

FOR THE YOUNGER JUNIORS

THE LAME FAIRY GETS BACK HER WAND FROM THE QUEEN

By LAURA CROZER

ONCE upon a time there was a lame fairy. There was nothing the matter with her beautiful straight fairy self, however; it was her wand that was lame.

You know, of course, that every fairy from the littlest boy or girl straight up to Queen Titania herself, carries a wand; and in this wand their power lies. There are two sides to every wand; a withered flower can be brought to life by having the good side held out toward it, and a fresh flower will wither and die if it is touched by the other side.

Now, the lame fairy had had a wand as good as anybody's in the beginning, but she was naughty. She used to walk along at sunrise under the clover blossoms, hitting them with her wand to feel the cool dewdrops fall upon her face. But when the sun got hot the clovers withered and died.

One day Elvyn put a wild canary to sleep in a tree because she wanted to take a nap in the soft feathers of its back. She did not wake until almost time for the fairy games, and flew off in a great hurry. Another fairy found the bird three days later and woke it from its magic sleep, but the baby birds had starved.

Elvyn was dreadfully sorry, and cried bright fairy tears like the sparks you see on summer evenings among the bushes. But Queen Titania took her wand and drew it along the side of Elvyn's, and after that it had no power to harm anything. "You are not fit to be trusted," she said.

Elvyn hoped the other fairies would not find out about her disgrace, but they soon did, for she could not make the flower bow to her or even give her a sip of honey, and pretty soon she couldn't join in their games at all.

It was Titania's herald who first called Elvyn the lame fairy, and it was harder for her to bear because she had always admired him. He wore a green suit and a hat with a splendid white feather that waved in the breeze as he flew before the queen. He was too

proud of all this to join the other fairies in their games, though he said it was because he had to fly about so much carrying messages for the queen that he was tired.

So Elvyn grew more lonesome. She began to take long flights by herself. One day she had a terrible experience, for she stepped on a pitcher plant just as it was closing its hungry mouth to devour a fly. Of course the plant could not eat a fairy, but it kept her prisoner for hours, for she could not make it open its lips. It was the herald who found her at last shivering beneath the plant, too covered with its sticky juice to fly.

"Elvyn," he said to her after the queen's maid had warmed and dressed her, "I fear you are not safe, you are always getting into trouble. So I have made a whistle out of the end of a pine needle. If ever you need me again blow it and I will come, no matter where I am."

A lovely pink color showed in Elvyn's pale wings as she thanked him, for she saw that he still liked her in spite of her misfortunes.

Near the wood where the fairies lived was an old stone house which sheltered a family of children. Elvyn spent a great deal of her time watching them after she grew better.

One day she flew into the garden to find the two little boys building block houses, while their baby sister slept in her cradle.

"See what your aunt has sent sister for her birthday," said the nurse, coming out of the house with a bunch of sweet yellow flowers which she laid beside the baby on the pillow. "Take care of her now and be good children while I go to the market."

By and by Elvyn grew tired of watching the little boys build up houses and knock them down and crept to the pillow beside the baby. Pretty soon she fell fast asleep.

She was awakened by a terrific roar in her ears and sat up to see the cross bumble bee flying above the baby's head and the bunch of flowers. Suddenly his wing brushed the baby's cheek and she awoke with a cry.

"Be careful," cried the lame fairy,

flying straight up. "You'll hurt the baby!"

"And why not? Stupid child!" answered the cross bumble bee. He was the oldest and largest bee in the grove, larger than the lame fairy, as they both poised on their wings. He roared at her again, "And who are you to tell me not to hurt any one! Have you never hurt anything? What about the starved canary birds? What if I choose to sting this stupid child who waves her arms and keeps me away from the flowers?" Can you stop me, lame fairy?"

"Yes, I can!" cried the lame fairy, and she flew straight up as he flew down, dropping her useless wand, but keeping her body and her wide springs between the Cross Bumble Bee and the baby's face. His weight bore her down and they fell among the flowers.

"Here you are!" she cried. "Take what you want and go. I will keep the baby from touching you."

"Stand aside, lame fairy!" he cried. "I shall sting the child for annoying me and because she has such a stupid, good natured face!"

Again he rose, and again the lame fairy met him, and again and again, falling now to one side and now to the other, but keeping herself always between the Cross Bumble Bee and the Baby.

Her beautiful wings grew dragged and weary and her bright robes were torn and fluttering where the Cross Bumble Bee had stung through them, though he, of course, had not been able to hurt her. At last she felt that she could not rise again. She put her hands up to her swelling throat and felt the cobweb chain that held the Herald's whistle. Raising it to her lips she blew a last breath into it. There was no sound.

The Herald was sitting at the feet of the Queen waiting to take a message to a distant part of the kingdom. His green coat, just washed in dew, was splendidly bright, and he smiled at himself in an ocean shell full of water that the Queen kept for a mirror.

"Now take our message"—she had begun, when suddenly, faint and silvery, he heard the sound of his whistle. For this was a magic whistle that only the one who made it could hear, and that at any distance.

"Yes, your majesty," he cried. "I crave your pardon and will return in one instant!" He was gone, leaving the queen with her mouth open.

In a moment he was beside Elvyn, who was feebly struggling up to meet the Cross Bumble Bee again. He caught her in his arms as her wearied wings gave way and with one stroke of his hand tumbled the Cross Bumble Bee over among the flowers dead.

The baby was by this time screaming and the nurse was coming at a run.

"See, sister has killed a bumble bee," she cried. "She must have squeezed it in her hand! No wonder she's crying!"

But the Herald had snatched up Elvyn's wand and was carrying her back to the wood. He laid her at Titania's feet, a pale, tattered little heap, with her useless wand and his own silver trumpet beside her.

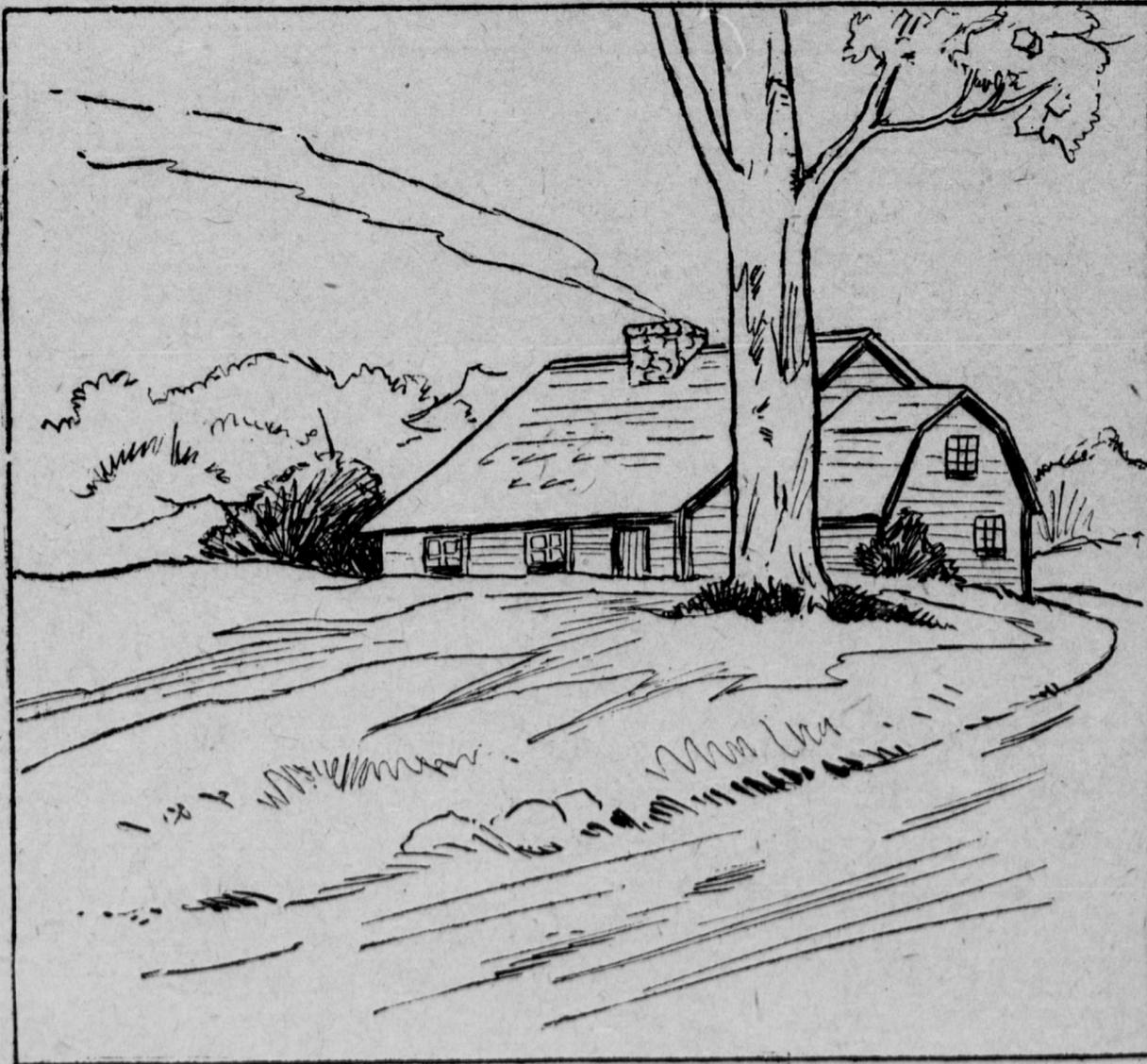
"Your majesty," he said, kneeling, "forgive her. See how she has suffered for her fault? Or if it be that her fault is still too great, yet have I served you faithfully. Take back your silver trumpet and make her whole. Choose another for my honors and let me go forth with her in my old plain colors. Or if it be that this is not enough, still let me go forth with her, so that I may be with her and fight her battles for her." He knelt before the Queen and bowed his head. The Queen bent over and touched Elvyn's wand with her own and it glowed as if it were lying in the sunlight. Then she touched Elvyn herself, who sprang up, well again.

"Neither of you shall go," she said with a smile. "I need just such brave helpers as you two. Elvyn, take up your wand."

Elvyn picked up her wand and stretched out her arm. There was a rustling as all the leaves bowed to her, for she was no longer the lame fairy, but Lady Elvyn of the Court.

THE WINNERS OF PAINT BOX PRIZES

This is the picture to be colored. Paint it in water colors or crayon and send immediately to the Editor of the Junior Call



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Shepherd Boy's Song

He that is down needs fear no fall;
He that is low no pride;
He that is humble ever shall
Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,
Little be it, or much;
And, Lord, contentment still I crave,
Because thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is,
That go on pilgrimage;
Here little, and hereafter bliss,
Is best from age to age.

—John Bunyan.

Dot—Baby Indians must be just like baby geese, mamma.
Mamma—Why so?
Dot—Why, because the down on their heads all turns into feathers when they grow up.

"Gee, but this is a cold winter!" remarked John to Dot.

"What do you expect," said Dot, "when they're fooling with the north pole all the time?"

NAME Age

ADDRESS