

JACOB ABBOTT

COUSIN LUCY'S
CONVERSATIONS

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Jacob Abbott
Cousin Lucy's Conversations /
By the Author of the Rollo Books

NOTICE

The simple delineations of the ordinary incidents and feelings which characterize childhood, that are contained in the Rollo Books, having been found to interest, and, as the author hopes, in some degree to benefit the young readers for whom they were designed, – the plan is herein extended to children of the other sex. The two first volumes of the series are Lucy's Conversations and Lucy's Stories. Lucy was Rollo's cousin; and the author hopes that the history of her life and adventures may be entertaining and useful to the sisters of the boys who have honored the Rollo Books with their approval.

CONVERSATION I

THE TREASURY

One day in summer, when Lucy was a very little girl, she was sitting in her rocking-chair, playing keep school. She had placed several crickets and small chairs in a row for the children's seats, and had been talking, in dialogue, for some time, pretending to hold conversations with her pupils. She heard one read and spell, and gave another directions about her writing; and she had quite a long talk with a third about the reason why she did not come to school earlier. At last Lucy, seeing the kitten come into the room, and thinking that she should like to go and play with her, told the children that she thought it was time for school to be done.

Royal, Lucy's brother, had been sitting upon the steps at the front door, while Lucy was playing school; and just as she was thinking that it was time to dismiss the children, he happened to get up and come into the room. Royal was about eleven years old. When he found that Lucy was playing school, he stopped at the door a moment to listen.

"Now, children," said Lucy, "it is time for the school to be dismissed; for I want to play with the kitten."

Here Royal laughed aloud.

Lucy looked around, a little disturbed at Royal's interruption. Besides, she did not like to be laughed at. She, however, said nothing in reply, but still continued to give her attention to her school. Royal walked in, and stood somewhat nearer.

"We will sing a hymn," said Lucy, gravely.

Here Royal laughed again.

"Royal, you must not laugh," said Lucy. "They always sing a hymn at the end of a school." Then, making believe that she was speaking to her scholars, she said, "You may all take out your hymn-books, children."

Lucy had a little hymn-book in her hand, and she began turning over the leaves, pretending to find a place.

"You may sing," she said, at last, "the thirty-third hymn, long part, second metre."

At this sad mismating of the words in Lucy's announcement of the hymn, Royal found that he could contain himself no longer. He burst into loud and uncontrollable fits of laughter, staggering about the room, and saying to himself, as he could catch a little breath, "*Long part! – O dear me! – second metre! – O dear!*"

"Royal," said Lucy, with all the sternness she could command, "you *shall not* laugh."

Royal made no reply, but tumbled over upon the sofa, holding his sides, and every minute repeating, at the intervals of the paroxysm, "*Long part – second metre! – O dear me!*"

"Royal," said Lucy again, stamping with her little foot upon the carpet, "I tell you, you shall not laugh."

Then suddenly she seized a little twig which she had by her side, and which she had provided as a rod to punish her imaginary scholars with; and, starting up, she ran towards Royal, saying, "I'll soon make you sober with my rod."

Royal immediately jumped up from the sofa, and ran off, – Lucy in hot pursuit. Royal turned into the back entry, and passed out through an open door behind, which led into a little green yard back of the house. There was a young lady, about seventeen years old, coming out of the garden into the little yard, with a watering-pot in her hand, just as Royal and Lucy came out of the house.

She stopped Lucy, and asked her what was the matter.

"Why, Miss Anne," said Lucy, "Royal keeps laughing at me."

Miss Anne looked around to see Royal. He had gone and seated himself upon a bench under an apple-tree, and seemed entirely out of breath and exhausted; though his face was still full of half-suppressed glee.

“What is the matter, Royal?” said Miss Anne.

“Why, he is laughing at my school,” said Lucy.

“No, I am not laughing at her school,” said Royal; “but she was going to give out a hymn, and she said – ”

Royal could not get any further. The fit of laughter came over him again, and he lay down upon the bench, unable to give any further account of it, except to get out the words, “*Long part!* O dear me! What shall I do?”

“Royal!” exclaimed Lucy.

“Never mind him,” said Miss Anne; “let him laugh if he will, and you, come with me.”

“Why, where are you going?”

“Into my room. Come, go in with me, and I will talk with you.”

So Miss Anne took Lucy along with her into a little back bedroom. There was a window at one side, and a table, with books, and an inkstand, and a work-basket upon it. Miss Anne sat down at this window, and took her work; and Lucy came and leaned against her, and said,

“Come, Miss Anne, you said you would talk with me.”

“Well,” said Miss Anne, “there is one thing which I do not like.”

“What is it?” said Lucy.

“Why, you do not keep your treasury in order.”

“Well, that,” said Lucy, “is because I have got so many things.”

“Then I would not have so many things; – at least I would not keep them all in my treasury.”

“Well, Miss Anne, if you would only keep some of them for me, – then I could keep the rest in order.”

“What sort of things should you wish me to keep?”

“Why, my best things, – my tea-set, I am sure, so that I shall not lose any more of them; I have lost some of them now – one cup and two saucers; and the handle of the pitcher is broken. Royal broke it. He said he would pay me, but he never has.”

“How was he going to pay you?”

“Why, he said he would make a new nose for old Margaret. Her nose is all worn off.”

“A new nose! How could he make a new nose?” asked Miss Anne.

“O, of putty. He said he could make it of putty, and stick it on.”

“Putty!” exclaimed Miss Anne. “What a boy!”

Old Margaret was an old doll that Lucy had. She was not big enough to take very good care of a doll, and old Margaret had been tumbled about the floors and carpets until she was pretty well worn out. Still, however, Lucy always kept her, with her other playthings, in her *treasury*.

The place which Lucy called her treasury was a part of a closet or wardrobe, in a back entry, very near Miss Anne’s room. This closet extended down to the floor, and upwards nearly to the wall. There were two doors above, and two below. The lower part had been assigned to Lucy, to keep her playthings and her various treasures in; and it was called her *treasury*.

Her treasury was not kept in very good order. The upper shelf contained books, and the two lower, playthings. But all three of the shelves were in a state of sad disorder. And this was the reason why Miss Anne asked her about it.

“Yes, Miss Anne,” said Lucy, “that is the very difficulty, I know. I have got too many things in my treasury; and if you will keep my best things for me, then I shall have room for the rest. I’ll run and get my tea things.”

“But stop,” said Miss Anne. “It seems to me that you had better keep your best things yourself, and put the others away somewhere.”

“But where shall I put them?” asked Lucy.

“Why, you might carry them up garret, and put them in a box. Take out all the broken playthings, and the old papers, and the things of no value, and put them in a box, and then we will get Royal to nail a cover on it.”

“Well, – if I only had a box,” said Lucy.

“And then,” continued Miss Anne, “after a good while, when you have forgotten all about the box, and have got tired of your playthings in the treasury, I can say, ‘O Lucy, don’t you remember you have got a box full of playthings up in the garret?’ And then you can go up there, and Royal will draw out the nails, and take off the cover, and you can look them all over, and they will be new again.”

“O aunt Anne, will they be really *new* again?” said Lucy; “would old Margaret be new again if I should nail her up in a box?”

Lucy thought that *new* meant nice, and whole, and clean, like things when they are first bought at the toy-shop or bookstore.

Miss Anne laughed at this mistake; for she meant that they would be *new* to her; that is, that she would have forgotten pretty much how they looked, and that she would take a new and fresh interest in looking at them.

Lucy looked a little disappointed when Anne explained that this was her meaning; but she said that she would carry up some of the things to the garret, if she only had a box to put them in.

Miss Anne said that she presumed that she could find some box or old trunk up there; and she gave Lucy a basket to put the things into, that were to be carried up.

So Lucy took the basket, and carried it into the entry; and she opened the doors of her treasury, and placed the basket down upon the floor before it.

Then she kneeled down herself upon the carpet, and began to take a survey of the scene of confusion before her.

She took out several blocks, which were lying upon the lower shelf, and also some large sheets of paper with great letters printed upon them. Her father had given them to her to cut the letters out, and paste them into little books. Next came a saucer, with patches of red, blue, green, and yellow, all over it, made with water colors, from Miss Anne’s paint-box. She put these things into the basket, and then sat still for some minutes, not knowing what to take next. Not being able to decide herself, she went back to ask Miss Anne.

“What things do you think I had better carry away, Miss Anne?” said she. “I can’t tell very well.”

“I don’t know what things you have got there, exactly,” said Miss Anne; “but I can tell you what *kind* of things I should take away.”

“Well, what kind?” said Lucy.

“Why, I should take the bulky things.”

“Bulky things!” said Lucy; “what are bulky things?”

“Why, *big* things – those that take up a great deal of room.”

“Well, what other kinds of things, Miss Anne?”

“The useless things.”

“Useless?” repeated Lucy.

“Yes, those that you do not use much.”

“Well, what others?”

“All the old, broken things.”

“Well, and what else?”

“Why, I think,” replied Miss Anne, “that if you take away all those, you will then probably have room enough for the rest. At any rate, go and get a basket full of such as I have told you, and we will see how much room it makes.”

So Lucy went back, and began to take out some of the broken, and useless, and large things, and at length filled her basket full. Then she carried them in to show to Miss Anne. Miss Anne looked

them over, and took out some old papers which were of no value whatever, and then told Lucy, that, if she would carry them up stairs, and put them down upon the garret floor, she would herself come up by and by, and find a box to put them in. Lucy did so, and then came down, intending to get another basket full.

As she was descending the stairs, coming down carefully from step to step, with one hand upon the banisters, and the other holding her basket, singing a little song, – her mother, who was at work in the parlor, heard her, and came out into the entry.

“Ah, my little Miss Lucy,” said she, “I’ve found you, have I? Just come into the parlor a minute; I want to show you something.”

Lucy’s mother smiled when she said this; and Lucy could not imagine what it was that she wanted to show her.

As soon, however, as she got into the room, her mother stopped by the door, and pointed to the little chairs and crickets which Lucy had left out upon the floor of the room, when she had dismissed her school. The rule was, that she must always put away all the chairs and furniture of every kind which she used in her play; and, when she forgot or neglected this, her punishment was, to be imprisoned for ten minutes upon a little cricket in the corner, with nothing to amuse herself with but a book. And a book was not much amusement for her; for she could not read; she only knew a few of her letters.

As soon, therefore, as she saw her mother pointing at the crickets and chairs, she began at once to excuse herself by saying,

“Well, mother, that is because I was doing something for Miss Anne. – No, it is because Royal made me go away from my school, before it was done.”

“Royal made you go away! how?” asked her mother.

“Why, he laughed at me, and so I ran after him; and then Miss Anne took me into her room and I forgot all about my chairs and crickets.”

“Well, I am sorry for you; but you must put them away, and then go to prison.”

So Lucy put away her crickets and chairs, and then went and took her seat in the corner where she could see the clock, and began to look over her book to find such letters as she knew, until the minute-hand had passed over two of the five-minute spaces upon the face of the clock. Then she got up and went out; and, hearing Royal’s voice in the yard, she went out to see what he was doing, and forgot all about the work she had undertaken at her treasury. Miss Anne sat in her room two hours, wondering what had become of Lucy; and finally, when she came out of her room to see about getting tea, she shut the treasury doors, and, seeing the basket upon the stairs, where Lucy had left it, she took it and put it away in its place.

CONVERSATION II

DEFINITIONS

A few days after this, Lucy came into Miss Anne's room, bringing a little gray kitten in her arms. She asked Miss Anne if she would not make her a rolling mouse, for her kitten to play with.

Miss Anne had a way of unwinding a ball of yarn a little, and then fastening it with a pin, so that it would not unwind any farther. Then Lucy could take hold of the end of the yarn, and roll the ball about upon the floor, and let the kitten run after it. She called it her rolling mouse.

Miss Anne made her a mouse, and Lucy played with it for some time. At last the kitten scampered away, and Lucy could not find her. Then Anne proposed to Lucy that she should finish the work of re-arranging her treasury.

"Let me see," said Miss Anne, "if you remember what I told you the other day. What were the kinds of things that I advised you to carry away?"

"Why, there were the *sulky* things."

"The what!" said Miss Anne.

"No, the big things, – the big things," said Lucy.

"The bulky things," said Miss Anne, "not the *sulky* things!"

"Well, it sounded like *sulky*," said Lucy; "but I thought it was not exactly that."

"No, not exactly, – but it was not a very great mistake. I said *useless* things, and *bulky* things, and you got the sounds confounded."

"Con – what?" said Lucy.

"Confounded, – that is, mixed together. You got the *s* sound of *useless*, instead of the *b* sound of *bulky*; but *bulky* and *sulky* mean very different things."

"What does *sulky* mean? I know that *bulky* means *big*."

"Sulkiness is a kind of ill-humor."

"What kind?"

"Why, it is the *silent* kind. If a little girl, who is out of humor, complains and cries, we say she is fretful or cross; but if she goes away pouting and still, but yet plainly out of humor, they sometimes say she is *sulky*. A good many of your playthings are bulky; but I don't think any of them are sulky, unless it be old Margaret. Does she ever get out of humor?"

"Sometimes," said Lucy, "and then I shut her up in a corner. Would you carry old Margaret up garret?"

"Why, she takes up a good deal of room, does not she?" said Miss Anne.

"Yes," said Lucy, "ever so much room. I cannot make her sit up, and she lies down all over my cups and saucers."

"Then I certainly would carry her up garret."

"And would you carry up her bonnet and shawl too?"

"Yes, all that belongs to her."

"Then," said Lucy, "whenever I want to play with her, I shall have to go away up garret, to get all her things."

"Very well; you can do just as you think best."

"Well, would you?" asked Lucy.

"I should, myself, if I were in your case; and only keep such things in my treasury as are neat, and whole, and in good order."

"But I play with old Margaret a great deal, – almost every day," said Lucy.

"Perhaps, then, you had better not carry her away. Do just which you think you shall like best."

Lucy began to walk towards the door. She moved quite slowly, because she was uncertain whether to carry her old doll up stairs or not. Presently she turned around again, and said,

“Well, Miss Anne, which would you do?”

“I have told you that *I* should carry her up stairs; but I’ll tell you what you can do. You can play that she has gone away on a visit; and so let her stay up garret a few days, and then, if you find you cannot do without her, you can make believe that you must send for her to come home.”

“So I can,” said Lucy; “that will be a good plan.”

Lucy went immediately to the treasury, and took old Margaret out, and everything that belonged to her. This almost made a basket full, and she carried it off up stairs. Then she came back, and got another basket full, and another, until at last she had removed nearly half of the things; and then she thought that there would be plenty of room to keep the rest in order. And every basket full which she had carried up, she had always brought first to Miss Anne, to let her look over the things, and see whether they had better all go. Sometimes Lucy had got something in her basket which Miss Anne thought had better remain, and be kept in the treasury; and some of the things Miss Anne said were good for nothing at all, and had better be burnt, or thrown away, such as old papers, and some shapeless blocks, and broken bits of china ware. At last the work was all done, the basket put away, and Lucy came and sat down by Miss Anne.

“Well, Lucy,” said Miss Anne, “you have been quite industrious and persevering.”

Lucy did not know exactly what Miss Anne meant by these words; but she knew by her countenance and her tone of voice, that it was something in her praise.

“But perhaps you do not know what I mean, exactly,” she added.

“No, not exactly,” said Lucy.

“Why, a girl is industrious when she keeps steadily at work all the time, until her work is done. If you had stopped when you had got your basket half full, and had gone to playing with the things, you would not have been industrious.”

“I did, a little, – with my guinea peas,” said Lucy.

“It is best,” said Miss Anne, “when you have anything like that to do, to keep industriously at work until it is finished.”

“But I only wanted to look at my guinea peas a little.”

“O, I don’t think that was very wrong,” said Miss Anne. “Only it would have been a little better if you had put them back upon the shelf, and said, ‘Now, as soon as I have finished my work, then I’ll take out my guinea peas and look at them.’ You would have enjoyed looking at them more when your work was done.”

“You said that I was something else besides industrious.”

“Yes, persevering,” said Miss Anne.

“What is that?”

“Why, that is keeping on steadily at your work, and not giving it up until it is entirely finished.”

“Why, Miss Anne,” said Lucy, “I thought that was *industrious*.”

Here Miss Anne began to laugh, and Lucy said,

“Now, what are you laughing at, Miss Anne?” She thought that she was laughing at her.

“O, I am not laughing at you, but at my own definitions.”

“Definitions! What are definitions, Miss Anne?” said Lucy.

“Why, explanations of the meanings of words. You asked me what was the meaning of *industrious* and *persevering*; and I tried to explain them to you; that is, to tell you the definition of them; but I gave pretty much the same definition for both; when, in fact, they mean quite different things.”

“Then why did not you give me different definitions, Miss Anne?” said Lucy.

“It is very hard to give good definitions,” said she.

"I should not think it would be hard. I should think, if you knew what the words meant, you could just tell me."

"I can tell you in another way," said Miss Anne. "Suppose a boy should be sent into the pasture to find the cow, and should look about a little while, and then come home and say that he could not find her, when he had only looked over a very small part of the pasture. He would not be *persevering*. Perhaps there was a brook, and some woods that he ought to go through and look beyond; but he gave up, we will suppose, and thought he would not go over the brook, but would rather come home and say that he could not find the cow. Now, a boy, in such a case, would not be *persevering*."

"I should have liked to go over the brook," said Lucy.

"Yes," said Miss Anne, "no doubt; but we may suppose that he had been over it so often, that he did not care about going again, – and so he turned back and came home, without having finished his work."

"His work?" said Lucy.

"Yes, – his duty, of looking for the cow until he found her. He was sent to find the cow, but he did not do it. He became discouraged, and gave up too easily. He did not *persevere*. Perhaps he kept looking about all the time, while he was in the pasture; and went into all the little groves and valleys where the cow might be hid: and so he was *industrious* while he was looking for the cow, but he did not *persevere*."

"And so you see, Lucy," continued Miss Anne, "a person might persevere without being industrious. For once there was a girl named Julia. She had a flower-garden. She went out one morning to weed it. She pulled up some of the weeds, and then she went off to see a butterfly; and after a time she came back, and worked a little longer. Then some children came to see her; and she sat down upon a seat, and talked with them some time, and left her work. In this way, she kept continually stopping to play. She was not industrious."

"And did she *persevere*?" asked Lucy.

"Yes," said Miss Anne. "She persevered. For when the other children wanted her to go away with them and play, she would not. She said she did not mean to go out of the garden until she had finished weeding her flowers. So after the children had gone away, she went back to her work, and after a time she got it done. She was *persevering*; that is, she would not give up what she had undertaken until it was finished; – but she was not *industrious*; that is, she did not work all the time steadily, while she was engaged in doing it. It would have been better for her to have been industrious and persevering too, for then she would have finished her work sooner."

As Miss Anne said these words, she heard a voice out in the yard calling to her,

"Miss Anne!"

Miss Anne looked out at the window to see who it was. It was Royal.

"Is Lucy in there with you?" asked Royal.

Miss Anne said that she was; and at the same time, Lucy, who heard Royal's voice, ran to another window, and climbed up into a chair, so that she could look out.

"Lucy," said Royal, "come out here."

"O no," said Lucy, "I can't come now. Miss Anne is telling me stories."

Royal was seated on a large, flat stone, which had been placed in a corner of the yard, under some trees, for a seat; he was cutting a stick with his knife. His cap was lying upon the stone, by his side. When Lucy said that she could not come out, he put his hand down upon his cap, and said,

"Come out and see what I've got under my cap."

"What is it?" said Lucy.

"I can't tell you; it is a secret. If you will come out, I will let you see it."

"Do tell me what it is."

"No," said Royal.

"Tell me something about it," said Lucy, "at any rate."

“Well,” said Royal, “I will tell you one thing. It is not a bird.”

Lucy concluded that it must be some curious animal or other, if it was not a bird; and so she told Miss Anne that she believed she would go out and see, and then she would come in again directly, and hear the rest that she had to say. So she went out to see what Royal had got under his cap.

Miss Anne suspected that Royal had not got anything under his cap; but that it was only his contrivance to excite Lucy’s curiosity, and induce her to come out.

And this turned out to be the fact; for when Lucy went up to where Royal was sitting, and asked him what it was, he just lifted up his cap, and said, it was that monstrous, great, flat stone!

At first, Lucy was displeased, and was going directly back into the house again; but Royal told her that he was making a windmill, and that, if she would stay there and keep him company, he would let her run with it, when it was done. So Lucy concluded to remain.

CONVERSATION III

THE GLEN

Behind the house that Lucy lived in, there was a path, winding among trees, which was a very pleasant path to take a walk in. Lucy and Royal often went to take a walk there. They almost always went that way when Miss Anne could go with them, for she liked the place very much. It led to a strange sort of a place, where there were trees, and high, rocky banks, and a brook running along in the middle, with a broad plank to go across. Miss Anne called it the glen.

One morning Miss Anne told Lucy that she was going to be busy for two hours, and that after that she was going to take a walk down to the glen; and that Lucy might go with her, if she would like to go. Of course Lucy liked the plan very much. When the time arrived, they set off, going out through the garden gate. Miss Anne had a parasol in one hand and a book in the other. Lucy ran along before her, and opened the gate.

They heard a voice behind them calling out,

“Miss Anne, where are you going?”

They looked round. It was Royal, sitting at the window of a little room, where he used to study.

“We are going to take a walk, – down to the glen,” said Miss Anne.

“I wish you would wait for me,” said Royal, “only a few minutes; the sand is almost out.”

He meant the sand of his hour-glass; for he had an hour-glass upon the table, in his little room, to measure the time for study. He had to study one hour in the afternoon, and was not allowed to leave his room until the sand had all run out.

“No,” said Lucy, in a loud voice, calling out to Royal; “we can’t wait.”

“Perhaps we had better wait for him,” said Miss Anne, in a low voice, to Lucy. “He would like to go with us. And, besides, he can help you across the brook.”

Lucy seemed a little unwilling to wait, but on the whole she consented; and Miss Anne sat down upon a seat in the garden, while Lucy played about in the walks, until Royal came down, with his hatchet in his hand. They then walked all along together.

When they got to the glen, Miss Anne went up a winding path to a seat, where she used to love to sit and read. There was a beautiful prospect from it, all around. Royal and Lucy remained down in the little valley to play; but Miss Anne told them that they must not go out of her sight.

“But how can we tell,” said Royal, “what places you can see?”

“O,” said Miss Anne, “look up now and then, and if you can see me, in my seat, you will be safe. If you can see me, I can see you.”

“Come,” said Royal, “let us go down to the bridge, and go across the brook.”

The plank which Royal called a bridge, was down below the place where Miss Anne went up to her seat, and Royal and Lucy began to walk along slowly towards it.

“But I am afraid to go over that plank,” said Lucy.

“Afraid!” said Royal; “you need not be afraid; it is not dangerous.”

“I think it *is* dangerous,” said Lucy; “it bends a great deal.”

“Bends!” exclaimed Royal; “the bending does no harm. I will lead you over as safe as dry ground. Besides, there is something over there that I want to show you.”

“What is it?” said Lucy.

“O, something,” said Royal.

“I don’t believe there is anything at all,” said Lucy, “any more than there was under your cap.”

“O Lucy! there was something under my cap.”

“No, there wasn’t,” said Lucy.

“Yes, that great, flat stone.”

"*In* your cap, I mean," said Lucy; "that wasn't *in* your cap."

"*In!*" said Royal; "that is a very different sort of a preposition."

"I don't know what you mean by a preposition," said Lucy; "but I know you told me there was something in your cap, and that is what I came out to see."

"*Under*, Lucy; I said *under*."

"Well, you meant *in*; I verily believe you meant *in*."

Lucy was right. Royal did indeed say *under*, but he meant to have her understand that there was something *in* his cap, and lying upon the great, flat stone.

"And so you told me a falsehood," said Lucy.

"O Lucy!" said Royal, "I would not tell a falsehood for all the world."

"Yes, you told me a falsehood; and now I don't believe you about anything over the brook. For Miss Anne told me, one day, that when anybody told a falsehood, we must not believe them, even if they tell the truth."

"O Lucy! Lucy!" said Royal, "I don't believe she ever said any such a word."

"Yes she did," said Lucy. But Lucy said this rather hesitatingly, for she felt some doubt whether she was quoting what Miss Anne had told her, quite correctly.

Here, however, the children arrived at the bridge, and Royal was somewhat at a loss what to do. He wanted very much to go over, and to have Lucy go over too; but by his not being perfectly honest before, about what was under his cap, Lucy had lost her confidence in him, and would not believe what he said. At first he thought that if she would not go with him, he would threaten to go off and leave her. But in a moment he reflected that this would make her cry, and that would cause Miss Anne to come down from her seat, to see what was the matter, which might lead to ever so much difficulty. Besides, he thought that he had not done exactly right about the cap story, and so he determined to treat Lucy kindly.

"If I manage gently with her," said he to himself, "she will want to come across herself pretty soon."

Accordingly, when Royal got to the plank, he said,

"Well, Lucy, if you had rather stay on this side, you can. I want to go over, but I won't go very far; and you can play about here."

So Royal went across upon the plank; when he had got to the middle of it, he sprang up and down upon it with his whole weight, in order to show Lucy how strong it was. He then walked along by the bank, upon the other side of the brook, and began to look into the water, watching for fishes.

Lucy's curiosity became considerably excited by what Royal was constantly saying about his fishes. First he said he saw a dozen little fishes; then, going a little farther, he saw two pretty big ones; and Lucy came down to the bank upon her side of the brook, but she could not get very near, on account of the bushes. She had a great mind to ask Royal to come and help her across, when all at once he called out very eagerly,

"O Lucy! Lucy! here is a great turtle, – a monster of a turtle, as big as the top of my head. Here he goes, paddling along over the stones."

"Where? where?" said Lucy. "Let me see. Come and help me across, Royal."

Royal ran back to the plank, keeping a watch over the turtle, as well as he could, all the time. He helped Lucy across, and then they ran up to the place, and Royal pointed into the water.

"There, Lucy! See there! A real turtle! See his tail! It is as sharp as a dagger."

It was true. There was a real turtle resting upon the sand in a shallow place in the water. His head and his four paws were projecting out of his shell, and his long, pointed tail, like a rudder, floated in the water behind.

"Yes," said Lucy. "I see him. I see his head."

"Now, Lucy," said Royal, "we must not let him get away. We must make a pen for him. I can make a pen. You stay here and watch him, while I go and get ready to make a pen."

“How can you make it?” said Lucy.

“O, you’ll see,” said Royal; and he took up his hatchet, which he had before laid down upon the grass, and went into the bushes, and began cutting, as if he was cutting some of them down.

Lucy remained some time watching the turtle. He lay quite still, with his head partly out of the water. The sun shone upon the place, and perhaps that was the reason why he remained so still; for turtles are said to like to bask in the beams of the sun.

After a time, Royal came to the place with an armful of stakes, about three feet long. He threw them down upon the bank, and then began to look around for a suitable place to build his pen. He chose, at last, a place in the water, near the shore. The water there was not deep, and the bottom was sandy.

“This will be a good place,” he said to Lucy. “I will make his pen here.”

“How are you going to make it?” said Lucy.

“Why, I am going to drive these stakes down in a kind of a circle, so near together that he can’t get out between them; and they are so tall that I know he can’t get over.”

“And how are you going to get him in?” said Lucy.

“O, I shall leave one stake out, till I get him in,” answered Royal. “We can drive him in with long sticks. But you must not mind me; you must watch the turtle, or he will get away.”

So Royal began to drive the stakes. Presently Lucy said that the turtle was stirring. Royal looked, but he found he was not going away, and so he went on with his work; and before long he had a place fenced in with his stakes, about as large round as a boy’s hoop. It was all fenced, excepting in one place, which he left open to get the turtle through.

The two children then contrived, by means of two long sticks, which Royal cut from among the bushes, to get the turtle into his prison. The poor reptile hardly knew what to make of such treatment. He went tumbling along through the water, half pushed, half driven.

When he was fairly in, Royal drove down the last stake in the vacant space which had been left. The turtle swam about, pushing his head against the bars in several places; and when he found that he could not get out, he remained quietly in the middle.

“There,” said Royal, “that will do. Now I wish Miss Anne would come down here, and see him. I should like to see what she would say.”

Miss Anne did come down after a while; and when the children saw her descending the path, they called out to her aloud to come there and see. She came, and when she reached the bank opposite to the turtle pen, she stood still for a few minutes, looking at it, with a smile of curiosity and interest upon her face; but she did not speak a word.

CONVERSATION IV

A PRISONER

After a little while, they all left the turtle, and went rambling around, among the rocks and trees. At last Royal called out to them to come to a large tree, where he was standing. He was looking up into it. Lucy ran fast; she thought it was a bird's nest. Miss Anne came along afterwards, singing. Royal showed them a long, straight branch, which extended out horizontally from the tree, and said that it would be an excellent place to make a swing.

"So it would," said Miss Anne, "if we only had a rope."

"I've got a rope at home," said Royal, "if Lucy would only go and get it, – while I cut off some of the small branches, which are in the way."

"Come, Lucy," he continued, "go and get my rope. It is hanging up in the shed."

"O no," said Lucy; "I can't reach it."

"O, you can get a chair," said Royal; "or Joanna will hand it to you; she will be close by, in the kitchen. Come, Lucy, go, that is a good girl; and I'll pay you."

"What will you give me?" said Lucy.

"O, I don't know; but I'll give you something."

But Lucy did not seem quite inclined to go. She said she did not want to go so far alone; though, in fact, it was only a very short distance. Besides, she had not much confidence in Royal's promise.

"Will you go, Lucy, if I will promise to give you something?" said Miss Anne.

"Yes," said Lucy.

"Well, I will," said Miss Anne; "I can't tell you *what*, now, for I don't know; but it shall be something you will like."

"But, Royal," she added, "what shall we do for a seat in our swing?"

"Why, we must have a board – a short board, with two notches. I know how to cut them."

"Yes, if you only had a board; but there are no boards down here. I think you had better go with Lucy, and then you can bring down a board."

Royal said that it would take some time to saw off the board, and cut the notches; and, finally, they concluded to postpone making the swing until the next time they came down to the glen; and then they would bring down whatever should be necessary, with them.

As they were walking slowly along, after this, towards home, Royal said something about Lucy's not being willing to go for *his* promise, as well as for Miss Anne's, – which led to the following conversation: —

Lucy. I don't believe you were going to give me anything at all.

Royal. O Lucy! – I was, – I certainly was.

Lucy. Then I don't believe that it would be anything that I should like.

Royal. But I don't see how you could tell anything about it, unless you knew what it was going to be.

Lucy. I don't believe it would be anything; do you, Miss Anne?

Miss Anne. I don't know anything about it. I should not think that Royal would break his promise.

Lucy. He does break his promises. He won't mend old Margaret's nose.

Royal. Well, Lucy, that is because my putty has all dried up. I am going to do it, just as soon as I can get any more putty.

Lucy. And that makes me think about the thing in your cap. I mean to ask Miss Anne if you did not tell a falsehood. He said there was something in his cap, and there was nothing in it at all. It was only on the great, flat stone.

Royal. O, *under*, Lucy, *under*. I certainly said *under*.

Lucy. Well, you meant *in*; I know you did. Wasn't it a falsehood?

Miss Anne. Did he say *in*, or *under*?

Royal. *Under*, *under*; it was certainly *under*.

Miss Anne. Then I don't think it was exactly a falsehood.

Lucy. Well, it was as bad as a falsehood, at any rate.

Royal. Was it as bad as a falsehood, Miss Anne?

Miss Anne. Let us consider a little. Lucy, what do you think? Suppose he had said that there was really something *in* his cap, – do you think it would have been no worse?

Lucy. I don't know.

Miss Anne. I think it *would* have been worse.

Royal. Yes, a great deal worse.

Miss Anne. He *deceived* you, perhaps, but he did not tell a falsehood.

Lucy. Well, Miss Anne, and isn't it wrong for him to deceive me?

Miss Anne. I think it was unwise, at any rate.

Royal. Why was it unwise, Miss Anne? I wanted her to come out, and I knew she would like to be out there, if she would only once come. Besides, I thought it would make her laugh when I came to lift up my cap and show her that great, flat stone.

Miss Anne. And did she laugh?

Royal. Why, not much. She said she meant to go right into the house again.

Miss Anne. Instead of being pleased with the wit, she was displeased at being imposed upon.

Royal laughed.

Miss Anne. The truth is, *Royal*, that, though it is rather easier, sometimes, to get along by wit than by honesty, yet you generally have to pay for it afterwards.

Royal. How do we have to pay for it?

Miss Anne. Why, Lucy has lost her confidence in you. You cannot get her to go and get a rope for you by merely promising her something, while I can. She confides in me, and not in you. She is afraid you will find some ingenious escape or other from fulfilling it. Wit gives anybody a present advantage, but honesty gives a lasting power; so that the influence I have over Lucy, by always being honest with her, is worth a great deal more than all you can accomplish with your contrivances. So I think you had better keep your wits and your contrivances for turtles, and always be honest with men.

Royal. Men! Lucy isn't a man.

Miss Anne. I mean mankind – men, women, and children.

Royal. Well, about my turtle, Miss Anne. Do you think that I can keep him in his pen?

Miss Anne. Yes, unless he digs out.

Royal. Dig? – Can turtles dig much?

Miss Anne. I presume they can work into mud, and sand, and soft ground.

Royal. Then I must get a great, flat stone, and put into the bottom of his pen. He can't dig through that.

Miss Anne. I should rather make his pen larger, and then perhaps he won't want to get out. You might find some cove in the brook, where the water is deep, for him, and then drive your stakes in the shallow water all around it. And then, if you choose, you could extend it up upon the shore, and so let him have a walk upon the land, within his bounds. Then, perhaps, sometimes, when you come down to see him, you may find him up upon the grass, sunning himself.

Royal. Yes, that I shall like very much. It will take a great many stakes; but I can cut them with my hatchet. I'll call it my *turtle pasture*. Perhaps I shall find some more to put in.

Lucy. I don't think it is yours, altogether, *Royal*.

Royal. Why, I found him.

Lucy. Yes, but I watched him for you, or else he would have got away. I think you ought to let me own a share.

Royal. But I made the pen altogether myself.

Lucy. And I helped you drive the turtle in.

Royal. O Lucy! I don't think you did much good.

Miss Anne. I'll tell you what, Lucy; if Royal found the turtle and made the pen, and if you watched him and helped drive him in, then I think you ought to own about one third, and Royal two thirds.

Royal. Well.

Miss Anne. But, then, Royal, why would it not be a good plan for you to let her have as much of your share as will make hers half, and yours half, to pay her for the trouble you gave her by the cap story?

Royal. To pay her?

Miss Anne. Yes, – a sort of damages. Then, if you are careful not to deceive her any more, Lucy will pass over the old cases, and place confidence in you for the future.

Royal. Well, Lucy, you shall have half.

Lucy clapped her hands with delight at this concession, and soon after the children reached home. The next day, Royal and Lucy went down to see the turtle; and Royal made him a large pasture, partly in the brook and partly on the shore, and while he was doing it, Lucy remained, and kept him company.

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