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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Toys

Now one autumn when people were beginning to think about Christmas and get ready for it, the Toy Shop was filled with toys.

There were big rubber balls, middle-sized balls, and little balls; and every one of them could bounce higher than a man's head.

And there were dolls, the most beautiful that you can imagine. Some of them were almost as large as a real baby; and the smallest doll was no longer than the Toy-Lady's finger, but she could stand alone.

There were tea-sets, too. The prettiest one was blue with gold bands around every little cup and saucer and plate. The sugar bowl and cream pitcher and tea pot had gold on their handles as well.

All the little girls who came to the Toy Shop looked with longing eyes at the blue-and-gold tea-set.

There was a green wagon with red wheels, the only one in the shop, because wagons take up so much room that the Toy-Lady had to sell one before she got another.

Boys liked the wagon, and they liked the pony-reins with jingling bells. The Toy-Lady had plenty of those. She had velocipedes and sleds, too, and rocking-horses; two beautiful white ones with a little seat between them where a child could sit and ride.

Or if you liked toys that make music, you could find them all at the Toy Shop: gay tin horns striped blue-and-silver, French harps and doll-pianos, merry drums, and music boxes. The music-boxes played tiny tinkling tunes that sounded like little birds twittering and chirping or like little brooks running over pebbles. Then there was a box, fastened tight, that had a surprise in it, and what the surprise was you shall know by and by.

But now you must hear about the white porcelain swan with its beautiful arching neck. It looked as if it had come straight from Fairyland. In the Toy Shop, it sat on a make-believe lake, which

was a looking-glass with little shells all around it; but the swan could float in water. All the toys that you can name were in the Toy Shop: pin-wheels that whirled, banks to keep money in, blocks to build with, big tin tops that sang like great sleepy bees when they spun, dozens and dozens of marbles, and many another

toy besides. When they were all in place on the shelves and counter and table and floor, and the window was trimmed her very best, the Toy-Lady was proud of the Toy Shop. Then oh, how busy she was! All day long, and every day, people came tip-tap down the little stair to buy the toys.

