

Emmy Lou:

HER TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS

5—Emmy Lou in a School Play

BY MRS. GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN.

It was the day of the exhibition. At the close of the half year the third reader class had suffered a change of teachers, the first having been a substitute, whereas her successor was a real teacher. And since the coming of Miss Carrie, the third reader class had lived, as it were, in the public eye, for on Friday books were put away and the attention given to recitations and company.

Miss Carrie talked in deep tones, which she said were chest tones, and described mysterious sweeps and circles with her hands when she talked. And these she called gestures. Miss Carrie was an elocutionist, and had even recited on the stage.

She gave her class the benefit of her talent and in teaching them said they must suit the action to the word. The action meant gestures, and gestures meant sweeps and circles.

Emmy Lou had to learn a piece for Friday. It was poetry, but you called it a piece, and though Uncle Charlie had selected it for Emmy Lou, Miss Carrie did not seem to think much of it.

Emmy Lou stood up. Miss Carrie was drilling her, and though she did her best to suit the action to the word, it seemed a complicated undertaking. The piece was called, "A Plain Direction." Emmy Lou came to the lines:

Straight down the Crooked Lane
And all round the Square,
Whatever difficulties her plump forefinger had had over the first three of these geometrical propositions, it triumphed at the end, for Emmy Lou paused. A square has four sides, and to suit a four-sided action, the word, takes time.

Miss Carrie, whose attention had wandered a little, here suddenly observing, stopped her, saying her gestures were stiff and meaningless. She said they looked like straight lines out in the air.

Emmy Lou, anxious to prove her efforts to be conscientious, explained that they were straight lines, it was a square, Miss Carrie drew herself up, and, using her coldest tones, told Emmy Lou not to be funny.

"Funny!" Emmy Lou felt that she did not understand. But this was a mere episode between Fridays. On Tuesday to prepare for Fridays, and a Sunday dress was becoming a mere everyday affair, since one's best must be worn for Fridays.

No other class had these recitations and the third reader was moved. His members were pointed out and standing in the garish light of fame. The other readers, it seemed, longed for fame and craved publicity, and so it came about that the school was to have an exhibition, with Miss Carrie's genius to plan and engineer the whole. Her maternal, Miss Carrie, drew from the whole school, but the play was for her own class alone.

And this was the day of the exhibition. Hattie and Sadie and Emmy Lou stood at the gate of the school. They had been sent home with instructions to return at half past two. The exhibition would begin at three.

"Of course," Miss Carrie had said, "you will not fail to be on time." And Miss Carrie had used her deepest tones, and Hattie and Sadie and Emmy Lou had wondered how she could even dream of such a thing.

It was not 2 o'clock, and the three stood at the gate the first to return. They were in the same place. It was "The Play." In a play one did more than suit the action to the word, one dressed to suit the part.

that in Hattie's heart there was exultation at the very awfulness of it.

"Oh, Sadie," said Emmy Lou, and there was no exultation in the tones of Emmy Lou's despair. Not that Emmy Lou had much to do—hers was mostly the suit of the action to some other's word. She was chosen largely because of Hattie and Sadie, who had wanted her. And then, too, Emmy Lou's Uncle Charlie was the owner of a newspaper. The exhibition might get into its columns. Not that Miss Carrie cared for this herself—she was thinking of the good it might do the school.

Emmy Lou's part was to weep when Sadie wept, and to point a chubby forefinger skyward when Hattie mentioned the departure from earth of the soldier parent, and to lower that forefinger footward at Sadie's tearful allusion to an untimely grave.

Emmy Lou had but one utterance, and it was brief. Emmy Lou was to advance one foot, stretch forth a hand and say, in the character of an orphan for whom no asylum was offered: "We know not where we go."

That very morning, at gray of dawn, Emmy Lou had crept from her own into Aunt Cordelia's bed, to say it over, for great to have reached that point. As Emmy Lou said it the momentous import of the confession fell with explosive relief on the go, as if the relief were great to have reached that point.

It seemed to Aunt Cordelia, however, that the where was the problem in the matter.

Aunt Louise called in from the next room. Aunt Louise had large ideas. The stress, she said, should be laid equally or know not, where and go.

Since then, all day, Emmy Lou had been saying it at intervals of half minutes, for fear she might forget.

Meanwhile, it yet lacking it moment or so to 2 o'clock, the orphaned heroines continued to linger at the gate, awaiting the hour.

"Listen," said Hattie, "I hear music." There was a church across the street. The drug store adjoined it. It was a large church, with high steps and a pillared portico, and its doors were open.

"It's a band, and marching," said Hattie. The orphaned children hurried to the curb. A procession was turning the corner and coming toward them. On either sidewalk crowds of men and boys accompanied it.

"It's a funeral," said Sadie, as if she intuitively divined the mournful.

Hattie turned with a face of conviction. "I know. It's that big general's funeral; they're bringing him here to bury him with the soldiers."

"We'll never see a thing for the crowd," despaired Sadie.

Emmy Lou was gazing. "They've got plumes in their hats," she said.

"Let's go over on the church steps and see it go by," said Hattie. "It's early." The orphaned children hurried across the street. They climbed the steps. At the top they turned.

There were plumes and more, there were flags and swords, and a band led. But at the church, with unexpected abruptness, the band halted, turned, it fell apart, and the procession came through; it came right on through and up the steps, a line of uniforms and swags on either side, from curb to pillar, and halted.

Aghast, between two glittering files, the orphaned children shrank into the shadow behind a pillar, while up streamed from the carriages below an unending line-bareheaded men and ladies bearing flow-

ers. Behind, below, about, closing in on every side, crowded people—a sea of people.

The orphaned children found themselves swept from their hiding by the crowd and unwillingly jostled forward into prominence.

A frowning man, with a sword in his hand, seemed to be threatening every body; his face was red and his voice was big, and he glittered with many buttons. All at once he caught sight of the orphan children, and threatened them vehemently.

"Here," said the frowning man, "right in here," and he placed them in line. The orphaned children were appalled, and even in the face of the man cried out in protest. But the man of the sword paid no heed, for the reason that he did not help themselves. There was no time for protest, for, pushed by the crowd, which closed and swayed above their heads, and piloted by the stout lady close behind, they were swept into the church and up the aisle, and when they came again to themselves were in the inner corner of a pew near the front.

The church was decked with flags. So was the third reader room. It was hung with flags for the exhibition.

Hattie in the corner nudged Sadie. Sadie nudged Emmy Lou, who, next to the stout lady, touched her timidly. "We've got to get out," said Emmy Lou. "We've got to say our parts."

"Not now," said the lady, reassuringly. "The programme is at the cemetery."

"Emmy Lou did not understand, and she tried to let the lady.

"Shh," said that person, engaged with the spectacle and the crowd, "sh-h-h."

Abashed, Emmy Lou sat, sh-h-h. Hattie arose. It was terrible to rise in church, and at a funeral, and the church was filled, the aisle was crowded and Hattie rose. Hattie was a St. George, and a dragon stood between her and the exhibition.

Emmy Lou felt herself grasped; she could not see up to find by whom. The crowd in the aisle had closed about her head, but she heard the stout lady behind saying: "Did you ever see such an ill-mannered child?" and Emmy Lou judged that Hattie was struggling against fate.

Slowly the crowd moved, and, being a part of it, however, unwillingly, Emmy Lou moved, too, out of the church and down the steps. Then came the crashing of the band and the roll of carriages and she found herself in the front row on the curb.

The man with the brandishing sword was there, and he was shouting. "One more carriage is here for the family," called the man with the sword. His face was red and his voice was hoarse. His glance in search for the family suddenly fell on Emmy Lou. She felt it fall.

She resolved herself for the man with the sword and his brow cleared. "Grandchildren next," roared the threatening man.

"Grandchildren," echoed the crowd. Hattie and Sadie were pushed forward from somewhere, Hattie lifting her voice. But what was the cry of Hattie before the brazen utterance of the band? Sadie was weeping wildly.

Emmy Lou, with the courage of despair, cried out in the midst of the threatening man, but the man, lifting her into the carriage, was speaking himself, and to the driver. "Keep an eye on them—separated from the family," he was explaining, and a moment later Emmy Lou into the carriage, and as the door banged their carriage moved with the rest up the street.

"Now," said Hattie, and Hattie sprang to the farther door. It would not open. Things never will in great dreams.

Through the carriage windows the school, with its arched doorways and windows, gazed frowningly, reproachfully. A gentleman entered the gate and went into the doorway.

"It's my minister," said Sadie, weeping afresh.

Hattie beat upon the window and called to the driver, but no mortal car could have heard above the noise of the throng. "My grown-up brother, an' gran'ma an' the rest," said Hattie. And Hattie wept.

"And the visiting lady next door," said Emmy Lou. She did not mean to weep, tears did not come readily to Emmy Lou, but just then her eyes fell upon the handkerchief still held by its exact center in her hand. What would the exhibition do without them?

Then Emmy Lou wept. Late that afternoon a carriage stopped at a corner upon which a school building stood. Since his charges were but infantile affairs, the colored gentleman on the box thought to expediate matters and drop them at the corners nearest their homes, into the doorway.

Descending, the colored gentleman swung open the door, and three little girls crept forth, three crushed little girls, three limp little girls, three little girls in a mild kind of mourning.

They came forth timidly. They looked around. They hoped they might reach their homes unobserved.

There was a crowd up the street. A gathering of people—many people. It seemed to be at Emmy Lou's gate. Hattie and Sadie lived farther on.

"It must be a fire," said Hattie. "But it wasn't the exhibition, the principal and Miss Carrie, the teachers and pupils, the mammas and aunts and Uncle Charlie."

"An' gran'ma—" said Hattie. "And the visiting lady—" said Emmy Lou. "And our minister," said Sadie.

The gathering of many people caught sight of them presently, and came to meet them, the three little girls in mild mourning.

The little girls moved slowly, but the crowd moved rapidly.

The gentlemen laughed, Uncle Charlie and the minister and the papa or two, laughed when they heard, and laughed again, and went on laughing, they leaned against the fence.

But the ladies could see nothing funny the mammas, Aunt Cordelia. That mild mourning had been the result of anxious planning and consultation.

Neither could Miss Carrie. She said they had failed her. She said it in her deepest tones and used gestures.

At supper she nodded and mild mourning and all, suddenly Emmy Lou collapsed and fell asleep, her head against her chair.

Uncle Charlie woke her. He stood her up on the chair and held out his arm. Uncle Charlie meant to carry her as if she were a baby thing again up to bed.

"Come," said Uncle Charlie. Emmy Lou stood dazed and flushed, she was not yet quite awake.

"Uncle Charlie had caught snatches of school verbiage. "Come," said he, "suit the action to the word."

Emmy Lou woke suddenly, the words smiting her ears with ominous import. She thought the hour had come, it was the exhibition.

She stood stiffly, she advanced a cautious foot, her chubby hand described a careful half circle. Emmy Lou spoke—"We know not where we go," said Emmy Lou.

Robert had been there a week when a giant came and told the dwarf if he did not let Robert out and tell him where the diamond was he would kill him. So the dwarf let Robert out and told him where to find the diamond. He soon found it and returned to the palace, where he afterwards married the king's daughter, Josephine, and after the king's death was made king himself and lived a long happy life.

JULIETTE LOVING.

MONKEY CAME TO TOWN.

Dear Editor,—I received your letter and badge, and I thank you so much for it. A monkey came to town to-day and I was so taken with him I could not get my mind off him, so wrote a little story, not exactly about one, but one, just to show how attractive they are with little children, I didn't get discouraged because my last picture did not win out, but thought about the old piece of poetry, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again." But I certainly hope this is good enough to publish next Sunday. I am glad to see the T. D. C. growing so rapidly.

Yours truly,
BERKLEY GREGORY,
Clover, Va.

"MY SCHOOL."

I have two miles to go to school. I walk with my brother. We have ten scholars. In recess we eat grapes, crack hickory nuts, play games and have a fine time. There are only two boys in school. There is a creek just below the school, and we go down there in spring and play. There is a great big gully just the other side of school, and we play snake in the gully in it.

We don't go to school but six months in a year. But recess is closing, and I must do the same.

Please send me a badge, if I am not too late.

Yours truly,
M. CLARICE HENSON,
Poindester, Louisiana county, Va.

A Kitten Story.

Three little kittens lost their mittens, and they began to cry. Oh! mother, dear, we very much fear. That we have lost our mittens.

Lost your mittens!
You naughty kittens!
Then you shall have no pie:
Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow.
No; you shall have no pie.
Mee-ow, mee-ow, mee-ow.
—Selected by Maud Eva Tyler.

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