

## Our Boys and Girls.

### WHO?

There is a little girl,  
A happy little girl,  
And everybody seems to love her well.  
If you would like to know,  
Why they all love her so,  
I think I can the pretty secret tell.

It is because she's kind,  
And quick to hear and mind.  
Her daily tasks she seldom does forget,  
She's pleasing in her ways,  
She's tender in her plays,  
Not often does she sulk or frown or fret.

Who is this little girl,  
This loving little girl,  
With face so smiling and with heart  
so true,

Who is, as I've been told,  
Quite worth her weight in gold?  
Sweet, winsome little maiden, it is you?



### SAM AND HIS BROTHER.

"Yes," Mrs. Tucker decided doubtfully, "I'll buy some clams if you two boys will take them to the sink and open them."

The two small boys lugged their basket across the kitchen and went quietly to work. Mrs. Tucker returned to her cooking, and sent occasional friendly glances at them; they were good-looking boys. At last they showed her what they had done.

"Yes, that will be enough," she said, and took out her purse to pay them.

She laid a ten-dollar bill on the table, and then, fumbling in the purse, secured some small coins, which she handed to the older boy. "That's right, isn't it," she asked.

"Yes, ma'am, thank you."

The pot on the stove began to boil and summoned her. She dropped the purse beside the ten-dollar bill, and seizing the spoon, stirred rapidly. The boys lingered at the sink, gathering up the shells.

"Good-by!" said the older boy.

"Good-by!" said Mrs. Tucker, without turning. "If you have any clams on Friday, you might bring me some."

The Tuckers were growers of small fruits, and as the boys made their way down the lane toward the road they gazed longingly at the berry-pickers.

"Wouldn't you like to be in among them raspberries, Sam?" asked the smaller boy.

"I don't know. They ain't there to be eaten; they're just there to be picked," said Sam, stolidly.

"Hi, there, boys!"

They turned at the shout, and saw Mrs. Tucker and a man running toward them from the house.

"It's because I cracked a dish in the sink," said the younger boy, beginning to run.

"Come back, Tom, come back," cried the older. But Tom paid no attention and fled down the lane.

Sam walked slowly toward Mrs. Tucker and the man, who came up out of breath.

"Now," gasped the man, angrily, "just hand that ten dollars over to my wife!"

Sam stared in amazement.

"How could you?" asked Mrs. Tucker, reproachfully. "And I thought you were such nice boys!"

"I don't know about the ten dollars," said Sam, flushing in spite of himself.

"I'm sorry Tom cracked the dish, and I'll pay for it."

He offered her the thirty cents she had given him.

"I don't know anything about any cracked dish," she said. "It's the ten dollars you or the other boy took from the table that I want!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Tucker, harshly, "just drop that bluff about the cracked dish!"

The boy made no movement, but he grew pale and stood in silence.

"Come," said Mr. Tucker, impatiently, "you had better confess! It may save you from the reform school."

"I've got nothing to confess," said Sam. "I don't know anything about the ten dollars—except that I noticed it on the table. That's all I know."

"Maybe the other boy took it while you weren't looking," suggested Mrs. Tucker.

"Tom ain't a thief!" protested Sam, indignantly. "More likely I'd take it than him. He ain't twelve years old."

"Is he your brother?" asked Mr. Tucker.

"Yes, sir."

"I've seen you about the village. Who are you anyway?"

"Sam Williams is my name. My father was Henry Williams that—th't got drowned."

Mr. Tucker's voice and manner softened. "I knew your father; he was a good fisherman, and he was always honest; I'm sorry if his boys ain't growin' up to be the same."

Sam's eyes filled and his lips quivered, but he only repeated:

"I don't know anything about the ten dollars, Mr. Tucker."

Mrs. Tucker pulled at her husband's arm and whispered in his ear, and he stroked his beard and seemed uncertain how to proceed. At last he said:

"Well, I won't do anything about it for the present. But there's no telling what I may do if things ain't straightened out pretty soon. You can see on the face of it, it looks bad for your brother and you."

He turned away, and so did his wife after a commiserating glance at the boy, who stood with downcast head.

"I'm sure he's honest, George," she said, as they walked back to the house.

"Yes, I can tell that by the look of him," her husband answered. "Of course it was the little feller that took the bill. And I'll trust this Sam to get it back for us."

Three days later, as Mr. and Mrs. Tucker were leaving the house, Sam appeared before them, looking pale and depressed. He produced a small bag from his pocket and handed it to Mr. Tucker, who, opening it, found it was full of coins.

"There's four dollars and eighty cents there," Sam said, in a low voice, "and—and will you please let me work out the rest?"

Mr. Tucker looked at him gravely.

"So you lied to me the other day? Do you think it would be safe for me to have such a boy as you on the place?"

Sam blushed but did not answer.

"Where is the rest of the money you stole?"

The boy straightened himself and his lips trembled, as if eager to speak. Then his head sank again, and he said almost inaudibly:

"That's all there is left. O, Mr. Tucker, if you'll only let me, I'll do anything—anything! I'll work harder than any boy you ever had!"

"You can join the pickers in the south lot," Mr. Tucker said abruptly. "Go

into the packing-house and get some empty baskets."

The boy looked up at him gratefully and hurried away.

"You know he didn't steal that money, George," said Mrs. Tucker, reproachfully. "Why did you speak to him so?"

"I wanted to make it easy for him," answered her husband. "This is the way he'd like to have one take it. Don't you see? He thinks we don't suspect."

So the kindly people watched and waited, and Sam worked away, happy in the delusion of his sacrifice.

At the end of the third week Mr. Tucker called the boy to him.

"Well, Sam," he said, "we're square now. You might take a couple of boxes of berries home to Tom."

"Thank you, sir," Sam answered.

"And see here. Why didn't you tell me in the first place it was Tom and not you that took the money?"

The boy turned red. "I—I don't know how you found out. You won't send him to the reform school, Mr. Tucker?" he pleaded.

"No. Tell me about the money."

"I found out; 'twas his initiation fee. There's a lot of rough fellows that live near us, and they'd started a robbers' gang and got Tom into it. Every one who joined had to steal something for an initiation fee."

"And the ten dollars was Tom's fee?" said Mr. Tucker. "I shall have to look into this."

"It's all broke up now," Sam assured him. "I thrashed the chief."

"And why did you pretend it was you and not Tom that stole?"

"Because Tom's such a little fellow. And if he was sent away to the reform school, I didn't know how he'd stand it. And then 'twould be bad for him to begin with a bad name."

"But how about yourself? Didn't you think it would be just as bad for you?"

"No, sir. I'm bigger and I could stand it better. I could work it some way."

Mr. Tucker was silent a moment; then he said:

"I suppose the money you brought me was your own savings?"

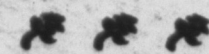
"Yes, sir. The ten dollars had been spent."

"What are you going to do now?"

"Go back to fishing and digging clams."

"You come up here again to-morrow, Sam. Maybe I can find you a steady job. And bring Tom along with you and then I can likely give him an odd chore to do. That'll keep him away from bad company, and maybe help out his self-respect."

That was the way in which the two boys got their start. And in after years, when both of them were prospering, Tom was grateful to Sam as Sam was always grateful to Mr. Tucker.—*Youth's Companion.*



### THE LITTLE HOUSEHOLDER.

"O yes, I have all kinds of tenants," said a kind-faced old gentleman; "but the one I like best is a child not more than ten years of age. A few years ago I got a chance to buy a piece of land over on the West side, and did so. I noticed that there was an old coop of a house on it, but I paid no attention to it. After a while a man came to me and wanted to know if I would rent it to him.

"What do you want it for?" said I.

"To live in," he replied.



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"Well, I said, 'you can have it. Put me what you think it worth to you.'

"The first month he brought two dollars, and the second month a little boy who said he was the man's son, came with three dollars. After that I saw the man once in a while, but in the course of time the boy paid the rent regularly, sometimes two dollars and sometimes three dollars. One day I asked the boy what had become of his father.

"He's dead, sir," was the reply.

"Is that so?" said I. "How long since?"

"Mor'n a year," he answered.

"I took his money, but I made up my mind that I would go over and investigate, and the next day I drove over there. The old shed looked quite decent. I knocked at the door and a little girl let me in. I asked for her mother. She said she did not have any."

"Where is she?" said I.

"We don't know, sir. She went away after my father died, and we've never seen her since."

"Just then a little girl about three years old came in, and I learned that these three children had been keeping house together for a year and a half, the boy supporting his two little sisters by blacking boots and selling newspapers, and the elder girl managing the house and taking care of the baby. Well, I just had my daughter call on them, and we keep an eye on them now.

I thought I wouldn't disturb them while they were getting along. The next time the boy came with the rent I talked with him a little, and then I said: 'My boy, you are a hero. Keep on as you have begun and you will never be sorry. Keep your little sisters together, and never leave them. Now look at this.'

"I showed him a ledger in which I had entered up all the money that he had paid me for rent, and I told him it was all his with interest. You keep