

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

MARJORY'S FIRST CELEBRATION.

A Fourth of July That Was Very Different From Expectation.

"Are you going to buy torpedoes for me, Uncle Alec?" asked Robby.

"Yes," said Uncle Alec.

"Oh, goody! And pinwheels, and rockets, and fiery serpents, and Roman candles?" asked Robby, spinning around his uncle as though he were a pinwheel himself.

"Yes," laughed Uncle Alec.

"And little pistols and caps?"

"Yes."

"And teenty-tonty firecrackers, and middle-sized ones, and great big cannon ones?" asked Robby.

Uncle Alec opened his lips to say yes again, but a sorrowful little voice said: "Oh, Uncle Alec, Robby is a perfectly frolicious boy. I wish you wouldn't buy such dreadful things."

"Pooh!" said Robby, and he put his hands in the pockets of his knickerbockers and stood very straight; for he was seven and brave, and Marjory was only five, and didn't like Fourth of July at all.

"I won't let 'em hurt you. I can keep care of you, Marjory," he said. "And you can hold my punk." Here he brought out a dilapidated piece from the recesses of his trousers pocket, a remnant from the last Fourth, which he handed to Marjory as a sort of earnest of bigger and better things to be expected in Uncle Alec's package.

"Yes; but I don't like to hear them," said Marjory, and though she was the dearest little girl in the whole world, she looked almost ready to cry. But when the time for buying the things came Marjory was quite ready to go, and when her uncle came home with his arms full of bundles Marjory said to her mamma:

"Mama, Robby's bundles are full of awful things, and mine are full of nice things, and we are going to put them on the shelf and not look at them until Fourth of July."

On the day before the Fourth the postman brought a letter to Robby.

"Hurrah!" he shouted, after he had heard it read. "Grandma wants me to stay with her all the Fourth of July, and I can make as much noise as I want. Mama, may I go?"

Mama was glad to say yes, for Robby was never tired of shooting, and Marjory never seemed to get used to the noise, and cried so much that the day was always a hard one for their mother.

When the happy morning came Robby was up before light, packing his treasures for the journey; and when Uncle Alec took him to the train all the passengers smiled when they saw a small American with such a large box going somewhere to celebrate his independence.

"It's very sad without Robby," moaned Marjory at lunch time.

"Yes," said her mother, "but not nearly so sad as it is with him. I haven't heard you cry once to-day; and when nap time is over you know that you are to begin to celebrate."

How Marjory's eyes danced when she woke from her nap and was dressed in her very prettiest dress! She went to the next house and invited all the little girls to come and see her "Fourth of July," and they came. She ran and took the packages from the shelf, and Uncle Alec came to help her.

Off came the papers—and what do you think she found?

Robby had taken her bundles and left his, and there on the floor lay strings and strings of tiny red firecrackers, and middle-sized ones, and great, great cannon ones.

Marjory hid her face in her mama's lap and cried and cried.

"I'm crying some for me," she sobbed, "but most for Robby. I just believe I'll die!"

"Well, put on your hat, pussykins, and we'll catch the 3 o'clock train and make him happy again," said Uncle Alec, who, in his long black duster, had just come in from a trial drive of a new horse he was thinking of purchasing; and then Marjory was happy indeed.

"Oh, you dear, dear Uncle Alec!" cried Marjory, holding out her hands and running up to him. "Mama promised to send word to the girls explaining everything."

They were soon walking down the village street toward grandma's house. They found grandma and grandpa, and John the man, and Kate the maid, all searching for a lost Robby.

"He ran to open his bundles in the kitchen, and we haven't seen him since, though we've called and called," said grandma.

"He is under the bed, I think," said Marjory. "He goes there so people won't see him cry." And upstairs they all ran. Marjory looked, and there, far under grandma's bed, lay a sad, little, curled-up bundle that was Robby. Nobody laughed when he crawled out, red and tear-stained, with his arm full of Marjory's packages, and he wiped his eyes very hard when no one was looking, and was soon as merry as the others.

"Ladies first," said Uncle Alec, as they went out on the lawn; and Robby laughed with the rest at the day fireworks as the queer cats and pigs and funny mandarins went floating up and away. They pulled the crackers, and every one had a gay cap to wear, and the very nicest of candy came from the boxes that looked just like firecrackers.

Then came Robby's turn. How the torpedoes and the pistols snapped, and the firecrackers roared, and the great great ones boomed like cannons! Marjory sat on Uncle Alec's knee, and never cried at all, but laughed and shouted, "Wasn't that a fine one, Robby?" And nobody but Uncle Alec knew how she trembled, and how very brave she was.

When the dark came Robby shot off his fireworks. Finally there was just one thing left—the biggest, reddest cracker of them all—and Marjory said in a faint little voice, "Let me light it."

"You wouldn't dare," said Robby. "I don't dare, but I'm going to,"

said Marjory, and she grasped Robby's hand. oh, so tightly! and ran, and lighted it, and was back in an instant on Uncle Alec's knee.

"Bravo!" they all cried, and "BOOM!" said the big cracker, and Fourth of July was over.—A. L. Sykes, in July St. Nicholas.

Examine yourself whether you had rather be rich or happy; and if rich, be assured that this is neither a good, nor altogether in your own power; but if happy, that this is both a good, and in your own power; since the one is a temporary loan of Fortune, and the other depends on will.—Epictetus.

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