

JINNY

By LESLIE JAMES

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It was the big doctor who found her, misshapen and suffering, in her father's gloomy shop. In spite of its noise and dust, Jinny preferred the shop to the tiny back room, because the customers spoke kindly to her and made her forget the ache in her back. When they gave her candy enough to start a make believe shop on the narrow window ledge, she sold it for pins to the children in the dingy court, just because she loved to watch these straight limbed, bright eyed children caper about as she knew she never could.

When the big doctor brought her to the hospital, he said to Nurse Powell: "I'll leave Jinny under your special care, Miss Powell. I am greatly interested in her case. The expense is being met by one perfectly able to do it, and she is to want for nothing."

And thus were the gates of an earthly paradise opened to Jinny of Borden's court. First there was the cunning little room, all her own, with pictures on the wall, and the whitest of iron beds with shiny knobs on each corner, and a bright red wrapper, woolly and soft, with knit slippers to match. Then came the pretty young ladies of the Flower mission with their nodding blossoms and occasional glasses of quivering jelly. Sometimes the big doctor's nieces brought their dolls and spent an hour at Jinny's bedside, and happy Jinny was permitted to hold as long as she liked the marvelous Florette, who could walk and talk like a real baby and whose dresses really and truly came from Paris.

But in Jinny's mind all these things faded into insignificance when compared with the big doctor and Nurse Powell. These two formed a joint divinity before which Jinny burned the sweet incense of childish devotion. Nurse Powell had obeyed the physician's generous instructions to the letter—at first from a sense of duty and later because she learned to love the patient little sufferer.

And the big doctor? Even Nurse Powell, who knew his deep interest in his work, wondered at the attention he lavished on this denizen of the slums. Often when his rounds in the hospital were over and he had time to spare he would come back to Jinny's room for a chat, and Jinny, her great black eyes set in a face of ivory whiteness, would smile happily from one to the other, the big doctor who ordered medicine that eased the pain in her back and the nurse whose gentle hand could smooth away wrinkles in her forehead when the pain was at its worst.

Sometimes when they sat thus Jinny was vaguely conscious that the big doctor was talking to her, but looking at Nurse Powell. But Jinny did not know how, years before, when the big doctor, fresh from the medical school, had been house physician in the city hospital, he had met a sweet faced "probe" doing her first night duty in his ward. The head nurse had looked scornfully at the slender figure and the trembling hands, but the young house physician had said: "Give her time. She'll get her bearings after a bit."

Nurse Powell had been grateful for his cheerful encouragement and the many kindnesses which lightened her burden during that first awful year in the big wards, but when he asked for something more than gratitude she could not give it. Now head of the nurses' staff at a sanitarium, she sometimes grew a-weary and wished she had learned to love the big doctor whose brown eyes seemed still to follow her at her duties. Then her heart would say: "No, no! His work would always come first, and I would be second. Besides, I wonder if he has a heart! When I see him undertaking those horrible operations without the quiver of an eyelash, I think he has no feeling."

And so this nurse who could unflinchingly assist at the same operations waited inconsistently for love to come into her life, a love that would be all tenderness and thoughtfulness, a thing apart from the scenes of suffering in which she moved.

It was one afternoon when Jinny had been almost a year at the hospital. In the morning the big doctor had said: "I've changed the medicine again, Miss Powell. I don't like that rise in temperature. If you note a tendency toward coma during the afternoon, send for me at once."

But Nurse Powell did not have to send for him. He came of his own accord, just as the afternoon drew to a close. Jinny had been sleeping restlessly, and when she opened her eyes with an expression of weariness that had not been there since she came to the hospital the big doctor and Nurse Powell were sitting on either side of her little bed. At the foot lay a gayly illustrated copy of Mother Goose's rhymes, which Nurse Powell had been reading aloud before kindly sleep came to the small sufferer. Now Jinny pointed to it with a wan smile.

"I've had the funniest dream! I went to Mother Goose's land, way, way off, an' she was such a funny ole woman, an' she was right glad to see me! An' she says, 'Little girl, would you like to stay with me awhile?' An' I says, 'I'm obliged to you, ma'am, but I can't stay long.' An' then she brings out the purtiest dress, purtier than my red wrapper, an' she says, 'Little girl, would you like to wear that?' An' when I see the little stick all tied with ribbons I knew it were little Bopeep's dress, an' I put it on an' chased them sheep all round the field, an' it never hurt my back a bit. An' I tried on lots uv clothes, Little Miss Muffett's ruffled

bonnet, an' Mary, Mary Quite Contrary's big hat, an' the Queen of Heart's long train, an' Mother Goose, she says, 'Ain't you havin' a good time, little girl?'
"An' I says: 'Yes, ma'am, thankie, ma'am, but I guess I'd better be a-goin'.' You see, my big doctor 'll be round' pretty soon, an' he'll miss me 'll I ain't in my cot. An' Nurse Powell will bring my bread an' milk, an' there won't be any little girl there to eat it.' An' then Mother Goose she says, 'All right, little girl; jus' jump on my broomstick, an' we'll be down there in a jiffy.' An' here I am, an' I'm glad, fur the bed feels so cumfy, an', sure enough, my big doctor is here."

The great black eyes glowed wondrous bright as they met the big doctor's gaze, and he spoke very gently while he stroked her hand, now thin and transparent.

"Does your back ache, after your long ride on the broomstick, Jinny?"
"Oh, no! The ache's all gone. There ain't been any ache all day."
The big doctor looked across the bed at Nurse Powell, but she was gazing steadily through the open window. And something bright and clear, like diamonds, shone on her long lashes.
A weak, piping voice raised again.
"No, I ain't achin' any place today, only I'm dreadful tired. An' every once in awhile you an' Nurse Powell go a-slippin' an' a-slippin' away from me, an' then I feel like I was a-slippin' too. I wisht Nurse Powell would sing. Then p'haps I'd go to sleep again."
Nurse Powell's quivering lips tried to form the notes of the nursery song Jinny loved best, but something rose in her throat and choked the melody.
"I wisht—you'd sing—that—sleepy song."
The tired voice trailed off into silence, but not before the heavy eyes

were raised appealingly to those of the white capped nurse.
The big doctor seemed to rouse himself as from a dream. He leaned over and clasped Jinny's nerveless hand in his great, warm one and then in a clear tenor voice began to sing:
"Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea."
The music floated over the cot, past Nurse Powell, through the open door and down the corridor to the ward, where other sufferers heard and marveled, and over the face of Jinny stole an expression of infinite peace.
In that distant ward men who had been battling with death turned their faces toward the sinking sun and felt that even amid pain it was good just to live, and in Jinny's little room all was silent. Nurse Powell was kneeling beside the bed, her face hidden in the pillow. The little hand she still held was strangely limp and pulseless.

Then a strong arm raised her to her feet, and she looked straight into the soft brown eyes that had followed her all these years patiently, steadfastly.
"Gertrude!"
"Henry!"
Later, when she raised her head, she turned from him to the quiet figure on the cot.
"I almost wish she knew—she loved us both so well."
And the big doctor whispered gently, "I think she did know, even before you did."
Sutherland's Masterly Presentation.
The North American is publishing a series of letters by Hugh Sutherland on conditions social, industrial and political as they are in Ireland. The first article was printed December 8, and was followed by others which, for graphic

description and masterly presentation of facts, have no parallel in recent newspaper writing. They will continue until the subject is fully exploited. Mr. Sutherland is familiar to newspaper readers. As commissioner for the North American to the Boer republic in the concluding days of Kruger's presidency, as a staff correspondent for the same paper in the mining districts.
In order that the truth might be known, therefore, the North American commissioned Mr. Sutherland as chief of an expedition into Darkest Ireland. For weeks the searchers for truth traversed the country. They have got at the heart of one of the greatest political revolutions the world has experienced, one that is taking place without the world being aware of it. Fortunately for contemporaneous history, there is Mr. Sutherland to write and the North American to print the story.
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