



## **A Little Boy and a Little Girl**

I

In a large town, full of houses and people, where there was not room for everybody to have even a little garden, two poor children lived. Their names were Kay and Gerda. They could not have a garden larger and better than a few flowers in flower-pots. They were not a brother and a sister, but they loved each other as if they had been.

Their parents lived opposite to each other in two garrets, where the roofs touched each other and the water-pipe ran between them. In each house there was a little window, so that anyone could step from one window to the other. The parents of these children had

each a large wooden box in which they grew kitchen herbs, and a little rose-bush in each box.

The parents placed these two boxes so that they reached from one window to the other. The rose-bushes had long branches and formed an arch of leaves and flowers. The children often stepped out together and were sitting on their little stools under the rose-bushes, or playing quietly.

In winter all this pleasure came to an end because it got too cold and the windows were quite frozen over. But that time the boy and the girl warmed copper pennies on the stove, and hold the warm pennies against the frozen window. Very soon a little round hole appeared through which they could look at each other.

In summer they could be together with one jump from the window, but in winter they had to go up and down the long staircase and through the snow before they could meet.

"Look! There are the white bees," said Kay's grandmother one day when it was snowing.

"Do they have a queen bee?" asked the little boy, as he knew that the real bees had a queen.

"Of course, they have," said the grandmother. "She is the largest of them all, and always, after flying over the ground, returns up to the dark clouds. Often at midnight the Snow Queen flies through the streets of the town, and looks in at the windows, and then the ice freezes on them into wonderful shapes, that look like flowers and castles."

"Yes, I have seen them," said both the children.

"Can the Snow Queen come in here?" asked the little girl.

"Only let her come," said the boy, "I'll set her on the stove and then she'll melt."

Then the grandmother smoothed his hair and told him some more tales.

## Exercises

### 1. Choose the best answer.

- 1) The little boy and the little girl's names were
  - a) Karl and Clara.
  - b) Kay and Gerda.
  - c) Tom and Mary.

- 2) The kids lived
- a) in London.
  - b) a small village.
  - c) in a big town.
- 3) They had
- a) a big garden with roses.
  - b) roses in flower-pots.
  - c) an idea to become gardeners.
- 4) They were
- a) not a brother and a sister.
  - b) a brother and a sister.
  - c) cousins.
- 5) They lived
- a) in one house.
  - b) in a rich house.
  - c) opposite to each other.
- 6) The little boy and the little girl liked
- a) sitting or playing quietly under the rose-bushes.
  - b) playing with other kids in the yard.
  - c) drawing roses.