brown and his sister Sue had good times at grandpa's farm. One day it rained, but the children played a part of the time in the barn, and the rest of the time in the big attic of grandpa's house.

This attic had in it even more things, to have a good time with, than did the attic at Bunny's home.

There were big fur rugs that Grandpa Brown put in the sled when it was winter. There were strings of sleigh bells that jingled when they were touched. And there was a spinning wheel, like the one in Mother Brown's attic, only it was larger.

Then, too, there were piles of old clothes, old picture-papers, trunks with many strange things in them, and so many other things that Bunny and Sue did not get tired of playing all day long.

But the attic was only nice to play in on rainy days. On days when the sun shone down hot on the roof it was too warm up there. So the next day, when the storm was over, Bunny and Sue looked for something else to do to have a good time.

"Come on, and we'll play ball," said Bunny.

He and Sue did not exactly play ball the way big boys did. But Bunny would throw the ball, and when Sue had caught it she would toss it back. They went out behind the house to play this game.

Back and forth they tossed the ball, until Sue missed it when Bunny threw it to her. The ball rolled under a currant bush, but when Sue ran to pick it up, the little girl suddenly stopped, and stood looking at the bush.

"What's the matter?" asked Bunny. "Why don't you pick the ball up, and throw it to me, Sue?"

"I--I can't," she answered

"Why not?"

"Cause a hen's got it."

"A hen's got my ball?" asked Bunny, much surprised.

"Yep," said Sue, shaking her head up and down to make Bunny understand. "The ball is right by the hen, and she's got her bill on it. I dassn't pick it up, 'cause she'll peck me."

Bunny ran to where Sue stood. Surely enough, the ball had rolled under the edge of the currant bush, close to where a big hen was all cuddled up in a heap. And the hen did have her bill on the ball with which the children had been playing.

"Why--why that hen is on a nest!" exclaimed Bunny. "I guess grandma doesn't know there's a hen's nest out here. We'll go and tell her."

"But aren't you going to take your ball?" asked Sue. "Maybe the hen will eat it if you don't."

"Hen's can't eat balls," said Bunny. "The ball is too big for them to swaller."

"Well, anyhow, they could pick holes in it, and then we couldn't play with it any more."

"That's so," agreed Bunny. "I'll see if I can get it away from her."

But when Bunny crept under the currant bush, and reached for his ball, the hen made a funny clucking noise, ruffled up her feathers and looked so angry, that Bunny was afraid.

"Maybe she's got little chickens in her nest," said Sue. "If she has she'll peck you if you go close to her--grandma said so."

"Maybe she has," agreed Bunny. "But I'll get a long stick and poke my ball out. Then she can't peck me."

But it was not easy to make the ball roll out of the way of the hen. The stick would slip off it when Bunny reached for it, and whenever the stick came near the hen she would peck at it. Once she almost knocked it from Bunny's hand.

And, all the while, the hen made that queer clucking noise, and fluffed up her feathers so that she looked twice as big as she really was.

"Oh, come away! Come away!" begged Sue. "She'll bite you, Bunny!"

Bunny Brown was a little afraid of the hen. And when he found he could not roll the ball out of her way he ran to the house, with Sue, and told his mother and grandmother what had happened.

"Why, that must be the old gray hen, sitting on her nest that she went off and made by herself," said Grandma Brown. "I wondered where she was hiding, but I never thought to look under the currant bush. I'm glad you found her, Bunny. I'll get your ball for you."

The hen did not seem to mind when Grandma Brown went close to her. Very carefully Grandma reached for Bunny's ball. Then she gently lifted up one of the hen's wings, and showed the children the eggs under her feathers.

"Soon some little chickens will hatch out of the eggs," said grandma. "Some of the shells are already cracked, and the chickies may be out to-morrow."

"Oh, I'll just love to see them!" cried Sue.

Now that they had their ball again, Bunny and Sue could play once more. And the next day the little chickens did hatch. Up to the house came the old mother hen with eleven little, fluffy, yellow balls, almost as round as Bunny's ball, but of course not so big.

"Peep! Peep!" went the little chickens, as they followed the hen-mother around.

"Cluck-cluck!" said the hen-mother.



"OH, AREN'T THEY CUTE!"—Page 208.

Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue on Grandpa's Farm.

"Oh, aren't they cute!" cried Sue.

Every one thought they were, and I think the hen mother was very proud of them, for if any one went too near she would make a queer noise, and ruffle up her feathers, just as she had when Bunny reached for his ball near her.

It was two or three days after this that Bunny Brown and his sister Sue awakened one morning, and saw something queer out on the side of grandpa's barn.

"Oh, look!" exclaimed Sue, who saw it first. "What a big picture, Bunny!"

Indeed it was a large one, brightly colored, showing elephants, lions, tigers and horses, all in a big ring. And there were men and ladies jumping from the top of a tent, into nets underneath.

"Oh, it's a circus picture!" cried Bunny. "How did it get there, Grandpa?"

"A man came along early this morning, and pasted it up," said Grandpa Brown.

Bunny and Sue ran out to look at the circus picture. It was a fine, big one, and the more they looked at it the more the children liked it. Finally Bunny said:

"Sue, I've got an idea! Such a big idea!"

"Oh, what is it," asked Sue. "What's an idea? Is it good to eat?"

Bunny did not exactly know what an idea was, but he had heard his mother and father say that word.

"Sue!" exclaimed Bunny in a sort of whisper, "if that circus is coming to town we'll go—you and me. We'll go to the circus!"

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue, clapping her hands. "That will be just fine! But how can we go?"

CHAPTER XXII

OFF TO THE CIRCUS

Bunny Brown thought for a minute. He and Sue looked at the gay circus poster, and the more he looked at it the more he felt that he and his sister must go and see the big show in the white tent.

"How can we go, Bunny?" asked Sue.

Bunny Brown wrinkled up his forehead. He always did that when he was thinking hard, and now that the "big idea" had come to him he was thinking harder than ever.

"First we'll have to find out where the circus is going to be," he said. "We'll ask grandpa. He'll know."

"Do you s'pose mother will let us go?" asked Sue.

"I don't know. We'll have to ask. First we'll find out where the show is going to be."

Bunny and Sue stood a little while longer looking at the circus picture. As they turned this way and that, peering at the big elephant, the savage-looking lion, the striped tiger and the hippopotamus, with his mouth so widely open, Bunker Blue came along whistling.

"Maybe Bunker knows!" cried Sue.

"Knows what?" asked the red-haired lad, stopping near the two children. "What do you think I know?"

"Where the circus is going to be," replied Bunny. "Do you know where they'll put up the tent?"

Bunker squinted at the circus poster.

"No, I don't know exactly where it will be," he said, "and it doesn't tell on that sign. But it says the circus is coming day after to-morrow. You could find out from your grandpa's hired man, though, where the tents will be. I guess they will put them up in the same place they had them last year, and the hired man was here then. He's worked for your grandpa a good many years. Ask the hired man."

"We will," Bunny said.

"Are you thinking of going to the circus?" asked Bunker.

"We--we'd like to," answered Sue softly.

"And maybe we will," added her brother.

"You're too little to go to a circus," said Bunker Blue, "and I don't believe any of the big folks are going. I'd like to go myself, but I don't believe I can."

"Well, we're going, anyhow," whispered Bunny to Sue, so Bunker would not hear.

"Are you sure, Bunny?"

"Sure we'll go!" he said. "Just you leave it all to me."

At dinner that day Bunny and Sue talked of nothing but the circus, and the big picture-poster on grandpa's barn.

"It's the same show that was here last year," said the hired man. "I saw the fellow who pasted the picture on the barn, and he was the same one who was around last year."

"And--and will the tent be in the same place?" asked Bunny.

"Yes," said the hired man. "The circus always shows in the same place when it comes to town. They put the tents up by the baseball grounds, just outside of the town."

Bunny had found out what he wanted to know. If he and Sue could get to town, all they would have to do would be to ask where the baseball grounds were. Any one could tell them that, and then they would find the circus.

But first Bunny wanted to find out if his papa and mamma, or grandfather and grandmother, were going to the show. It would be so much easier for him and Sue if they were. So Bunny asked:

"Could we go to the circus, Mother?"

"Oh, I hardly think so," answered Mother Brown. "I don't like a circus, and your father has to go to the city that day to look after his boat business. Grandpa is too busy to go, and I'm sure grandma and I don't want to go."

"No, indeed!" exclaimed Grandma Brown. "I always was afraid of wild animals, and I don't like a circus anyhow."

"Bunker Blue could take us," said Bunny.

"No, dear. I'm sorry, but Bunker is going to drive papa into town on that day, so he could not take you. You had a nice time at the picnic, and that ought to be enough for you. This is only a small circus, and I don't believe it would be nice for you to go," said Mother Brown.

But Bunny Brown and his sister Sue wanted very much to go to this circus, even if it was only a small one.

"Oh, Bunny! We can't go!" said Sue, with tears in her eyes, when she and Bunny went out in the yard after dinner. "We can't go to the circus!"

"Maybe we can," insisted Bunny.

"But how can we? Mother isn't going, nor father, nor grandma nor grandpa. How can we go?"

"We can go by ourselves. It isn't very far in to town. Not more than a mile. We can walk a mile, Sue."

"Yes, but who will give us the money for tickets? Do they sell tickets to the circus for pins, Bunny? If they did maybe we could find enough pins in grandma's house, on the floor. Nobody wants those pins. We could pick 'em up."

"They don't sell real circus tickets for pins," explained Bunny. "They sell them for money."

"I've got five cents," said Sue.

"So have I. But that won't be enough. It's twenty-five cents for children. Bunker read that on the circus poster."

"Oh, we'll never get that much money!" sighed Sue.

"Maybe we will," Bunny said.

"How?"

"Well, I might carry water to the elephant, and the man might give me a ticket for that. Bunker said he once got in the circus that way."

"But, I couldn't carry water to an elephant," objected Sue. "I'd be afraid he'd bite me."

"I'd carry it for you," kindly offered Bunny. "I'm not afraid of an elephant. If you're kind to them they won't bite you."

"But elephants is so big, they take an awful lot of water," Sue went on. "They'd drink a whole tub full. You could never carry that much."

"I'll try," said Bunny. "I want to go to that circus!"

"And so do I, Bunny."

"They didn't say we mustn't go," the little boy went on. "Mother just said she and grandma couldn't take us. I don't think they'd mind if we went by ourselves."

"Maybe not, Bunny. But, s'posin' they wouldn't let us in the tent?"

"Oh, I guess they will. You could carry some water for the ponies. You're not afraid of them, are you?"

"No," said Sue slowly. "I'm not 'fraid of ponies. I'll get them some water, Bunny. But maybe they have all the water they want, and they won't let us in, no matter what we do."

Bunny thought that over for a minute. Then he said:

"We could do our Punch and Judy show for the circus man, Sue. Maybe he'd let us in if he saw that."

"Maybe. But, Bunny, you haven't any lobster claw to put on your nose, to make you look like Mr. Punch."

Bunny sighed.

"That's so," he said. "The lobster claw is broken. I guess we'll have to carry the water, Sue. I'll get some for the elephant, and you can carry some for the ponies. Then the circus man will give us tickets to the show. We'll go, anyhow."

So Bunny had it all planned out. Neither he nor Sue said anything to their father, mother or grandparents about what they were going to do. Bunny was quite sure if they asked they would not be allowed to go, and he did not want to do anything he was told not to do. But he and Sue had not really been forbidden to go to the circus, though of course Mrs. Brown had no idea the children were planning to see the show in the tent, with the wild animals, and the men and women jumping into nets.

The rest of the day Bunny and Sue spent pretty much out near the barn, looking at the big circus poster, wondering if they would see all the animals in the picture. They spent part of the next day doing the same thing.

Mrs. Brown was so busy helping Grandma Brown, and Mr. Brown was so busy getting ready for his trip to the city, that no one paid much attention to the children.

"We'll start off early to-morrow morning," said Bunny, the night before the circus was to come to town. "We'll take a lunch with us. I'll save some of my supper and some of my breakfast. We can take some bread and cake, and we've each got five cents, to get some pink lemonade with."

"I want a circus balloon, too," said Sue.

"Well, maybe a man will give you one," said Bunny, hopefully.

Sue clapped her hands in joy.

"I hope he gives me a red one!" she cried.

Early the next morning, right after breakfast, Bunny Brown and his sister Sue went quietly from the house. They had wrapped some slices of bread, and some cookies, in pieces of newspaper, and this lunch they carried with them as they started off for the circus. No one saw them start, and down the road they went, hand in hand, off toward town.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue, as she toddled along beside her brother. "Isn't it just fine!"

"Wait till you see the circus!" said Bunny, his eyes shining with delight. "We'll have lots of fun!"

CHAPTER XXIII

THE GYPSIES

Along the dusty road, on the way to town, walked Bunny Brown and his sister Sue. Hand in hand they toddled on, thinking of the fun they were going to have. They did not stop to think that they were running away to go to the circus, but that is just what they were doing. They had not asked their mother if they might go. They were pretty sure she would say they could not.

Bunny and Sue did not mean to do wrong--they just did not think. They only wanted to have a good time.

"Do you s'pose we'll really see elephants, Bunny?" asked Sue.

"Course we will!"

"Like in the picture?"

"Sure!"

"With two tails, and his big teeth sticking out like lollypop handles, that Wango put in his mouth? Elephants like that?"

"Yes, Sue. Only an elephant hasn't two tails. One end is his tail, and the other is his trunk--his long nose that he breathes through, and squirts water in. I told you about it."

"Yes, I know, Bunny. But I forgot. And are you going to give the elephant water to squirt in his trunk?"

"Maybe. But I hope he doesn't squirt it on me."

"Or on me," added Sue. "I'm going to water the ponies. They haven't any trunks; have they Bunny?"

"No. Oh, we'll have a good time, Sue."

"And will I get a red balloon?"

"I don't know about that," Bunny Brown shook his head. The more he thought about the circus the harder it seemed to be to get inside the tent. Suppose they wouldn't let him water the elephant? How was he going to get a ticket to the show, or one for Sue? Bunny was beginning to feel worried--that is he didn't know just what he was going to do. But he would not give up yet.

There were many persons going into town that day. Many of them were going to the circus, it seemed. Some wagons and carriages had many children in with the grown folks.

At first Bunny and Sue thought it fun to walk along by themselves. But, after a bit, Sue began to get tired. It was hot and dusty, and the town was farther away than even Bunny had thought.

"Oh, Bunny!" Sue cried at last. "I want to ride!"

"But how can you?" asked the little boy.

"If you had brought Splash, and the express wagon, we could have a nice ride."

"That's so," said Bunny slowly. He had not thought of that. He stood in the road and looked back toward grandpa's house. Just then there were no wagons or carriages in the road. But Bunny saw a small cloud of dust coming toward him. Faster and faster it came. Then he heard a bark.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue. "Is that Splash?"

"I--I don't know," began Bunny Brown, but in another second he saw that it was their big, shaggy dog.

"Oh, it *is* Splash!" cried Sue. "I'm so glad he came. Now, if an elephant tries to bite us when you're watering it, Bunny, Splash will bite him."

"Elephants aren't afraid of dogs," said Bunny. "But I'm glad you came, Splash."

"I wish he'd brought the express wagon, and I could ride," said Sue, with a sigh.

But that was too much to wish for. The two children had slipped away that morning without calling for Splash to go

with them. Bunny thought if the dog came Mother Brown might see, and ask Bunny and Sue where they were going. And of course they would have to tell.

But Splash had come anyhow, and he could not be sent back. He barked happily, and was very glad to be with the children once more. He would never have stayed at home if he could have had his way about it.

"Well, come on," said Bunny, after a bit. "We don't want to be late for the circus, Sue."

"No. I want to see everything. Will they let Splash in too, Bunny?"

"I guess so. They have trained dogs in circuses."

"But Splash isn't trained."

"He can draw us in the express wagon," Bunny reminded her.

"Yes," said Sue. "And I wish we had it now. I'm awful tired."

"But you can sit down when we get in the circus, after I water the elephant."

That seemed to make it all right, and once more the children went on, hand in hand, Splash now running on ahead, and sometimes trotting back.

Pretty soon a wagon, drawn by a white horse, and driven by a fat, good-natured-looking man came up from behind the children. The man looked down at Bunny and Sue, and cried out: "Whoa!"

He was talking to his horse, of course, and the horse stopped. So did Bunny and Sue.

"Want a ride?" asked the fat man, with a jolly laugh.

Bunny and Sue wanted a ride very much, and they both said so.

"Get in," said the fat man. "Or, wait a minute, and I'll lift you in. You're too small to get up by yourselves. Is this your dog?"

"Yes," answered Bunny. "And, please, could he ride, too? He gets tired running along."

"Yes, he can get in too. I've got plenty of room. Up you go, doggie!"

"His name is Splash," said Sue, as the fat man lifted first her and then Bunny up into the wagon.

"Oh, Splash; eh? That's a good name. Well, up with you, Splash!"

Splash, seeing that Bunny and Sue were in the wagon, leaped in himself. Then off they went again. Sue was happy now.

"Where are you tots going?" the fat man wanted to know.

"To the circus," said Bunny. "I'm going to water the elephant."

"And I'm going to water the pony," added Sue.

The fat man laughed. He seemed to be doing that most of the time.

"Well, you're pretty small to be going to a circus alone," went on the fat man. "But I s'pose your folks will meet you there. Don't get lost, that's all."

"Are you going to the circus?" asked Bunny.

"No indeed," laughed the fat man. "I haven't time. But I'm going close to the circus grounds, where the tents are. I'll let you off there."

"Thank you," said Bunny.

He was glad he and Sue and Splash would not have to walk, as he was also beginning to feel tired.

"Here you are, youngsters!" finally called the man, as the wagon went around a turn in the road. "There are the circus grounds. You can get out here and walk straight ahead. But don't get lost. Where is your father, or mother, going to meet you?"

Bunny did not answer that question. For of course mother or father did not know that the two children had gone to the circus at all. Bunny began to be a little worried.

But the fat man did not ask any more questions. For, just then, a band began to play music, and the horse wanted to hurry away. So the fat man helped Bunny and Sue out of the wagon, and drove off with a wave of his big hand. Splash jumped out himself.

"Now we'll go over and see the circus," said Bunny.

And oh! what a lot there was for him and Sue to look at. There were big white tents, and from the poles were flags of all colors, fluttering in the wind. In another tent, the sides of which were raised up to let in the air, were many horses and ponies.

In another tent there was a long table, on which were many dishes, and seated on benches, were men and women eating at the table.

"Oh look, Bunny!" suddenly cried Sue. "There's your elephant!"

Bunny looked, and saw a big elephant, pushing a large red wagon, by putting his head against it, while some men steered it.

"Are you going to water that elephant?" asked Sue.

"I--I don't know," replied Bunny. Now that he saw how very big an elephant was he began to think that, after all, perhaps he had better water just a pony, as Sue was going to do.

"When can we go in the circus, Bunny?" asked Sue, as she heard the band playing again. It was not time for the show to begin. In fact, the parade had not yet started, but Bunny and Sue did not know this. The circus was just getting ready to have the parade. "I want to go in and see the animals," went on Sue.

"Have to get a ticket first," said Bunny. "I'll ask a man to let me water a pony. I guess an elephant is too big."

"And I'll water a pony, too, Bunny."

The elephant, pushing the big wagon, came close to where Bunny and Sue were standing. Splash barked at the elephant, and ran back. So did Bunny and Sue. The elephant looked bigger than ever.

A man carrying a long whip, came hurrying up to the tent where the horses and ponies were eating their hay.

"Please mister!" cried Bunny. "I want to go to the circus! So does my sister. We'll water the ponies if you give us a ticket."

The man looked at the two children. At first he looked cross, and then he smiled, just as the fat man had done. No one could look cross for very long at Bunny Brown and his sister Sue.

"You're too little to water ponies, or to go to circuses," said the man with the whip. "You had better go back home. I guess you're lost. I'll send a man to take you home."

Then he hurried off, cracking his whip.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue. "Did you hear what he said? He said he was going to send us home! And we won't see the circus. Oh dear!"

"Yes, we *will* see the circus!" cried Bunny. "I'll ask another man! Come on, Sue. We'll stand in another place, and then he can't find us when he comes back."

Bunny went around to the other side of the horse-tent, followed by his sister and Splash. It would be dreadful to be sent home now, just when the circus was ready to start.

"We'll ask some one else to let us water the ponies, and then they'll give us tickets to get in," said Bunny. "Take hold of my hand, Sue, and then you won't get lost."

As the two children stood there they hardly knew what to do. All about them men were hurrying here and there, some leading horses or camels. Bunny and Sue could hear music in the big tent.

And as they stood there, they saw two men coming along who did not look like those who belonged with the circus. The two men had gold rings in their ears, and the faces of the men were very dark. They had on coats with silver buttons, and wore red sashes around their waists. Each man was leading a horse, but the horses were not like circus

horses.

"Oh, Bunny!" cried Sue. "Look--those are Gypsies--like the ones we saw in the woods."

"Yes!" cried Bunny. "And they have two horses. Maybe those are grandpa's horses. Oh, Sue! S'pose they should be! Maybe we've found 'em! Maybe we've *found* the Gypsies who took grandpa's horses, and didn't bring 'em back."



CHAPTER XXIV

BUNNY AND SUE ARE SAD

Bunny and Sue watched the two Gypsy men closely. The children were sure the men were Gypsies, for they looked just like those others the children had seen in the woods, when the two youngsters wandered away on the first night of their automobile trip.

The two men, with their bright red sashes, and the gold rings in their ears, stood together. Each one had hold of the halter of a horse he was leading. And the horses did not seem to be the kind that belonged in a circus, for they pranced about, and did not like to hear the music. Nor did they like the sight of the elephants and camels, that were now walking about, getting ready for the parade.

"Do you s'pose they could be grandpa's horses?" asked Sue, of her brother.

"Maybe," said Bunny.

"What did the Gypsy men bring them here for?" Sue wanted to know.

"Maybe they want to train them to be circus horses, or maybe they want to sell them," Bunny answered.

"We ought to go to tell grandpa," declared Sue. "Then he could come and get his team. He wants it awful much."

"We can tell him after the circus," Bunny said. "We want to see the show, Sue."

"Yes, and I want a red balloon, or maybe a blue one. Which goes up the highest, Bunny?" For, just then a man walked past, with many balloons, blue, red, green and yellow, floating in the air.

"Oh, I guess they all go up the same, Sue," said Bunny. The little boy was thinking hard. Suppose those should be his grandfather's horses that the Gypsy men had? How could Bunny get them? It seemed too hard for the little boy to do.

Then, too, Bunny wanted to take Sue in to see the circus. That was what they had come for. But how could he get in when he had no money? And, now that he had seen an elephant close by, he did not feel like carrying water to one of the big animals. Suppose one of them should accidentally step on Bunny Brown?

The little boy looked around for some one to whom he could speak. He wanted to ask about getting into the show, and he wanted to talk about his grandfather's horses and the Gypsies.

But every one seemed to be too busy to stop to speak to the two children, all alone on the circus grounds.

Watching the two Gypsies, with the horses, Bunny and Sue saw the men talk to some of the circus people. The Gypsies pointed to the horses several times, and Bunny and Sue felt sure that the men with the red sashes, and the gold rings in their ears, were trying either to sell the horses, or have them trained to become circus animals.

"Oh, look, Bunny!" Sue suddenly cried. "The circus is starting!"

From one of the tents came a long line of elephants, camels and horses. On the backs of the animals were men and women who wore red, green, blue, yellow, pink and purple clothing, which sparkled in the sunshine as if covered with diamonds like the one in Aunt Lu's ring.



"THAT'S THE PARADE!" SAID BUNNY.--

Page 233.

Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue on Grandpa's Farm.

"That's the parade!" said Bunny. "That isn't the circus. That's in the tent. Oh, I wish I could find a man to give us a ticket, or some money, for watering the ponies!"

Bunny looked all around. But he saw no one whom he could ask. Every one seemed to be looking at the parade which was to march through the streets of the town, and then back to the circus grounds.

Even the Gypsy men, with the horses that Bunny and Sue thought might be those belonging to their grandfather, were watching the parade.

"Come on!" cried Bunny. "We'll look at it, too. We can go to the circus later. Come on, Sue!"

They found a good place where they could watch the start of the parade. They saw the horses, elephants and camels. They saw the cages of lions and tigers, and even bears. And they saw the big steam piano, playing its funny tooting tunes, rumbling along. The steam piano was the last thing in the parade.

"Now we'll go and see if we can find some one to let us in the show," said Bunny, when the gay procession had passed.

"But I'm hungry!" exclaimed Sue. "I got five cents, Bunny. Can't I have some peanuts or--or pink lemonade?"

"Why--why, I guess so," said the little boy. "I got five cents, too. I'll tell you what we can do, Sue. You buy five cents worth of peanuts, and give me half. I'll buy a glass of pink lemonade, and give you half. We can get two straws. You can drink half and I'll drink half."

"All right, Bunny. Only you mustn't drink faster than I do, 'cause I'm awful thirsty."

"I'll let you drink more than half then, Sue."

The children bought the peanuts and lemonade, and when they had finished drinking the red lemonade through two straws, and were chewing the peanuts, they saw one of the circus men, with a long whip, come up to the two Gypsies with the horses.

What was said Bunny and Sue could not hear, but they saw the circus man walk off, while the two Gypsies, leading their horses, went after him.

"Oh, Sue!" exclaimed Bunny. "There go grandpa's horses!"

"Well, when we go home we can tell him they are here in the circus, and he can come after them, Bunny. Now I want to go in and see the animals."

But Bunny Brown and his sister Sue were not to go to the circus right away. Just as Bunny was going up to another circus man he saw, to ask him how he could get a ticket to the show, a voice cried:

"Well, if there aren't those Brown children! And all alone, too! They must be lost! We must take them home!"

Bunny and Sue looked up to see Mr. and Mrs. Kendall, who lived on the farm next to Grandpa Brown's, standing near.

"Bunny Brown! How did you get here?" asked Mrs. Kendall.

"We walked," said Bunny. "We're going to see the show."

"A fat man gave us a ride, and Splash, too," said Sue, as she patted her dog's head. "Bunny was going to water the elephant, but he's too big--I mean the elephant is too big. So we're going to water the ponies and then we're going in the circus."

"Bless your hearts!" cried Mrs. Kendall. "Does your mother know you came here?"

"Well--er--maybe," said Bunny. "But we didn't have time to tell her."

"They ran away, that's what they did," said the farmer. "Their folks will be wild about them. I'd better take them home."

Bunny Brown and his sister Sue felt sad when they heard this.

"But we don't want to go home," said Bunny.

"We want to see the circus!" cried Sue.

"I know, my dear," explained Mrs. Kendall, kindly, "but your family don't know where you are, and they will worry and be frightened. We will take you home, and perhaps your folks will bring you back to see the circus. You can't go in alone, anyhow."

Sue's eyes filled with tears. Bunny wanted to cry, but he did not like to. Some one might see him.

"And we--we found grandpa's horses, too," Sue went on.

"What's that?" cried Mr. Kendall. "You found the horses the Gypsies took? Where are they?"

"They're gone now," said Bunny, and he told what he and Sue had seen.

"Oh, well, maybe they weren't the same Gypsies, or the same horses at all," Mrs. Kendall said. "These children guess at lots of things," she told her husband.

"Yes," he answered. "But I'll just about have time to drive them home, and come back to see the circus myself."

"I'll come with you," said his wife. "Their mother is probably looking for them now. Come, Bunny, Sue--you'll ride home with us."

"Then we can't see the circus!" cried Sue, tears falling from her brown eyes.

"Maybe you can to-morrow," suggested Mrs. Kendall. "The circus will be here two days."

"That's good!" said Bunny.

He and Sue did not feel so sad now. But they were a little disappointed. Mrs. Kendall took them to where her husband's wagon was standing in the shade, with the horse eating oats from a bag. Into the wagon the children were lifted. Splash jumped up all by himself, and then they were driven back to grandpa's farm, leaving the circus, with its big white tents, the fluttering flags, the jolly music, the elephants, camels and horses far behind.

"We'll tell grandpa about the Gypsies and his horses," said Bunny.

"Yes," said Sue. "And then maybe he'll bring us back to the show."

CHAPTER XXV

GRANDPA'S HORSES

"Well, well! You children do the queerest things!" cried Grandpa Brown, when Mr. and Mrs. Kendall drove up to the farmhouse with Bunny Brown and his sister Sue in the wagon, Splash standing up in the back, and barking as though he had done it all. "Yes, you certainly do queer things! The idea of running off to a circus!"

"We--we didn't run--we walked," corrected Sue.

"And we saw the elephants, but I didn't water any," said Bunny.

"Oh, I was *so* worried about you!" cried Mrs. Brown, as she put her arms around Bunny and Sue. "Why did you do it?"

"We--we wanted to see the circus," said Bunny.

"And oh! we saw grandpa's horses!" cried Sue. "Two Gypsy mans had them!"

Every one looked surprised on hearing this.

"What's that? What's that?" cried Grandpa Brown. "You saw my two horses that the Gypsies borrowed, and didn't bring back?"

"Yes, we saw them," said Bunny. "Anyhow they *looked* like your horses, 'cause they weren't circus horses."

"What about this, Mr. Kendall?" asked Grandpa Brown of the kind farmer who had brought Bunny and Sue home.

"I don't know anything about it," was the answer. "My wife and I went to the circus, and when we were standing around, waiting for the show to begin, we saw these tots there. They were all alone, so we knew something must be wrong. They told us they'd run away, and we brought them back. But I didn't see your horses, though I did see two Gypsy men hanging around one of the tents."

Grandpa Brown thought for a few seconds. Then he said:

"Well, it might be that the Gypsies came back with my team, and are trying to sell them to the circus. I guess I'd better go over and see about it."

"You can ride back with us," said Mr. Kendall. "My wife and I are going right back to the circus."

"Oh, can't we go?" cried Bunny.

"Please!" begged Sue.

"Not this time, my dears," said Mother Brown. "But if all goes well, you shall go to-morrow, when daddy comes back. The circus will be here for two days."

Bunny and Sue were glad to hear this. Grandpa Brown rode off with Mr. and Mrs. Kendall; and Bunny and Sue were given a good dinner and put to sleep that afternoon, for they were tired, sleepy and hungry.

It was late in the afternoon when Bunny and Sue awoke. They went out on the porch, and the first thing they saw was Grandpa Brown coming down the road, riding on one horse and leading another which trotted by the side of the first.

"Oh, look!" cried Bunny. "Grandpa did get his horses back from the Gypsies!"

"That's just what I did, little man!" cried Grandpa Brown, as he rode up the drive. "Those were my horses you saw the Gypsy men have, though of course you only guessed it."

"Are they really yours?" asked Mother Brown.

"Yes, the same ones the Gypsies took. If it had not been for Bunny and Sue I might never have gotten them back."

"I thought we'd find them!" cried Bunny. "We found Aunt Lu's diamond ring, and now we have found grandpa's horses."

"Good luck!" cried Sue, clapping her hands.

And the horses did really belong to Grandpa Brown. He told how he got them back.

"The Gypsy man, who borrowed my team, just before you folks came to the farm," grandpa said to Bunny, Sue and Mother Brown, "that Gypsy man really meant to bring my horses back, when he got through with them, but he was taken ill. Then some of the bad Gypsies in the tribe ran away with the team--they took them far off and kept them.

"Where they went I don't know, but to-day they came back, and, seeing the circus, the Gypsies thought they could sell my horses, to do tricks, maybe, though I never trained them to do any more than pull a plow or wagon.

"Anyhow, when I got to the circus I found one of the circus men was just going to buy my horses from the Gypsies. I told him the team was mine, and that the Gypsies had no right to sell it to him. The Gypsies ran away when they saw me, and the circus man gave me my horses. So I have them back. But if Bunny and Sue had not gone to the circus I never would have known about my horses."

"And did you see the elephants?" asked Sue.

"No, I didn't have time to look at them," said her grandfather with a laugh. "I was too glad to get my horses back."

"I--I wish we could go to the circus," begged Bunny.

"So you shall--to-morrow!" cried Grandpa Brown. "My goodness you certainly shall go! You must have a reward for finding my horses for me, so I'll take you and Sue and everybody to the circus to-morrow. We'll all go and have a good time!"

"Will you take Bunker Blue?" asked Bunny.

"Yes, Bunker shall go."

"And can I get a blue balloon?" Sue wanted to know.

"Yes, or a red or green or yellow one."

"And me, too?" asked Bunny.

"Of course."

"And can we have peanuts, and more pink lemonade, 'cause it was awful good, and can we feed the elephant, and--and----"

Sue had to stop, for she was all out of breath.

"You can have the best time ever!" cried Grandpa Brown, giving her a hug and a kiss.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" cried Sue, and that was all she could say, she felt so happy. Bunny was happy too, and, a little later, he and Sue went out to the barn to see grandpa's team of horses the Gypsies had taken, but which were now safe in their stalls.

Of course Papa Brown was surprised when he came to the farm the next day, and heard that Bunny and Sue had found grandpa's horses for him.

"My, such children!" he cried. But I think he was proud of them just the same.

"Oh, Bunker! We're going to the circus!" cried Sue. "And you're going too!"

"And so am I!" shouted Bunny. "And maybe we'll get up a circus of our own, Sue!"

"Oh, will we?"

"Maybe!"

And what sort of show the two children gave you may read about in the next book of this series, which will be called: "Bunny Brown and His Sister Sue Playing Circus."

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Bunny and Sue sat looking at the men and women turn somersaults in the air, and fall down safely into the big nets. They saw the races, when monkeys rode on the backs of ponies and dogs. They saw the cages of wild animals, and

they fed the elephants peanuts by the bagfull.

"Oh, Bunny! Bunny!" cried Sue when they came out, each carrying a toy balloon. "Wasn't the circus wonderful!"

"Fine!" cried Bunny Brown. "But you just wait until we get up our circus! That will be better yet!" And we will all wait and see what happened.

THE END

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remarkable journey through the air to do so. Tommy even rode on a Rocket and met the monstrous Blue Frog. When they arrived at Goldilocks' house they found that the Three Bears had been there before them and mused everything up, much to Goldilocks' despair. "We must drive those bears out of the country!" said Pa Flyaway. Then they journeyed underground to the Yellow Palace, and oh! so many things happened after that!



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