

For the Boys and Girls

LITTLE SAM AND SAM LITTLE

One clear, cold, starry night, a soft, thin covering of snow lay upon the ground; there came to the great house on the hill a stranger, who was traveling for all he could get. He stopped at first, and gave him the warmest, heartiest welcome. They called him "Baby," at first, and he was too dignified and serious for all but grandpa, and even she finally adopted "Little Sam."

So you see that Little Sam of the great house on the hill was really named Little Sam Little of the small house on the hill.

When these two Sams were about six months old they were introduced to each other. First Little Sam always tried to work at the great house, and Sam, in his nurse's arms, entered the kitchen.

How these babies understood each other nobody knew; but there was a bond between them from that time forth.

Sam Little's mother and Little Sam's nurse made an excuse to pay a visit to the kitchen, and when the miller let him come into the mill, as he did occasionally, he loved to watch the big stones crushing the grain and turning out the snowy flour. Then he thought there was nothing he would like better than to be a miller.

The splash, splash of the mill wheel was music to Sam's ears, and when the miller let him come into the mill, as he did occasionally, he loved to watch the big stones crushing the grain and turning out the snowy flour. Then he thought there was nothing he would like better than to be a miller.

At this particular time she had asked permission to take her Sam with her, and as was rolling over the floor in a rollicking sort of way when Little Sam went out to ride in his baby carriage, he would push it down the hill and stop a while in the hollow.

In this way the two friends met, much pleasanter than the people of the great house knew.

Grandpa would certainly have put a stop to it; for when Little Sam grew old enough to run around quite independently, and was sometimes found outside, he would push it down the hill and stop a while in the hollow.

Sam Little, however, was very rich before he came, and afterward they considered themselves much richer, so he must have brought something with him.

Now, about the same time, a week or two later perhaps, another wee stranger chanced to be traveling that way. He did not climb the hill, but stopped at the very small house that stood at its foot, in the hollow. A number of just such travelers had been entertained there before, and, it being no great thing, there was not much preparation made for this one.

The two must have come from the same country, for each was called "Baby," and really they behaved very much alike. Neither of them seemed to have much manners, except when they were not aware that our Master was present.

They cried often, made darling talk incessantly of that faces, kicked, and otherwise acted Sam Little. One has to be careful, and said I am alike, all that kind of things.

"Really, John, you will have to get a nurse that is more to be depended upon. Your present one is entirely

much alike. Neither of them seemed to have much manners, except when they were not aware that our Master was present.

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Reaching the breast of the dam, he clambered up the bank, and saw on the opposite side, still further upstream, a tiny angel and child singing their gentle hymn of praise.

He jumped to his feet, listened, and started to run in the direction of the sound:

"Cracky! What's up now? I do believe that's Master Sam! Oh, I'm afraid he's gone and drowned himself!"

Reaching the breast of the dam, he clambered up the bank, and saw on the opposite side, still further upstream, a tiny angel and child singing their gentle hymn of praise.

With but one thought—that of rescuing "Master Sam," to whom he was devoted as a faithful dog is to his master—he threw aside his old coat and plunged in.

Now it was that Sam Little's education and pluck served him well. He could swim like a fish, but the dam was wide and the current strong.

The boy was saved. One Sam landed on the bank, looking like death as he lay there without showing any signs of life, and the other almost too exhausted to move.

But Sam Little was thoroughly scared at the sight of Little Sam. He ran as quickly as he could to a house that was fortunately near at hand. As he reached it he saw with joy the car from the great house just coming around the bend. In it were Little Sam's father and grandpa, returning from the station.

It did not take many words to make them understand Sam's story. Soon Little Sam was in his father's arms, being rapidly borne to the machine.

Either the motion, the breeze or the warmth of his father's heart, or possibly all combined, served to bring him back to life.

Then [Sam Little] found his tongue. He put Sam Little in the car and took him home with him. He questioned both boys as to how it all happened, and said to Sam Little:

"You are a brave boy. We owe you more than we know how to pay. What do you want most in the world?"

Sam said, if it wasn't for the cow, he would like most of all to go to school now, and, when he was old enough, he would like to learn to be a Miller.

Many people said that this was a good idea, and so they agreed to call the stranger Sammy.

Sammy Little was the way it was written in the family Bible, but, being such busy folks, it took them long to pronounce both syllables, so it was soon shortened to Sam.

Poor Sam Little, never to see or know his father. That was sad. People said:

"It didn't make much difference, though, for the older Sam was always a shiftless, ungrateful scoundrel."

His wife could do better with him. However, she knew how to make both ends meet, at the time, the present Sam Little learned to do.

Perhaps you will not believe it, but he used often to lie on the floor, looking more like a ball than anything else, with his chubby little foot in his mouth and his big toe stuck in his mouth.

Find a name for the other baby was not, by any means, such an easy thing. They searched far and wide, consulted their many friends, looked through the biographical dictionary, rubbed up their knowledge of foreign cognomines, but all to no purpose. Nothing would fit. There was not one name which they could all agree.

At length, grandpa said:

"I think we shall have to fall back upon the family name, after all. We have been only sons for four generations, and all Samuels. It has been a lucky name in our family, too. Success and good fortune have attended us. If our dear baby should also chance to be an only son, what better can we do than give him the old name?"

Well, grandpa carried the day. Perhaps his sweet, gentle mother would rather it were something else; but she yielded gracefully and spoke the name in such a soft, musical voice, and with so many pretty variations, that really it seemed quite like a new name, after all. She cooed over her treasure as a mother bird twitters over her nestlings.

It was "Baby Sam," "Sam Darling," "Precious Samie," and a dozen others that only she and baby understood, but more frequently than any-

"Sleeping his last sleep," she said. "Oh, will I see him when he gets awake?"

"If you don't keep quiet and stop bothering me I'll wake you!" his mother answered.

He did not venture any more questions, but often pondered about it and wondered how long he would have to wait.

He was the sort of boy who would have to wait for many things; but he who waits wins."

What did Sam Little win? You shall see.

His mother kept a cow, which was one of the best friends the Little family had. Being poor themselves, they could not always give the cow as much as she gave them.

Throughout the greater part of the year that cow had to turn "tramp" and get her living on the roadside.

It fell to Sam's lot to tend her, seek out the best tufts of grass and the richest fence corners, and drive her there, and then to drive her home again at night.

There was one spot in particular that Sam and the cow liked; it was close by an old mill.

Sometimes the dusty miller would stand in the door and say kindly:

"Get down the bars and drive hor along by the stream there a bit, Sam. The grass is good and rich, and I don't begrudge her a taste of it."

The splash, splash of the mill wheel was music to Sam's ears, and when the miller let him come into the mill, as he did occasionally, he loved to watch the big stones crushing the grain and turning out the snowy flour. Then he thought there was nothing he would like better than to be a miller.

One day—the boys were twelve years old—Sam had driven his cow, further along the stream than usual and was lying on the bank under a water-willow, a little way below the dam, not thinking of anything in particular, but was just lazily munching the grass or chewing her cud, when he heard a piercing scream.

He jumped to his feet, listened, and started to run in the direction of the sound:

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