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# "SALADA" TEA

'Fresh from the gardens'

## All in a Saturday Morning

Margaret E. Creswick,  
Howland Ave., Toronto.

"Ho, hum! Saturday morning." So muttered young Nancy, as she roused herself from a happy state of being nearly asleep, yet enough awake to know that people were moving about her home, and that there was no real hurry for her to get up.

The world outdoors was flooded with sunshine. Some of it poured in at her window. Stretching her slender arms over the edge of the bed, she could feel its warmth, like a gentle caress. Through her sleepy eyes she fancied she could see the Fairy Queen dancing on the sunbeams and reaching out to touch, with a magic wand, the little outstretched hand.

"She laughed and sat upright in bed. 'Fairies, indeed!' she said. 'Miss Nancy, you're far too old to believe in fairies. You're thirteen, now!' She liked to hear that 'teen, so she repeated the word. Then with a little less elation, 'Yes, old enough to help with the dishes and dusting.'"

She sat there, hugging her knees, and contemplating the important age she had reached, yes, a very important age! But oh! it meant ever so many more responsibilities!

"Both the work," she declared. "Who wants to get up to dust and sweep, a morning like this? What a horrid world it is. Mighty unfair, too!" At that moment she heard her eleven-year-old brother, come beneath her window, and talk to his companion, young Tommy Jones, about going to "the cut" to swim.

Nancy jumped to the floor quickly, dragging the bed clothes half way to the window.

"Hey, you!" she called to Bob. "What do you mean running off like this? How about helping with some of the work, for a change?"

Nancy wasn't the least embarrassed that Tommy could see her leaning over the window sill in her 'nightie'. In fact, in her sudden anger at the unfairness of things, she had forgotten that she was hardly presentable. Bob was shocked and displeased.

"Oh, go get dressed!" he answered, "and mind your own business. When you start getting up before noon maybe you can talk to me then. Come on, Tom," he concluded, in an injured tone.

Tom agreed promptly, and the two boys were soon out of sight, leaving an angry girl looking out at a world of sunshine and joy. She felt none of either, now. Who could after such injustices?

Naturally her temper was not very sweet when she descended to the kitchen, a few minutes later. And she certainly found nothing there to improve it.

"Well, you lazy little good-for-nothing," said her sister, Janet, offering the first irritation. "It's about time you got up. Hurry and have your breakfast. It's half past nine. I'm not going to wait all day to get the dishes done."

"Oh, shut up!" replied Nancy, "I'll eat when I please."

Then her mother's sweet voice broke in. "Nancy, dear," she said, "you'll have to get up earlier, Saturday morning. You can't waste the whole day indoors. Hurry, clean the breakfast things up, and then you can go out."

"Well, I like that!" protested Janet. "If I do the sweeping surely

Nancy can dust. I'm not going to do everything and let that youngster get spoiled."

Janet was interrupted by Frances, still another sister, who had just come in from the summer kitchen. "Mother, how much baking powder do I put in this cake?" she asked.

Then, noticing her young sister, "Oh, good morning, 'Merry Sunshine,'" she remarked. "Well, up so early? Why, it's not ten o'clock yet."

"What difference does it make to you when I get up?" retorted Nancy. "A lot of difference, Miss 'Snapping Turtle,'" Frances replied hotly. "You upset the whole household, coming down long after everybody else."

Nancy started to fight back angry tears. "Oh, that's too bad!" she cried. She hated being called "Snapping Turtle."

Mother soon squelched the quarrel. "That's enough of this wrangling," she ordered. "Frances get on with your baking. Janet, you go upstairs and do the sweeping. Nancy can help me with the dishes and when you are through, she can go up and dust and make the beds."

By the time Nancy had eaten breakfast she was feeling much more amiable. She chatted gaily with her mother while they worked together. Janet was soon down again to say that she had finished her part of the cleaning. So Nancy, finding a duster, went reluctantly upstairs.

There was the bookcase in the hall. It was dusty. She would start there. Besides, it was more interesting than anything else in sight. So the duster moved slowly over the top, then it ran along the edge of the first shelf. Nancy may have had her faults, but she was thorough. Out came every book. She dusted the shelf well, and each volume, too. It was slow work. Presently her eyes rested on a favorite book. She took the volume from its place and dusted it carefully, then she started turning over the leaves. Twice she had read it before, but now she couldn't resist the temptation to run over a few pages once more.

She became absorbed and sat down on the floor, legs crossed and the book in her lap. Soon she forgot all about her work. What an odd picture she made, with her duster lying idle beside her! She would have gone on reading for ever so long, probably, but someone called up asking her to throw down the broom. Quickly she was again brought back to the world of cleaning. "Golly, I must get on with my work!" she exclaimed.

Shortly she went into her own room and noticed her sister had turned back the bed covers and had put the pillows in the window to air. Nancy's first impulse was to throw her lithe young body across the mattress for another rest. The sunny window and soft pillows, however, proved a greater attraction. She tossed the duster over to a chair and turned towards the window, addressing a sleepy-looking cat. "Well, Miss Kitty," she said, "if mamma saw you curled up on those clean pillows she wouldn't be very pleased." Kitty paid no attention. She just blinked, closed her eyes and started to purr again.

Nancy sighed as she looked out of doors at the beautiful view beyond the fluttering white curtains. She longed to be out there, this beautiful warm, sunshiny June day, wandering through the woods and looking for violets. Oh, how glorious it would be!

Before her now the whole universe was drowsy and peaceful. A faint breeze was rustling the leaves; the chickens in the yard were clucking lazily; a robin in the orchard chirped blithely; in the garden were men working, but their voices were mellow, as though they were far away.

Nancy took another long, long breath. "What a lazy world," she remarked to herself. "Lazy chickens, lazy robin, lazy white clouds, lazy little village sleeping down there—lazy—lazy—lazy! Everything is lazy. Why can't I be, too?"

Well, she would be; that was all. So she sat down on the floor, and pushing the kitten to one side, rested her arms on the downy pillows. She smiled dreamily. The view, looking out from here, was grand. She never tired of it. Often before she had come to gaze and dream, and it had always offered some rapture.

Nancy's home was at the top of a hill, one of those that formed the valley in which the little village of Astervale nestled, but which she could hardly see for trees. At a distance the place looked like a small forest. She loved Astervale because it seemed so happy and contented, sleeping there in its cradle. She wondered if it would ever wake up and climb up the hills, as a town or city. She hoped not. It was so much nicer just as it was, for it left the lovely fields, all laid out so neatly on the

hillsides. Oh, how she did love the open country, the hills, the valleys, and the woodlands! All the fields were green now, with many different shades. The woods, too, away to the south, had still other tones of green.

Nancy smiled joyously. "Green everywhere," she said aloud. "Every kind there is. And green is the fairy color. Why, the view is just like a fairy world."

A train had just come into the station at Astervale. The sound of its whistle interrupted her reflections. Then, as it started again, she heard the chug-chug of the engine and the ding-dong of the bell. White smoke rose above the trees, and soon the train, like a huge dark worm, was whirling out through the fields. Shortly it came to a grade and began to climb, puffing, roaring. "The ugly black monster," she protested to herself, "tearing through my beautiful green Fairyland!"

For a few moments it was lost to sight as it went through the cut in the hill. Nancy laughed to herself as she thought of the boys swimming in the pool, there. They would have to duck when the coaches went by. When she could see the train again it was smaller, its whistle fainter.

She watched it for some time. Now it would disappear behind an elevation or grove, then re-appear, still smaller again than before. Finally it was only a heavy dark line, leaving behind a stream of smoke. "Ah, now it is a tiny fairy train," she exclaimed in glee.

Away to the southwest stretched many miles of picturesque, undulating country. Some days the hills were covered by haze, which gave them a bluish tint. That was why they were called the Blue Mountains. Nancy liked them best when the haze veil was gone—like it was to-day—for then she could see the outline of the forests against the horizon.

As she pondered she began to wish herself on the train. Then she wondered where it was going. It must be to some very enchanting place, for everything in the whole world was so beautiful and daring! Soon indeed she was, in imagination, far away, speeding on with the magic thing to a happy land of enchantment. Suddenly she was so startled as to almost jump from the floor.

"Nancy!" came an authoritative call from downstairs.

"Yes," she answered, rising quickly. "It was the voice of her mother. 'Whatever are you doing?' asked Mrs. Luke. 'Haven't you finished your work yet?'"

"No, oh—not quite, mamma." "My goodness, you are slow!" declared Mrs. Luke, rather cross now. She was coming upstairs. "You'll have to hurry." She added, "Why it's nearly noon. Come, you must finish before lunch."

Nancy picked up her duster and started working for dear life.

Mrs. Luke paused when she reached Nancy's doorway. "Good gracious, my child," she exclaimed, "why, you haven't even made the beds yet! What have you been doing, all this time? You should have been through in twenty minutes, and here you've been an hour and twenty minutes!" She walked over to the window, and kitted, startled by the angry voice, jumped down to the floor and scurried away.

"Nancy! didn't you see that cat on the pillows? I wish you would pay some attention to your work. I can't count on you to do anything, properly." Out of patience, she began making the beds.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself!" she chastised as she worked. "It shouldn't take you all this time to do a simple little task. Bless me if I couldn't do everything myself on Saturdays with less trouble than in trying to make my girls help. But, oh dear, I guess it's all in the day."

Nancy listened respectfully. She didn't like to be scolded. Now it made her so unhappy she wished she could run away—away from everything disagreeable.

She took one more yearning glance out of the window to the enticing countryside, then turned to help her mother, but with a lighter heart.

After all one could imagine things, such things were worth while just to think how lovely it would be to be flying away on trains to all sorts of wonderful places! Besides, there was a dreamland, a sweet, enchanting dreamland, away of there beyond those wonderful Blue Mountains! There must be. There would be, for her!

### Little Men

We are dumb at heart: Although the air is thick with little words Mouthed into petty speech, and lost again. Great poets voice their love, And so the birds; But we are dumb of heart.

For we are little men And such as we can never tell desires Or speak our love as birds and poets do;

So friendship shrouds its glow, And love its fires: For we are little men! —Thomas Sergeant, in the Bermondsey Book.

### LONG LIFE

Man is living longer now than in days gone by, and there seems no reason why he should not live much longer still. Old age may not always be pleasant, but that depends largely on what we make it. Many of the finest achievements in statesmanship, literature, medicine, and the arts have been made by men of 60 or over. The astronomer Galileo, the philosophers, Herbert Spencer and Lamarck, Brown and Goethe, the poets, Verdi the composer, produced their masterpieces between the ages of 70 and 85. Titian painted at 98. Most of the successful generals in the World War were far past the retiring age of 64.

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### TIME

The noiseless foot of time steals swiftly by, And ere we dream of manhood age is nigh. —Juvenal.

### FAILURE

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