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Allie Baa's Letter

Mary Graham Bonner

Allie Baa's full name was Alice Gustava Ariel Star Jewel Bright Carol Carmen Cucumber-Green—but she had always been called Allie Baa for short. She was a rag doll, and she had belonged to her mother since childhood. Her mother was a grown-up lady now, but she had kept Allie all these years, and whenever little girls came to call, Allie was brought out and made friends immediately.

That summer, Allie's mother went to the seashore and left Allie in charge of the city apartment. She was to keep watch and see that all was safe.

When Great-Aunt Mary's birthday arrived, Allie's mother sent a gift as she always did—some comfortable pillows for the porch where her great-aunt loved to sit, with a little card tucked in: *To Dear Great-Aunt Mary, with love and many happy returns, from Allie Baa.*

In the birthday excitement, Great-Aunt Mary didn't notice the card. She opened the pillows, enjoyed them, and assumed they were from someone else entirely. But the next day, sorting through her cards, she found the little note—and realized her mistake.

So she sat right down and wrote Allie a letter.

My dear Allie Baa,

I find this morning that the pillows are from you, so please accept my warmest thanks for your sensible, most useful, pretty gift. Yesterday, when I received my presents, it was a distinct loss not to find something from you, and I thought perhaps you were too hot to shop, or had some other good reason. But I am glad I thought wrongly—you did remember me as of old.



I shall think of you whenever I lie, sit, or lean against these pillows.

I suppose you are in the city this summer, as I have heard nothing of any ocean dips on your part. Perhaps salt water might not agree with you. It is well to be cautious! You might feel the responsibility of guarding the apartment, but you have a calm, brave, quiet nature, and I feel sure you won't have a nervous

breakdown.

With love and thanks,

Affectionately,

GREAT-AUNT MARY

Allie's mother brought the letter up to town on her next visit—Allie couldn't very well answer the door for the postman herself. And when the letter was read to her, Allie smiled in her rag-doll way, and the paint on her face cracked just a little with joy.

She sent word back with her mother: that she was so happy with the letter, and that she hoped Great-Aunt Mary would have many, many happy returns, for she was the best Great-Aunt Mary that had ever lived.

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