

LITTLE BABS



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FOREWORD

A "Sunny Book" with pictures, too,
All drawn and written just for you
To tell you of the fairies gay
Who live around the House all day:
The Fairies of the Jam and Bread,
The Fairies of the Chair and Bed,
The Fairies of the Spoon and Dish—
Why any Fairy you could wish,
And last of all the Fairy Who
Can Make Your Dearest Dreams Come True.

LITTLE BABS



*Dedicated to
Everyone Who Likes to Have a
"CHUM"*

LITTLE BABS

by
GEORGE MITCHELL

Illustrations by
ARTHUR HENDERSON



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LITTLE BABS

ONCE there was a little girl who had no mother, and she lived with her father away out in the woods. He was a woodchopper and, because they were very poor, Little Babs—I forgot to tell you that was the little girl's name, at least, her name was Barbara, but she was called Babs for short—well, Little Babs had to do all the work, so she had no time to play, and even if she had, there wasn't anyone to play with.

Her father was very kind to her, but he came home so tired, that as soon as he had eaten his supper, he went off to bed, so Little Babs was very lonely.

“Oh dear,” she would say, “I wish I had been born twins.”

And one day she went up to the attic and there she found an old book, and sitting down, she began to read, for her father had taught her how.

The story was about Aladdin. You remember Aladdin and the wonderful lamp?

It didn't take her long to read it, and when she had finished, she went downstairs and wondered.

“It couldn't be true,” she said to herself, and she looked at the lamp on the kitchen shelf.

“Why can't that be a magic lamp?” she thought, and something inside of her said:

“Maybe it is.”



“But I’ve rubbed it thousands of times,” said Little Babs.

“Well, rub it again,” said something inside of her.

So she took down the lamp and she rubbed it and rubbed it, but nothing happened, and she was about to put it back on the shelf.

“I wish there was a fairy in you,” said Little Babs. And the lamp glowed suddenly and a voice inside of it said:

“There is!” and Little Babs was so startled that she almost dropped the lamp.

“I don’t understand,” said Little Babs. “How is it you can talk now?”

“Because you wished a fairy in me,” said the lamp. “What can I do for you?”

“Please, get me a playmate,” said Little Babs.

“I can’t do that,” said the lamp. “I am only a



lamp. But I can show you the fairies of other things and maybe they can help you. Look!"

And Little Babs turned and saw the kitchen flooded with a wonderful light, and everything seemed alive, because she could now see the fairies of everything.

For a long while Little Babs looked about the kitchen. There was the Fairy of the Stove, a curious-looking old fellow with a black face and a cheerful smile, and, in a hollow voice, that sounded like the wind roaring down the chimney, he shouted:

"Ho, Ho! Miss Babs,
I'm the Fairy of the Stove!
I'm a funny old cove!
What can I do,
Miss Babs, for you?"

"Get me a playmate, if you please," said Little Babs, and the Fairy of the Stove replied:

"That I cannot do,



Miss Babs, for you.
I can only keep you warm
In winter, and in storm,
And cook your meals for you.
That is all that I can do,
Miss Babs, for you.
Little daughter,
Ask the water."

"Thank you," said Little Babs, and turning to the water, she said:

"Water, Water, get me a playmate." And the Fairy of the Water gurgled:

"I'm the Fairy of the Water,
Little Babs, little daughter;
I can only give you drink,
Wash the dishes in the sink.
That is all that I can do,
All that I can do for you.
Ask the Jug."

And Little Babs smiled and said:

"Thank you, you are very good." And she turned to the jug, and said:



“Jug, Jug, get me a playmate, if you please.” But
the Fairy of the Jug replied:

“I’m the Fairy of the Jug,
I can pour into the mug.
That’s all that I can do,
All that I can do for you,
Little Babs, ask the Cup.”

And the Cup told her to ask the Saucer.

And the Saucer told her to ask the Table.

And the Table told her to ask the Floor.

And the Floor told her to ask the Walls.

And the Walls told her to ask the Ceiling.

And so on and so on until she came to the Clock,
and the Clock said:

“I’m the Clock on the Wall,
I can give you time, that’s all.
But every little minute

Has sixty seconds in it;
And if I were only you,
I’ll tell you what I’d do,
Little Babs”

“What would you do?” said Little Babs.

And the Clock said:

“I’d ask the Fairy of the Clock
To stop his old tick-tock
For an hour, every day,
Till I found someone to play.”

“Goodie,” cried Little Babs. “Please, good, kind
Fairy of the Clock, stop for an hour ’till I can find
someone to play with me.”

Said the Clock:

“Just as you say,
I will not tick-tock to-day.
While you search upon your way
For some one to help you play.”

“Thank you,” said Little Babs. “But could you
tell me where I could find the Fairy of Play?”



And then the Clock said,

“As you walk along the road
You will find his bright abode.
'Round the door in beauty twine
Fragrant Honeysuckle vine,
And the roses blooming there
Fill with perfume all the air.”

“I declare, I declare”, said Little Babs, making a little rhyme all by herself. And off she went to find a playmate, and as she walked along the road she thought of all the kinds of playmates she wanted but she didn't see how she was ever to get one. And bye and bye just around a turn of the road she saw a beautiful little cottage and there were Honeysuckle vines all around the door and great big rose bushes in the yard, and the perfume of the flowers was just wonderful.

“Oh, this must be the place where the Fairy of Play is,” said Little Babs and she cried:

“Oh, Fairy of Play, help me.”



And before her hopped a prankish little fairy dressed in leaves and flowers, and every time he moved, bells tinkled.

“I’m the Fairy of Play,
Little Babs. Tell me, pray,
What can I do,
Little Babs, for you?”

“Oh, please, get me a playmate,” said Little Babs.

And the Fairy of Play asked:

“What kind
Shall I find?”

And Little Babs replied:

“Oh, please, I’d like a Prince riding on a beautiful pony; or a Baker’s-boy who has lots of cookies and cakes; or a Clown to do funny tricks for me all day; or a Toyshop-boy with lots of toys; or a Soldier who is very brave; or a Sailor in a beautiful sail-boat—if you please.”



And the Fairy of Play smiled and said:

“I can get you all of them. But listen:

The Prince will snub you, sure,
Little Babs, because you're poor.

The Baker's-boy will give you cake
Until you're ill with stomach-ache.

The Clown will weary you with tricks
Before you've counted up to six.

And you must know that Toyshop-Boys
Are very selfish with their toys.

And Soldiers have to go to war,
And you won't see them any more.

And Sailors always sail away
And haven't any time for play.”

When Little Babs heard this, she sat down upon a
stone and began to cry.

“I wish I could be smart,” she said.

But the Fairy of Play said quite cheerfully:



“Little Babs, you mustn't cry,
You can be as smart as I.”

And Little Babs stopped crying and asked:

“How?”

And the Fairy of Play answered:

“Run back and tell the Clock
To start again to tick-tock;
And in the morning come downstairs
As soon as you have said your pray'rs.”

So Little Babs went back and did what she was told.

And early in the morning she crept downstairs and she was just in time, for, as she reached the door, she heard the Fairy of the Lamp shout:

“Ready, ready, Fairies all,
Ready to obey my call.”

And all the Fairies of Everything ran out and the Fairy of the Lamp cried:

“Fairy of the Pan,
Hop on the Stove



As quick as you can;
Cook the breakfast, hurry up,
Coffee Fairy fill the cup.
Fairies of the Eggs,
Come and stretch your legs,
Come down off the shelves
And boil your little selves.
Fairies of the Butter and Bread,
Slice yourself and quickly spread.
Hurry, all of you, I say,
So our Little Babs may play."

And the Fairy of the Clock rang six times:

"Ding, ding, ding,
Ding, ding, ding."

And then he sang out:

"Six o'clock—
Knock, knock;
The door unlock—
It's time for Breakfast."

And down came Little Babs' father and had his breakfast, and Little Babs told him all about the fairies,

starting in with the wonderful Fairy of the Lamp, who was just like the genie of Aladdin's wonderful lamp.

"And the Fairy of the Lamp told me to get the Fairy of the Stove to help me get a playmate," said Little Babs. "And then the Fairy of the Stove, after reciting a funny little rhyme referred me to the Fairy of the Jug, who called in the Fairy of the Cup, who called in the Fairy of the Saucer and all the others until at last the Fairy of the Clock got all the Fairies of Everything to run out and busy themselves around the house and help me do everything up spic and span just like you see it now."

"And the Fairies cooked the breakfast and set the table and everything?" asked Babs' father. "I can hardly believe it. It sounds too good to be true."

But when he saw that Babs wanted him to believe it he tried to look like he did, but really he didn't believe it at all until he was finished with his breakfast.



Then you may imagine his surprise when the Fairy of the Lamp came out and again shouted:

“Ready, ready, Fairies all,
You must all obey my call.”

And the Fairies all ran out as they had done before,
and the Fairy of the Lamp cried:

“Run, Fairy of the Water, so the Fairies of the Cup,
And the Saucer and the Plate may wash themselves up.

Fairies of the Cupboard, open wide yourselves,
So the Saucer and the Plate,
Before they are late
May hop into their places on your shelves.

Fairy of the Broom, sweep the floor without delay.
Fairy of the Tablecloth, put yourself away.

Fairies of the Forks and Knives
Run for your very lives.
Hurry, all of you, I say!
Hurry, put yourselves away,
So our Little Babs may play
Every minute of the day.”



And the Fairies of Everything did as they were told, and in a jiffy the kitchen was all tidy and in order.

“Well, well,” said Little Babs’ father. “I’m blest if ever I saw anything so wonderful.”

And while he was still talking there came a knock on the door, and when it was opened there stood a little boy just as big as Little Babs.

“Are you Little Babs?” he asked.

“Yes, walk in,” answered she.

“The Fairy of Play sent me,” he said.

“Are you a Prince or a Sailor or a Soldier or a Clown or a Toyshop-boy, or a Baker’s Boy?” asked Little Babs.

“No,” said he, “I’m just a Chum.”

“That’s exactly what I want,” said Little Babs, clapping her hands.

“That’s what the Fairy of Play said,” explained the boy, “and she knows just what’s best for children.”

And Babs’ father was so surprised he couldn’t speak, but only took up his cap and went off, almost forgetting his axe.

And Little Babs and her little Chum went off into the fields and there they played and played and played.







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