

MY BOOK of DELIGHTS

Book Nine

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

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Libraries of Hope

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My Body and Growing Up in a Family







What Really Matters

My mother says she doesn't care
About the color of my hair
Or if my eyes are blue or brown
Or if my nose turns up or down.
She says she doesn't care for things like that.
        It doesn't really matter.

My mother says she doesn't care
If I'm dark or if I'm fair
Or if I'm thin or if I'm fat
She says she doesn't care for things like that.
        It doesn't really matter.

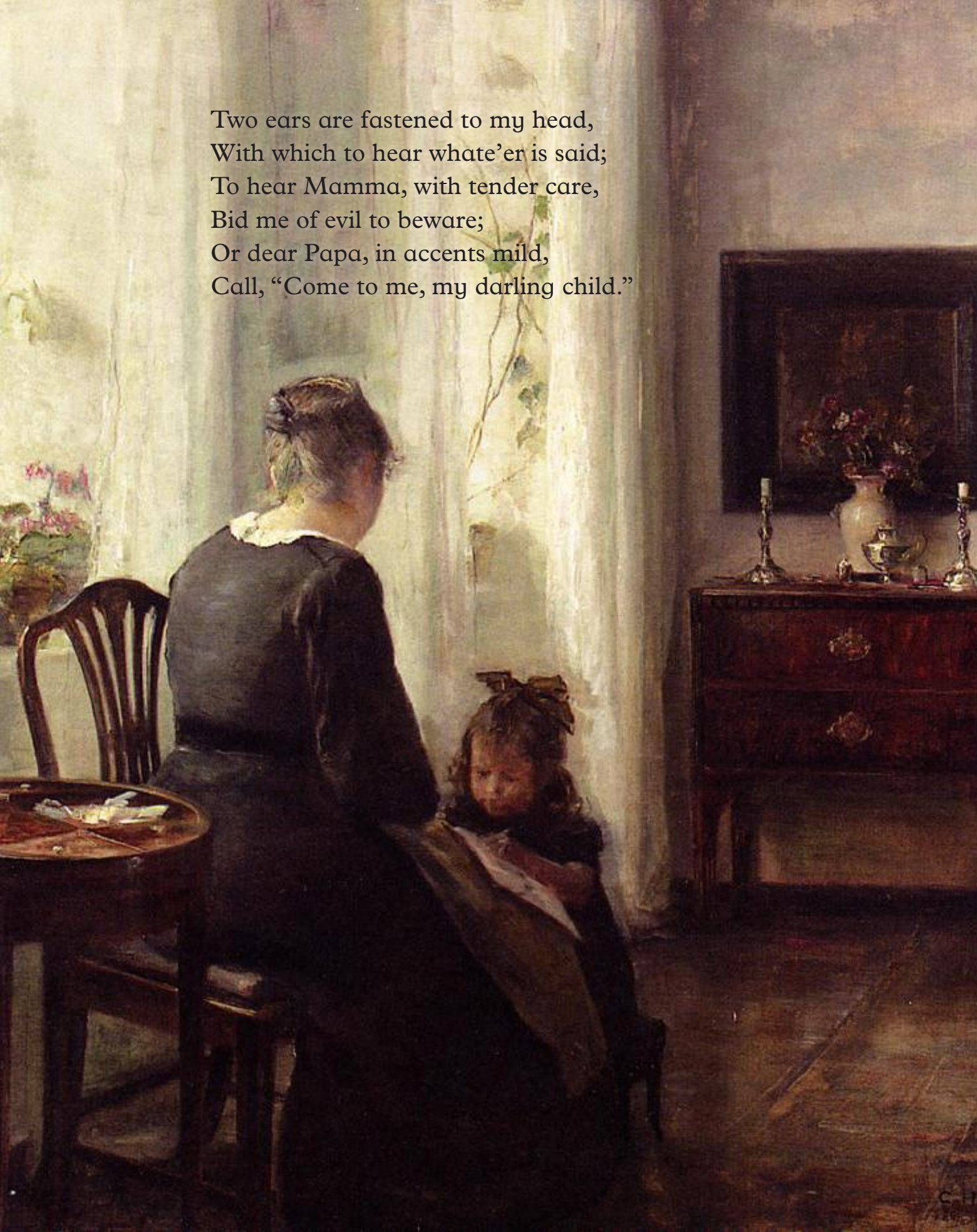
But if I cheat or tell a lie
Or do mean things to make folks cry,
Or if I'm rude or impolite
And do not try to do what's right,
        Then that really does matter.

It isn't looks that makes one great.
It's character that seals your fate.
It's what you are within your heart, you see,
That makes or mars your destiny.
        And that really does matter!



Some of God's Gifts

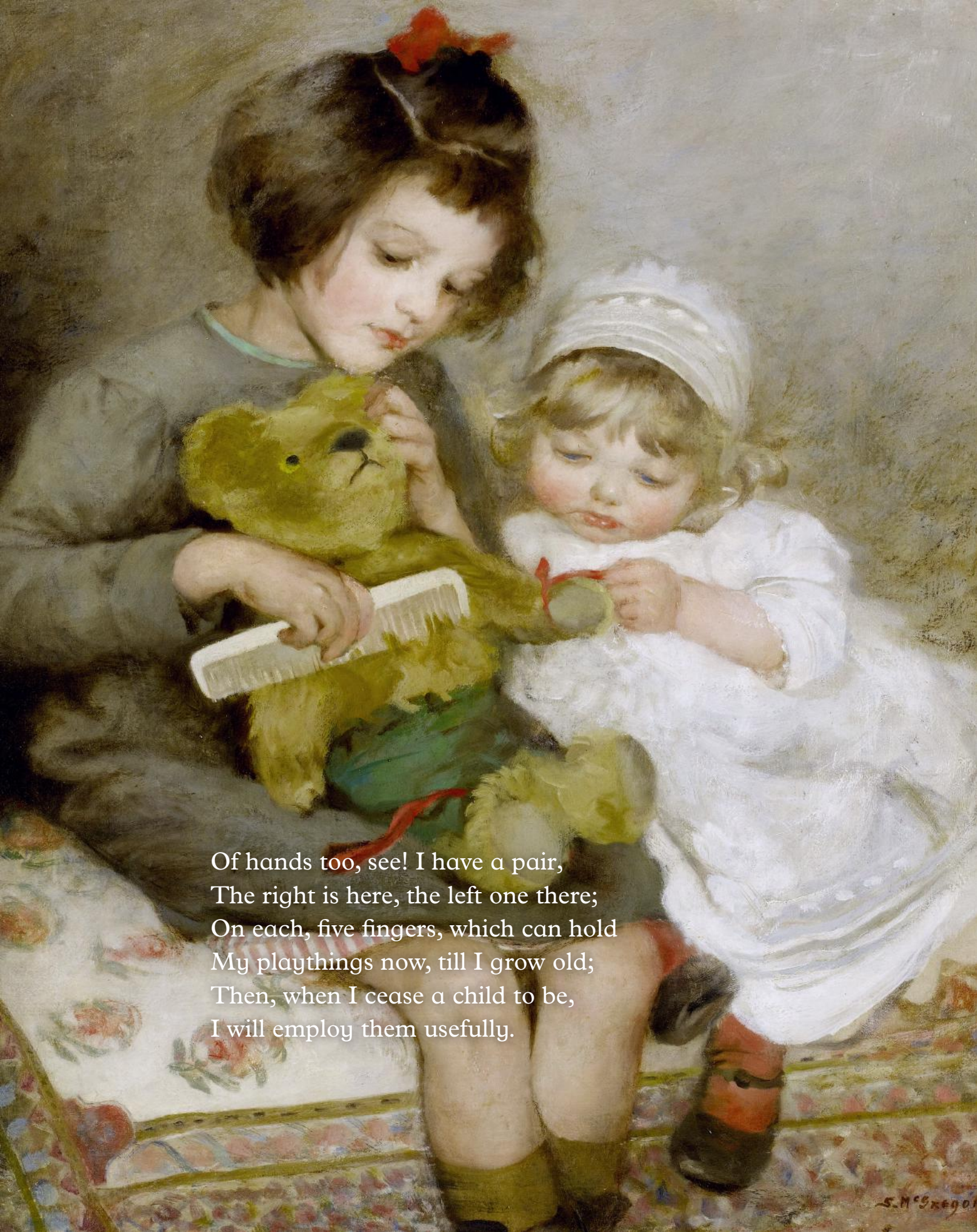
Two eyes have I, both bright and clear,
Which swift can glance afar and near;
Can mark each flow'ret on the ground,
Yet high as heav'n can gaze around:
These eyes were gifts from God to me,
And His are all things that I see!



Two ears are fastened to my head,
With which to hear whate'er is said;
To hear Mamma, with tender care,
Bid me of evil to beware;
Or dear Papa, in accents mild,
Call, "Come to me, my darling child."



A mouth, a mouth I have also,
Of which I make full use, you know;
With it I utter each request,
By it are all my thoughts expressed;
And I can laugh, and sing, and pray
To God who hears each word we say.



Of hands too, see! I have a pair,
The right is here, the left one there;
On each, five fingers, which can hold
My playthings now, till I grow old;
Then, when I cease a child to be,
I will employ them usefully.


Two feet I have, which trot about,
When with my parents I go out;
And though in trying far to jump,
I sometimes fall, and get a thump;
Yet never mind, I try again,
And shall not always try in vain.


A heart I have, with which to love
Kind friends on earth, and God above:
And all these blessings, hands, feet, eyes,
Ears, mouth, and heart, with all we prize,
E'en life itself, full well I know
To God's great goodness all we owe.





Infection

By Louis de Louk

A baby smiled in its mother's face;
The mother caught it, and gave it then
To the baby's father—serious case—
Who carried it out to the other men;
And every one of them went straight away
Scattering sunshine thro' the day.





Watch the Corners

By Lulu Linton

When you wake up in the morning of a chill and cheerless day,
And feel inclined to grumble, pout, or frown,
Just glance into your mirror and you will quickly see
It's just because the corners of your mouth turn down.
Then take this simple rhyme,
Remember it in time:
It's always dreary weather, in countryside or town,
When you wake and find the corners of your mouth turned down.

If you wake up in the morning full of bright and happy thoughts
And begin to count the blessings in your cup,
Then glance into your mirror and you will quickly see
It's all because the corners of your mouth turn up.
Then take this little rhyme,
Remember all the time:
There's joy a-plenty in this world to fill life's silver cup
If you'll only keep the corners of your mouth turned up.







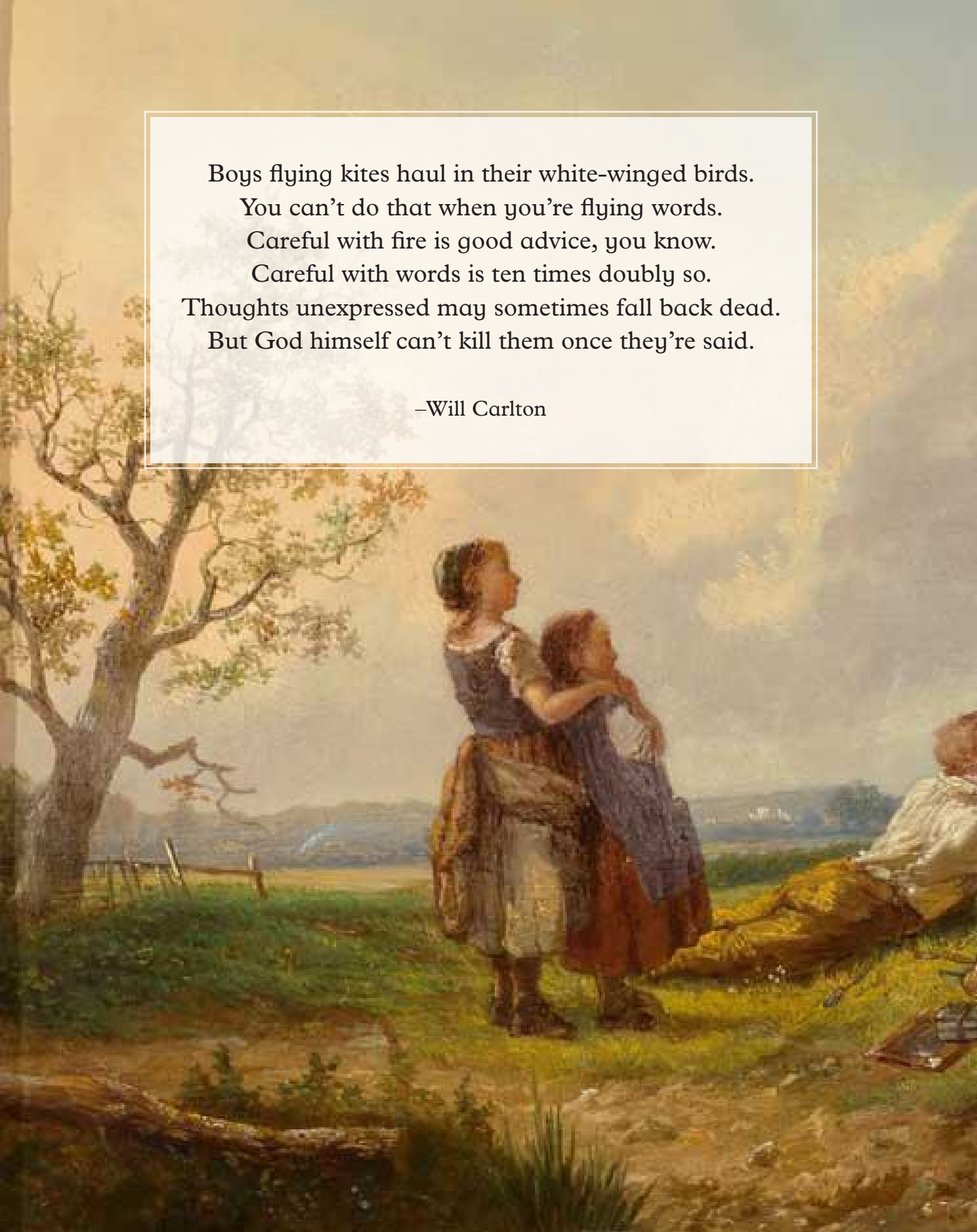


A Smile

A smile is catching
Like measles, they say,
So you better watch out;
I have one today.

A smile is catching
And so I suppose
A big one could pop out
Right under your nose.





Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds.
You can't do that when you're flying words.
Careful with fire is good advice, you know.
Careful with words is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead.
But God himself can't kill them once they're said.

–Will Carlton





The Owl

There was an old owl who sat in an oak.
The more he sat, the less he spoke.
The less he spoke, the more he heard.
Why can't we be like that wise old bird?





My Nose

It doesn't breathe,
It doesn't smell,
It doesn't feel so very well.
I'm discouraged with my nose,
The only thing it does is blows!





Mud

Mud is very nice to feel
All squishy-squashy between the toes.
I'd rather step in squishy mud
Then smell a yellow rose.
Nobody else, but the rose bush knows
How nice mud feels between the toes.





Little Things

When God doth make a lovely thing,
The finest and completest,
He makes it little, don't you know?
For little things are sweetest.

Little birds, and little flowers,
Little diamonds, little pearls—
But the sweetest things on earth
Are the little boys and girls.

Little raindrops fill the fountains,
Little birds sing in the trees,
Little sand-grains make the mountains,
Little hives are filled with bees.

All the little things are useful,
And the children must be too,
There is always work made ready
For the little hands to do.



My Hands

Sometimes my hands are naughty,
And so my mama says,
"I will have to spank them
And send them off to bed."
And so, little hands, be careful
Of everything you do.
Because if you have to go to bed,
I have to go there, too!



Stick to Your Task

Stick to your task ‘til it sticks to you!
Beginners are many, but enders are few.
Honor, power, place and praise
Will always come to the one who stays.

Stick to your task, ‘til it sticks to you!
Grin at it, sweat at it, smile at it, too.
For out of the grin and the sweat and the smile
Will come life’s victories after awhile.



It matters not if you try and fail
And try and fail again.
It matters much if you try and fail
And fail to try again.



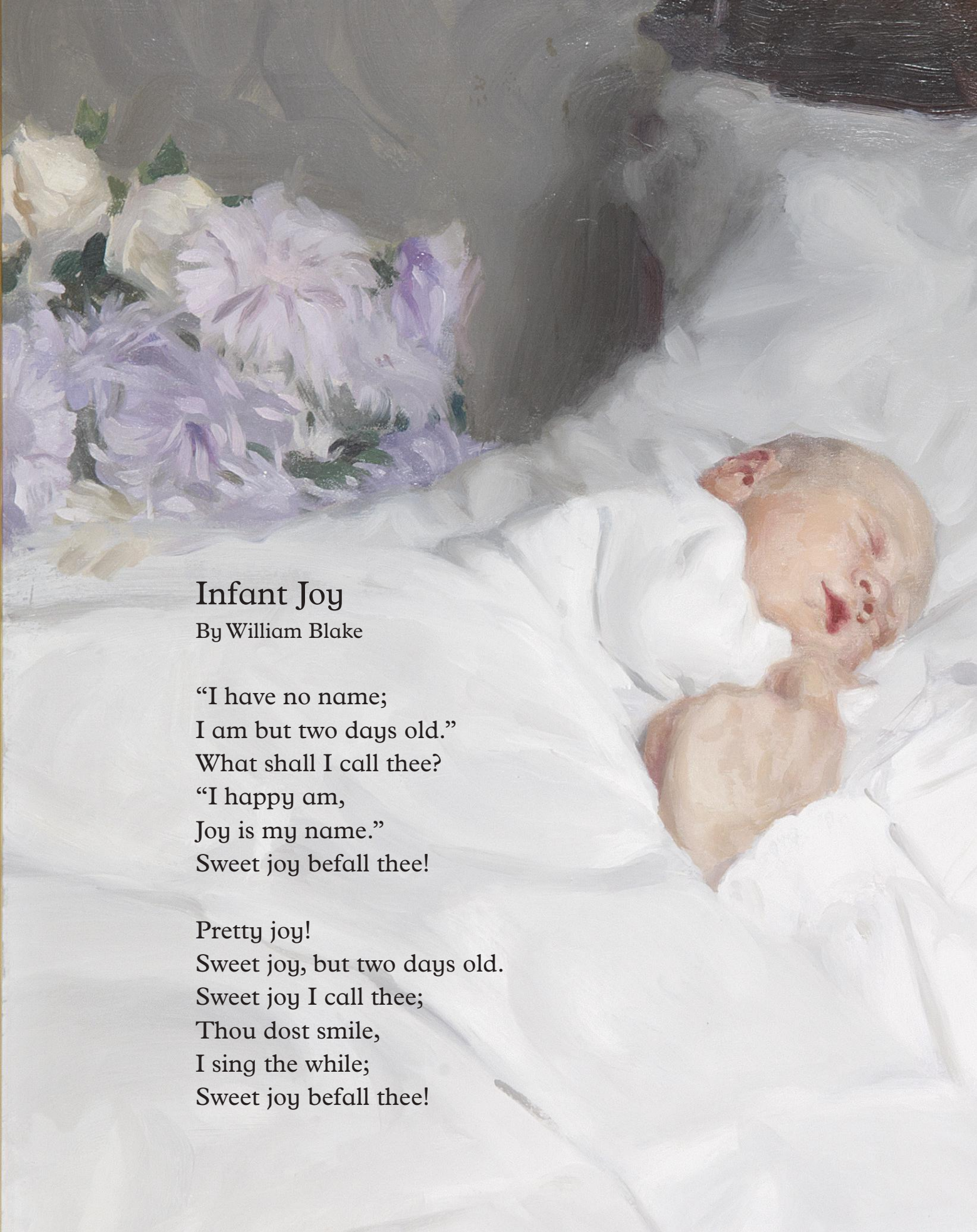




Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

–William Wordsworth





Infant Joy

By William Blake

"I have no name;
I am but two days old."
What shall I call thee?
"I happy am,
Joy is my name."
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
Sweet joy, but two days old.
Sweet joy I call thee;
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while;
Sweet joy befall thee!





Little

By Dorothy Aldis

I am the sister of him
And he is my brother.
He is too little for us
To talk to each other.

So every morning I show him
My doll and my book;
But every morning he still is
Too little to look.









The Reason Why

"When I was at the party,"
Said Betty (aged just four),
"A little girl fell off her chair,
Right down upon the floor;
And all the other little girls
Began to laugh, but me—
I didn't laugh a single bit,"
Said Betty, seriously.

"Why not?" her mother asked her,
Full of delight to find
That Betty—bless her little heart—
Had been so sweetly kind.
"Why didn't YOU laugh, darling?
Or don't you like to tell?"
"I didn't laugh," said Betty,
"Cause it was me that fell!"



My Doll

I have a little doll,
        I take care of her clothes;
And she has flaxen hair,
        And her name is Rose.

She has pretty violet eyes
        And a very small nose
And a sweet little mouth
        And her name is Rose.

She has a little bed,
        And when the daylight goes
I tuck her up in it,
        And say, “Good night, dear Rose.”







A Mortifying Mistake

By Anna Maria Pratt

I studied my tables over and over, and backward and forward, too;
But I couldn't remember six times nine, and I didn't know what to do.
Till sister told me to play with my doll, and not to bother my head.
"If you call her 'Fifty-four' for awhile, you'll learn it by heart," she said.

So I took my favorite, Mary Ann (though I thought 'twas a dreadful shame
To give such a perfectly lovely child such a perfectly horrid name),
And I called her my dear little "Fifty-four" a hundred times, till I knew
The answer of six times nine as well as the answer of two times two.

Next day Elizabeth Wigglesworth, who always acts so proud,
Said, "Six times nine is fifty-two," and I nearly laughed aloud!
But I wished I hadn't when teacher said, "Now, Dorothy, tell if you can."
For I thought of my doll and – sakes alive!—I answered, "Mary Ann!"



The Good Natured Girl

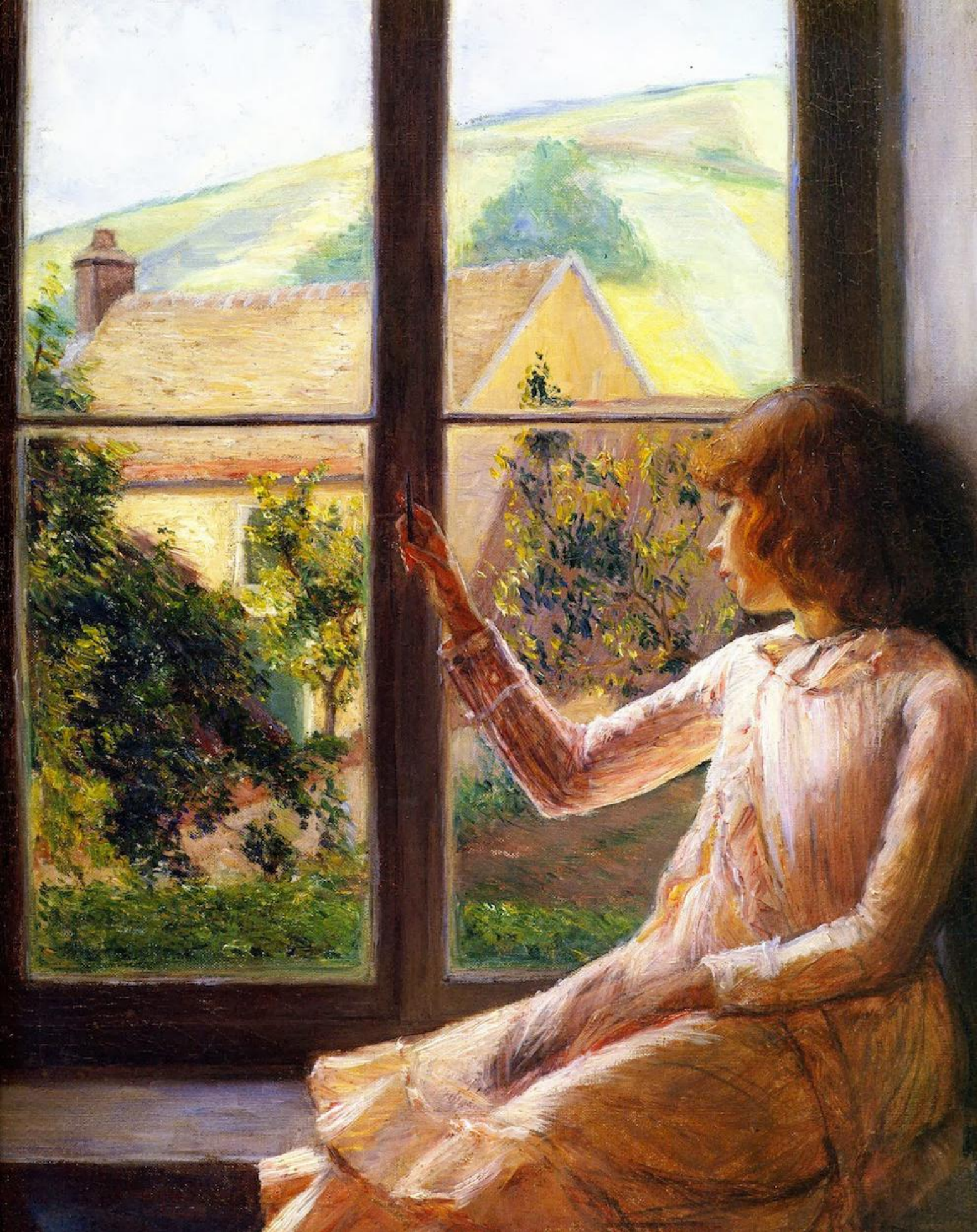
No matter what happened
They found her the same:
No fuss and no fury,
And no word of blame.

Her friends and relations
Were quite at a loss
To think how it was
That she never was cross!

They said to her, "How
On earth is it—pray tell
That you always are keeping
Your temper so well?"

"Only this," she replied,
"I have made up my mind,
No matter what happens,
That I will be kind."


LUDZKO





Song for a Little House

By Christopher Morley

I'm glad our house is a little house,
Not too tall nor too wide;
I'm glad the hovering butterflies
Feel free to come inside.





The Family Meeting

By Charles Sprague

We are all here,
Father, mother,
Sister, brother.
All you hold each other dear.
Each chair is filled; we're all at home!
Tonight let no cold stranger come.
It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found.
Bless, then, the meeting and the sot;
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle peace assert her power,
And kind Affection rule the hour.
We're all—all here.









The Family

The family is like a book—
The children are the leaves,
The parents are the covers
That protecting beauty gives.

At first the pages of the book
Are blank and purely fair.
But Time soon writeth memories
And painteth pictures there.

Love is the little golden clasp
That bindeth up the trust;
Oh, break it not, lest all the leaves
Should scatter and be lost!





Kind Mama

This is not the old woman who lived in a shoe;
She has seven children, and knows what to do;
She gives them some honey on nice home-made bread;
She reads them a story, then puts them to bed.









When

By Clifton Bingham

When cherries grow on apple trees,
And kittens wear lace caps,
And boys their sisters never tease,
And bears wear woolen wraps;

When all the nursery dolls and toys
Begin to dance and play,
Then little girls and little boys
May be in bed all day.

When donkeys learn to sing and dance,
When pigs talk politics,
When London is a town in France,
When two and two make six,

When drops of rain are real pearls,
When coal is clear and white,
Then little boys and little girls
May sit up late at night.









My Daddy's Gift

My daddy said the other day
He wanted just one gift.
It wasn't a hat, or a fancy tie
Or a book or a handkerchief.

"All that I shall want," said he,
"And Mother wants it, too,
Is just to have you kind and sweet,
To keep you good and true."

And so, though I'm a little girl
I'll try to do my part,
Each day to bring this precious gift,
To cheer my daddy's heart.



Life's Morning and Evening

"Grandmother, tell me,
were you young once, and little, like me?
Golden and brown was your hair?
Smooth and unwrinkled your skin?
Could you once frolic
and run round in the garden, like me?
Grandmother, had you a doll?
Did you love flowers and birds?
Shall I a grandmother be?
Totter along with a cane?
Might one not stay ever young
on this bright, beautiful earth?"









Grandma's Glasses

When grandma puts her glasses on
And looks at me just so,
If I have done a naughty thing,
She's sure, somehow to know.
How is it she can always tell
So very, very, very well?





Old Tales

My Grandpa says that long ago
Before he was a man,
His Grandma told my tales to him
As only grandmas can.

And long before he was a boy,
In lands across the sea,
The boys and girls were told the tales
That now he tells to me.

So when my Grandpa reads a tale
Or tells a tale to me,
I know it is as old, as old,
As old as it can be.







Grandfather's Chair

I love, when the evenings are balmy and still,
And summer is smiling on valley and hill,
To see in the garden the little ones there,
All happy and smiling round grandfather's chair.

Such stories he tells them,—such tales of delight,—
Such wonders to dream of by day and by night,
It's little they're thinking of sorrow and care,
Their bright faces beaming round grandfather's
chair.

And words, too, of wisdom, fall oft from his tongue;
Dear lessons to cherish and treasure while young;
Bright things to remember when white is their hair.
And some of them sit in a grandfather's chair.

Ah! Little ones, love him, be kind while you may,
For swiftly the moments are speeding away;
Not long the kind looks and the love you may share,
That beam on you now from a grandfather's chair.



Civil War Days



Louisa May Alcott

Louisa May Alcott kept a diary. Would you like to see what one of her days was like?

"I rose at five and had my bath. I love cold water! Then we had our singing-lesson. After breakfast I washed dishes and ran on the hill till nine, and had some thoughts—it was so beautiful up there. Did my lessons—wrote and spelled and did sums. We had bread and fruit. I read and walked and played till supper-time. I ran in the wind and played be a horse and had a lovely time in the woods with Anna and Lizzie. We were fairies, and made gowns and paper wings."

Her father and mother thought this was a perfect way for children to spend their days.

But not everyone agreed.

One day a visitor came and asked, "Well, Mr. Alcott, you have been able to carry out your methods of learning in your own family, and I should like to see your model children."

Just then loud shouts were heard and the visitor watched as Anna wheeled a wheelbarrow in which sat baby May, crowned like a queen. Louisa was harnessed like a horse, and Elizabeth ran barking at the side, pretending to be a dog. When they saw the guest, the horse in her surprise stumbled and fell, bringing the wheelbarrow and baby and driver down in a heap.

Mrs. Alcott turned to the visitor with a smile. "Here are the model children," she said.

You can read more about Louisa and her sisters in a book called *Little Women*.


BERNIE MUDDY SMITH



Louisa wrote this poem
when she was fourteen years old.



My Kingdom

By Louisa May Alcott

A little kingdom I possess;
Where thoughts and feelings dwell;
And very hard the task I find
Of governing it well.
For passion tempts and troubles me.
A wayward will misleads,
And selfishness its shadow casts
On all my words and deeds.

How can I learn to rule myself,
To be the child I should,
Honest, and brave, nor ever tire
Of trying to be good?
How can I keep a sunny soul
To shine along life's way?
How can I tune my little heart
To sweetly sing all day?

Dear Father, help me with the love
That casteth out my fear!
Teach me to lean on thee and feel
That thou art very near;
That no temptation is unseen
No childish grief too small.
Since Thou, with patience infinite
Doth sooth and comfort all.

I do not ask for any crown
But that which all may win;
Nor seek to conquer any world
Except the one within.
Be thou my guide until I find
Led by a tender hand
The happy kingdom in myself,
And dare to take command.





Clara Barton

Clara loved her flower gardens, learning about everything, and her pets. But there was one thing that made Clara unhappy while she was growing up.

She was dreadfully afraid of people.

Whenever she was around someone she did not know, something strange would happen. Clara would almost forget her name, put her fingers in her mouth, look down at the floor, and wish that she might run away and hide.

The name of this feeling is bashfulness.

Her mother and father sent her away to school, thinking it would cure her. But, instead, it grew worse and worse. She stopped eating because she thought everyone was watching her. She got thin and pale until at last her father sent for her to come home.

Clara had a soft spot in her heart for anything or any one that was in trouble. When she cared for others, she forgot about being bashful.

During the Civil War, she took care of many wounded soldiers.

Clara never got quite cured of her bashfulness. Even when she was a grown woman, she said she would rather stand in front of a cannon on a battle-field than speak in front of a meeting of strangers.

But she never let her bashfulness keep her from doing good.

Robert E. Lee

A great battle had begun. Cannon were booming, some far away, some near at hand. Soldiers were marching through the field. Men on horseback were riding quickly to the front.

A cannon ball struck the ground near a group of soldiers. But they kept marching forward.

Another cannon ball flew through the air and struck a tree near General Robert E. Lee, who was riding across the field. One ball after another came whizzing near him.

"General, you are in danger here," said an officer who was riding near him. "You had better get to a place of safety."

But the General rode on.

Suddenly he stopped at the foot of a tree.

"Halt!" he cried to the men who were with him. He leaped from his horse. He stooped and picked up a bird's nest that had fallen upon the ground. In the nest were some tiny, hungry birds.

"I cannot think of leaving these little things here," said the general.

He lifted the nest gently and put it in a safe place in the tree.

He had done one good deed. He would do many more before the war was over.




CONSTANT MAYER 1866

Ulysses S. Grant

From the time he was a little boy, Ulysses loved horses. As he grew older he saved every cent that he could earn, a few pennies here, a nickel there, a quarter once in a while, until he had enough to buy a horse of his own.

A farmer nearby had a glossy brown colt Ulysses wanted to buy. But the man wanted $25.00 for it and $25.00 was a lot of money in those days for a boy to save.

Ulysses asked his father what he should do. His father said, "$25.00 is too much for that colt. Go to the man and offer him $20.00 at first. I think he will be glad to get that. But if he refuses, offer him $22.00. And then, if he won't take less, you may pay him $25.00."

Now what do you suppose that small boy did?

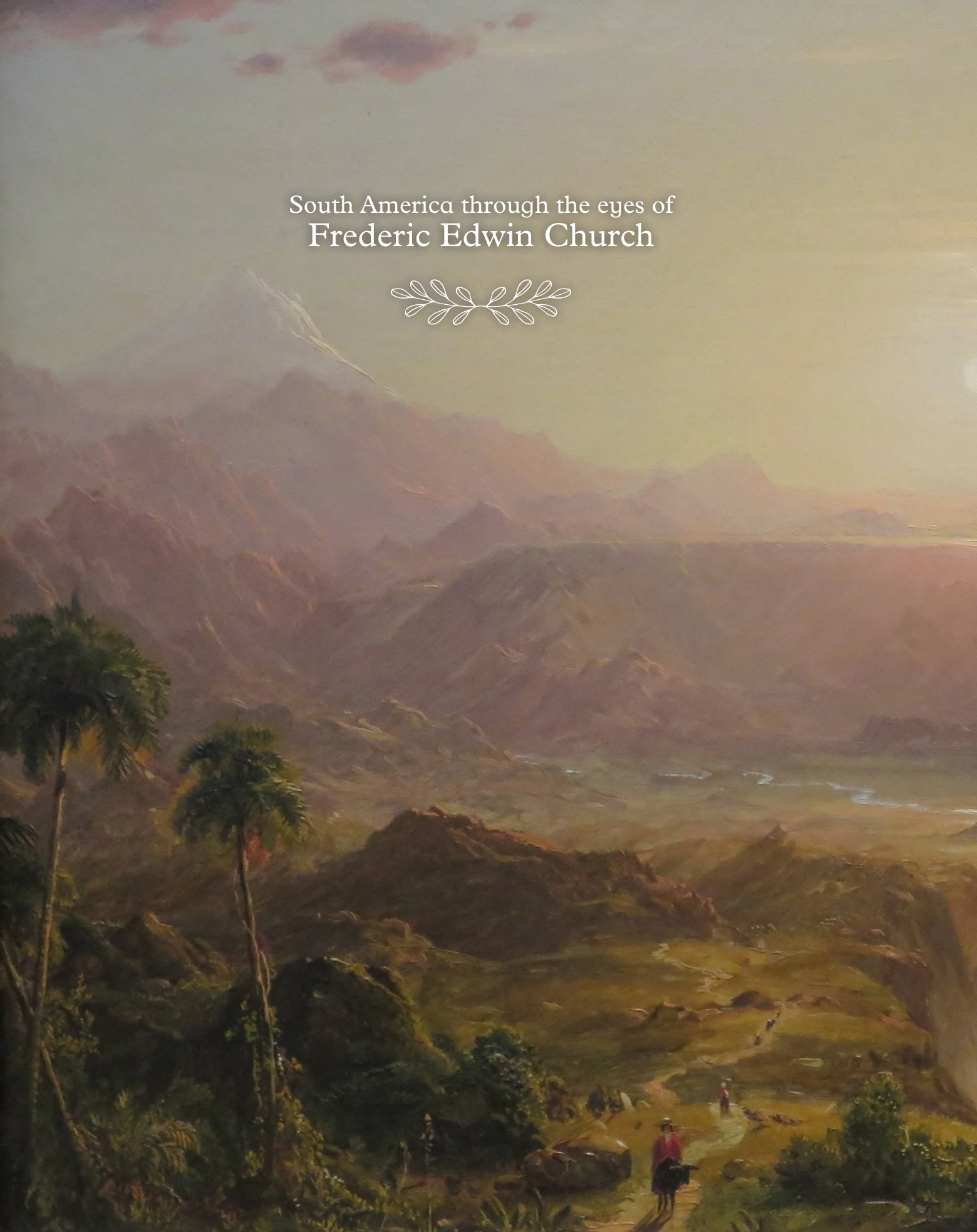
He went to the farmer and said to him, "Father says I am to offer you $20.00 for the colt first, then $22.00, and then $25.00. So will you let me have him for $20.00 please?"

What price do you think Ulysses had to pay for his horse?



South America





South America through the eyes of
Frederic Edwin Church









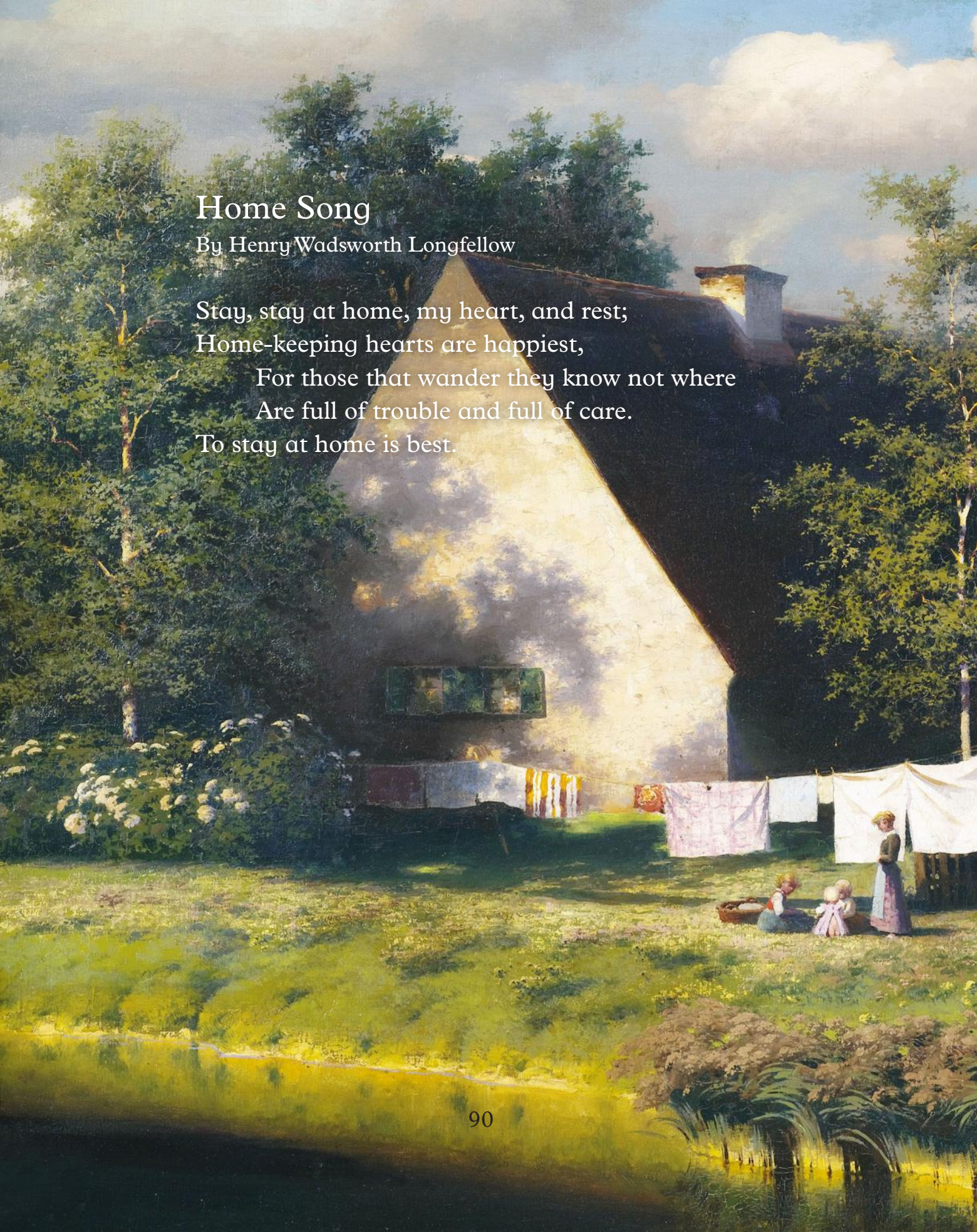












Home Song

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care.
To stay at home is best.



Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.

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