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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Pony-reins

Maud Lindsay

A pony-reins, with jingling bells, for his little grandson, whose name was Davy. And Davy would have liked nothing better for a present if only he had had somebody to play "Pony" with him.

His baby brother was too young, and his nurse was too fat. His father worked downtown all day, and, though his mother could play almost anything else, she said she did not believe she would be a good pony. She could not run fast enough. Davy wanted a pony that could run very fast, and trot and gallop and prance. "Perhaps you can catch a pony when you go to the park to play," said his mother.

So when he went to the park with Nurse and the baby, he took the reins with him.

The park was full of children, but Davy did not know any of them, for he had just come to live in the city.

He had felt very shy and lonely, and had kept close to Nurse's side until the day when he took the pony-reins with him. He was too busy then looking out for a pony to think of anything else.

"Who wants to be a pony?" he called, waving the reins till the bells jingled. "Who wants to be a pony?" And every little boy who heard him call wanted to be that very thing.

There was a little boy in a sailor suit, a little boy with a blue tie, and a little boy whose shoes were brand-new. Davy liked all of them, but he did not know which one to take for a pony.

"Who can run the fastest?" asked Nurse to help him out; but every one of those little boys was sure that he was the fastest runner.

"Just watch me," said the little boy in the sailor suit, and he ran down the walk so fast that he frightened the park pigeons from their breakfast.

"Just watch me," said the little boy with the blue tie and off he went. And off



went the little boy whose shoes were new. Clatter! Clatter!

Davy ran after them. "I'll catch a pony now. I'll catch a pony now," he shouted.

But though the boys wanted so much to play with the jingling pony-reins, they were not going to let Davy catch them so easily as he thought. No indeed! Not if they could help it. They galloped this way and that way, and kicked up their heels like very wild horses.

Davy would have to run fast himself to catch those ponies. He did run fast, this way and that way, calling, "Whoa! Pony. Whoa!"

He almost caught the boy with the blue tie as he darted around the elm-tree; he almost caught the boy whose shoes were new, by the barberry-bushes. And he did catch the boy in the sailor suit over by the stone bench. Hurrah!

"Now you're my pony," he said as he put the reins on him.

"Yes," said Nurse, who had been watching all the while. "And if the other boys will wait in the stable behind the bench, they can be ponies by and by, can't they?"

"Oh, yes, and I'll be one sometimes, and the boys can drive me," said Davy.

All the morning long, ponies were running and galloping and trotting in the park, or resting in the stable behind the bench; and when it was time to go home, the little boys were sorry to part with each other.

"Goodbye, goodbye," said Davy as he went off jingling the pony-reins.

Oh, what a nice present his grandfather had given him!

"But we can play again tomorrow."

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