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YOUNG DAYS.

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GOING A JOURNEY.

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Four-leaved Clover

L. M. Montgomery

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ou don't mean to tell me,' said Uncle Jacob, looking horrified, 'that not one of you has ever found a four-leaved clover? Well, well, well!'

Bernice and Rachel, the twins, and Chrissy, the nine-year-old, looked as ashamed as they felt. Plainly, Uncle Jacob considered it a serious thing never to have found a four-leaved clover.

'I didn't know there was such a thing as a four-leaved clover,' said Chrissy, determined to make a clean breast of it.

Uncle Jacob shook his head.

'I've always had my suspicions about those city schools. What *do* they teach if they leave out such important things? Of course if you've never even heard of four-leaved clovers, you don't know how there came to be four-leaved clovers at all?'

No, they didn't; but they wanted to learn.

'Well, at least, you know that the queen of the fairies made all the clovers?' said Uncle Jacob.

The twins and Chrissy didn't really know that, either; but they kept silence. They were not going to display any more ignorance.

'One day she was making clovers at a great rate, being an industrious fairy; but somehow or other she made a mistake in counting, for, when she finished, she had a whole clover leaf left over. She thought it would be a terrible thing to waste it, being an economical fairy. In the midst of her perplexity she had a brilliant idea, being a clever fairy. She added the extra leaf to a clover and gave it the fairy blessing, being a kindly disposed fairy. And so, from that time out, whoever finds a four leaved clover is a very lucky person.

'Now,' concluded Uncle Jacob, 'I have a plan. Out there behind the orchard is a whole big meadow of clover. You three may look for four-leaved clovers to-morrow, and the one who finds the *first* four-leaved clover shall go with me to town, day after to-morrow, and we'll have a jamboree.'

The twins and Chrissy were immensely excited. They had only been a fortnight at Mount Hope Farm, but in that time they had learned what a jamboree with Uncle Jacob meant. All that night they dreamed of finding four-leaved clovers, and after breakfast the next morning they were ready for the clover meadow.

'Dear me!' said Aunt Mary, with a sigh, as she went through the hall, 'there's that bottle of medicine Dr. Fair left here last night for Teddy Andrews. It ought to go down this morning, but I don't see how ever I'm going to get time to take it.'

Chrissy heard her just as she was going out of the door. Chrissy stopped short. The twins were already scrambling over the fence. Chrissy thought of the jamboree

just once. Then she said,—

‘I’ll run down to the Andrews’ with Teddy’s medicine, aunty.’

‘Thank you, Chrissy. That will be a real help to me,’ said Aunt Mary, who didn’t know anything about the clover-leaf compact.

Uncle Jacob saw Chrissy starting off with the bottle. ‘Well, well, well!’ he said.

Chrissy had seen Teddy Andrews before, and felt very sorry for him. He was just seven, and was ill with spinal trouble. He had to lie on the sofa all the time. This morning she found him crying.

‘O Teddy, what’s the matter?’ she said.

‘Johnny said he would read to me the new fairy story Aunt May sent me this morning,’ sobbed Teddy, ‘and now he’s gone off fishing, and there’s nobody to read. And I’m so tired of being sick and lonesome.’

Chrissy in her mind’s eye saw the twins in clover. But she said, briskly:—

‘I’ll read it to you, Teddy-boy. Here, give me the book.’

Chrissy read all the morning. The story was a long one, and Teddy was wild to know the end. He listened with flushed cheeks and shining eyes; and, when Chrissy finished, he said: ‘Oh, thank you ever so much! It was just splendid. I’ll think about it all the afternoon and not be a bit lonesome.’

Chrissy promised to come again soon and read to him. Then she walked soberly home to dinner. She thought she had lost all chance of the jamboree; but, when the twins came into dinner, neither of them had yet found a four-leaved clover.

‘I’m afraid the fairy queen forgot to make any this year,’ said Rachel, sorrowfully.

After dinner, back hurried the determined twins. Chrissy stayed to help Aunt Mary with the dinner dishes, and then she, too, started for the field. In the yard she met Nora Lee.

‘Please, I’ve come to learn the song,’ said Nora, shyly.

Chrissy had met Nora in Sunday school the preceding Sunday, and struck up a fast friendship with her. She had promised that, if Nora came up to Mount Hope some day, she would teach her the loveliest new song she had learned in Sunday school at home. But she had not known Nora would come just when it was so necessary she should be looking for four-leaved clovers.

‘Come in,’ she said heartily. ‘We’ll go right at it.’

It was three o’clock before Nora had learned the song and gone home. Chrissy was tired and warm, but no twin had yet turned up with a four-leaved clover, and the jamboree was still to be won. As Chrissy went through the kitchen, Aunt Mary got up off the sofa with a sigh.

‘Dear me! I must make a cake for the men’s tea. And how my head does ache!’ For a moment Chrissy thought she couldn’t—no, she couldn’t. Then she did.

‘Aunty, I’ll make the cake, and you go and lie down. Oh, yes, indeed, you must! I can make plain cake splendidly, and I like doing it.’

‘You are the greatest little help that ever was, Chrissy,’ said Aunt Mary, gratefully. ‘I believe I’ll have to let you. I can hardly hold my head up. I’ll go and lie down upstairs.’

Chrissy lighted a fire, put on an apron, mixed the cake and baked it. Uncle Jacob looked in at the window once and saw her.

‘Well, well, well!’ he said to himself.

Then tea-time came, and, when the twins came in to tea, lo and behold! neither of them had yet found a four-leaved clover. But they were determined that they would.

Chrissy made her third start for the clover meadow; but she saw Aunt Mary, who hadn’t eaten anything at tea, and who had a little wrinkle of pain between her eyebrows, packing a basket in the pantry.

‘Where are you going with that basket, aunty?’ said Chrissy. ‘I don’t think you ought to be up at all. Please go and lie down.’

‘I must take this basket of eatables down to old Aunt Sally,’ said Aunt Mary. ‘She is very poor, and I fear she is out of provisions. I forgot about it before, so I mustn’t put it off any longer.’

‘I’ll take it down to Aunt Sally,’ said Chrissy.

‘Child, I’m afraid you are too tired. You’ve been running my errands all day, Chrissy.’

‘That is what nine-year-old legs are for,’ said Chrissy, laughing. ‘I’m not a bit tired and I haven’t a headache.’

Uncle Jacob saw Chrissy starting off with her basket, and he said, ‘Well, well, well!’

It was nearly dark when Chrissy got back. She was tired, and her face was a wee bit sober; for she knew it was too late now to look for lucky clovers. The dew was falling, and Aunt Mary never let them stay out after dewfall. Then Chrissy just happened to look down, and there at her feet was a big clump of clover. She bent over it and gave a joyful little cry. Right under her hand were three four-leaved clovers, such big, luxuriant clovers that they must have cost the fairy queen some economical twinges.

Chrissy picked the clovers, and her feet went twinkling up the lane, forgetting all about being tired. Uncle Jacob was sitting on the veranda, and the twins were there,

too, rather tired and cross.

‘Oh, girls,’ gasped Chrissy, ‘did you find any four-leaved clovers? I’ve found three!’

‘See, there, now,’ said Uncle Jacob, ‘I expected you would. It’s an odd thing—I forgot to comment on this before—that the folks who go looking for four-leaved clovers hardly ever seem to find them. It’s the folks who go about doing little duties and kindnesses and thinking about other people that find the luck. Well, Chrissy, we’ll have the jamboree, sure enough.’

Chrissy looked at the twins’ disappointed faces.

‘Please, Uncle Jacob,’ she said timidly, ‘can’t Rachel and Bernice go, too? You see, I found *three* clovers.’

‘So you did—so you did. That’s always the way. People like you find so much luck that it spills over into other people’s laps, even when they don’t deserve it. Yes, we’ll take the twins, too. Now run up to bed, and get your beauty sleep for tomorrow.’

And that night they all dreamed again of finding four-leaved clovers, but Chrissy slept with hers under her pillow.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

[The end of *Four-leaved Clover* by L. M. (Lucy Maud) Montgomery]