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HOW THE TWINS FOOLED MAMMA

A STORY FOR CHILDREN

By Florence Jones Hadley

It was the first of April, and the little folks in the Warren home had been whispering and laughing and having secrets from each other all the morning, and every little while the cry "April fool" would ring out, while shrieks of laughter made every one—except a certain one—turn to see what was the matter.

Suddenly Polly spoke up, in an excited little voice, "Do you know, Molly Warren, we have all been fooled in this house but our mamma? And I really can't think of a single way to fool her. Can you?"

"I guess it isn't very easy to fool our mamma—she's too smart. But can't you think of a single thing, Polly Warren? You might try, anyway."

Polly's brows drew together in a little frown, for she was trying hard to think. Molly always depended on her to do the thinking, especially where there was any mischief to be planned, or a way to be found out of some piece of work that they were expected to do. And, I am sorry to say, sometimes she had to think hard how to keep them both from punishment, for when there was any naughty thing done in the Warren house, you could be pretty certain it was done, not by Molly or Polly, but by Molly and Polly. And I am glad to say that neither ever tried to escape punishment by putting the blame all on the other, as some little girls would do. When they were naughty, they were naughty together, and when they were good, which often happened, they were good together.

But now she just could not think of a single thing that would be likely to fool mamma, and she gave it up. At last, feeling rather cross with Molly because that little girl said, petulantly, "I don't believe you tried one bit, so

there," after she had thought so hard, she kept perfectly still for five minutes.

But it was too long until Molly jumped up, clapping her hands. "Oh, Polly Warren, I have just the splendid idea! Let's go to the attic and dress up in some of grandma's funny old dresses, then go to the front door and ring the bell, just like real ladies," and away she flew to the attic, knowing well that Polly would follow.

Such a chattering as there was, such smothered little laughs, as they tried on different dresses, until they were ready at last. Then, stealing softly down the stairs, they went to the front door and rang the bell.

In a few minutes mamma opened the door, to find two strangely-dressed young—or were they old—ladies, who seemed to be trying hard to choke off little giggles by clapping partially-gloved hands over mouths that would persist in puckering, instead of being primly closed as they ought to be.

Mamma looked rather surprised and a little perplexed, as she saw her callers, but she smiled and invited them in, giving them the very best chairs—the chairs she would never let them sit on, as they were especially for callers.

"I am glad to see you," and mamma spoke just as she did to her really and truly callers. "I really did not look for callers to-day, and when I heard the doorbell ring, I was almost afraid it was an April-fool joke. But I am very glad, now, that I went," and again mamma smiled at the callers.

"But I do not believe I have the pleasure of knowing your names," she went on, then waited for the little girls to speak.

A giggle came from behind the

thick veil that covered Polly's round face.

"Why, you see, I am Mrs. White, and this lady," looking straight at Molly, is Mrs. Graham. We are neighbors, you see, and so we thought we'd call together."

"I'm so glad you did," smiled mamma, while Molly wriggled on her chair.

"Isn't your chair comfortable, Mrs. Graham? Perhaps?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am," and Molly actually caught her breath as she thought she might be obliged to leave that big "stuffed" chair.

Then again she fidgeted, while Polly remarked that she guessed they had better be going, as they had so many other calls to make.

But Molly was not quite ready to go, and pushing the black veil down until one blue eye peeped out, making her look so funny that Polly actually giggled, she asked:

"Have you any little girls, ma'am?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," and mamma laughed. "Perhaps you have heard of them—Molly and Polly Warren? I think nearly everybody has heard of them," and mamma laughed in such a way that the twins were not just sure what she meant.

"We haven't any little girls," and Polly sat up very straight. "I think they are 'stremely troublesome. Don't you?" with a side glance at her mother.

"Oh I don't know," mamma answered, as if she were rather in doubt.

"My little girls are very good—sometimes. But sometimes they do worry me dreadfully," with a sigh.

Polly tilted her chin, while Molly twisted uneasily about.

"How old are they?" from Molly.

"Well, really, I hardly know how to answer," and mamma looked puzzled.

"You see, they are different ages at different times." The twins opened their eyes very wide.

"When they wish to do something that I think is too hard for them, they say they are six years old; but when I want them to help me sometimes, or

when they are afraid to go to bed in the dark, they say they are only half-past five. So you see, I do not know just how old they are," and mamma looked very much puzzled.

There seemed to be nothing to say, after that, and the twins rose with more eagerness than mamma's callers usually showed, almost forgetting to bow and say "good afternoon."

But just as soon as they were safe in their own little room, Molly asked, breathlessly, "Do you really think we fooled her, Polly?"

And Polly sniffed, as she answered, "Didn't I tell you our mamma is too smart to be fooled, Polly Warren?"

The Vital Question

She—"What did papa say?"

He—"He said he couldn't answer until he put on his boots."

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