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Ann's Funny Fingers

Laura Rountree Smith

*"It is just as jolly to work as play,"
said the Funny Fingers to Ann one day.*

Little Ann looked down at her fingers, surprised to find they had voices and could talk to her. She got out the old dishpan and said:

*"I wash dishes every day in the year,
I wish the Fairies would help me here."*

Then the Funny Fingers began to dance this way and that way, and they shouted:

*"Each Funny Finger, it appears,
Has helped you work for years and years."*

Then the Funny Fingers began to wash a blue plate, cup, and saucer, and they said:

*"This is interesting as can be,
For the blue china came over the sea."*

"Dear me," said Ann, "even the dishes seem to have a story to tell today." Soon they were all washed and piled away neatly, and Ann put wood in the old kitchen stove as the Funny Fingers cried:

*"Even Funny Fingers have to learn,
How to make a fire burn."*

Then they suggested:

*"The Funny Fingers take a broom,
And skillfully they sweep a room."*

Ann sang a little song as she swept the kitchen, and then she said:

*"I hate to practice, as you know,
But to the piano, I must go."*

She hurried to the piano when her little kitchen tasks were done, and thump, thump went her fingers over the keys.

The Funny Fingers shouted as though they were talking to themselves:



*"She stumbles so, and seldom tries,
Though this is really our exercise."*

"Your exercise," cried Ann; "why, I thought it was my exercise. I will try to be more careful, then." She began to count, "One, two, one, two," and the music sounded much better.

In half an hour, the exercise really sounded like a pretty little piece, and the Funny Fingers suggested:

*"Always be careful, if you please,
When you place us on the piano keys."*

Ann laughed softly as the Funny Fingers continued:

*"The Funny Fingers like to play,
A little game—come try croquet."*

So, Ann put on her sunbonnet and went out and played a funny little game of croquet with the red ball and the green ball, and the Funny Fingers, and the red ball won the game.

By and by, she was tired and curled up in the hammock and fell asleep.

Mother came home from town and found the dishes washed and the fire burning merrily, the kitchen floor swept as neat as a pin.

The music book was open on the piano, so she knew Ann had practiced her lesson. She even saw the croquet balls outside, and she knew the Funny Fingers had had some fun as well as work. Mother put a package in little Ann's lap.

When Ann woke, she cried, "Oh, my, what a surprise!"

She could hardly wait to open the package, which said in large letters upon it, "For the Funny Fingers."

In the package was a pair of brown kid gloves.

The Funny Fingers said:

*"They're pretty gloves, she deserves them too,
For useful things her fingers do;
Happy at work, and happy at play,*

Sing the Funny Fingers every day."

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