



For Manoling's Teacher

“**L**OLA, please give me my cap,” Manoling said pulling his grandmother by the skirt.

“Why, where are you going?”

“To school. My cap, quick. I will be late.”

“To school? You? You are not yet four.” Big Sister laughed.

“Yes. Yes. See, I have ‘flowen’ for my ‘teachen.’”

“And who is your teacher?” Lola asked.

“My ‘teachen’ is beautiful. I shall give her some ‘flowen,’” Manoling boasted.

Father came in. “Come, Manoling, we shall take a bath.”

“I don’t want a bath!” The boy cried running to his grandmother.

Father picked up a slipper. “See this? This is for the boy who will not take a bath. Come.”

“I don’t want a bath,” Manoling repeated. “I am going to my ‘teachen.’” He mumbled burying his head in Lola’s lap.

Mother got up and reached for Manoling’s cap.

“Manoling, here is your cap. Aren’t you going to school?”

“Yes, Mother, but I do not want a bath,” he answered raising his head a little.

“Your teacher will like your cap, but she does not like dirty children,” Mother said very gently.

“Am I dirty, Mother?” Manoling stood up.

“Yes, dear, because you have been making mudcakes. You will be very clean and sweet after the bath.”

Manoling offered his hand to his mother and allowed himself to be led to the bathroom.