

**BOYS AND GIRLS OF
COLONIAL DAYS**

**BOYS AND GIRLS
OF COLONIAL DAYS**

BY

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ILLUSTRATED BY

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YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

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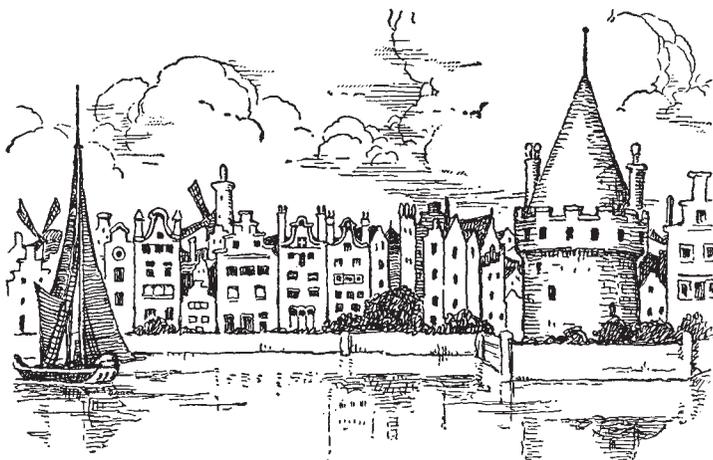
ISBN-10: 1-59915-246-0

ISBN-13: 978-1-59915-246-2

Yesterday's Classics, LLC
PO Box 3418
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

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THE PINK TULIP

PEERING over the edge of the boat rail, Love strained her weary, blue eyes for a glimpse of land. The sun, a ball of soft, gold light, showed now through the haze, and suddenly, like a fairy place the city appeared. There were tall, shining towers, gold church spires, pointed roofs with wide, red chimneys where the storks stood in one-legged fashion, and great windmills with their long arms stretched out to catch the four winds. Amsterdam, in Holland, it was, the haven of this little boat load of Pilgrims.

Love Bradford, ten years old, flaxen haired, and as winsome as an English rose in June, wrapped her long, gray cloak more closely about her and turned to one of the women.

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“Do you think that my father may have taken another boat that sailed faster than this and is waiting for me on the shore, Mistress Brewster? The last words that he said to me when he left me on the ship were ‘Bide patiently until I come, Love; I will not be long.’ That was many days ago.”

Mistress Brewster turned away that the little girl might not see the tears that filled her eyes. Love’s father, just before the ship that bore the Pilgrims from England had sailed, had been cast into prison by the King, because of his faith. Love was all alone, but Mistress Brewster did not want her to know of her father’s fate.

“Perhaps your father will meet you some day soon in Holland. Surely, if he said that he would not be long, he will keep his word. See, Love, see the little boy of your own age down there in the fishing boat.”

Love looked in the direction in which the woman pointed. A plump, rosy little boy with eyes as blue as Love’s own and dressed in full brown trousers and clumsy wooden shoes sat on a big net in one end of the boat. He looked up as the sails of the little fishing craft brought it alongside the boat that bore the wanderers from England. At first he dropped his eyes in shyness at sight of the little girl. Then he lifted them again and, as his eyes met hers, the two children smiled at each other. It was like a flash of sunshine piercing the gray haze that hung over the sea.

There were friends waiting on the shore for all save Love. Older brothers these were, fathers and other relatives who had made the pilgrimage from England

THE PINK TULIP

a few months before and had homes ready for them all. They climbed a long hill, very flat on the top, and reached by a flight of steps. Then they were as high as the trees that lined the beach and could look over the narrow streets, the tidy cottages with their red roofs, and the pretty gardens. There were many little canals, like blue ribbons, cutting the green fields.

“Welcome to Amsterdam!” said a Dutch housewife, in wide white cap and apron, who met them. She put her hand on Love’s yellow hair. “And in which house are you going to live, little English blossom?” she asked kindly.

Love looked up wonderingly into her face and there was a whispered consultation between Mistress Brewster and the Amsterdam woman. “Poor little blossom! She shall come home with me. There is always room for one more in the stork’s nest,” the Dutch woman said kindly. She took Love’s hand and led her away from the others, and along the canal.

The house where they stopped was very odd indeed. It was made of red and yellow bricks and it stood on great posts sunk deep into the ground. Opening the white door that fairly shone, it was so clean, they were in the kitchen. Such a kitchen it was, so cosy and so quaint! The floor was made of white tiles and there was a queer little fireplace. It looked like a big brass pan filled with coals, and there was a shining copper kettle hung over it by a chain from the ceiling. The kettle bubbled and sang a cheerful welcome to Love. There were stiff white curtains at the windows and, on the sill of one, was a



THE KETTLE BUBBLED AND SANG A
CHEERFUL WELCOME TO LOVE

THE PINK TULIP

row of blossoming plants. Blue and white dishes and a pair of tall candlesticks stood on a shelf. Love could see a bright sitting room beyond and another room where there was a strange bed built in the wall, and stretching almost from the floor to the ceiling.

“Jan, Jan,” the woman called. “Come in from the garden and offer your new little English sister a seed cake. You may have one yourself, too. You have long wished for a playmate and here is one come to live in the house with you.”

The door opened slowly and in came Jan. He did not look up at first. Then his eyes caught Love’s. It was the little boy of the fishing boat. His dear mother it was who had offered to take care of lonely little Love.

“You may help me drive the dogs that draw the milk wagon,” Jan said to Love the next morning after they had become very well acquainted over their breakfast of milk and oatmeal cakes.

“And so I can help to earn money for your kind mother,” Love said with shining eyes.

Jan had two dogs and a little two-wheeled cart to which he harnessed them every morning. Into the cart his mother put two shining pails of milk and a long handled dipper for measuring. To-day she put in some round, white cheeses and golden balls of butter. Off started the cart along the narrow street with Love running gaily along one side and Jan clattering along in his wooden shoes on the other side. The dogs knew where to stop almost as well as Jan did for they had made the trip so many times. The cheese and butter

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were soon gone, and every one had a pleasant smile for the little English lass. At one cottage, a Dutch housewife brought out a strange, earth-colored bulb that she put in Love's hands. Then, smiling down into the little girl's wondering face, she said:



JAN AND HIS DOG CART

“It is a rare one indeed. I give it to you that you may plant it and tend it all winter. When the spring comes, you will have a finer one than any child in all Amsterdam.”

Love thanked the woman but she puzzled over the hard, dry bulb as she and Jan walked home beside the empty cart. “It looks like nothing but an onion. What good is it, Jan?”

Jan's eyes twinkled. “I know, but I won't tell,” he

THE PINK TULIP

said. "I want you to be surprised next spring. Come, Love, we will plant it in the corner of the garden that the sun shines on first in the spring. Then we will wait."

As Jan dug a hole and Love planted the bulb, his words repeated themselves in the little girl's lonely heart. She remembered, too, what her dear father had said last to her, "Wait patiently until I come, Love." Would her patience bring the hard bulb to life or her father back, Love wondered sorrowfully.

The days passed, with blue skies and the bright sun shining down upon the canal, and then grew shorter. The storks flew south, and Love was very happy. Her days with Jan were busy, merry ones. She, too, had wooden shoes now; and Jan's mother had made her a warm red skirt and a velvet girdle and a little, green, quilted coat. Love looked like a real little Dutch girl as she skated to school, with her knitting in her school bag to busy her fingers with when it was recess time.

There was never any place in England, Love thought, so merry and gay as the frozen canal in front of her new home in Holland. Everybody was on skates; the market women with wooden yokes over their shoulders, from which hung baskets of vegetables; and even a mother skating and holding her baby in a snug nest made of a shawl on her back. The old doctor skated, with his pill bag on one arm, to see a sick patient at the other end of the town; and long rows of happy children glided by, holding each other's coats and twisting and twining about like a gay ribbon.

"Are you not glad, Love, that you came here to

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Holland to be my sister?" Jan asked as, holding her hand in his, he skated with Love to school.

"I am glad, Jan," Love laughed back. "I feel as if it were a story book that I am living in, and you and your dear mother and our house and the canal were the pictures in it. But, oh, Jan, I wish very much that I could see my father—so tall and brave and strong!" Then she stopped. "We must be hastening, Jan," she said, "or we shall be late for school." But to herself, Love was saying, "Be patient."

Spring came early that year in Amsterdam. The ice melted and the canals were once more blue ribbons of water. The sails of the windmills whirred, and the housewives scrubbed their sidewalks until the stones were clean enough to eat from. The storks built again in the red chimneys and, everywhere, the tulips burst into bloom. Love had never seen such beautiful flowers in all her life. There was no garden in all Amsterdam so small or so poor as not to have a bed of bright red and yellow tulips.

With the first sunshine, Love went out to the garden where she and Jan had planted the ugly, hard bulb. How wonderful; her patience had been rewarded! There were two tall straight green leaves and between them, like a wonderful cup upon its green stem, a great beautiful tulip. It was larger than any of the others. It was not red or yellow like the others, but pink, like a rose, or a sunrise cloud, or a baby's cheek.

"Come, Jan; come, mother," cried Love, and then the three stood about the pink tulip in admiration.

THE PINK TULIP

“It is the most beautiful tulip in all Amsterdam,” said Jan.

“It is worth money,” said his mother. “Some one would pay a good price for the bulb.”

Love remembered what Jan’s mother had said. As the days passed and the pink tulip opened wider and showed a deeper tint each day, a plan began to form in the little girl’s mind. She knew that there was not very much money in Jan’s home to which she had been so kindly welcomed. She knew, too, that nothing was so dear to the people of Holland as their tulips. Strange tales were told; how they sold houses, cattle, land, everything to buy tulip bulbs.

One Saturday when Jan was away doing an errand for his mother, Love dug up her precious pink tulip and planted it carefully in a large flower pot. With the pot hugged close to her heart, she went swiftly away from the house, down the long steps, and as far as the road that led along the coast of the sea below the dike. Here, where great merchant ships from all over the world anchored almost every day, Love felt sure that some one would see her tulip and want to buy it.

There was such a crowd,—folk of many nations busy unloading cargoes,—that at first no one saw the little girl with the flower in her arms. Up and down the shore she walked, a little frightened but brave. She held the flower high, and called in her sweet voice,

“A rare pink tulip. Who will buy my pink tulip?”

Intent on holding the flower carefully, she came

suddenly in front of a man who had been walking in lonely fashion up and down the shore. She heard him call her name eagerly.

“Love! Love! Oh, my little Love!”

Looking up, Love almost dropped the tulip in her joy. Then she set it down and rushed into his arms.

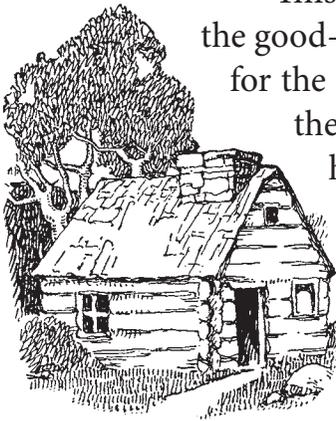
“Father, dear father! Oh, where have you been so long?” she cried.

It was a story told between laughter and tears. Goodman Bradford, only a short time since released from prison, had come straight to Amsterdam, but he had been able to find no trace of Love. Mistress Brewster had gone on with the Pilgrims to America, and there was no one to tell Goodman Bradford where his little daughter was. Now, he could make a home for her and reward Jan’s mother.

“I was patient,” Love said, “as you bade me be, and see,” she cried as, hand in hand, they reached the quaint little cottage where Jan and his mother stood at the door to greet them, “in good time they both came to me—the pink tulip, and my father.”

BIG HAWK'S DECORATION

“SEE to it, Preserve, that you win a colored ribbon from the schoolmaster to-day,” Mistress Edwards said as she turned from her task of polishing the pewter platter to look at the boy who stood in the doorway of the log cabin.



THE LOG CABIN
WAS BUT A
ROUGH HOME

“This is the day, I hear, on which the good-conduct ribbons are given out for the month, brightly dyed ones for the boys and girls whose lessons have been well learned, and black for the dunces. There is no chance of your coming home to me to-night without a ribbon of merit, is there?” The Colonial mother crossed the room and put her hands on her lad’s shoulder, looking anxiously into his honest brown eyes.

“No, mother,” Preserve answered. “At least I have hopes of winning a ribbon. Not once this month have I failed in my sums, and I can read my chapters in the Bible as well as any child in school.”

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“That is good!” Mistress Edwards said, pulling the boy’s long, dark cloak more closely about him and smoothing the cloth of his tall hat.

Preserve Edwards was a Puritan lad of many years ago. The log cabin that he was leaving to walk two miles through the clearing and across the woods to school was but a rough home. A few straight chairs and a hard settle, made of logs and standing by the fireplace, a deal table and the few pewter utensils, were almost the only furnishings of the living room. In one corner stood an old musket. Mistress Edwards looked toward it now in fear.

“Do you come home as soon as school is out, Preserve. I pray you do not linger on the way to play hare and hounds with the other boys and girls of the village. Remember, my boy, that your father is away with the horse these two days to fetch back a piece of linsey-woolsey cloth and some flour from Boston for me. He is not likely to come home for some days yet, and I am full of strange dread at what I saw in the cornfield this morning.”

“What did you see, mother?” Preserve’s eyes opened wide with wonder.

“It was not so much what I saw, but what it portended for us,” Mistress Edwards said. “It was only a flash of color, like painted feathers, among the withered stalks of corn. It minded me of Big Hawk’s headdress. If he were to find out that we were alone, one helpless woman and a boy of twelve here, I think it would go badly with us.”

BIG HAWK'S DECORATION

Preserve laughed bravely. Then he reached up to kiss his mother good-bye.

“It was no more than a red-winged blackbird that you saw,” he said, “or perhaps it was a bright tanager. The birds are getting ready to flock now, for they feel the autumn chill in the air. But I will hurry home—with my ribbon,” Preserve added.

Then he ran down the little path to the gate in the paling that surrounded the cabin, his speller under his arm, and his high-heeled, buckled shoes making the dry leaves scatter as he went.

It was a long road and a lonely one to the log schoolhouse. Preserve took his way through the cornfield where the dried stalks, rattling in the cold wind, made him think of the songs that he had heard Big Hawk and his tribe sing the last time they attacked the little Colonial settlement. That had been some months since, now, and Preserve could find no traces of footprints or any other marks of Indians in the cornfield.

“My mother had a fear for nothing,” Preserve said to himself. He went through a bit of woods, next, and pulled a small square of bark from one of the many birch trees that stood there, so white and still. It was for Preserve to write his sums upon in school, and as he hurried on he repeated his tables over and over to be sure that he knew them well.

There were log cabins scattered here and there, and from these came other boys and girls who followed Preserve on the way to school. Deliverance Baxter joined Preserve. She wore a long, scant, gray

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frock, and her yellow hair was tucked tightly inside a close, white cap. A white kerchief was folded neatly around her neck, and she, also, wore big buckles on her black slippers. Her eyes twinkled roguishly, though, as she chatted to Preserve.

“There is no doubt at all, Preserve, but that you will wear home the long streamers of red ribbon on your cape this afternoon. I have been quite as perfect as you in my lessons for the last month, but, woe is me, I did a great wrong yesterday. You know that Master Biddle, our schoolmaster, has just purchased a big wig from Boston town. The queue in the back is unusually long and tied with such a large bow that it caught my eye when I was getting a pile of copy books from behind his desk. I know not, Preserve, what witchery was in my fingers, but I tied Master Biddle’s queue to his chair. When he stood up, why, his wig was greatly disarranged; and I must needs stay after school until dusk, sitting on the dunce’s stool. I am most sorry, and will never be so witch-like again. You see I stand small chance of the ribbon, now, Preserve.”

The boy laughed, but he took the little girl’s hand comfortingly in his. Reaching in his lunch bag, he took out a red apple and slipped it into the big pocket that hung at her side.

“You were always a bit roguish in spite of your Puritan dress and sober living, Deliverance,” he said. “Never mind about the ribbon. If I should win it, why there is all the more chance of its being yours the next time. Here we are! See to it, Deliverance, that you tie no

BIG HAWK'S DECORATION

more queues to-day. Oh, see how finely Master Biddle is dressed for giving out the prizes!" Preserve said as they reached the schoolhouse door and took their places behind the rude desks, built of boards and resting on pegs in the floor.



“I TIED MASTER BIDDLE'S QUEUE TO HIS CHAIR.”

Other children were quietly taking their places in the little schoolroom, the smaller ones perched on hard benches made of logs. They all looked in awe at the schoolmaster who stood on a platform facing them. He wore a smart velvet coat with long tails, and inside it could be seen a waist coat which was very long and a fine white shirt with stiffly-starched ruffles. His knee breeches were of velvet like his coat, and there were silver buckles at the knees as well as on his shoes. A

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stiffly-ironed stock was wound about his neck, and worn to keep his head stiff and straight as became the dignity of the times. Above all was his white powdered wig, neatly braided in the back.

Looking at Master Biddle alone was enough to make the children of the Colonies sit up very straight and recite their lessons as well as they could. There was a prayer first, and then the boys and girls recited their reading, spelling, and arithmetic. Their pencils were thick plummets of lead and their copy books were made of foolscap paper, sewed in the shape of books and carefully ruled by hand. At eleven o'clock came recess, and at the end of the afternoon the awarding of the good-conduct ribbons.

“For perfect deportment,” Master Biddle announced as he pinned a bow of blue ribbon to one boy’s cape.

“For poor lessons!” he said, sadly, as he fastened a black bow to another. Then he held up a red bow with especially long, streaming ends.

“For perfect deportment, and for perfect lessons,” he said, as he fastened the red ribbon bow to Preserve Edward’s cape.

To-day it would seem but a small prize, but in the eyes of these Puritan boys and girls of so many years ago, the bow of ribbon, its streamers of red gayly flying over the long cape of a boy or the dull linsey-woolsey frock of a little girl, was a mark of great honor indeed. Ribbons were scarce and high in price in those days. Colors for children were almost forbidden, and

BIG HAWK'S DECORATION

for their elders as well. So Preserve walked out of the school door at the end of the day with his head very high and started home as proudly as any soldier wearing a decoration for bravery.

He did not notice how the dusk was settling down all about him. The trees on either side made dark shadows and there was no sound except the whir of a partridge's wing or the rattle of a falling nut. He did not hear the soft footfall behind him until Deliverance, breathless and her face white with fear, was upon him. She laid a soft hand on his shoulder and whispered in his ear:

“I beg you, Preserve, to let me walk with you. I know that it is not far to my cabin, but all the way through these woods I have heard strange sounds and I fancy, even now, that I see shapes behind the trees and bushes.”

Preserve took the timid little girl's hand and tried to laugh away her fears.

“So was my mother afraid this morning, at nothing,” he said. “She was of a mind that she saw Indians—Oh!” the boy's voice was suddenly hushed.

Towering in the path in front of the children like a great forest tree dressed in its gorgeous cloak of gaudy autumn leaves, stood the Indian chief, Big Hawk. He wore his war paint and his festival headdress of hawk's feathers. Slung over his blanket were his bow and a quiver full of new arrows. It seemed little more than a second before the edges of the path and the deep

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places among the trees on either side were alive with the Indians of Big Hawk's tribe.

Big Hawk looked at the frightened children, indicating with gestures what was his plan. He pushed back the white cap from Deliverance's pale forehead and laid his hand on the little girl's sunny hair. Then he pointed toward his tribe's camping place in the west. He wanted to take Deliverance there and hold her for a ransom. To Preserve he made gestures showing that he wished him to lead the way to the Edwards' cabin that they might plunder it before going back that night.

Deliverance clung, crying, to Preserve. He tried to be brave, but it was a test for a man's courage, and he was only a boy.

It was a second's thought and a strange whim of a savage that saved the two. The wind of the fall blowing through the trees caught the ends of Preserve's ribbon of honor and sent them, fluttering like tongues of flame, against the dark of the tree trunks. The color caught Big Hawk's eye, and he touched the bow on Preserve's cloak with one hand.

Quick as a flash a thought came to Preserve. He drew back from Big Hawk's touch and put his own hands over the ribbon as if to guard it.

"Heap big chief!" Preserve's voice rang out, brave and clear. Then, after waiting a second, he unpinned the red bow and held it, high, before Big Hawk's face.

"Big Hawk, heap bigger chief!" he said, as he went boldly up to the Indian and fastened the ribbon



HE POINTED TOWARD HIS
TRIBE'S CAMPING PLACE

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on his blanket. Then he motioned to Big Hawk to return to his camp and show the rest of the tribe his new decoration. A slow smile overspread Big Hawk's painted face. Then he turned and, motioning to his braves to follow him, went silently back through the woods, leaving Preserve and Deliverance alone, and safe.

Deliverance was the first to speak.

"My heart does beat so fast I can scarcely breathe, Preserve. Oh, but you are a brave boy! What shall we do now?" the little girl asked.

"Run!" said Preserve, without a moment's hesitation. "We had best run like rabbits, Deliverance!"

Hand in hand, the two scampered along, Preserve helping the little girl over the rough places, until the light from a candle in Deliverance's cabin was in sight. Her father had come home early, and when the children told him of their adventure, he set out to warn the rest of the settlers of the danger so bravely averted, and put them on guard against the Indians.

Preserve went on home, alone. His mother stood in the cabin door, anxious because he was so late.

"No ribbon? Oh, my lad, why have you disappointed me?" she said when she saw him.

"Big Hawk wears my decoration," Preserve said, as he told his story. "But I think that Master Biddle would have rather that little Mistress Deliverance, for all her witching, had his red bow," he finished, laughing.

THE SOAP MAKING OF REMEMBER BIDDLE

“IT may chance that you will not be able to return by Thanksgiving Day?” Remember Biddle asked with almost a sob in her voice.

A little Puritan girl of long ago was Remember, dressed in a long straight gown of gray stuff, heavy hobnailed shoes and wearing a white kerchief crossed about her neck. She stood in the door of the little log farm-house that looked out upon the dreary stretch of the Atlantic coast with Plymouth Rock raising its gray head not so very far away.

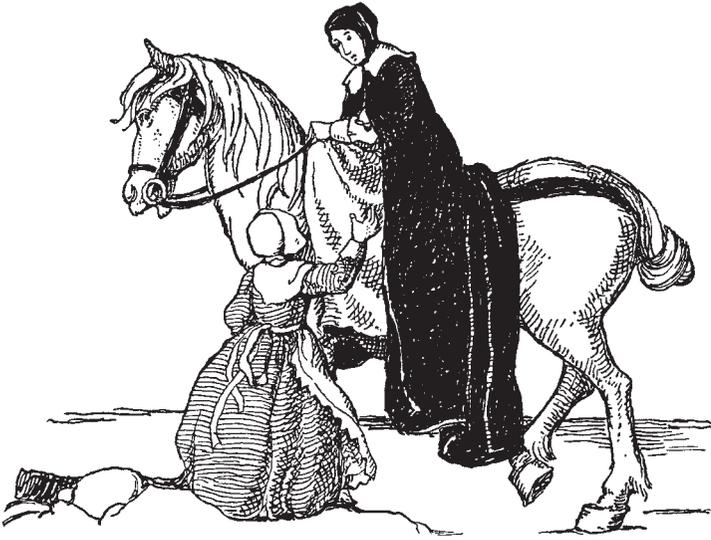
No wonder Remember felt unhappy. Her mother was at the door mounted upon their horse, and ready to start away for quite a long journey as journeys were counted in those days. She was going with a bundle of herbs to care for a sick neighbor who lived a distance of ten miles away. It had been an urgent summons, brought by the post carrier that morning. The neighbor was ill, indeed, and the fame of Mistress Biddle’s herb brewing was well known through the countryside.

She leaned down from the saddle to touch Remember’s dark braids. The little girl had run out

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beside the horse and laid her cheek against his soft side. Her father was far away in Boston, attending to some important matters of shipping. Her mother's going left Remember all alone. She repeated her question,

“Shall I be alone for Thanksgiving Day, mother, dear?” she asked.



“SHALL I BE ALONE FOR
THANKSGIVING DAY, MOTHER, DEAR?”

Her mother turned away that the little daughter might not see that her eyes, as well, were full of sorrow.

“I know not, Remember. I sent a letter this morning by the post carrier to Boston telling your father that I should wait for him at Neighbor Allison's, and if I could leave the poor woman he could come

THE SOAP MAKING OF REMEMBER BIDDLE

home with me. I hope that we shall be here in time for Thanksgiving Day, but if it should happen, Remember, that you must be alone take no thought of your loneliness. Think only of how much cause we have for being thankful in this free, fertile land of New England. And keep busy, dear child. You will find plenty to do in the house until my return.”

Throwing the girl a good-bye kiss, Mistress Biddle gave the horse a light touch with her riding whip and was off down the road, her long, dark cloak blowing like a gray cloud on the horizon in the chill November wind.

For a few moments Remember leaned against the beams of the door listening to the call of a flock of flying crows and the crackling of the dried cornstalks in the field back of the house. Beyond the cornfield lay the brown and green woods, uncut, save by an occasional winding Indian trail. The neighboring cabins were so far away that they looked like toy houses set on the edge of other fields of dried cornstalks. Looking again toward the woods Remember shivered a little. She saw in imagination, a tall, dark figure in a gay blanket and trailing feather headdress stalk out from the depths of the thicket of pines and oaks. Then she laughed.

“There hasn’t an Indian passed here since early in the summer,” she said to herself. “Mother would not have left me here alone if she had not known that I should be quite safe. I will go in now and play that I am the mistress of this house, and I am getting it ready for

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company on Thanksgiving Day. It will be so much fun that I shall forget all about being a lonely little girl.

It was a happy play. Remember tied one of her mother's long aprons over her dress to keep it clean, and began her busy work of cleaning the house and making it shine from cellar to ceiling. She sorted the piles of ruddy apples and winter squashes and pumpkins in the cellar, and rehung the slabs of rich bacon and the strings of onions. As she touched the bundles of savory herbs that hung about the cellar walls, Remember gave a little sigh.

"I see no chance of these being used in the stuffing of a fat turkey for Thanksgiving," she said to herself. "It may be that I shall have to eat nothing but mush and apple sauce for my dinner, and all alone. Ah, well-a-day!" She began to sing in her sweet, child voice one of the hymns that she had learned at the big white meeting-house:

"The Lord is both my health and light;
Shall men make me dismayed?
Since God doth give me strength and might,
Why should I be afraid?"

As she sang, Remember lifted a bucket of soft soap that stood on the cellar floor and tugged it up to the kitchen. Then she went to work with a will.

Several days passed before Remember had cleaned the house to her satisfaction. On her hands and knees she scoured the floors, her rosy hands and arms drenched with the foaming soapsuds. Afterward

THE SOAP MAKING OF REMEMBER BIDDLE

she sprinkled sand upon the spotless boards in pretty patterns as was the fashion in those days. She swept the brick hearth with a broom made of twigs, and she scoured the pewter and copper utensils until they were as bright as so many mirrors. She washed the wooden chairs until the bunch of cherries painted upon the back of each looked bright enough to pick and eat. She dusted the straight rush-bottomed chairs and the settle that stood by the side of the fireplace. Even the tall clock in the corner had its round glass face washed. Then Remember stood in the center of the kitchen looking at the good result of her work.

“My mother, herself, could have done no better!” she thought. Then she looked at the keg that had held their precious store of soft soap. There was no soap to be bought in those long-ago days; the Puritans were obliged to make their own.

“I have used up all the soap. Oh, what will my mother say at such waste? What shall I do?” Remember said, in dismay.

She sat down by the fire and thought. Suddenly she jumped up. A happy plan had come to her.

“I will make a mess of soap,” Remember said to herself. “I have helped mother to make soap many a time and I can do no more than try. It is yet some days until Thanksgiving and I should be sadly idle with nothing more to do, now that the house is put so well in order.

The soap-making barrel, a hole bored in the bottom, stood in a corner of the cellar; it was light

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enough so that Remember could easily handle it and she was strong for her twelve summers and winters. In the bottom of the barrel she put a layer of clean, fresh straw from the shed and over this she filled the barrel as far as she could with wood ashes. Then she rolled, and tugged, and lifted the barrel to a high bench that stood by the kitchen door, taking care that the hole was just above a large empty bucket. Then Remember brought pails of water and, standing on a stool, poured the water into the barrel until it began to drip down through the ashes and the straw to the bucket below. It looked rather dirty as it filtered down into the bucket but Remember took good care not to touch it with her fingers for she knew that it had turned into lye. Late in the afternoon Remember took out a hen's egg and dropped it into the bucket to see what would happen.



REMEMBER BROUGHT PAILS OF WATER

THE SOAP MAKING OF REMEMBER BIDDLE

“It floats!” she said. “Now I am sure that I made the lye right and I can attend to the grease to-morrow.”

Remember had to start a huge fire the next day and she got out the great black soap kettle, filled it with the lye and hung it over the fire. Into this she put many scraps of meat fat and waste grease that her mother had been saving for just such a soap-making emergency as this. It bubbled and boiled and Remember carefully skimmed from the top all the bones and skin and pieces of candle wicking that rose, as the lye absorbed the grease, and cooked it into a thick, ropy mixture. It looked very much like molasses candy as it boiled and after a while Remember knew that it was done. She lifted the kettle off the fire and poured the thick, brown jelly, that was now good soft soap, into big earthenware crocks to cool.

“I made the soap quite as well as my mother could,” Remember said to herself with a great deal of satisfaction as she put the crocks, all save one, in the cellar. This one she kept for use in the kitchen.

“There’s not another thing that I can think of to do,” Remember said now. She looked out of the window at the bleak, bare fields behind which the November sun was just preparing to set in a flame-colored ball. “Here it is the afternoon before Thanksgiving Day and mother and father are not home yet, and we haven’t anything in the house for a Thanksgiving dinner!” She looked toward the woods now. What was that?

A speck of color that she could see in the narrow footpath between the trees suddenly came nearer,

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growing larger and brighter all the time. Remember could distinguish the gaudy blanket, bright moccasins, and feather headdress of an Indian. Stalking across the field, he was fast approaching their little log house which he could easily see from the woods and which seemed to offer him an easy goal.

Remember covered her face with her hands, trying in her terror to think what to do.

The bolt on the kitchen door was but a flimsy protection at best. Remember knew that the Indian would be able to wrench it off with one tug of his brawny arm. She knew, too, that it had been the custom of the Indians who were encamped not far off to take the children of the colonists and hold them for a high ransom.

“The white face takes our lands; we take the papoose of the white face,” they had threatened, and they were cruel indeed to the children whom they held, especially if their parents were a long time supplying the necessary ransom. But it had been so long now since an Indian had been seen in their little settlement, that Remember’s mother had felt quite safe in leaving her.

Remember looked now for a place to hide. There was none. The cellar would be the first place, she knew, where the Indian would look for her. The tall clock was too small a space into which to squeeze her fat little body; and there was no use hiding under the bed for she would be dragged out at once. Remember turned, now, hearing a footstep. The Indian, big, brown, and frowning had crossed the threshold and stood in the

THE SOAP MAKING OF REMEMBER BIDDLE

center of the room. His blanket trailed the floor; over his shoulder was slung a pair of wild turkeys he had killed.

Remember trembled, but she faced him bravely.

“How!” she said, reaching out a kind little hand to him. The Indian shook his head, and did not offer to shake hands with the little girl. Instead, he pointed to the door, motioned to her that she was to follow him.

Remember’s mind worked quickly. She knew that Indians were fond of trinkets and could sometimes be turned away from their cruel designs by means of very small gifts. She ran to her mother’s work basket and offered him in succession a pair of scissors, a case of bright, new needles, a scarlet pincushion, and a silver thimble. Each, in turn, the Indian refused, shaking his head and still indicating by his gestures that Remember was to follow him.

Now he grasped the little girl’s hand and tried to pull her. There was no use resisting. But just as they reached the door the Indian caught sight of the crock of soft soap—dark, sticky, and strangely fascinating to him. He stuck one long brown finger in it and started to put it in his mouth, but Remember reached up and pulled his hand away. She shook her head and made a wry face to show him that it was not good to eat.

“How?” he questioned, pointing to the soap.

Remember pulled from his grasp. Pouring a dipperful of water in a basin, she took a handful of the



THE INDIAN, HELPING HIMSELF TO A HUGE HANDFUL OF THE SOAP, WASHED HIS HANDS SOLEMNLY.

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soap and showed the Indian how she could wash her hands. As he watched a look, first of wonder, and then of pleasure, crept into his face. He smiled and looked at his own hands. They were stained with earth and sadly in need of washing. Remember refilled the basin with water and the Indian, helping himself to a huge handful of the soap, washed his hands solemnly as if it were a kind of ceremony.

As Remember watched him, her heart beat fast indeed, "As soon as he finishes he will take me away," she thought.

Slowly the Indian dried his hands on the towel she gave him. Then he picked up the crock of soft soap. He set it on his shoulder. Pointing to the pair of turkeys that he had laid on the table to show that he was giving them to Remember in exchange for the soap, he strode out of the door and was soon lost to sight in the wood's path.

Remember dropped down in a chair and could scarcely believe she was really safe. A quick clatter of hoofs roused her. She darted to the door.

"Father, mother!" she cried.

Yes, it was indeed they; her father riding in front with her mother in the saddle behind.

"Just in time for Thanksgiving!" they cried as they jumped down and embraced Remember.

"And I'm here, too, and we have a pair of turkeys for dinner," Remember said, half smiles and half tears, as she told them her strange adventure.