

LITTLE STORIES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE

The Children's Secret

By AUNT JULIA

THREE young heads were huddled together over a shining coconut shell bank.

"Ernie, break it open with this bolo," Irma whispered.

"Spread out, I might hit you," Ernie warned in low excited tones.

"Do not hit very hard You might awaken Mother." This from Frida.

Ernie raised the bolo and brought it down with all his strength. Centavos black with age and green with mold rolled in all directions.

"Let us see how much we have," Irma suggested. Each got a handful and counted. With a fine stick Irma wrote the numbers on the ground and added them up.

"Two pesos and sixty-six centavos," Irma announced.

Frida, the youngest of the three, rushed upstairs and into Mother's room.

"Mother, Mother! We have a secret."

"A secret? Then I suppose I should not ask what it is about."

"I shall not tell you about it. Sister and Brother will scold me if I do." Frida backed out of the room repeating, "It is a secret."

A few minutes later, the three children entered Mother's room. Finding Mother occupied, Irma suggested, "Mother, it is dark here. How would you like to do your darning out on the porch?"

"Let me carry your sewing basket for you," offered Ernie.



Mother got up and allowed herself to be dragged out by Frida.

Irma opened the wardrobe. The other two looked on.

"Mother has many *ternos*. She will not need any. Besides, our money will not be enough," Irma said.

They looked the dressing table over. Nothing was lacking there.

"Let us give her a birthday cake," Ernie suggested.

"Or some fruit," Frida put in.

Irma was silent. Being the oldest, she must decide for the other two.

"We must find out what Mother wants for a birthday gift," she finally said.

The children went out. They sat around Mother. She did not seem to notice them. They looked at one another. Ernie nudged at Irma and whispered,

"Go ahead, Sister, ask her

what she would like to have."

"Yes, Ate, go ahead," Frida urged.

"Mother," Irma began, "if . . . if a friend were to give you a gift, what would you rather have?"

"I should be thankful for anything," Mother answered. "Of course, I would rather get something useful and lasting. Why do you ask? I wonder if anybody would remember my birthday."

"Why . . ." the impulsive Frida blurted out, but she stopped when her brother poked

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BREAD AND CHEESE

By Doris and George Hauman

Here is a jolly fairy tale for even the smallest children. It tells in a gay, sprightly manner the story of Buttercup, a yellow cow, and Daisy, a little white lamb, who lived in a big blue barn under a smooth green hill. Life was very serene for them. They munched grass on the green hillside, lay under the crooked apple tree, and produced milk for Two Happy Children.

But Buttercup, being as near a fairy cow as any cow could be, had to obey the wishes of a Little Old Woman who lived on the other side of the hill. This Little Old Woman loved bread and cheese. Once Buttercup forgot, and a dreadful thing happened!

The book is attractively illustrated. The Haumans, parents as well as artists, seem to know just how to catch that irresistible humor which belongs in books of this happy age of childhood.

THE CHILDREN'S SECRET

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her on the side.

Irma got up and went in. The other two followed. A long conference was held. Then they went to their aunt.

"*Tia Ibana*, here is the money. Two-fifty in all." Irma placed the pile of centavos on the table. "Have it placed in a beautiful box."

On Sunday the children got up very early. They entered their mother's room on tiptoe. They swooned upon her on the bed and kissed her on the face and on the hair. After placing a box on Mother's lap, they sang,

"Happy birthday to you!

THE LOST MERRY-GO-ROUND

By Dorothy Lathrop

All children who love merry-go-rounds and the other fun-machines of childhood will find "The Lost Merry-Go-Round" a new and fascinating adventure into the world of imagination. The book contains a delightful collection of animal adventures which centers around the discovery of a grass-grown, rusty merry-go-round in Flittermouse Wood by children who were looking for a lost ball. While the children were playing with it, faint music was heard, and the merry-go-round began to move. And as each child clings to his chosen animal, the adventure stories are told—of Denny on the big dog; of Jim on the dragon which flies over the sea to Cockle Shell Island; of Peter on the bear; Rosemary on the Deer which go deeper into the woods, and so on.

The book has many interesting illustrations by the author. Pictures, in color and in black and white will delight the children.

L. V. R.

Happy birthday to you.

Happy birthday, dear Mother.

Happy birthday to you."

"That is our secret, Mother," Frida declared proudly.

"We got all the money in our bank," Ernie explained.

"Thank you, my darlings. This is a very pleasant surprise." She drew them all to her breast.

"Open the box now, Mother, and see if you like our gift." Irma suggested.

Mother carefully untied the golden ribbon and removed the pretty wrapper. Pressing the cardboard box, she asked, "Is it a little book?"

"No!" shouted Frida.

"Is it a birthday cake?"

LEGEND OF THE ROSAL

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close to Mother Nature. She formed them into pretty sets of petals and laid them upon the bowers of green which she had prepared. The Wind gathered the fragrances of the night and breathed them upon the newly-formed flowers which shone like soft stars in the evening darkness.

The next morning, the sun, peeping out of its mountain bed, spied the starry flowers. Touching them with his rays, he gave them lovely hearts of gold—his gift to Mother Nature's new creation. The bees and the butterflies hovered around the flowers, humming and buzzing with joy at the pretty sight.

This happened a long time ago. Today, when you go into your garden, do you ever notice the lovely flowers that glow so white and sweet among their leaves of dark green? Perhaps you call them the Rosal, but once upon a time, the velvet white petals that you touch and admire were the silver tips of stars.

"Oh, No. A cake is soon finished," Irma reminded her.

"Is it a box of powder?"

"Powder is soon used up," Ernie said.

"Well, dears, yours is a real secret and I am a poor guesser."

Lifting the lid, Mother saw a pretty, brown handbag. She opened it and found sixteen centavos in a tiny purse inside.

"This is what I call useful and lasting," she declared, holding up the handbag. "But what does the money mean?"

"Sixteen stands for the date of your birth," Irma explained. "The money also serves as a bait to attract more money. It means you will never find your bag empty."

"I see! My children know something their mother does not know. I like the gift and I love the givers."

The children were happy. They were also very proud because they could keep a secret.