



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Building-blocks

Maud Lindsay

Once, there were some children who had so many toys that they did not know what to do with them all. Perhaps this was the reason that the blocks were soon scattered from one end of the house to the other.

Nurse stepped on a block that had been left in a dark hall and turned her ankle; the baby tumbled over a heap of them on the nursery floor. Cook almost fell down the cellar stairs because there was a block on a step, and Father stubbed his toe against one when he came in at the front door.

It was too bad, Mother said, and she made the children pick up all the blocks and put them in a basket. When this was done, she set the basket on the highest shelf of the nursery closet.

There it stayed until one day when the rain came pouring down and the children had to stay indoors.

They stood at the nursery windows with their noses pressed against the panes and watched the rain until they were tired. Just then, Mother came in and took the basket of blocks from the shelf.

"The one who builds the best house and the prettiest shall have a prize," she said, and the children were as glad to see the blocks as if they had been a brand-new present.

Mother thought it would be more fun if only one child built at a time, and she counted the children out with a nonsense rhyme to see who should have the first turn. The names of all the children were in the rhyme:

"Willykin-Billykin, bouncing B, Manikin-Danikin, dancing D. Pollykin, Peterkin, O dear me! In comes a little mouse and out—goes—he!"

The count fell on Willykin-Billykin, who was really Billy. He made a lighthouse with a strong foundation and a tall tower, and he pasted a little circle of yellow paper on the block next to the roof to show where the light was.

“When I am a man, I shall be a lighthouse-keeper, I think,” he told the other children. “You can come in a boat to see me.”



When Peter’s turn came, he built a grand hotel with a great many windows, doors, and chimneys, and put his toy automobile in front of it.

Polly’s house was for mothers and fathers and children to live in. It was not large, but it had a big chimney and a porch to sit on when the weather was pleasant, Polly said.

Little man Dan built a pigeon-house because he liked pigeons. And that was a very good reason, I think. Don’t you?

“I have to build it high to keep the cats out,” he said, and he made his pigeon-house almost as tall as Billy’s lighthouse.

Mother and Nurse were the ones to say which house was the prettiest and the best, but they could not tell.

“Such good builders must all have prizes,” said Mother, so she gave each child a brown sugary ginger-cake right out of Cook’s oven.

By this time, the rain had stopped and the sun was shining. But before the children ran outdoors to play, they put the blocks back into the basket, and Mother set it up on the highest shelf of the nursery closet to stay until the next rainy day.

“I love rainy day playthings, don’t you, Mother?” said little man Dan.



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