

THE BOBBSEY TWINS
OR
MERRY DAYS INDOORS
AND OUT

BY
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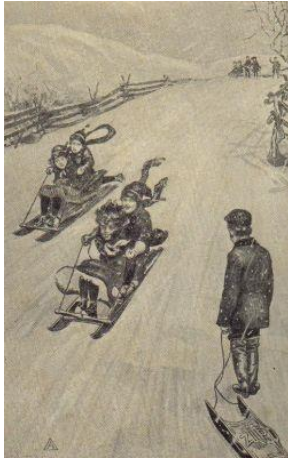
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"THE BOBBSEY TWINS AT THE SEASHORE," ETC.



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DOWN THE LONG HILL SWEEP THE TWO SLEDS.—

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THE BOBBSEY TWINS

CHAPTER I

THE BOBBSEY TWINS AT HOME

The Bobbsey twins were very busy that morning. They were all seated around the dining-room table, making houses and furnishing them. The houses were being made out of pasteboard shoe boxes, and had square holes cut in them for doors, and other long holes for windows, and had pasteboard chairs and tables, and bits of dress goods for carpets and rugs, and bits of tissue paper stuck up to the windows for lace curtains. Three of the houses were long and low, but Bert had placed his box on one end and divided it into five stories, and Flossie said it looked exactly like a "department" house in New York.

There were four of the twins. Now that sounds funny, doesn't it? But, you see, there were two sets. Bert and Nan, age eight, and Freddie and Flossie, age four.

Nan was a tall and slender girl, with a dark face and red cheeks. Her eyes were a deep brown and so were the curls that clustered around her head.

Bert was indeed a twin, not only because he was the same age as Nan, but because he looked so very much like her. To be sure, he looked like a boy, while she looked like a girl, but he had the same dark complexion, the same brown eyes and hair, and his voice was very much the same, only stronger.

Freddie and Flossie were just the opposite of their larger brother and sister. Each was short and stout, with a fair,

round face, light-blue eyes and fluffy golden hair. Sometimes Papa Bobbsey called Flossie his little Fat Fairy, which always made her laugh. But Freddie didn't want to be called a fairy, so his papa called him the Fat Fireman, which pleased him very much, and made him rush around the house shouting: "Fire! fire! Clear the track for Number Two! Play away, boys, play away!" in a manner that seemed very lifelike. During the past year Freddie had seen two fires, and the work of the firemen had interested him deeply.

The Bobbsey family lived in the large town of Lakeport, situated at the head of Lake Metoka, a clear and beautiful sheet of water upon which the twins loved to go boating. Mr. Richard Bobbsey was a lumber merchant, with a large yard and docks on the lake shore, and a saw and planing mill close by. The house was a quarter of a mile away, on a fashionable street and had a small but nice garden around it, and a barn in the rear, in which the children loved at times to play.

"I'm going to cut out a fancy table cover for my parlor table," said Nan. "It's going to be the finest table cover that ever was."

"Nice as Aunt Emily's?" questioned Bert. "She's got a—a dandy, all worked in roses."

"This is going to be white, like the lace window curtains," replied Nan.

While Freddie and Flossie watched her with deep interest, she took a small square of tissue paper and folded it up several times. Then she cut curious-looking holes in the folded piece with a sharp pair of scissors. When the paper was unfolded once more a truly beautiful pattern appeared.

"Oh, how lubby!" screamed Flossie. "Make me one, Nan!"

"And me, too," put in Freddie. "I want a real red one," and he brought forth a bit of red pin-wheel paper he had been saving.

"Oh, Freddie, let me have the red paper for my stairs," cried Bert, who had had his eyes on the sheet for some time.

"No, I want a table cover, like Nanny. You take the white paper."

"Whoever saw white paper on a stairs—I mean white carpet," said Flossie.

"I'll give you a marble for the paper, Freddie," continued Bert.

But Freddie shook his head. "Want a table cover, nice as Aunt Em'ly," he answered. "Going to set a flower on the table too!" he added, and ran out of the room. When he came back he had a flower-pot in his hand half the size of his house, with a duster feather stuck in the dirt, for a flower.

"Well, I declare!" cried Nan, and burst out laughing. "Oh, Freddie, how will we ever set that on such a little pasteboard table?"

"Can set it there!" declared the little fellow, and before Nan could stop him the flower-pot went up and the pasteboard table came down and was mashed flat.

"Hullo! Freddie's breaking up housekeeping!" cried Bert.

"Oh, Freddie! do take the flower-pot away!" came from Flossie. "It's too big to go into the house."

Freddie looked perplexed for a moment. "Going to play garden around the house. This is a—a lilac tree!" And he set

the flower-pot down close to Bert's elbow. Bert was now busy trying to put a pasteboard chimney on his house, and did not notice. A moment later Bert's elbow hit the flower-pot and down it went on the floor, breaking into several pieces and scattering the dirt over the rug.

"Oh, Bert! what have you done?" cried Nan, in alarm. "Get the broom and the dust-pan, before Dinah comes."

"It was Freddie's fault."

"Oh, my lilac tree is all gone!" cried the little boy. "And the boiler to my fire engine, too," he added, referring to the flower-pot, which he had used the day before when playing fireman.

At that moment, Dinah, the cook, came in from the kitchen.

"Well, I declar' to gracious!" she exclaimed. "If yo' chillun ain't gone an' mussed up de floah ag'in!"

"Bert broke my boiler!" said Freddie, and began to cry.

"Oh, never mind, Freddie, there are plenty of others in the cellar," declared Nan. "It was an accident, Dinah," she added, to the cook.

"Eberyting in dis house wot happens is an accident," grumbled the cook, and went off to get the dust-pan and broom. As soon as the muss had been cleared away Nan cut out the red table cover for Freddie, which made him forget the loss of the "lilac tree" and the "boiler."

"Let us make a row of houses," suggested Flossie. "Bert's big house can be at the head of the street." And this suggestion was carried out. Fortunately, more pasteboard boxes were to be had, and from these they made shade

trees and some benches, and Bert cut out a pasteboard horse and cart. To be sure, the horse did not look very lifelike, but they all played it was a horse and that was enough. When the work was complete they called Dinah in to admire it, which she did standing near the doorway with her fat hands resting on her hips.

"I do declar', it looks most tremend'us real," said the cook. "It's a wonder to me yo' chillun can make sech t'ings."

"We learned it in the kindergarten class at school," answered Nan.

"Yes, in the kindergarten," put in Flossie.

"But we don't make fire engines there," came from Freddie.

At this Dinah began to laugh, shaking from head to foot.

"Fire enjuns, am it, Freddie? Reckon yo' is gwine to be a fireman when yo' is a man, hey?"

"Yes, I'm going to be a real fireman," was the ready answer.

"An' what am yo' gwine to be, Master Bert?"

"Oh, I'm going to be a soldier," said Bert.

"I want to be a soldier, too," put in Freddie. "A soldier and a fireman."

"Oh, dear, I shouldn't want to be a soldier and kill folks," said Nan.

"Girls can't be soldiers," answered Freddie. "They have to get married, or be dressmakers, or sten'graphers, or something like that."

"You mean stenographers, Bert. I'm going to be a stenographer when I get big."

"I don't want to be any stenogerer," put in Flossie. "I'm going to keep a candy store, and have all the candy I want, and ice cream——"

"Me too!" burst in Freddie. "I'm going to have a candy store, an' be a fireman, an' a soldier, all together!"

"Dear! dear!" laughed Dinah. "Jess to heah dat now! It's wonderful wot yo' is gwine to be when yo' is big."

At that moment the front door bell rang, and all rushed to the hallway, to greet their mother, who had been down-town, on a shopping tour.

CHAPTER II

ROPE JUMPING, AND WHAT FOLLOWED

"Oh, mamma, what have you brought?" Such was the cry from all of the Bobbsey twins, as they gathered around Mrs. Bobbsey in the hallway. She had several small packages in her hands, and one looked very much like a box of candy.

Mrs. Bobbsey kissed them all before speaking. "Have you been good while I was gone?" she asked.

"I guess we tried to be good," answered Bert meekly.

"Freddie's boiler got broke, that's all," said Flossie. "Dinah swept up the dirt."

Before anything more could be said all were in the dining room and Mrs. Bobbsey was called upon to admire the row of houses. Then the box of candy was opened and each received a share.

"Now you had better go out and play," said the mother. "Dinah must set the table for dinner. But be sure and put on your thick coats. It is very cold and feels like snow."

"Oh, if only it would snow!" said Bert. He was anxious to try a sled he had received the Christmas before.

It was Saturday, with no school, so all of the boys and girls of the neighborhood were out. Some of the girls were skipping rope, and Nan joined these, while Bert went off to join a crowd of boys in a game of football.

"Let us play horse," suggested Freddie to Flossie. They had reins of red leather, with bells, and Freddie was the horse while his twin sister was the driver.

"I'm a bad horse, I'll run away if you don't watch me," cautioned Freddie, and began to prance around wildly, against the grape arbor and then up against the side fence.

"Whoa! whoa!" screamed Flossie, jerking on the reins. "Whoa, you naughty horse! If I had a whip, I'd beat you!"

"If you did that, I'd kick," answered Freddie, and began to kick real hard into the air. But at last he settled down and ran around the house just as nicely as any horse could. Then he snorted and ran up to the water bucket near the barn and Flossie pretended to give him a drink and some hay, and unharnessed him just as if he was a real steed.

Nan was counting while another girl named Grace Lavine jumped, Grace was a great jumper and had already passed forty when her mother called to her from the window.

"Grace, don't jump so much. You'll get sick."

"Oh, no, I won't," returned Grace. She was a headstrong girl and always wanted her own way.

"But jumping gave you a headache only last week," continued Mrs. Lavine. "Now, don't do too much of it," and then the lady closed the window and went back to her interrupted work.

"Oh, dear, mamma made me trip," sighed Grace. "I don't think that was fair."

"But your mamma doesn't want you to jump any more," put in another girl, Nellie Parks by name.

"Oh, she didn't say that. She said not to jump too much."

It was now Nan's turn to jump and she went up to twenty-seven and then tripped. Nellie followed and reached thirty-five. Then came another girl who jumped to fifty-six.

"I'm going a hundred this time," said Grace, as she skipped into place.

"Oh, Grace, you had better not!" cried Nan.

"You're afraid I'll beat you," declared Grace.

"No, I'm not. But your mamma said——"

"I don't care what she said. She didn't forbid my jumping," cut in the obstinate girl. "Are you going to turn or not?"

"Yes, I'll turn," replied Nan, and at once the jumping started. Soon Grace had reached forty. Then came fifty, and then sixty.

"I do believe she will reach a hundred after all," declared Nellie Parks, a little enviously.

"I will, if you turn steadily," answered Grace, in a panting voice. Her face was strangely pale.

"Oh, Grace, hadn't you better stop?" questioned Nan. She was a little frightened, but, nevertheless, kept on turning the rope.

"No!" puffed Grace. "Go—go on!"

She had now reached eighty-five. Nellie Parks was counting:

"Eighty-six, eighty-seven, eighty-eight, eighty-nine, ninety!" she went on. "Ninety-one-, ninety-two——"

"No—not so—so fast!" panted Grace. "I—I—oh!"

And then, just as Nellie was counting "Ninety-seven," she sank down in a heap, with her eyes closed and her face as white as a sheet.

For a moment the other girls looked on in blank wonder, not knowing what to make of it. Then Nan gave a scream.

"Oh, girls, she has fainted!"

"Perhaps she is dead!" burst out Nellie Parks. "And if she is, we killed her, for we turned the rope!"

"Oh, Nellie, please don't say that!" said Nan. She could scarcely speak the words.

"Shall I go and tell Mrs. Lavine?" asked another girl who stood near.

"No—yes," answered Nan. She was so bewildered she scarcely knew what to say. "Oh, isn't it awful!"

They gathered close around the fallen girl, but nobody dared to touch her. While they were there, and one had gone to tell Mrs. Lavine, a gentleman came up. It was Mr. Bobbsey, coming home from the lumber yard for lunch.

"What is the trouble?" he asked, and then saw Grace. "What happened to her?"

"She was—was jumping rope, and couldn't jump any more," sobbed Nan. "Oh, papa, she— isn't de—dead, is she?"

Mr. Bobbsey was startled and with good reason, for he had heard of more than one little girl dying from too much jumping. He took the limp form up in his arms and hurried to

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