YONGE CHARLOTTE MARY

LITTLE LUCY'S WONDERFUL GLOBE

Charlotte Yonge

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Little Lucy's Wonderful Globe:

Содержание

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CHAPTER I.
MOTHER BUNCH

There was once a wonderful fortnight in little Lucy's life. One evening she went to bed very tired and cross and hot, and in the morning when she looked at her arms and legs they were all covered with red spots, rather pretty to look at, only they were dry and prickly.

Nurse was frightened when she looked at them. She turned all the little sisters out of the night nursery, covered Lucy up close, and ordered her not to stir, certainly not to go into her bath. Then there was a whispering and a running about, and Lucy was half alarmed, but more pleased at being so important, for she did not feel at all ill, and quite enjoyed the tea and toast that Nurse brought up to her. Just as she was beginning to think it rather tiresome to lie there with nothing to do, except to watch the flies buzzing about, there was a step on the stairs and up came the doctor. He was an old friend, very good-natured, and he made fun with Lucy about having turned into a spotted leopard, just like the cowry shell on Mrs. Bunker's mantelpiece. Indeed, he said he thought she was such a curiosity that Mrs. Bunker would come for her and set her up in the museum, and then he went away. Suppose, oh, suppose she did!

Mrs. Bunker, or Mother Bunch, as Lucy and her brothers and

sisters called her, was housekeeper to their Uncle Joseph. He was really their great uncle, and they thought him any age you can imagine. They would not have been much surprised to hear that he had sailed with Christopher Columbus, though he was a strong, hale, active man, much less easily tired than their own papa. He had been a ship's surgeon in his younger days, and had sailed all over the world, and collected all sorts of curious things, besides which he was a very wise and learned man, and had made some great discovery. It was *not* America. Lucy knew that her elder brother understood what it was, but it was not worth troubling her head about, only somehow it made ships go safer, and so he had had a pension given him as a reward; and had come home and bought a house about a mile out of the town, and built up a high room to look at the stars from with his telescope, and another to try his experiments in, and a long one besides for his museum; yet, after all, he was not much there, for whenever there was anything wonderful to be seen, he always went off to look at it and; whenever there was a meeting of learned men—scientific men was the right word—they always wanted him to help them make speeches and show wonders. He was away now: he had gone away to wear a red cross on his arm, and help to take care of the wounded in the sad war between the French and Germans.

But he had left Mother Bunch behind him. Nobody knew exactly what was Mrs. Bunker's nation, indeed she could hardly be said to have had any, for she had been born at sea, and had been a sailor's wife; but whether she was mostly English, Dutch,

or Danish, nobody knew and nobody cared. Her husband had been lost at sea, and Uncle Joseph had taken her to look after his house, and always said she was the only woman who had sense and discretion enough ever to go into his laboratory or dust his museum.

She was very kind and good-natured, and there was nothing that the children liked better than a walk to Uncle Joseph's, and, after a game at play in the garden, a tea-drinking with her—such quantities of sugar! such curious cakes made in the fashion of different countries! such funny preserves from all parts of the world! and more delightful to people who considered that looking and hearing was better sport than eating, and that the tongue is not *only* meant to taste with, such cupboards and drawers full of wonderful things, such stories about them! The lesser ones liked Mrs. Bunker's room better than Uncle Joseph's museum, where there were some big stuffed beasts with glaring eyes that frightened them, and they had to walk round with hands behind, that they might not touch anything, or else their uncle's voice was sure to call out gruffly, "Paws off!"

Mrs. Bunker was not a bit like the smart housekeepers at other houses. To be sure, on Sundays she came out in a black silk gown with a little flounce at the bottom, a scarlet China crape shawl with a blue dragon upon it—his wings over her back, and a claw over each shoulder, so that whoever sat behind her in church was terribly distracted by trying to see the rest of him—and a very big yellow Tuscan bonnet, trimmed with sailor's blue ribbon; but

in the week and about the house she wore a green stuff, with a brown holland apron and bib over it, quite straight all the way down, for she had no particular waist, and her hair, which was of a funny kind of flaxen grey, she bundled up and tied round, without any cap or anything else on her head. One of the little boys had once called her Mother Bunch, because of her stories; and the name fitted her so well that the whole family, and even her master, took it up.

Lucy was very fond of her; but when about an hour after the doctor's visit she was waked by a rustling and a lumbering on the stairs, and presently the door opened, and the second best big bonnet—the go-to-market bonnet with the turned ribbons—came into the room with Mother Bunch's face under it, and the good-natured voice told her she was to be carried to Uncle Joseph's and have oranges and tamarinds, she did begin to feel like the spotted cowry, to think about being set on the chimney-piece, to cry, and say she wanted Mamma.

The Nurse and Mother Bunch began to comfort her, and explain that the doctor thought she had the scarlatina; not at all badly; but that if any of the others caught it, nobody could guess how bad they would be; especially Mamma, who had just been ill; and so she was to be rolled up in her blankets, and put into a carriage, and taken to her uncle's; and there she would stay till she was not only well, but could safely come home without carrying infection about with her.

Lucy was a good little girl, and knew that she must bear it; so,

though she could not help crying a little when she found she must not kiss any one, nay not even see them, and that nobody might go with her but Lonicera, her own washing doll, she made up her mind bravely; and she was a good deal cheered when Clare, the biggest and best of all the dolls, was sent in to her, with all her clothes, by Maude, her eldest sister, to be her companion,—it was such an honour and so very kind of Maude that it quite warmed the sad little heart.

So Lucy had her little scarlet flannel dressing gown on, and her shoes and stockings, and a wonderful old knitted hood with a tippet to it, and then she was rolled round and round in all her bed-clothes, and Mrs. Bunker took her up like a very big baby, not letting any one else touch her. How Mrs. Bunker got safe down all the stairs no one can tell, but she did, and into the fly, and there poor little Lucy looked back and saw at the windows Mamma's face, and Papa's, and Maude's, and all the rest, all nodding and smiling to her, but Maude was crying all the time, and perhaps Mamma was too.

The journey seemed very long; and Lucy was really tired when she was put down at last in a big bed, nicely warmed for her, and with a bright fire in the room. As soon as she had had some beef-tea, she went off soundly to sleep, and only woke to drink tea, and administer supper to the dolls, and put them to sleep.

The next evening she was sitting up by the fire, and on the fourth day she was running about the house as if nothing had ever been the matter with her, but she was not to go home for

a fortnight; and being wet, cold, dull weather, it was not always easy to amuse herself. She had her dolls, to be sure, and the little dog Don, to play with, and sometimes Mrs. Bunker would let her make funny things with the dough, or stone the raisins, or even help make a pudding; but still there was a good deal of time on her hands. She had only two books with her, and the rash had made her eyes weak, so that she did not much like reading them. The notes that every one wrote from home were quite enough for her. What she liked best—that is, when Mrs. Bunker could not attend to her—was to wander about the museum, explaining the things to the dolls: "That is a crocodile, Lonicera; it eats people up, and has a little bird to pick its teeth. Look, Clare, that bony thing is a skeleton—the skeleton of a lizard. Paws off, my dear; mustn't touch. That's amber, just like barley sugar, only not so nice; people make necklaces of it. There's a poor little dead fly inside. Those are the dear delightful humming-birds; look at their crests, just like Mamma's jewels. See the shells; aren't they beauties? People get pearls out of those great flat ones, and dive all down to the bottom of the sea after them; mustn't touch, my dear, only look; paws off."

One would think Clare's curved fingers all in one piece, and Lonicera's blue leather hands had been very movable and mischievous, judging by the number of times this warning came; but of course it was Lucy herself who wanted it most, for her own little plump, pinky hands did almost tingle to handle and turn round those pretty shells. She wanted to know whether the

amber tasted like barley-sugar as it looked, and there was a little musk deer, no bigger than Don, whom she longed to stroke, or still better to let Lonicera ride; but she was a good little girl, and had real sense of honour, which never betrays a trust, so she never laid a finger on anything but what Uncle Joe had once given all free leave to move.

This was a very big pair of globes—bigger than globes commonly are now, and with more frames round them—one great flat one, with odd names painted on it, and another brass one, nearly upright, going half-way round from top to bottom, and with the globe hung upon it by two pins, which Lucy's elder sisters called the poles, or the ends of the axis. The huge round balls went very easily with a slight touch, and there was something very charming in making them go whisk, whisk, whisk; now faster, now slower, now spinning so quickly that nothing on them could be seen, now turning slowly and gradually over and showing all that was on them.

The mere twirling was quite enough for Lucy at first, but soon she liked to look at what was on them. One she thought much more entertaining than the other. It was covered with wonderful creatures: one bear was fastened by his long tail to the pole; another bigger one was trotting round; a snake was coiling about anywhere; a lady stood disconsolate against a rock; another sat in a chair; a giant sprawled with a club in one hand and a lion's skin in the other; a big dog and a little dog stood on their hind legs; a lion seemed just about to spring on a young maiden's head; and

all were thickly spotted over, just as if they had Lucy's rash, with stars big and little: and still more strange, her brothers declared these were the stars in the sky, and this was the way people found their road at sea; but if Lucy asked how, they always said she was not big enough to understand, and it had not occurred to Lucy to ask whether the truth was not that they were not big enough to explain.

The other globe was all in pale green, with pink and yellow outlines on it, and quantities of names. Lucy had had to learn some of these names for her geography, and she did not want to think of lessons now, so she rather kept out of the way of looking at it at first, till she had really grown tired of all the odd men and women and creatures upon the celestial sphere; but by and by she began to roll the other by way of variety.

CHAPTER II.
VISITORS FROM THE SOUTH SEAS

"Miss Lucy, you're as quiet as a mouse. Not in any mischief?" said Mrs. Bunker, looking into the museum; "why, what are you doing there?"

"I'm looking at the great big globe, that Uncle Joe said I might touch," said Lucy: "here are all the names just like my lesson book at home; Europe, Asia, Africa, and America."

"Why, bless the child! where else should they be? There be all the oceans and seas besides that I've crossed over, many's the time, with poor Ben Bunker, who was last seen off Cape Hatteras."

"What, all these great green places, with Atlantic and Pacific on them; you don't really mean that you've sailed over them! I should like to make a midge do it in a husk of hemp-seed! How could you, Mother Bunch? You are not small enough."

"Ho! ho!" said the housekeeper, laughing; "does the child think I sailed on that very globe there?"

"I know one learns names," said Lucy; "but is it real?"

"Real! Why, Missie, don't you see it's a sort of a picture? There's your photograph now, it's not as big as you, but it shows you; and so a chart, or a map, or a globe, is just a picture of the

shapes of the coast-line of the land and the sea, and the rivers in them, and mountains, and the like. Look you here:" and she made Lucy stand on a chair and look at a map of her own town that was hanging against the wall, showing her all the chief buildings, the churches, streets, the town hall, and market cross, and at last helping her to find her own Papa's house.

When Lucy had traced all the corners she had to turn in going from home to Uncle Joe's, and had even found little frizzles for the five lime-trees before the Vicarage, she understood that the map was a small picture of the situation of the buildings in the town, and thought she could find her way to some new place, suppose she studied it well.

Then Mrs. Bunker showed her a big map of the whole country, and there Lucy found the river, and the roads, and the names of the villages near, as she had seen or heard of them; and she began to understand that a map or globe really brought distant places into an exceedingly small picture, and that where she saw a name and a spot she was to think of houses and churches; that a branching black line was a flowing river full of water; a curve in, a pretty bay shut in with rocks and hills; a point jutting out, generally a steep rock with a lighthouse on it.

"And all these places are countries, Bunchey, are they, with fields and houses like ours?"

"Houses, ay, and fields, but not always so very like ours, Miss Lucy."

"And are there little children, boys and girls, in them all?"

"To be sure there are, else how would the world go on? Why, I've seen 'em by swarms, white or brown or black, running down to the shore, as sure as the vessel cast anchor; and whatever colour they were, you might be sure of two things, Miss Lucy, that they were all alike in."

"Oh, what, Mrs. Bunker?"

"Do please sit down, there's a good Mother Bunch, and tell me all about them."

"Why, in plenty of noise for one, and the other for wanting all they could get to eat. But they were little darlings, some of them, if I only could have got at them to make them a bit nicer. Some of them looked for all the world like the little bronze images Master has got in the museum, brought from Italy, and hadn't a rag more clothing neither. They were in India. Dear, dear, to see them tumble about in the surf!"

"O, what fun! what fun! I wish I could see them. Suppose I could."

"You would be right glad, Missie, I can tell you, if you had been three or four months aboard with nothing but dry biscuits and salt junk, and may be a tin of preserved vegetables just to keep it wholesome, to see the black fellows come grinning alongside with their boats and canoes all full of oranges and limes and shaddocks and cocoa-nuts. Doesn't one's mouth fairly water for them?"

"Do please sit down, there's a good Mother Bunch, and tell me all about them? Come, suppose you do."

"Suppose I did, Miss Lucy, and where would your poor uncle's preserved ginger be, that no one knows from real West Indian?"

"Oh, let me come into your room, and you can tell me all the time you are doing the ginger."

"It is very hot there, Missie."

"That will be more like some of the places. I'll suppose I'm there! Look, Mrs. Bunker, here's a whole green sea, all over the tiniest little dots. There can't be people in them."

"Dots? You'd hardly see all over one of those dots if you were in one. That's the South Sea Miss Lucy, and those are the loveliest isles, except, may be, the West Indies, that ever I saw."

"Tell me about them, please," entreated Lucy "Here's one; its name is—is Ysabel—such a little wee one."


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Lucy had a great sneezing fit, and when she looked again into the smoke, what did she see but two little black figures.

"I can't tell you much of those South Sea Isles, Missie, being that I only made one voyage among them, when Bunker chartered the *Penguin* for the sandal-wood trade; and we did not touch at many, being that the natives were fierce and savage, and made nothing of coming down with arrows and spears at a boat's crew. So we only went to such islands as the missionaries had been at, and got the people to be more civil and conformable."

"Tell me all about it," said Lucy, following the old woman hither and thither as she bustled about, talking all the time, and stirring her pan of ginger over the hot plate.

How it happened, it is not easy to say; the room was very warm, and Mother Bunch went on talking as she stirred, and a steam rose up, and by and by it seemed to Lucy that she had a great sneezing fit, and when she looked again into the smoke, what did she see but two little black figures, faces, heads, and feet all black, but with an odd sort of white garment round their waists, and some fine red and green feathers sticking out of their woolly heads.

"Mrs. Bunker, Mrs. Bunker," she cried, "what's this? who are these ugly figures?"

"I am so glad to see you. Hush, Don! don't bark so!"

"Ugly!" said the foremost; and though it must have been some strange language, it sounded like English to Lucy. "Is that the way little white girl speaks to boy and girl that have come all the way from Ysabel to see her?"

"Oh, indeed! little Ysabel boy, I beg your pardon. I didn't know you were real, nor that you could understand me! I am so glad to see you. Hush, Don! don't bark so!"

"Pig, pig, I never heard a pig squeak like that," said the black stranger.

"Pig! It is a little dog. Have you no dogs in your country?"

"Pigs go on four legs. That must be pig."

"What, you have nothing that goes on four legs but a pig! What do you eat, then, besides pig?"

"Yams, cocoa-nut, fish—oh, so good, and put pig into hole among hot stones, make a fire over, bake so nice!"

"You shall have some of my tea and see if that is as nice," said Lucy. "What a funny dress you have; what is it made of?"

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.