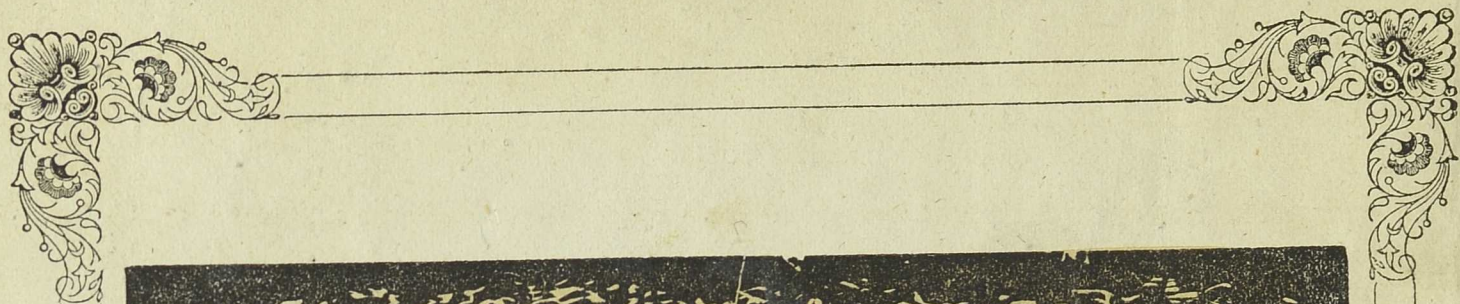


LITTLE
MARY
AND HER
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THE STORY OF
& HER CAT
LITTLE MARY

PRICE SIXPENCE.

LITTLE MARY

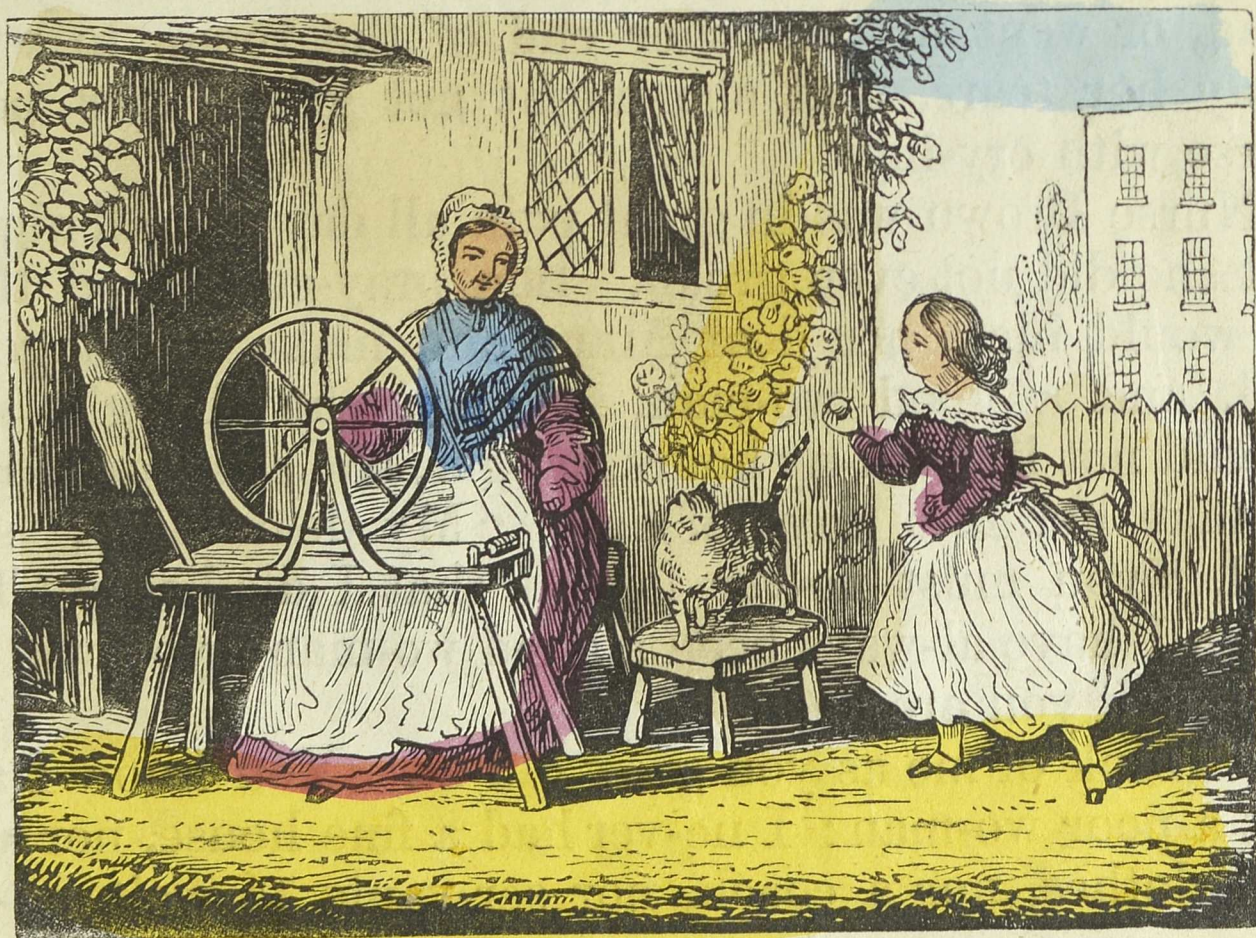
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THE
STORY OF
LITTLE MARY AND HER CAT.

THERE was once a pret-ty lit-tle girl, call-ed Mary, who was very fond of an old wo-man that liv-ed in a small white cot-tage, just at the end of her pa-pa's garden. This old wo-man had nurs-ed this pret-ty lit-tle girl, and ta-ken great care of her when she was but a ba-by, and not able to walk, or put any thing in-to her own mouth. Nurse Brown (for that was her name) was a kind, good old wo-man. She lov-ed lit-tle Mary dear-ly, and Mary lov-ed her nurse dear-ly; and she used very of-ten to go to the cot-tage, where some-times she would read to the nurse, and some-times Nurse Brown would tell sto-ries to her, or sing old songs, such as she had learn-ed from the books that are sold at Mr. Dar-ton's shop, on Hol-born Hill, where all kinds of books that can amuse and in-struct chil-dren are to be bought. And af-ter tell-ing these tales or sing-ing these old songs, Nurse Brown used very of-ten to say, "You have a good mam-ma, my sweet Mary, and you say you love her. It is very easy for any lit-tle girl to say those words; but my Mary must shew that she loves her mam-ma by mind-ing all that her mam-ma says, and not do-ing those things which her mam-ma tells her it is wrong to do. If a lit-tle girl will tell a lie, or do any thing which she is bid not to do, she

gives her mam-ma great pain. Yes; when lit-tle girls are naugh-ty, mam-mas have more pain in their hearts than all the lit-tle girls in the world ever felt with the tooth-ache, or head-ache, or sore fin-gers; but Nurse Brown's dear Mary will ne-ver give her mam-ma such pain in her heart." Mary's blue eyes, fix-ed upon her nurse, used to shine bright-ly, while the good old wo-man talk-ed to her in this way; and she was al-ways rea-dy to jump for joy when the hour came in which her mam-ma gave her leave to skip through the gar-den, and away to Nurse Brown's neat clean cot-tage, where nurse, in a plain stuff gown, with a cap and apron as white as snow, was al-ways to be found at her spin-ning wheel, with her cat sit-ting by her side.

The name of this cat was Muff, and Muff was as pret-ty a cat as any in the whole world: his back was strip-ed with black and grey stripes; his face was round and broad; and his breast and paws were as white as Nurse Brown's apron. Muff was al-ways very glad to see Mary: he would some-times watch for her at the



win-dow ; and he would of-ten go to the door of the cot-tage to meet her when she was com-ing across the path. If Mary play-ed with Muff, Muff ne-ver put his claws to scratch her.

At last poor Nurse Brown fell sick, and the doc-tor thought she would not live. Mary's mam-ma sent wine to the good old wo-man, and phy-sic, and all things that were like-ly to do her ser-vice ; and she sent a per-son to take care of her, and at-tend up-on her night and day. Mary pray-ed her mam-ma to let her go and at-tend up-on Nurse Brown ; but her mam-ma said, "No, my dear child, you are not strong enough, nor old enough, to nurse a sick per-son. You may go to see her, and sit be-side her, and tell her how much you love her ; and you may give her the cup with her phy-sic, when you are there : but if you were to stay all night it would dis-tress her much, for she knows that sit-ting up at night would make you very ill too." So Mary went once a day to the cot-tage, and tears used to fill the eyes of the kind heart-ed lit-tle girl, to see how very bad her poor old friend was ; but she turn-ed away her head, or went to the other end of the room, to wipe away her tears, that she might not grieve her poor nurse with cry-ing.

Nurse Brown was in great pain all day and all night, but she did not even groan. She pray-ed to God that he would bless her dear Mary and make her a good girl, and a good wo-man. When she thought she should not live ma-ny hours lon-ger, she sent for Mary, to take her last leave of her. "My dear Mary," she said, "you must ne-ver for-get that I die hap-py, be-cause I have al-ways been a good wo-man : you will be hap-py if you are good.

"Think of me as you grow old-er. You know I am but a poor wo-man : I ne-ver had a fine house, nor any fine clothes, nor a coach, nor ser-vants to wait up-on

me; but I have al-ways done that which I knew to be right, and good per-sons have lov-ed me for so do-ing. I have been hap-py in my lit-tle cot-tage, and in my stuff gown, be-cause I was good, and be-cause all good per-sons lov-ed me, and spoke well of me. You will see Nurse Brown no more, my dear child; but you can al-ways love to think of her, and of all that she has said to you. I have no-thing to give my Mary but my cat: he is as gen-tle, as kind, and as good as a cat can be. Take Muff home with you; take care of him; and, if you should hap-pen at any time to do wrong, when you look at Muff you will think of me, and be sor-ry for your fault."

Mary and Muff were ta-ken home by the ser-vant; and Nurse Brown died that night.

Mary cri-ed sad-ly; and poor Muff, who did not know at all why he was ta-ken from the cot-tage and his old mis-tress, would not eat the bread-and-milk that the ser-vant brought to him, but walk-ed round the room and scratch-ed at the doors and win-dows, to find some place to get out at. If any one came in-to the room, he hid him-self un-der a ta-ble or chair; but he would come out if Mary call-ed him, for he knew her voice: and the most part of that af-ter-noon she let him lie in her lap, and then he was con-tent and qui-et; but the mo-ment she put him down from her lap, he crept about, crying MEW, MEW, and look-ing up at her, as much as to say, "Pray take me to my own home again."

But in a very few days Muff was as hap-py in his new home as he had been in the cot-tage; for Mary was very kind to him, and cats soon-er for-get their old friends than lit-tle girls do. Mary did not for-get Nurse Brown; she strove to be al-ways a good girl; she tri-ed not to be an-gry, or cross, or fret-ful; and when she got rid of any bad tem-per that was ris-ing

in her heart, she used to stroke Muff while she thought of his old mis-tress.—Some-times she would say aloud, “Ah! Muff; if Nurse Brown were alive, how hap-py it would make her to see me such a good girl!” Then Muff would purr about her, and look up in her face, as if he too was made hap-py by Mary’s good-ness.

Mary and Muff were the best of friends and play-fel-lows. If Mary play-ed with her ball, he used to watch to catch it; and, if it fell to the ground, he would take it up in his mouth, and run away with it in-to a cor-ner as if to hide it. If Mary danc-ed, he would run af-ter her feet. If she was in the gar-den he would frisk about



her, and run up and down the trees like a squir-rel, as if he strove to di-vert her; but when Mary took her skip-ping rope, Muff went as far from her as he could, for he once got a hard knock with the rope, and ever af-ter he was afraid of it.

Mary’s mam-ma was very fond of Muff, both for his own and for poor Nurse Brown’s sake, and she gave

him a lit-tle stool, with a piece of car-pet over it, and when Mary was learn-ing her les-son, or bu-sy with her work, there sat Muff up-on his lit-tle stool close be-side her, and as grave as any judge.

One day Mary was very sick : she had a pain in her sto-mach, and a pain in her head. Her mam-ma held her in her lap, and laid her head up-on her bo-som, think-ing if she sat qui-et for some time she would be bet-ter ; but the pain did not go away, she grew worse and worse. Then her mam-ma said, “ My love, I must go and pre-pare some-thing that will do you good.” When Mary’s mam-ma came back with a cup of phy-sic, Mary be-gan to cry, and say, “ I do not like phy-sic, it is so nas-ty.”—“ My dear Mary,” said her mam-ma, “ no one likes phy-sic ; I do not like it my-self ; but when I am un-well I take it to do me good. You are in pain, and you want to be rid of your pain. The taste of the phy-sic will not be in your mouth so much as a mi-nute, but the pain in your sto-mach may last all the day, or ma-ny days. I think my Mary is too wise a lit-tle girl to re-fuse it, on-ly because it has not a plea-sant taste.” But Mary was not wise just then : she was, in-deed, very fool-ish ; for she cri-ed, which made the pain in her head much worse, and she would not take her phy-sic, which would have made both her head and her sto-mach bet-ter. “ Well,” said her mam-ma, “ I did not think you would have been so sil-ly and so naugh-ty a child ; but since you would ra-ther be in pain than well and hap-py, you must bear it as you can. I am very sor-ry for you, but I shall not nurse you in my lap any lon-ger.” Up-on this, Mary went in-to a cor-ner of the par-lour, sat down up-on the floor, and be-gan to cry and sob so loud that Muff heard her, who till then had been sleep-ing on the hearth be-fore the fire. Muff start-ed up and look-ed about him, and, see-ing his lit-tle mis-tress cry-ing on the ground,

he ran to her, and, putting his fore-paws up-on her shoulder, began to rub his head against her face, and sing PURR! PURR! This made Mary think of Nurse Brown, and how often she had seen her take dose after dose of physic. She stroked Muff, and she was sorry for her fault. She kissed her mam-ma, took her physic, ate a piece of orange-peel after it to take away the taste, and sat in her mam-ma's lap, who told her a story. She then fell asleep; and when she awoke again the pain was all gone, and she and Muff went to play.

As Mary was once taking a walk, she found a half-starv-ed lit-tle kit-ten. A cru-el boy had thrown it in-to



a pond, to see how it could swim; and the poor lit-tle crea-ture had crawl-ed out of the wa-ter just as Mary came by. The boy ran away, and Mary took the kit-ten home with her. Muff had ne-ver seen a kit-ten be-fore, and at first could not tell what to make of it; the kit-ten took Muff for its mo-ther, and ran up to him

in a great hur-ry ; but Muff ran back-ward, half afraid, and hid him-self un-der a ta-ble. When the kit-ten had been fed, it lay down to sleep be-fore the fire. Muff came and look-ed at it, and af-ter some time he lay down by it, and at last be-gan to clean it, for it was very dir-ty. From that time Muff was quite fond of the kit-ten ; he play-ed with it in the most gen-tle man-ner : it al-ways lay at night in his bas-ket : they ate out of the same plate ; and Muff would of-ten sit still, and let the kit-ten eat first, as if he was afraid it would not have enough.

Ma-ry had an un-cle who was go-ing a great way off in a ship. He did not ex-pect to come back for three or four years ; and, when he said fare-well to Mary, he gave her a very fine lock-et, with some of his hair in it, and set round with gold and pearls. It was but a use-less pre-sent for such a lit-tle girl. Mary ti-ed it round her neck with a black rib-bon ; and, tak-ing up her rope, she be-gan to skip, but then the lock-et jump-ed up and down on her neck, and once hit her on the mouth. Mary ti-ed it tight-er, and then it made her too warm. "What shall I do with it?" said Mary. "Oh ! Muff shall wear the lock-et, and then I can al-ways see it." So she call-ed Muff, and ti-ed the lock-et round his neck. Muff shook his head again and again ; he rub-bed his paw over his ear ; he could not think what was the mat-ter with his neck. Then, as the lock-et hung down be-low his breast, he pat-ted it from side to side, first with one paw, and then with the other, which made Mary laugh very much. Mary's mam-ma was that day go-ing out to din-ner, and, while Mary was laugh-ing to see Muff pat about the lock-et, her mam-ma came in to kiss her be-fore she went out. See-ing Muff with the lock-et on, she told Mary to take it from him, as it would be spoil-ed by Muff, and it was too good a lock-et to be made a play-thing. It would be best, she

said, to wrap it in pa-per, till Mary was old enough to wear it her-self. Mary took off the lock-et from Muff's neck, and her mam-ma went away to pay her vi-sit.

Af-ter din-ner, Mary wish-ed she could shew the maids how pret-ty Muff look-ed when dress-ed in the lock-et ; so she for-got to mind what her mam-ma had said, and again put the lock-et round the cat's neck. Muff was soon tir-ed of play-ing with it ; he then be-gan to bite it with his teeth ; so Mary ti-ed it tight un-der his chin, where he could not get at it to bite it, and she and the maids all laugh-ed to see what odd tricks he play-ed, as he tri-ed to get rid of a thing he was not used to, and which teas-ed him very much. At last some per-son came in whom Mary was glad to see, and she for-got the cat and the lock-et.

That per-son gave her a new book, and she read the book till it was time to go to bed, and still she ne-ver thought of the cat and her un-cle's pre-sent.

When Mary got up the next morn-ing, Muff did not come to purr about her feet as he used to do. Mary went down stairs, and there was no Muff in the par-lour. No one had seen Muff that day. Mary went up stairs, in-to the bed-rooms, and in-to the gar-rets, and look-ed in-to all the clo-sets, and then in-to the kit-chen, and the cel-lars, and the wash-house, and the brew-house, but Muff was not to be found in any of these pla-ces. Mary went sob-bing in-to the gar-den, and call-ed MUFF! MUFF! MUFF! but Muff was not to be found in the sum-mer-house, or green-house, or coach-house, or sta-ble.

When Mary went back to the par-lour, her mam-ma ask-ed her if she had again ti-ed on the lock-et to Muff's neck. Mary blush-ed : but she al-ways told the truth ; and she said, " Yes, mam-ma, I did." " You did very wrong," said her mam-ma ; " you see what mis-chiefs hap-pen, when lit-tle girls will not obey their mam-mas,

or those who are wi-ser than them-selves. Some bad peo-ple have found Muff out of doors, and have sto-len him for the sake of the lock-et. The cat you lov-ed so well may be ill-us-ed, or even kill-ed; and the lock-et is lost which your un-cle gave you to keep for his sake, when he was go-ing away for ma-ny years, and might per-haps ne-ver see you again."

Mary was rea-dy to break her heart with grief. She had made her mam-ma an-gry, she had lost her un-cle's pre-sent, and she had caus-ed poor Muff, who had been Nurse Brown's cat, and who was so fond, so gentle, and so good a cat, to be sto-len, and per-haps starv-ed, or beat, or kick-ed, if not kill-ed, for she could not sup-pose that any per-son who was so wick-ed as to steal Muff and the lock-et would use him well. Mary's mam-ma sent to all the hous-es round about to in-quire for Muff, but no news could be heard of him. One day, two days, three days pass-ed away, and Muff was not found. "I shall ne-ver, ne-ver see him again," said Mary. "Oh, that I had mind-ed what my mam-ma said to me! then poor Muff would have been sit-ting on his stool be-side me here, and I should have been good and hap-py."

At the end of the week, a poor rag-ged boy of the vil-lage, to whom Mary had of-ten giv-en her cakes and her fruit, be-cause she had been told he was very kind to his sick fa-ther, and work-ed hard to get mo-ney for his mo-ther to buy bread for his lit-tle bro-thers and sis-ters; this poor boy came with some-thing un-der his coat, and ask-ed to see Miss Mary. Mary's mam-ma told the ser-vant to bring Robert (for that was the boy's name) in-to the par-lour. He came in, and, pull-ing off his hat and mak-ing his best bow, he said, "Miss, I have found your cat." Mary jump-ed up, and so did her mam-ma; but they look-ed very sad when they saw poor Muff al-most starv-ed to death, and so weak that

when Robert put him on the floor, he could scarcely stand up-on his legs.

Robert work-ed hard at a farm-house, and had been sent that day by his mas-ter to sweep out an old sta-ble which had a hay-loft over it. While Robert was sweep-ing the sta-ble, he thought he heard a cat cry. He look-ed about and saw no cat, but still he thought he heard it cry. So, at last, he climb-ed up, and push-ed open the door of the hay-loft, and there he saw poor Muff ly-ing on the ground, and faint-ly cry-ing MEW, MEW, just as if he was dy-ing. Robert call-ed him by his name, for he knew it was the cat that Nurse Brown had giv-en to Miss Mary; but Muff was so weak, he could not get up to come to him. Robert had his din-ner in his pock-et; it was on-ly a small bit of brown bread, and a lit-tle bot-tle of milk-and-water, for his pa-rents were very poor; but he had a kind heart, and



he broke his bread in-to very small pie-ces, and wet it with the milk-and-wa-ter, and put them, bit by bit, in-to

Muff's mouth. When Muff had eat-en the bread he seem-ed bet-ter; and Robert was so glad that he took him in his arms, jump-ed down from the hay-loft, and ran as fast as he could to car-ry him home to Mary.—The black string was still round Muff's neck, but the lock-et was gone, and the bad man that stole the lock-et must have shut the cat up in that emp-ty hay-loft, where, but for Robert, he would have di-ed of hun-ger.

With good care and good food Muff grew well and fat again, and was as hap-py and as mer-ry as ever; and Mary's mam-ma was so pleas-ed with Robert's giv-ing up his own din-ner to feed a starv-ed cat, that she said she was sure a kind boy would make a good man, and she sent him to school, that he might learn to read and write. She gave him new and warm clothes, and was kind to his fa-ther, mo-ther, bro-thers, and sis-ters, for his sake. Mary lent Robert all her books, as soon as he had learnt to read, and she used to di-vide her mo-ney with him, that he might buy other books and other play-things for his lit-tle sis-ters. She ne-ver for-got that Robert had sav-ed her dear Muff from death; and that it was the wis-est and the best thing she could do ever af-ter, to obey her mam-ma, and ne-ver to do any thing which her mam-ma bid her not to do.

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