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The Famous HONEY BUNCH *Books*

By HELEN LOUISE THORNDYKE

Here is a complete list of these well-loved stories,
in order of publication.

HONEY BUNCH, JUST A LITTLE GIRL
HER FIRST VISIT TO THE CITY
HER FIRST DAYS ON THE FARM
HER FIRST VISIT TO THE SEASHORE
HER FIRST LITTLE GARDEN
HER FIRST DAYS IN CAMP
HER FIRST AUTO TOUR
HER FIRST TRIP ON THE OCEAN
HER FIRST TRIP WEST
HER FIRST SUMMER ON AN ISLAND
HER FIRST TRIP ON THE GREAT LAKES
HER FIRST TRIP IN AN AIRPLANE
HER FIRST VISIT TO THE ZOO
HER FIRST BIG ADVENTURE
HER FIRST BIG PARADE
HER FIRST LITTLE MYSTERY
HER FIRST LITTLE CIRCUS
HER FIRST LITTLE TREASURE HUNT
HER FIRST LITTLE CLUB
HER FIRST TRIP IN A TRAILER
HER FIRST TRIP TO A BIG FAIR
HER FIRST TWIN PLAYMATES
HER FIRST COSTUME PARTY
HER FIRST TRIP ON A HOUSEBOAT
HER FIRST WINTER AT SNOWTOP
HER FIRST TRIP TO THE BIG WOODS
HER FIRST LITTLE PET SHOW
HER FIRST TRIP TO A LIGHTHOUSE
HER FIRST VISIT TO A PONY RANCH
HER FIRST TOUR OF TOY TOWN
HER FIRST VISIT TO PUPPYLAND
HER FIRST TRIP TO REINDEER FARM
HONEY BUNCH AND NORMAN RIDE
WITH THE SKY MAILMAN

**HONEY BUNCH:
HER FIRST LITTLE GARDEN**

BY
HELEN LOUISE THORNDYKE

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Honey Bunch: Her First Little Garden

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CHAPTER I

THE EXPRESS PACKAGE

"HONEY BUNCH," said Ida Camp suddenly, "there's an express wagon stopping at your door."

Honey Bunch was sitting in the swing on Ida's porch and pretending that she was going to a fire. It was a game she and Ida had learned from watching the boys who lived on their street. If there was one game they played more than another, it was going to a fire. Ida had a porch hammock and a dinner bell—a large, old-fashioned one—and she and Honey Bunch would sit in the hammock and swing and take turns ringing the bell. Sometimes Ida's mother would come out and say they were making too much noise, and then

they would have to stop and play a quieter game.

When Honey Bunch looked across the street and saw the express wagon stopping squarely in front of her own front door, she forgot all about playing fire. You know yourself it is most exciting to have an express wagon come to your house. You know at once that it is bringing something, and you always hope the something may be for you.

"Let's go and see! Come on, Ida!" cried Honey Bunch, bouncing out of the swing and running down the steps as fast as she could go. "Let's go and see what has come!"

Ida hurried after Honey Bunch and together they ran across the street, though not so fast that they did not stop and look both ways for automobiles. They were both careful to do that. But after they had made sure that no cars were coming toward them, they ran so fast that they hadn't much breath left when they reached the express wagon.

They need not have hurried. The driver of the wagon was kneeling on the seat and

looking at all the packages piled up in the back. He seemed to be hunting for something.

"Please, are you bringing something to our house?" asked Honey Bunch politely.

Once before she had thought the express wagon had brought a package to her house, but she had found out that the wagon had just stopped there while the driver took a bundle across the street. That was disappointing.

"I have a package here for—let me read the tag again—for Miss Honey Bunch Morton," said the driver, smiling. "Do you know where she lives?"

Honey Bunch was so excited she gave a bounce. Ida Camp bounced, too. Ida did everything Honey Bunch did because she loved her so much she wanted to be just like her.

"I'm Honey Bunch Morton! Is it for me? What is it, please?" cried Honey Bunch.

The driver jumped down from the wagon, holding a long narrow package in his arms.

"I can't tell you what it is, for I haven't

opened the bundle," he answered cheerfully. "It feels a little heavy and yet not so heavy. It doesn't rattle and I don't think it is breakable. But you'll have to guess the rest, for that is all I know about it."

Honey Bunch was more excited than ever. She had not the slightest idea of what could be in the bundle. How could she guess what might be a little heavy and yet not so heavy? Ida Camp looked surprised, too.

"You can't sign the slip, can you?" said the driver. "No, of course you can't—your mother will have to do that for you. I'll carry in this bundle for you and then you can see what is inside."

Honey Bunch and Ida ran up the steps of Honey Bunch's house, and as soon as Honey Bunch had opened the screen door she called "Mother!"

Mrs. Morton came downstairs. She was surprised, too, to see the driver and to hear that he had brought a package for Miss Honey Bunch Morton. She signed the slip for him and he hurried off, after telling Honey Bunch

that he hoped she had a new doll. He said he couldn't wait to see because that might make him late and he knew Honey Bunch wouldn't want to keep another little girl waiting for her package.

"Oh, no!" said Honey Bunch. "Don't be late—and I hope the other little girl has a doll like mine."

Mrs. Morton laughed as she took the long, thin package from the hall table where the driver had put it.

"You mustn't expect to find a doll inside this, dear," she said. "The driver said that because he thought you might want a doll. He doesn't know you have nine nice ones upstairs."

"But what is in it?" asked Ida Camp, pinching the bundle to see if she could feel anything.

"I think we'll go out on the back porch to open it," said Mrs. Morton; "because it feels to me as though it were wrapped in excelsior. We can make as much litter as we want to on the back porch. Honey Bunch, run and get

the kitchen scissors and you shall open the package all yourself."

Honey Bunch ran to the kitchen and snatched the scissors from the hook over the table. Then she rushed out on the back porch where her mother and Ida were waiting with the mysterious bundle.

"Now cut the string and unwrap it carefully," said Mrs. Morton.

Snip, snip, went the scissors and the strong brown string was in three pieces. Then Honey Bunch began to unwrap the paper. She unrolled it and unrolled it and unrolled it. There didn't seem to be any end to that paper. Ida watched her breathlessly. Honey Bunch put out her tongue, as she always did when she worked hard, and began to wonder if there really was anything in the parcel.

"Here's the curly stuff," said Ida, when at last the paper was unrolled.

The curly stuff was the excelsior, and Honey Bunch pulled that out—wads and wads of it. The little May breeze blew it all over the

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back porch, but no one minded that. What they wanted to see was under the excelsior.

At last Honey Bunch came to something black and shiny and something bright and shiny, too. She cut one more string and tore off the last scrap of paper and then——

"Garden tools!" shouted Honey Bunch. "Look, Ida—garden tools! Here's a rake and a hoe and a spade! Look, Mother!"

"They are lovely," said Mrs. Morton, while Ida felt of the rake. "Lovely, dear. And here is a card tied to the handle of the hoe. Guess who sent them to you, Honey Bunch."

"Stub," guessed Honey Bunch. "She likes farming, and maybe she thinks I'll come see her this summer and bring them with me. Did Stub send them, Mother?"

Mrs. Morton shook her head.

"No, Stub didn't send them to you, dear," she answered. "I knew at once where they came from when I signed the receipt. This card says 'with love to Honey Bunch from Uncle Peter, who hopes she will have a garden to show him next month.'"

"My dear, darling Uncle Peter sent me my garden tools!" sang Honey Bunch, hugging the little hoe and rake and spade as though they were the uncle who had sent them to her. "I wish he would come see us now, Mother, and I could tell him I like them."

"We'll write him that," Mrs. Morton promised. "And he'll be here next month, perhaps. Well, Honey Bunch, what are you going to do with your tools, now that you have them?"

"Garden," replied Honey Bunch promptly. "Garden the way you do, Mother. Daddy will tell me what to do and I'll have flowers to put in your vases in the morning."

"That will be lovely," said Mrs. Morton, giving her little girl a kiss. "You and Daddy will have to garden this year, because I don't want to stand too long on my foot. You'll pick Mother's roses for her when they come, won't you, dear?"

Honey Bunch promised to pick the roses. Her mother had a good many flowers in her

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garden, but she had hurt her foot in a fall on the ice during the winter, and she did not think she would be able to do as much work in the yard this summer as she had always done before. But, as she said, there would be Honey Bunch and Daddy, and surely they would garden together beautifully.

Honey Bunch and Ida went out and showed the new tools to Norman Clark, whose yard adjoined Honey Bunch's at the back and was separated from it by a high board fence. Mrs. Miller—who came to wash for Honey Bunch's mother—said Norman lived on the fence, but Honey Bunch was sure Mrs. Miller was mistaken about that. Norman didn't live on the fence at all—he had his meals in his house and he slept there, just like any other boy; he only stayed on the fence part of the morning, when it was sunny, and almost all the afternoon, when it was shady. He liked to stay on the fence because he could see up and down the block, into nearly all the other yards and, looking through the wide strip of

ground at the side of Honey Bunch's house, he could see out into the street on which her house faced.

The two little girls found Norman sitting on the fence, whittling a piece of wood. He thought the tools were very nice.

"I don't suppose you want to lend that spade?" he suggested. "I could use a spade. I haven't anything but a rusty tin shovel that isn't any good."

"Are you going to have a garden, Norman?" asked Honey Bunch. "That will be fun. What are you going to plant in it?"

"No, I don't want any garden," replied Norman scornfully. "Gardens are for girls. I'm a pirate chief and I need spades to dig for buried treasure. You lend me yours and perhaps I'll bring you home a gold chest."

Honey Bunch stared at him. She did not especially want a gold chest.

"I'm making a dagger now," went on Norman, showing the piece of wood he was whittling. "It goes in my belt and stays there day and night."

"Don't you take it out when you go to bed?" asked Ida.

"Not unless it sticks in me," answered Norman. "A pirate chief should always be armed. Will you lend me the spade, Honey Bunch?"

"I have to garden with it," replied Honey Bunch. "Maybe when I have my garden all dug, I'll lend it to you. Where is the buried treasure, Norman?"

"I don't know till I find it," said Norman. "You never know where the treasure is before you dig it up. That's why it is exciting to be a pirate. Maybe there is buried treasure right there, under that rose bush."

Honey Bunch and Ida turned and stared at the rose bush. Suddenly, a beautiful black cat with a white streak of fur around her neck walked from behind it. This was Lady Clare and her collar was ermine—Daddy Morton said so.

"You'll have to tie Lady Clare up if you're going to make a garden," remarked Norman, cutting slivers of wood from his dagger.

"Cats dig up gardens as fast as you plant 'em, 'less you tie 'em up."

"Lady Clare won't dig up my garden," Honey Bunch declared earnestly. "She likes flowers. I'll tell her I am going to have flowers like Mother and she'll walk around the garden. You'll see, Norman."

Norman said all right, but he didn't seem to believe it. However, he patted Lady Clare when she jumped up on the fence beside him and she purred and curled her front paws under herself, ready to take a nap. Lady Clare liked the fence almost as much as Norman did. Perhaps she, too, liked to watch what was going on in the other yards.

Honey Bunch went away thinking of what Norman had said, and then it began to worry her. If she planted a garden, would Lady Clare really try to dig it up?

CHAPTER II

PLANNING THE GARDEN

"DADDY," said Honey Bunch at dinner that night, "could I make a garden in the morning?"

"Well, dear, it is early yet to start a garden," her daddy answered. "Jack Frost might come and nip your seeds, and then think how sorry you would feel."

"Oh, Daddy, Jack Frost went away ever so long ago!" cried Honey Bunch. "I have on my summer dress, Daddy. In winter I have to wear a winter dress. This is summer now, isn't it, Mother?"

"Spring," replied Mrs. Morton, smiling.

"Jack Frost has a trick of coming back in the night to surprise gardens," explained Daddy Morton. "He goes away and stays several weeks, until he thinks we have forgot-

ten about him. Then the winds tell him that the gardens are planted and some little green plants have come up and that the fruit trees are ready to shower out their beautiful blossoms.

"'I'll show them,' says Jack Frost, and he hops on board the North Wind express and comes back. All night long he goes about and with his cold, cold fingers he pinches the little green stalks and freezes the brown earth where the little seeds are hidden and nips the fruit tree blossoms.

"'Now they may plant their gardens all over again,' he says, when he has done this; and away he goes and the warm weather comes back again.

"Sometimes Jack Frost will do this three times in a single month and sometimes once and sometimes not at all. But wise people do not trust him, and they save their little brown seeds until they are sure there is no danger of a return visit from Jack Frost."

"I wouldn't want Jack Frost to freeze my garden," said Honey Bunch earnestly, "but

it would be fun to use the tools Uncle Peter sent me."

"Oh, you can do that," her daddy answered quickly. "There are a great many things to be done to a garden, Honey Bunch, before it is ready for seeds and plants. I'll draw you a picture of your garden after dinner, and then to-morrow you and I will go out and begin to work in it."

And that, of course, was just what Honey Bunch wanted. As soon as dinner was over she ran and got a pencil and paper and then waited quietly while her daddy talked to some one on the telephone. She was as patient and sunny as a little girl with a name like hers ought to be. You see, she had another name—yes, indeed. Her "truly" name was Gertrude Marion Morton, but her daddy said *he* thought she was a bunch of sweetness and as he couldn't say that every time he called to her, why not call her Honey Bunch?

So he did, and her mother soon did, too, and then Mrs. Miller, the washerwoman, and Uncle Peter and Stub and Julie and the Tur-

ner twins—who were Honey Bunch's cousins—all began to say "Honey Bunch" whenever they spoke to her.

Ida Camp and the other little girls who lived in the neighborhood said Honey Bunch, too, and presently Honey Bunch might have forgotten that she had any other name if it had not been for the Christmas presents and the birthday party invitations and the letters that came to her addressed "Miss Gertrude Marion Morton."

But Uncle Peter would never write that long name out. When he sent her presents—like the garden tools—he always addressed them to "Miss Honey Bunch Morton."

"Now I'll show you how your garden will be," said Daddy Morton, when he had finished talking over the telephone. "I think that long narrow piece of ground at the side of the house will be just right for you. It is sunny, and the back yard is already planted with Mother's rose bushes and her tulip bulbs."

"And Mrs. Miller has to have some grass to put the clothes on," Honey Bunch pointed

out. "She has to have grass to bleach the new tablecloth on. She says that rose bushes are all right for handkerchiefs, Daddy, but give her a piece of grass for a tablecloth!"

Mr. and Mrs. Morton laughed. Honey Bunch was very fond of Mrs. Miller and liked to listen to her talk. Sometimes Honey Bunch listened so eagerly and so carefully that she herself talked just like Mrs. Miller. That always made her daddy and mother laugh. Honey Bunch did not mind. She liked people to laugh, even when they laughed at her.

"Well, Mrs. Miller shall have her grass for the tablecloth," said Daddy Morton, "and you shall have the side yard for your garden, Honey Bunch. What do you want to plant in it?"

"Tulips," replied Honey Bunch right away. "Red and pink ones, like Mother's."

"Oh, dearest, I planted those last fall. You helped me, don't you remember?" her mother reminded her. "You and I spent a whole afternoon planting the bulbs and I told you that they would sleep snug and warm all win-

ter in the nice, warm earth and wake up this spring. You can't plant bulbs in May, Honey Bunch; they wouldn't flower."

Honey Bunch thought a minute. She was disappointed about the bulbs, but she wasn't going to let that spoil her garden.

"What are those little low flowers, Daddy?" she asked. "Norman Clark has a picture of some he painted in school before he moved to Barham. You know—Mother had some last summer. All colors."

"Nasturtiums?" suggested Mr. Morton.

"Yes," replied Honey Bunch, nodding her head. "It's a long name, isn't it?" she added. "Could I have some of those, Daddy?"

"You may, if you'll try to say the name," her daddy said. "Try, Honey Bunch. Say 'nasturtium.'"

Honey Bunch tried her best, and the third time she said it quite nicely. Her daddy said she would find it was easier each time she said it, and Honey Bunch and he decided that a gardener must be able to pronounce the name of any flower he planted in his garden.

"You have a long fence on one side of your garden that will be a support for tall or climbing flowers," Daddy Morton said, when Honey Bunch had pronounced "nasturtium" plainly.

"What kinds of tall flowers are there, Daddy?" Honey Bunch asked eagerly.

"Well, larkspur is tall," replied Mr. Morton. "Do you know what larkspur is, dear?"

"Aunt Carol had larkspur in her garden," said Honey Bunch. "Blue flowers and, oh! so pretty."

"Hollyhocks are tall, too," said Mr. Morton. "I like hollyhocks myself, though some people think they are a stiff flower."

"Hollyhocks and larkspur take two years to blossom," objected Mrs. Morton. "I don't think it is quite fair to ask so much patience from a little girl who is going to plant her first garden."

"I'd forgotten that," said Mr. Morton. "No, Honey Bunch, this year we'll have only flowers in your garden that will bloom for you before the summer is over. No little

gardener should be asked to cultivate patience her first season."

Then he said they would go shopping for their flower seeds the next week.

"This is the way your garden will look, then, Honey Bunch," he told her. "That is, if we don't change our minds."

Honey Bunch looked. She saw a long, narrow frame drawn on the paper. This frame was marked off into neat little spaces and in these spaces the flower seeds were to go, her daddy said.

"I wish I could plant the favorite flower of every one," said Honey Bunch earnestly. "Then, when it grew, I could pick it for them and put it in a vase in their house."

"So you shall, darling," Mrs. Morton told her. "You shall plant a flower to please every one—if your garden is large enough. You'll have plenty of time to ask and find out what the favorite flowers are, before the ground is ready for planting."

"And if a little girl I know is in bed and fast asleep within the next fifteen minutes,"

added Daddy Morton, "I'll bring her home something to-morrow night to use in the garden."

You may be sure Honey Bunch scurried off to bed at that. And though she meant to dream of her garden, she didn't. She didn't dream at all.

In the morning Daddy Morton went downtown to his office, promising to come home an hour earlier than usual that afternoon and help Honey Bunch with her garden.

"I'll go and ask Mrs. Miller what her favorite flower is," said Honey Bunch to herself, when she had carried the bread tray out to the kitchen for her mother and brushed the crumbs off the table like the helpful little girl she was.

Mrs. Miller had come to iron that morning and her cheerful red face was bending over the ironing board in the laundry when Honey Bunch took her new garden tools downstairs to show her.

"Uncle Peter sent them to me," explained Honey Bunch proudly, "and Daddy is going

to help me this afternoon; we're going to make a garden. I'm not going to put the seeds in the ground till it is too late for Jack Frost to come back and spoil them."

"They're grand tools," declared Mrs. Miller. "Just grand. 'Tis a fine garden you should be having, Honey Bunch, with tools like that to work for you."

"I'll plant something for you," said Honey Bunch. "What is your favorite, Mrs. Miller, to grow in the garden?"

Honey Bunch meant a flower, but Mrs. Miller did not know that. She put her hot iron back on the stove and looked at the little girl with great earnestness.

"Cabbage," she said solemnly. "Honey Bunch, if there is one thing I do admire in a garden, 'tis cabbage. The bigger the better, to my way of thinking."

Honey Bunch stared at the good-natured washerwoman.

"But, Mrs. Miller," she answered, "this is a flower garden. I want to pick flowers and put them in vases, you know. You can't put a

cabbage in a vase and look at it, can you?"

"No, that's true," agreed Mrs. Miller. "Though you can put it in the pot and have a fine dinner with it. But, of course, I would be the last one to ask you to mix vegetables with posies. I tell you, Honey Bunch! How about a cabbage rose? That's a grand flower now."

"Is it?" asked Honey Bunch doubtfully. "Are you sure it is a flower, Mrs. Miller?"

Mrs. Miller was quite sure.

"Is it your favorite flower?" persisted Honey Bunch. "I want to plant your favorite flower."

Mrs. Miller said she thought it was the prettiest rose that grew, and Honey Bunch promised to plant a cabbage rose for her. Daddy, she thought, would know about cabbage roses.

"Now I'll go ask Ida Camp her favorite flower," said Honey Bunch, climbing down from the chair in which she had been sitting to talk to Mrs. Miller. "I wonder what flower Ida will want me to plant for her?"

Ida knew at once what she wanted. She said she liked red poppies, the reddest red poppies there were, and could she have those in Honey Bunch's garden?

"Of course," answered Honey Bunch. "Mother will write it down for me and Daddy and I will go shopping and buy the seeds."

"I think," said Ida happily, "that your garden is going to be just lovely, Honey Bunch."

CHAPTER III

DADDY'S PRESENT

HONEY BUNCH thought her garden was going to be lovely, too. She was out on the front step waiting for her daddy when he came home that afternoon. Under his arm he had a package.

"That's for you," he said, kissing Honey Bunch. "Are you ready to make a garden?"

"Oh, my, yes," answered Honey Bunch. "I've been ready ever so long. Is this a keep-till-after-dinner bundle, Daddy, or a now one?"

Honey Bunch always divided the packages Daddy brought her into two kinds—the ones she must put away and keep till after dinner—they were usually candy—and the ones she might open at once.

"It's to open now," said Mr. Morton.

"We'll go in the house and let Mother see, too. And then we'll go to work."

Honey Bunch opened the package as soon as she was in the house. In it she found something dark blue with strings and funny little pockets stitched in a row across the bottom.

"What is it, Daddy?" she asked, puzzled.

"It's a garden apron, sweetheart," her daddy explained. "I wanted to get you overalls to wear while you were grubbing in the dirt, but Mother said no, she didn't want her little girl turned into a little boy, even for make-believe. So I bought you this. You tie it over your dress so," and Daddy Morton slipped the apron over Honey Bunch's yellow head and tied it twice, once at the back of her neck and once at the waist.

"Now there you are, with your clean dress all covered up," he said. "And in this pocket you put a ball of string—like that; little scissors for cutting the string go in this pocket; and in this one a pencil and paper, to write

down the seeds and plants we want to get; and in this fourth pocket we put the tape measure, to tell us when we have a bed long or wide enough—there!”

As Mr. Morton showed Honey Bunch the pockets and told what they were for, he put the string and the scissors and the pencil and paper and tape measure in their places so that, when he had finished, Honey Bunch looked like a real little gardener.

“I’ll make you a sunbonnet, Honey Bunch,” said her mother. “You won’t need it now, for the sun isn’t hot. But this summer you shall have one to wear when you are pulling weeds.”

Honey Bunch and her daddy went out into the garden and Mother and Mrs. Miller came and sat on the side steps to watch them.

“I can’t stay but a minute,” Mrs. Miller said; “but while I am waiting for the clothes to dampen down, I’ll just look at your garden.”

There was another interested friend watching Honey Bunch. This was Norman Clark.

He sat on his fence and dangled his feet over and whistled.

"I must ask Norman what his favorite flower is," said Honey Bunch, who had not forgotten for one minute what kind of garden she wanted hers to be.

"Norman," she called, going closer to the fence, "Norman, what is your favorite flower? I'll plant it in my garden for you."

"I don't believe you will," said Norman gloomily. "I don't like stylish flowers. Never did."

Honey Bunch laughed merrily.

"What are stylish flowers?" she asked, stooping down to pat Lady Clare, who was rubbing against her.

"Stylish flowers," explained Norman, "are those your mother plants to look pretty and you can't pick one without first asking."

"Oh!" said Honey Bunch. "Well, of course, my mother has some flowers she doesn't want me to pick—but she told me about those. Most of them she says are to grow and look beautiful for every one to see and then, by

and by, she saves the seed. You can't pick flowers and save the seed, too. Didn't you know that, Norman? But my mother always gives me part of her flowers for my own. And you can pick your favorite flower in my garden—if it grows."

"Well, if I can have the kind of flower I like and if I can pick it, that's different," said Norman, looking more pleasant. "I like sunflowers, Honey Bunch—they're my favorite flowers."

"All right, I'll plant sunflowers specially for you," Honey Bunch promised him, and then she ran off to help her daddy, who was waiting.

Goodness, Honey Bunch had no idea there was so much to do to make a garden. First her daddy took a large spade—not the little shining one that belonged to the set of tools Uncle Peter had sent Honey Bunch, but one three times as large and heavy—and he spaded up the strip of ground that lay between the fence and the house. This fence was not a high board one, like the one Norman Clark

"lived on" (as Mrs. Miller said), but it was rather a pretty fence, of open iron work. You could see through it into Mrs. Farriday's yard. She had rambler roses growing on her side of the fence.

Honey Bunch tried to help her daddy spade, but she found the ground was too hard to move—that was what she said, and it was true. The ground was hard to move and turn over. Daddy Morton said that was one reason little girls had to have their daddies help them make a garden.

After all the earth was spaded up, then Honey Bunch could help. She took her little rake and Daddy took the big rake and they went over every bit of that ground and raked it till it was smooth and brown. Mrs. Miller had to go back to her ironing and Honey Bunch's mother went in to get dinner before they had finished raking. But Norman did not go in—he sat on the fence and watched them and whistled. Lady Clare, too, stayed. She seemed to be wondering what they were doing.

When the garden plot was spaded and raked, Honey Bunch and her daddy had to go in and wash their hands and get ready for dinner. But they were as busy as they could be, after dinner, up to the minute when Honey Bunch had to go to bed. Honey Bunch sat on the floor and looked at pictures in the seed catalogues her daddy had brought home and her daddy sat on the floor, on the rug beside her, and whittled out pegs to hold the strings which were to mark the different flower beds.

"To-morrow," Daddy said, kissing Honey Bunch good-night when at last she really had to go to bed, "we shall go downtown and shop for seeds."

The stores in Barham, where Honey Bunch lived, were "downtown." Downtown was where her daddy went every day, to his office, but Honey Bunch did not. She went so seldom that when she did go it always seemed exciting. She was sure to have a shopping trip around Christmas time and perhaps when she and Mother wanted to buy new summer clothes, or a coat for winter, but the rest of the

time Honey Bunch knew very little about what was going on in the shops and stores.

"This is the very first time I ever went shopping for seeds, Daddy," she said, the next afternoon as they went downtown on the trolley car.

Daddy Morton had come home early again from the office, to take his little girl seed-shopping. He liked to go seed-shopping, too. He said so.

"This is the first time you ever made a garden, dear," he told Honey Bunch, lifting her down from the car.

They went into a store so big that at first Honey Bunch thought it went right on and never stopped at all. It was wide, but it was long, too, and you could see straight through it, from one end to the other. Honey Bunch was staring down the aisle and wondering how far it went when she saw, far, far away, a little girl staring back at her. This little girl wore a blue hat and a blue sweater and a dress with little pink flowers sprinkled over it.

"Why, it's me!" said Honey Bunch aloud.

The clerk who was coming to wait on them, heard her and laughed.

"That's a mirror back there," he explained. "You're not the first one who has been surprised. What can I do for you to-day?"

Mr. Morton lifted Honey Bunch up and sat her on the counter. This was much better, because when she was on the floor she couldn't see over the counter at all. She saw only the big sacks and bags that were standing against the walls of the store.

"We are going to have a garden," explained Mr. Morton seriously, "and we need seeds to plant in it."

"Yes, sir," replied the clerk. "And you've come to the right place. Have you a list?"

Honey Bunch put her hand in her sweater pocket and pulled out the list her daddy had written for her.

"Here it is," she said.

The clerk took it and read it aloud, looking very much interested as he read.

"A cabbage rose, for Mrs. Miller," he read. "Heliotrope for Mother and some nasturtiums

for her to have pretty soon so she won't have to wait; red poppies for Ida Camp—the reddest ones there are; sunflowers for Norman Clark, because he doesn't like stylish flowers. Uncle Peter's favorite flowers are pansies—Mother said so. Don't forget Mrs. Miller wants a cabbage rose. And please, some clove pinks for Daddy."

"Well, I never!" said the clerk, when he had finished reading the list. "I should say this was going to be a garden worth having. But hasn't the gardener forgotten something?"

"Oh, no—did I?" asked Honey Bunch, in alarm. "What did I leave out? Tell me."

"You haven't said anything about your own favorite flower," replied the clerk, smiling a little. "How about that?"

"I don't want any—not the first time," answered Honey Bunch.

She had said the same thing to her daddy and mother when they had asked her what flower she wanted to plant for herself. To tell the truth, Honey Bunch thought all flowers

beautiful and she had no favorite because she loved them all.

The clerk helped them find the seeds they wanted, but they had to wait for Uncle Peter's pansies and Mrs. Miller's cabbage rose bush.

"We'll have pansy plants in next week," the clerk said, tying up the little envelopes of seeds. "You have to have plants, if you want flowers this summer. In August you can get the seeds and plant them and they'll bear blossoms next year. And our rose bush stock isn't in yet—that ought to be along next week, too."

"We're not going to plant the seeds right away," Honey Bunch explained gravely, taking the parcel the clerk handed her. "We have to wait because Jack Frost may come back and spoil them."

"I see you are going to be a wise gardener," the clerk told her, shaking hands with her before Daddy lifted her down from the counter. "I should like to see your garden some day."

"Ask him to come and see it when your

flowers have a good start, Honey Bunch," said Mr. Morton.

So Honey Bunch, a little shyly, invited the seed store clerk to come and see her garden "after a while," and he said he would with pleasure.

There were a great many interesting things in the store to look at, and Honey Bunch and her daddy looked at them all. There were baby chickens in one corner, and Honey Bunch was eager to have little chickens in her garden until she learned that the little chickens would soon grow into big chickens and eat the garden up. Then she thought she would rather just raise flowers.

"My goodness, look at Lady Clare!" said Honey Bunch, as she and her daddy peeped in at the garden on their way to their front door. "She's sleeping in the middle of the garden!"

CHAPTER IV

A RAINY SUNDAY

IT was easy enough to wake Lady Clare up and bring her into the house, but it did seem as though the cat thought Honey Bunch had planned the garden especially for her. Lady Clare took naps in the middle of the garden nearly every morning; she went to sleep on Honey Bunch's garden apron, if it wasn't hung up on the nail in the laundry; and Lady Clare even knocked down the garden tools when she found them standing on the side porch. But that, Honey Bunch admitted, might have been an accident.

When the time came to plant the seeds that Honey Bunch and her daddy had bought in the seed store, Lady Clare sat on the fence with Norman Clark and was as interested as he was. And Norman was very much interested. He asked every other minute when Honey

Bunch was going to plant his sunflower seeds.

"I have to measure things first," Honey Bunch told him, feeling in the pocket of her apron for the tape measure. "I have to measure off places to plant the seeds in; don't I, Daddy?"

"Yes, indeed," answered Mr. Morton. "And we mustn't forget the paths. I knew a little girl once who planted her flower garden so closely that when it was finished she had no place to walk; and she couldn't weed it, unless she stepped on some of the things she had planted."

"I guess her daddy didn't help her," said Honey Bunch wisely.

"What is that board for?" asked Norman, pointing to a flat board leaning against the fence.

"You'll see by and by," replied Mr. Morton. "Come, Honey Bunch, you hold the tape measure while Daddy finds out where to put the pegs."

So Honey Bunch held one end of the tape measure and her daddy held the other end and

together they measured a space to plant the clove pinks in. Then Mr. Morton put a peg down and tied a string to that and ran the string along to another peg. And he and Honey Bunch did this three times, once for the nasturtiums and once for heliotrope—which was Mrs. Morton's favorite flower.

"Now you take your spade, Honey Bunch," Mr. Morton said, when the little pegs were in and the strings tied. "See if you can dig in a straight line, directly under these strings."

Honey Bunch took her shining new spade and began to dig. She was so excited she stuck out her pink tongue and Norman and Lady Clare almost fell off the fence, trying to see what she was doing. Her daddy had to show her just at first, but after that she did it nicely all by herself—a little trench under each white string.

"Now the seeds go in that," explained Mr. Morton, cutting the tops of the seed envelopes with his knife. "Put them in carefully, Honey Bunch, not more than two or three in

a place; and leave plenty of space between for the roots to grow."

Honey Bunch opened one of the envelopes and looked in.

"Oh, Daddy," she cried, "these aren't any good—they're too little!"

"No, indeed, those are very fine seeds," said Mr. Morton, smiling. "You'll see them grow into sturdy plants and beautiful flowers. Look out, dear—you don't want to mix the seeds—you want your flowers to grow in separate rows."

Then Honey Bunch knelt down and very slowly and very carefully dropped the tiny seeds into the warm, brown earth, patting the dirt over them as Daddy showed her. She planted the heliotrope first, then the clove pinks, then the red poppies for Ida Camp, and then the nasturtiums.

"And now," said Mr. Morton, when these seeds were planted, "we'll plant the sunflowers!"

"Hurrah!" cried Norman, raising his arm to wave it as he had seen boys do in parades.

But his arm hit Lady Clare and knocked her over backward into his yard. Norman was very sorry and jumped down and explained to the cat that he had not meant to knock her over. Then he lifted her back on the fence and climbed up beside her and they were good friends again.

Mr. Morton said the sunflowers would grow best near the fence, so he and Honey Bunch dug a trench for the seeds, but they did not need any string to help them make a straight row, for the fence was a guide. Honey Bunch dropped in the seeds and then Norman found out what the board was for. Mr. Morton put it over the place where the seeds were planted and told Honey Bunch to press down on it. This, he said, would prevent the seeds from being washed out if a rain should come before they were well started.

"I have a lot of garden left over," said Honey Bunch, looking at the ground where nothing was planted.

"Oh, no one plants a whole garden in a single day, Honey Bunch," her daddy an-

swered. "Monday we'll plant the sweet peas for Stub and the marigolds for Bobby and Tess, and then, when we go to get the pansy plants for Uncle Peter and the cabbage rose for Mrs. Miller, I think we'll be able to get the scarlet sage plants to please Julie."

This was Saturday afternoon—that was the reason Honey Bunch's daddy could help her plant her garden. And during the few days they had waited, since buying the seeds, Mrs. Morton had written to Honey Bunch's cousins to tell them that Honey Bunch was planting a garden and wanted to know their favorite flowers so that she could plant some seeds especially to please them. Stub had asked for sweet peas and the Turner twins wrote they liked marigolds and Julie "loved scarlet sage" her letter said.

"What is *your* favorite flower?" asked Norman, jumping down from the fence to help Honey Bunch carry away her tools. "Where are you going to plant your favorite flower?"

"I—I haven't any," said Honey Bunch, just as she had told the seed clerk.

After dinner that night Honey Bunch and her mother went out to look at the garden and they found Lady Clare lying asleep on the place where the clove pinks were planted. Honey Bunch carried her into the house and scolded her a little, but Lady Clare only blinked her green eyes and looked very wise.

"To-morrow you can't go out of the house at all," said Honey Bunch severely. "You'll have to stay in the house till you promise to be a good cat."

Honey Bunch had heard Ida Camp's mother say that to her.

But Sunday morning Honey Bunch woke up to see rain dashing against the window and she knew that Lady Clare wouldn't want to sleep on the flower seeds. If there was one thing Lady Clare did not like, it was to be forced to stay out in the rain; she wanted to keep her beautiful, silky hair shining and dry.

"Oh, dear," sighed Honey Bunch at breakfast, "I thought I'd show Ida Camp my garden to-day. She wasn't at home when I was planting it."

"Plenty of time to-morrow, dear," said Mrs. Morton cheerfully. "Why don't you make a book garden. If you take pains we'll send it to some little girl who has to stay in the hospital and can't have any garden at all."

"A book garden, Mother?" asked Honey Bunch. "I never made a book garden. Could I?"

"Certainly," Mrs. Morton answered. "I'll show you how just as soon as I clear the table."

Honey Bunch helped her mother clear the breakfast table and she helped so much that in a very short time they were ready to begin the book garden, on which they worked all day long, except for the time they were at Sunday-school and church, and while, of course, they were at their meals.

"We'll need ever so many things," said Mrs. Morton, smiling, "and you may collect them. We'll call them our garden tools."

"Aprons, too, Mother?" urged Honey Bunch. "We need aprons to garden in."

"Yes, aprons, too," agreed Mrs. Morton. "I think aprons will be a big help, because we

shall use paste, and a little girl I know sometimes forgets and wipes her sticky hands on her dress when she uses paste."

A little pink blush showed in Honey Bunch's round cheeks. She was the little girl who sometimes forgot.

"The aprons are in the second drawer in the kitchen," said Mrs. Morton, who knew how Honey Bunch liked to trot around the house and find things. "Bring two—one for you and one for me."

Honey Bunch went to the drawer in the kitchen cabinet and chose a pink apron for Mother and a blue one for herself and brought them back to the library where her daddy was reading and her mother was making room on one end of the long library table for them to work.

"Now we'll need the blunt pointed scissors and a bottle of library paste," said Mrs. Morton, tying on her apron. "The scissors are upstairs while the paste is here in this table drawer."

Upstairs after the scissors went Honey

Bunch, and then she found the seed catalogues on the shelf in the hall closet, and after that she had to look in Mother's desk for an old blankbook and in Daddy's coat pocket for a pencil.

"How do we make a book garden?" Honey Bunch asked after each trip, and each time Mother said:

"You'll see."

Perhaps you don't know how to make a book garden, either, so I'll tell you how Honey Bunch and her mother went about it.

The seed catalogues were old ones—last year's—and they had a great many beautifully colored pictures of flowers in them. Vegetables, too. Mr. Morton said he hoped they wouldn't ask him to look at the vegetables—it made him hungry just to see the pictures of corn and beans and tomatoes.

For the cover of her garden book, Honey Bunch cut out a great purple pansy. She remembered that Uncle Peter's favorite flowers were pansies, and, as she told her mother, Uncle Peter was her favorite uncle, so wasn't

that all right? Mrs. Morton said she thought it was.

Then, on the pages of the blankbook, Honey Bunch pasted pictures of the flowers she cut from the catalogues. Of course they were not all colored, but she had a box of crayons—they were in the drawer with the library paste so she did not have to make an extra trip for them. Honey Bunch could color pictures very nicely, and she did these with much care. She wanted them to be good enough to go to the little girl who was in the hospital.

In the back of the catalogues were pictures of garden tools, and Honey Bunch cut these out. She couldn't print well enough—that is, she couldn't print small enough letters—to go under these pictures, but her mother did that for her. When Honey Bunch tried to print, she needed plenty of room and sometimes it took a whole page for her to print "Dear Daddy."

At the top of the page of tools Honey Bunch insisted on putting pictures of a rake and a hoe and a spade—for those were her own gar-

den tools. And on the back cover of the blankbook she pasted the picture of a pink rose.

"There!" said Honey Bunch, when all the pictures were pasted in. "I think that is a nice book garden, Mother. Is it nice enough to go to the little hospital girl?"

"Yes, indeed; and I'll send it off in the morning," promised Mrs. Morton, who often sent packages of things to the children's ward of the Barham Hospital. "It is a lovely garden book, dearest."

CHAPTER V

JUST WAITING

AFTER that one rainy Sunday, when Honey Bunch made her garden book, it did not rain again for a long time. Indeed it did not rain for so long that Mr. Morton brought home a little green watering-pot for Honey Bunch one night, and after that she carried water to her garden after dinner each day.

But before the watering-pot came, Honey Bunch grew much worried. She told Mrs. Miller she was worried one morning when the good-natured washerwoman was hanging up clean clothes to dry in the part of the back yard "saved specially" for her, as Honey Bunch said.

"It's my garden," explained Honey Bunch. "It doesn't grow."

"Bless your heart, lamb, give it time," said Mrs. Miller, taking a clothespin out of her

mouth so she could speak more plainly. "Why, how long has it been since you planted it?"

"Saturday," answered Honey Bunch forlornly. "And not a thing has come up!"

"Well, to-day is Tuesday," said Mrs. Miller. "You'll have to wait several more days before you see anything. But some morning, Honey Bunch, you'll come out and there will be a row of little green tips breaking through the ground to surprise you."

"I dug up one of the nasturtium seeds to see if it had died," confided Honey Bunch. "But I couldn't tell—it looked just the same as usual."

"You mustn't dig them up—not if you want them to grow," said Mrs. Miller seriously. "Don't you know what all gardeners have to have, Honey Bunch—what it is they can't get along without?"

"A rake and hoe and spade," declared Honey Bunch. "Uncle Peter sent them to me."

"They're useful," admitted Mrs. Miller,

shaking out a pillowcase and fastening it on the line, "but you could make a garden without them—if you knew how. But there's one thing a gardener can't succeed without."

"Has Mother got it?" asked Honey Bunch. "She has a garden."

"All mothers have it," replied Mrs. Miller, smiling into the puzzled blue eyes of Honey Bunch. "Dear me, I see I'll have to tell you—well, then, Honey Bunch, you can't have a garden unless you have plenty of patience. Did you know that?"

"Oh!" said Honey Bunch. "Patience means waiting, doesn't it, Mrs. Miller?"

"Yes, indeed, it does," agreed Mrs. Miller. "Patience means to wait for your garden to grow, not to dig up the seeds to look at them, and later, when the weeds come, to pull them out one by one and not get discouraged. And it'll take a sight of patience," added Mrs. Miller with more energy, "to keep that cat off the plants. Scat!"

Mrs. Miller was fond of Lady Clare, but the washerwoman said she believed she cared

more for a garden than for any kitty cat. Anyway, she waved a towel at Lady Clare who only blinked her eyes and never moved. She was lying stretched out, full length, on the spot where the sunflowers were planted.

"I'll have to move her," said Honey Bunch sadly. "I have to move her lots of times. I wouldn't care if she would lie on the nasturtiums, because they don't belong to any one; they're just to pick. But Lady Clare always lies down where some one's favorite flower is planted. I move her away from Ida's poppies 'most every day."

"She likes it because it is a sunny place and the ground is warm," Mrs. Miller explained. "Well, if it isn't one thing, it's another, when you are trying to raise something. My father was a farmer, and he was forever fighting the crows. Fast as he would get a cornfield planted, the crows would come and dig up the seed and eat it."

"They do that up at Broad Acres—Uncle Rand's farm," said Honey Bunch eagerly. "Stub showed me the scarecrow Uncle Rand

made to scare them away. I waited a long time once to see a crow get scared, but nothing happened."

Mrs. Miller said she thought that the sight of Honey Bunch probably warned the crows not to come picking corn, and Honey Bunch said yes, she supposed that was the reason they had stayed away from the cornfield. Then she went over and gently picked up Lady Clare and carried her into the house and shut her in the laundry. Lady Clare curled up on a cushion in a chair and went to sleep again. Nothing bothered her. She was a happy cat.

The day after Mrs. Miller came to wash, Honey Bunch and her mother went down to the same seed store where she and her daddy had gone and bought a cabbage rose bush and the pansy plants. The same clerk waited on them and he remembered Honey Bunch and asked how her garden was growing.

"There are little green things coming pretty soon, but they haven't come yet," Honey Bunch told him. "And Lady Clare *will* lie

down on it. But if it isn't one thing, it's another."

The clerk laughed and said that was very true.

"But you'll be paid for all the waiting and all the trouble when you pick the first flower," he said kindly. "And here are some flowers ready for you, to help you wait more patiently."

He showed Honey Bunch a long basket filled with beautiful pansy plants, and the plants were filled with great, velvet pansies, dark blue, yellow and white ones. Honey Bunch thought they were the prettiest flowers she had ever seen. She didn't wonder that Uncle Peter chose pansies as his favorite flower.

"Do you want them sent?" asked the clerk, when he had shown Honey Bunch and her mother the rose bush, its roots wrapped in burlap to keep the damp earth safely around it.

"Oh, no, Mother, do let's take them home

with us," begged Honey Bunch. "We can plant them right away."

Mrs. Morton said they would carry the plants. She took the pansies, for they were rather heavy, and Honey Bunch carried the rose bush. That was lighter, and it wasn't a large bush, just a nice one, the clerk said.

"Come in again and tell me about your garden," he said to Honey Bunch, when she said good-bye. She promised him she would do so.

Mr. Morton came home a little earlier than usual that night, and he set out the rose bush and the pansy plants for Honey Bunch before dinner. While he was planting them, Honey Bunch brought out a low glass dish and picked the pansies—her mother told her that pansy plants should be kept almost free of flowers, that as soon as they bloomed the blossoms should be picked and then more would come. So Honey Bunch filled the dish with lovely pansy faces and they had it for a center piece on the dinner table that night. Honey

Bunch said she wished Uncle Peter could see it.

"Uncle Peter is going to England with Julie's daddy this summer," said Honey Bunch's mother, when Honey Bunch wished that he could see the pansies. "But I think, as soon as college closes, he will come and stay with us for a few days, and then you may show him his pansy plants."

A few days after this Honey Bunch came rushing into the house with such an excited face that her mother knew something had happened.

"Mother!" she cried. "Oh, Mother! My garden grew! Come see! It grew a lot!"

Mrs. Morton was sewing on a new dress for Honey Bunch, but she dropped her sewing on the floor and ran out to see the garden. Sure enough, little green tips were peeping through the earth. How pretty they did look! And how straight the rows were!

"Why, Honey Bunch Morton, you have a real garden!" said her mother, looking as pleased as Honey Bunch did. "Won't it be

fun to tell Daddy when he comes home to-night!"

Honey Bunch could hardly wait to tell Daddy. While she was waiting for night to come she ran over and told Ida Camp and brought her back to look. She told Norman Clark, too, and Mrs. Miller, whom she saw passing the house on her way home from some other place where she washed.

"My garden grew!" sang Honey Bunch to herself. "My garden grew—all the flowers came up."

She ran all the way to the corner when she saw her daddy coming and she told him about the garden long before they reached the house. He went out with her to see it right away and he said it was a fine start.

"Now things will grow so fast you'll be astonished," he told her. "You'll have to be a little patient about the flowers—they won't come right away; but they won't be long."

Honey Bunch thought it strange that every one talked about patience when they spoke of her garden. There was a picture of her great-

great Aunt Patience in an old album in the attic, and she wondered if Aunt Patience had had a garden. She decided to ask her mother some day.

Every morning Honey Bunch went out and worked in her garden. There was not much to do yet, of course, but she put on her apron and felt very important walking up and down between the rows. Mrs. Farriday, if she saw her from her kitchen, always called to her to ask her how her garden was growing and sometimes they compared notes. Mrs. Farriday had a garden, and sometimes she entered her flowers in the Barham Flower Show. This was held once a year and the most beautiful flowers were exhibited and prizes were given for the best and rarest.

"Oh, Lady Clare!" Honey Bunch looked reproachfully at the beautiful cat when she found her for the second time one morning lying on the sunflower plants. "What a bad kitty you are! I'm going to put you out in the street and you can go and play with Raymond."

Raymond was Ida Camp's cat, and Lady Clare often went up on the Camp porch and sat in the sunshine with Raymond. No one knew what they talked about, but Honey Bunch thought she did. She said they told each other what they had had for breakfast and talked about the dog who lived on the next street and sometimes chased them both up a tree.

Honey Bunch stooped down and lifted Lady Clare, who was pretty heavy. She carried her toward the low fence that separated the side yard from the street, intending to put her down on the other side. But, to her surprise, she saw some one there, watching her.

An old lady with white hair sat in a funny-looking chair, drawn close up to the fence. She had bright black eyes and she stared at Honey Bunch. When she saw the little girl looking at her, she smiled.

"You like to work in your garden, don't you?" she said pleasantly. "I've seen you several mornings as I went past; and this morning

I said I was going to stop and maybe get acquainted. Do you like flowers?"

"Oh, yes!" answered Honey Bunch. "I'm going to have some by and by. This is my very first garden, and it's growing now."

"I think it looks as though you were a good gardener," returned the old lady. "Does the cat walk on your beds?"

Honey Bunch clapped her hands. She had to put Lady Clare down to do it and the cat ran away, over into Norman's yard.

"That's why Lady Clare goes to sleep on the flowers, isn't it?" cried Honey Bunch. "I never thought of it! I just scolded her! Poor Lady Clare!"

The old lady looked at Honey Bunch and her black eyes crinkled up with laughter. Honey Bunch laughed to see her laughing.

CHAPTER VI

A GARDEN FRIEND

"YOU funny little girl," said the old lady.

"Am I funny?" asked Honey Bunch, her blue eyes still dancing.

"Yes, indeed, you are," the old lady answered. "You think your cat—what did you say her name is?"

"Lady Clare," Honey Bunch told her.

"Oh, yes. Well, you think Lady Clare goes to bed on the flower beds because they are beds, don't you?" the old lady said. "Just as we go to sleep in our beds at night?"

Honey Bunch nodded.

"Doesn't she?" she asked, coming closer to the fence and looking over it at the old lady very earnestly.

"Well, now, perhaps she does," admitted the old lady more thoughtfully. "Cats are the wisest creatures in the world, and I wouldn't

undertake to say what a cat thinks or how much a cat knows. But doesn't your cat bother you when you want to work in your garden?"

Honey Bunch hated to say anything unkind about Lady Clare, but she knew that the cat often did bother her.

"You see," explained Honey Bunch, "she scratches in the dirt and she lies down on the plants and she walks all over everything. But I'm going to invent something to stop her pretty soon."

"Dear me," said the old lady, "I didn't know I was talking to an inventor. Perhaps I'd better tell you my name. I am Mrs. Lancaster and I live in the yellow brick house on the next block."

"I'm Honey Bunch," said the little girl. "Honey Bunch Morton. 'Honey Bunch Morton isn't my real name—Gertrude Marion Morton is.'"

"I like Honey Bunch better," declared Mrs. Lancaster. "I see you're looking at my chair, though you are too polite to ask

me what kind of a funny contraption it is. I like polite children. This is a wheel-chair, and I can wheel myself all about—to the library and the bakery and around the block and past your garden. It's handy, isn't it?"

Honey Bunch looked at the old lady sadly. "Are you—are you *lame*?" she asked timidly.

"Can't walk a step," Mrs. Lancaster said, but she spoke cheerfully. "Oh, I could—the doctors tell me they could help me out, but it takes money. And money, to spend in that way, is something I haven't got. So I just go along and try to be thankful I have such a nice chair. I don't even have to have any one push me around, I do it all myself."

Honey Bunch still looked sad at the thought that here was some one who could not walk around and go up and down stairs as she could. Honey Bunch was sure that no handy wheel-chair would make up to her for the loss of her two dancing little feet. Still Mrs. Lancaster had her feet—Honey Bunch could see them plainly. How could she be lame

when she had two feet the same as other people who were not lame?

"Stop puzzling about my stupid lameness," said Mrs. Lancaster, just as though she had guessed what Honey Bunch was thinking. "Tell me about your invention. You said you were going to invent something to stop Lady Clare from going to sleep on your flower beds."

"Yes, I am," said Honey Bunch confidently. "I'm going to make a scare cat."

"A *what?*" asked Mrs. Lancaster, in great surprise.

"A scare cat," repeated Honey Bunch. "My cousin Stub lives on a farm, and Uncle Rand—that's Stub's daddy—puts up scare-crows to keep the crows from eating the corn. So I thought I could make a scare cat and put it in my garden to keep Lady Clare away from the flowers. Of course, I don't want to scare her much—just a little," added Honey Bunch.

Mrs. Lancaster's bright black eyes began to twinkle again.

"I never heard of a scare cat—never," she announced. "Though that is no reason why one wouldn't do a world of good. Have you thought how you will make one, Honey Bunch?"

"Uncle Rand dressed a stick up in old clothes," said Honey Bunch, "but I don't b'lieve Lady Clare will be afraid of old clothes. She isn't afraid of anything much, except dogs. I'll have to make a dog."

"I'll make you a dog," said Mrs. Lancaster. "I'll cut it out this afternoon and stuff it and sew it up. I'll bring it to you to-morrow morning; I don't go out much afternoons, because the sun is too hot."

"But maybe you will be tired," Honey Bunch said.

"No, I sha'n't be tired, I'll be glad to have something pleasant to do," declared Mrs. Lancaster. "I suspect I'll laugh every stitch I take in that dog, but you won't mind, will you, Honey Bunch?"

"Of course not," said Honey Bunch.

"What kind of flowers have you in your

garden?" asked Mrs. Lancaster next. She did not seem to want to hurry away.

"Sweet peas—they're over by the side fence," said Honey Bunch, pointing out the wire where the sweet peas would grow as soon as they were tall enough. "Sweet peas are my Cousin Stub's favorite flower. And there are clove pinks for Daddy, and red poppies for Ida Camp—she is my best friend. And I have heliotrope for Mother and scarlet sage for Julie—she's my cousin. The twins, Bobby and Tess (they're my cousins, too) have marigolds, and that bush is a cabbage rose for Mrs. Miller. She wanted a cabbage, but I couldn't plant that for her, because this is a flower garden. Those green things next to the fence are sunflowers for Norman Clark—he lives in that house just back of ours. And the pansies are for Uncle Peter."

"That's the nicest garden I ever heard of," said Mrs. Lancaster warmly. "I've had beautiful gardens myself—years ago when my husband was living. But I never thought to plant the favorite flowers of my friends. Now

each time you look at those green growing things, you remember the one for whom you planted them, don't you, Honey Bunch?"

"Oh, yes!" Honey Bunch nodded. "That is the way. And when the weeds come, I'll just say, 'You can't spoil Julie's flowers—get away,' and I'll pull them out. It is lots of fun."

"I don't doubt it for one minute," answered Mrs. Lancaster. "But I must go home and start work on the scare cat. That will be 'lots of fun' for me."

She started to turn her chair around, pushing a little wheel at the side, then she stopped as though she had remembered something.

"You didn't tell me about your favorite flower, Honey Bunch," she said. "What did you plant to please yourself?"

Honey Bunch thought it very queer that every one should ask her this question, but she answered that she had no favorite flower.

"I see," Mrs. Lancaster said. "You love them all. Have you any ground left that isn't planted?"

Honey Bunch explained that she had some garden "left over" and that her daddy had said that by and by she might think of something she wished to plant in it.

"Don't you say a word about it to any one," said Mrs. Lancaster, "and I'll bring you something for your garden. I have some seeds I've been saving and no one has anything like them, I'll be bound."

"Could I say a word to Mother?" asked Honey Bunch.

"Tell Mother, of course," said Mrs. Lancaster. "Little girls always tell Mother their secrets. But don't tell Ida or Norman or Stub; we'll surprise them."

Mrs. Lancaster, you see, knew the names of people Honey Bunch knew already. She was that kind of an old lady.

Now she made the little wheels at the side of her chair spin around and she turned it and rolled away up the street, Honey Bunch watching her.

Honey Bunch watched the wheel-chair out

of sight and then went into the house to tell Mother about her new friend.

"I've seen that old lady wheeling herself around," said Mrs. Morton as soon as she heard about Mrs. Lancaster. "She must be very lonely—she doesn't even have some one to talk to as she wheels herself about. I'm glad she is interested in your garden."

Mrs. Morton laughed too, when she heard about the scare cat. She thought that Stub would like to hear of it and promised to put the news in her next letter to Stub's mother.

Honey Bunch did not work in her garden all the time. Dear me, no. She had a great many other interesting things to do as well as to garden. She helped her mother very often, by running up and down stairs to get her things she needed; she helped set the table and helped to clear it off; she helped Mrs. Miller hang out clothes. Sometimes when Mrs. Miller swept off the porch or the front sidewalk, Honey Bunch swept too. She had a little broom all her own and she had a little

carpet sweeper so that, when Mother swept the rugs, she could run her carpet sweeper over them and pick up the little grains of dust that might be left.

When Mrs. Morton baked, Honey Bunch helped her. Sometimes she made a pie. Daddy always ate it, and he said the only fault he had to find with Honey Bunch's cooking was that she never made a pie large enough.

Honey Bunch could cut out cookies and she could put the currants in the cookie men her mother made for her. The currants were the eyes, you know. No wonder Honey Bunch was always busy when there were so many things she could do.

But she didn't work all the time, either. Dear me, no. She played with Ida Camp and the two little girls had tea parties for their dolls. These same dolls had to be taken out in their carriages to get the air, too. And Honey Bunch thought paper dolls should have the same treatment until one unlucky day she took a large family of paper dolls out for the air and the wind blew them away and she

never found but one of them. That was a little girl paper doll whose name was Nancy.

Sometimes Honey Bunch played with Norman Clark, though not so much as with Ida. Norman liked noisy games, and his favorite game was pirates. He didn't care for dolls' tea parties—though once, when he had been invited to a party Honey Bunch gave, he had been glad to come; he had not known many boys to play with then—but he liked to borrow Honey Bunch's garden tools. He had a large sand box in his yard and he used the tools for building wonderful things in the sand.

"How much did my sunflowers grow last night?" Norman would ask Honey Bunch every morning.

"Oh, ever so much," she would answer. "You ought to see how fast they grow, Norman."

There was another tool, or garden helper, Honey Bunch had that Norman liked to borrow. This was her tin watering-pot. But Norman did not use the watering-pot to water

flowers with. He, like the mischievous lad he was, thought it a great joke to fill the pot with water and sprinkle Lady Clare as she lay asleep in the sun. When Honey Bunch found this out she would not lend him her watering-pot any more.

One day Norman grew tired of his sand box and climbed the fence with Honey Bunch's rake in his hand.

"Let me work in your garden," he said, and without waiting for permission commenced to rake in the dirt.

Honey Bunch wanted Norman to be very careful. She was just going to tell him so when suddenly Norman pulled on the rake and brought up something long and dirty from the loose ground. The something twisted back and forth on the end of the rake.

"It's a snake!" screamed the boy. "A snake! Look out, or he'll eat you up!"

CHAPTER VII

MORE GIFTS

NORMAN was frightened and ran quickly toward the house, almost knocking Honey Bunch over as he did so.

"Run! Run!" he shrieked. "He'll eat you up, or sting you, or something!"

Honey Bunch was scared too—just for a moment. She stared with wide open eyes at the thing on the tines of the rake. It did not move. She felt dimly that if it was a snake it ought to wriggle around. Almost against her will she took a step closer and looked sharply at the object. Then she tilted her nose and looked at the lad, now at a safe distance.

"A snake!" she scoffed. "Oh, Norman, how silly you are! It's not a snake at all. It's only an old piece of washline, all covered with dirt."

"A washline," faltered Norman, and came

back looking very sheepish. "Well, it looked like a snake, anyway," he mumbled. Then, afraid of being teased, he climbed the high fence and went home.

The first thing Honey Bunch thought of when she woke up the morning after her talk with Mrs. Lancaster was the scare cat. She wondered if the old lady had made a scare cat and what it would look like and when she would bring it to her for the garden.

"I wouldn't want it to scare Lady Clare too much," said Honey Bunch to herself, as she ate her cereal.

But when she went out into her garden and found Lady Clare had dug a little hole under the cabbage rose bush and was lying cozily in it, Honey Bunch decided she wouldn't care if the scare cat did frighten Lady Clare.

Honey Bunch was putting the dirt back in the hole again when she heard some one calling to her. She looked up, and there was the wheel-chair, drawn close to the fence, and Mrs. Lancaster sitting in it. The old lady waved her hand.

"Good morning," she called to Honey Bunch. "You see, I've remembered my promise. Come and tell me what you think of your invention."

Honey Bunch dropped her rake and ran over to the fence. Mrs. Lancaster held a sharp-pointed stick out to her—that is, it was sharp-pointed at one end; the other held the funniest-looking stuffed animal you ever saw. Honey Bunch giggled in delight when she saw it.

It was a dog—but such a queer dog! He was white with neat brown dots all over him and he was so fatly stuffed that he looked as though one more inch of cotton would have burst his seams. But it was his mane and tail that made Honey Bunch laugh. They were made of the brown and white dotted stuff cut in very narrow strips, and when the wind blew this mane and tail fluttered in the breeze like so many narrow ribbons.

"I think he is a lovely dog," said Honey Bunch, hugging the stuffed dog, stick and all. "I would like to call him 'Spot.'"

"That is a good name," Mrs. Lancaster agreed. "I made Spot from oilcloth, so he will be all right out in the rain. I'm glad you like him, Honey Bunch, and I hope he will keep Lady Clare and her friends out of your garden."

"I'll stick the stick in the ground," said Honey Bunch happily, "and then I'll get Lady Clare and bring her to look at Spot."

She stuck the sharp end of the stick in the ground and Spot's mane and tail began to flutter in the breeze.

Lady Clare sat on the fence and watched her, but Honey Bunch went back to the front fence to speak to Mrs. Lancaster.

"I forgot to say 'thank you very much,'" she said shyly.

"Bless your heart, dearie, you don't have to thank me," replied Mrs. Lancaster. "You invented the scare cat, you know, and I had a good chuckle carrying out your idea. I wonder what Lady Clare thinks about it?"

"I'll go see," said Honey Bunch, and she ran over to Lady Clare.

"Here, kitty, kitty," she called, and Lady Clare jumped down from the fence and let Honey Bunch pick her up. The stuffed dog was in the middle of the clove pink bed—a favorite spot of the cat's for a nap—and Honey Bunch pointed it out to Lady Clare.

"That's Spot," she said.

Lady Clare looked at Spot. She didn't seem to be frightened at all.

"Well," said Honey Bunch hopefully, "at least she can't lie down where I put him."

"No, she can't," said Mrs. Lancaster. "And if Spot doesn't do any more good than to make us laugh, he will have been useful. And now come and see what else I have brought you."

Honey Bunch peeped over the fence and Mrs. Lancaster held out a square brown envelope to her.

"Seeds," she said mysteriously. "Our secret seeds. Remember, you are not to tell any one except your mother."

Honey Bunch took the envelope and opened it. The seeds looked just like other seeds she had already planted.

"That square plot of ground will be fine for them, if you have nothing planted there," Mrs. Lancaster said.

Honey Bunch had nothing planted there, and so, while Mrs. Lancaster watched her, she divided the square plot of ground into smaller squares, like a checker board. Then she put the seeds in carefully and patted the earth down over them.

"I'll sprinkle the water on them to-night," she explained. "Because Daddy says if you water gardens when it is sunny the sun dries all the water up and the plants are just as thirsty as ever."

"That is true," said Mrs. Lancaster. "The very best time to water a garden is after dinner. I always did mine, then."

"What kind of flowers are they?" coaxed Honey Bunch. "The ones you gave me?"

"Bend down and I'll whisper," said Mrs. Lancaster.

Honey Bunch put her yellow head close down to the old lady's white hair and Mrs. Lancaster whispered the name of the seeds

to her. Of course that made the secret all the more exciting.

"I never saw any, did I?" asked Honey Bunch, her eyes shining.

"I don't know, my dear," said Mrs. Lancaster. "But even if you have, I doubt if you have seen any like these. My husband spent years working over them; he saved the seed and planted it and cultivated and watched and labeled the plants—and then he died before he could test these. I hope you'll have some beautiful flowers from them, Honey Bunch."

"I'll pick them for you," promised Honey Bunch.

Mrs. Lancaster stayed a little while longer, talking about flowers and gardens while Honey Bunch pulled the little green weeds that were beginning to fill up the spaces in the rows of nasturtiums. Then the old lady wheeled herself away in her chair, saying she would see Honey Bunch again soon.

She did come again soon, and after that hardly a morning passed that she did not

wheel her chair up to the fence and talk to Honey Bunch while the little girl worked in the garden. She told Honey Bunch about the gardens she had had and told her what to do when things went wrong in the little new garden, for instance, when the pansy plants looked a little wilted. They needed more earth around the roots, Mrs. Lancaster said. She told Honey Bunch to lift up the leaves and see if the rich brown earth had not been washed away. Sure enough, it had—some of the roots were “sticking straight up out of the ground,” Honey Bunch reported.

Spot, the brown and white dog, really didn't frighten Lady Clare at all, but he certainly made people laugh.

“Ha—ha!” you could hear them chuckle when they went past the house and looked in the side yard. “Ha—ha! What in the world is that? A weather vane?”

“No, it isn't a weather vane,” Honey Bunch would explain earnestly if she happened to be outdoors. She knew what a weather vane

was, for there had been one on the barn at Broad Acres. "That isn't a weather vane," Honey Bunch would say. "That's a scare cat, and his name is Spot."

Then the people who had laughed usually wanted to know what a scare cat was, and Honey Bunch had to tell them about Lady Clare.

It wasn't long before the seeds Mrs. Lancaster had given her sprouted and sent up little tiny green leaves.

"What are those?" asked Ida Camp, when she saw them.

"Sh—they're a secret," answered Honey Bunch. "I promised not to tell."

"What are those things planted in the square?" asked Norman Clark, when he climbed over the fence to see how well his sunflowers were growing and stopped to look at the rest of the garden.

"They're a secret," said Honey Bunch patiently.

"Don't you know what they are?" asked

Norman, staring at the plants as though he could tell what they were if only he looked long enough.

"I know the name of them," answered Honey Bunch. "But I don't know how they're going to look," she admitted.

"Doesn't any one know?" persisted Norman, who was curious.

"Somebody does, but she said not to tell any one about the seeds," replied Honey Bunch, who found it hard to keep a secret when so many questions were asked her. "Mother knows, for I told her; but you wait and see, Norman. You'll be surprised."

"No, I won't," contradicted Norman. "Nothing ever surprises me. When will there be a rose on Mrs. Miller's bush?"

"Not till next year," replied Honey Bunch. "It only has flowers on it in June, and Daddy says this was such a little bush we'll have to wait till next year. But Mrs. Miller doesn't care; she says she would rather wait a year for a cabbage rose than have a dozen different roses now."

"I wouldn't," said Norman. "I'd rather have 'em now. What color is a cabbage rose, Honey Bunch?"

"Pink," the patient Honey Bunch told him. "Lovely pink. And Mrs. Miller says it smells sweeter than any other rose she ever smelled."

"I don't think cabbages smell very sweet," commented Norman frankly. "Wonder why they call it a cabbage rose?"

"I'll ask Daddy," said Honey Bunch, who always asked him the questions she couldn't answer.

And that night, when she asked him why a cabbage rose was called that, he told her he thought it was because once upon a time some one had thought it looked like a cabbage.

"You look at a cabbage head the next time you go to market with Mother, Honey Bunch," Mr. Morton said, "and see if you don't think it looks something like a rose."

Honey Bunch remembered this, and the next morning, when she and Mother went out to buy good things to eat, she took great pains

to look carefully at a green cabbage on the grocer's stand. It *did* look like a rose, it really did!

"That is," said Honey Bunch that night, when she was telling her daddy how the cabbage looked, "the leaves are folded up like rose leaves. But it isn't the color of a rose and it doesn't smell like a rose. And, Daddy?"

"Yes, dear, what is it?" he asked.

"If there are cabbage roses, why aren't there rose cabbages? I asked Mr. Edmonds and he said he never heard of any."

Mr. Edmonds was the grocer. Honey Bunch's daddy said that he would have to think this over.

"I suppose," said Honey Bunch, who had been thinking it over all the afternoon, "the reason is, because there just isn't."

"Don't think any more about cabbage roses, Honey Bunch," urged Mrs. Morton, taking a letter from the table. "I have something nice to tell you."

Honey Bunch's quick blue eyes had seen

the brown lettering on the envelope. She knew what that meant.

"Uncle Peter!" she cried. "A letter from Uncle Peter! Is he coming to see us, Mother? I'm so glad I didn't pick his pansies to-day."

Mrs. Morton smiled and drew out the letter to read it aloud to Honey Bunch. It told them that Uncle Peter would come to visit them "the day after to-morrow."

CHAPTER VIII

UNCLE PETER COMES

"My Uncle Peter is coming to see us tomorrow," said Honey Bunch to Mrs. Lancaster the next morning. "But I won't tell him about the secret flowers," she added.

"You're very fond of your Uncle Peter, aren't you?" said Mrs. Lancaster, smiling. "You talk about him so much. The pansies are ready for him, aren't they?"

"Pansies are his favorite flowers," declared Honey Bunch. "Uncle Peter sent me my rake and my hoe and my spade, but he hasn't seen my garden growing yet. And he hasn't seen Spot; but he knows about him—Mother wrote and told him."

When the time came for Mrs. Lancaster to go home that morning, she turned her chair around and stopped, instead of rolling off at her usual quick pace. She could turn the

wheels rapidly and skillfully, and as a rule she hurried along the street in her wheel-chair as fast, if not faster, than a woman would walk.

"By the way, Honey Bunch," she said to the little girl who stood at the fence ready to wave good-bye, "I won't be around for two or three days. Don't expect me to come before the first of next week."

"But then you won't see Uncle Peter," protested Honey Bunch. "He's going Friday—he can stay but one night, Mrs. Lancaster. Couldn't you just come a minute in the morning and see Uncle Peter?"

"Not very well," said the old lady. "To tell you the truth, Honey Bunch, I don't care much about meeting new faces; I like little people better than grown-ups—always did. You can tell me about the good time you have with Uncle Peter, and that will be much better than if I came and saw him."

Honey Bunch went into the house almost crying. She wanted Mrs. Lancaster, who was one of her best friends by this time, to see her dearest uncle. But when she told her mother

what the old lady had said, Mrs. Morton took Honey Bunch on her lap and tried to make her understand.

"You see, darling," she said gently, "Mrs. Lancaster is an old lady, and she isn't well. Sometimes her poor crippled legs hurt her. When you are a tired old lady it is often hard work to have to meet and talk to strangers. Uncle Peter doesn't seem a stranger to us, because we know and love him dearly, but Mrs. Lancaster would have to begin at the beginning with him and make his acquaintance.

"You and Mrs. Lancaster have a beautiful time together," Mrs. Morton went on, rocking with Honey Bunch in her lap, "because you both love flowers and you're making a garden together—the secret flowers are something you are both interested in. I've been out and spoken to this dear little old lady once or twice, but now I usually nod to her and wave my hand from the window because I know she is happier talking to my little girl. You may not understand exactly, dear, until

you are an old lady yourself, years and years and years from now. But Mother knows Mrs. Lancaster would rather talk to you and watch your garden grow and not be asked to visit with grown-up people."

That made Honey Bunch feel better. You may have noticed, as she did, that talking things over with Mother does make you feel better every time. Now, instead of feeling sorry because Mrs. Lancaster wasn't going to see Uncle Peter, Honey Bunch bustled out into her garden to make everything look as nice as possible for his visit.

She pulled every weed she could find, though there were not many. She was a faithful little gardener and kept such sharp watch on the weeds that not many of them had a chance to grow high before she spied them, and then it was off with their heads and out with their roots. It had not taken Honey Bunch long to learn that taking the heads off the weeds didn't discourage them. She had to pull them up by the roots and throw them into the trash can, before they died.

When she had the weeds pulled, Honey Bunch spent half an hour fixing Stub's sweet pea vines. She always thought of the flowers she had planted as belonging to the ones for whom she had planted them. So whenever she tried to coax the pretty curly green vines of the sweet peas to grow up the wires Daddy Morton had fixed for them, Honey Bunch said to herself that she was "making Stub's sweet peas grow."

With the stray weeds pulled and the vines started up the wires and the earth raked around the plants to make them tidy and a few scattered pieces of paper picked from the paths, Honey Bunch's garden was in perfect order. That was because she spent some time in it every day. Some small gardeners, you know, and big ones, too, let their gardens go for days at a time; they never weed or water or cultivate them. And then, suddenly, they want to show the garden to some one and they have to pitch in and work for hours—perhaps in the broiling sun—to put the garden in order. But it never looks as nice, no matter how

hard they may work, as does the garden which has been carefully tended since the first seed was planted.

What do you suppose happened to Honey Bunch the morning of the day her Uncle Peter was expected? Her garden bloomed!

Yes'm, she came out on the side porch before breakfast, in her spandy new pink gingham dress that Mother had just finished making for her, and she looked over to her garden just as she always did, every morning. There she saw three pinks and more nasturtiums than she could count—they made a lovely blaze of color—and one scarlet poppy.

Honey Bunch was so surprised she nearly fell off the porch! It was lucky the railing was there. Of course she had looked at her garden every morning hoping to find that it *had* blossomed, but she had looked so many mornings and seen only the bright-faced pansies that she could hardly believe it true when she saw these other flowers.

"Mother! Daddy! Mrs. Miller!" she cried. "Come look, quick!"

Daddy Morton came hurrying downstairs without his necktie, and Mrs. Morton, who was buttoning her slippers, left one strap undone while she ran out to look, and Mrs. Miller, who had come to clean the house, left the coffee pot on the stove and it boiled over.

"Flowers!" said Honey Bunch, almost shouting, she was so excited. "Flowers in my garden!"

"Well, I never!" Mr. Morton seemed as pleased as Honey Bunch. "And clove pinks, too! Perhaps I'll have one to wear downtown in my buttonhole."

"Oh, yes, Daddy," said Honey Bunch eagerly. "I'll pick it for you. And the nasturtiums will go in Mother's glass dish on the table and the red poppy is Ida's. Isn't it fun?"

"Don't pick the very first flowers and give them away, little daughter," said Mrs. Morton, stooping down to hug Honey Bunch. "The posies will bloom fast now they have started; if I were you, I'd leave those right

where they are growing, at least until you have shown your garden to Uncle Peter."

Honey Bunch thought this was a fine plan, and although she brought Ida Camp to see her poppy and called Norman to look over the fence at the nasturtiums, she told them that no flowers were to be picked till after Uncle Peter had seen them.

"When will my sunflowers bloom?" asked Norman. "Gee, they're growing tall, aren't they?"

"Daddy says they will have flowers on in August," Honey Bunch answered. "And they'll be higher than that fence, when they're grown up, Norman. Mrs. Lancaster told me so."

"That will be nice," said Norman with satisfaction. "Then I can see them without climbing the fence. Maybe I'll buy a parrot to eat the seeds, Honey Bunch. Do you like parrots?"

"I like to hear them talk," replied Honey Bunch. "There is one in that red house down

on the next block. But I would rather have a canary bird than a parrot. A parrot can't sing."

It seemed a very long morning to Honey Bunch, in spite of the excitement of finding the flowers and showing them to Ida and Norman, but the afternoon finally came and it brought Uncle Peter.

"Well, how you've grown!" was the first thing Uncle Peter said when he saw her. "I suppose it is this working out in the open air. You are a farmer now, aren't you, Honey Bunch? Like Stub."

Honey Bunch laughed. She didn't mind being teased.

"I'm a gardener, Uncle Peter," she said. "I made a garden with the rake and the hoe and the spade you sent me. And I have a garden apron with things in the pocket."

"You have?" said Uncle Peter, pretending to be surprised. "Then it is lucky I didn't buy you that."

Honey Bunch looked at him, her blue eyes eager. She knew it wasn't polite to ask him

what he *had* bought her, but it was hard not to say anything. And she knew he had brought her some kind of present. Uncle Peter never came to see her that he didn't bring her a gift. He had once told her that uncles were meant to bring little girls presents.

"I think," said Uncle Peter then, "if you look on the table in the hall, you'll find a package there for you. In fact, I seem to remember putting one there."

Honey Bunch ran out into the hall. There on the table sat a package. It seemed to be pretty big, and it was tied all over with string and the string had knots in it. Honey Bunch couldn't guess, from looking at it, what might be inside. There are some packages you can always guess—candy, for instance. But I do not believe that you could have told from looking at this package what was inside it.

"I'll cut the string for you," said Uncle Peter, taking out his knife. "The paper came off in the train and I had to tie it up as best I could. There you are, Honey Bunch!"

Honey Bunch took off the paper and found—a little red wheelbarrow! The reddest, glossiest, smoothest little wheelbarrow you ever saw.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" squealed Honey Bunch. "What a darling little wheelbarrow. I can wheel things in it, Uncle Peter!"

She put her arms around his neck and kissed him, and Uncle Peter told her that he had had a wheelbarrow when he was a little boy and helped his daddy in the big garden at home.

"You may not use it so much during the summer, but you will this fall, Honey Bunch," Uncle Peter said. "And now, if some one asked me, I might go out and see this garden I have heard so much of—I even heard that pansies were growing in it."

Honey Bunch gave one hand to Uncle Peter and carried the new wheelbarrow in the other and took them both out to see her garden. The pansy plants were thick with lovely blossoms and another poppy had blossomed since morning. As for the nasturtiums, they were

red and yellow and orange, each one gayer than the other.

Uncle Peter put a pansy in his buttonhole at once and knelt down on the grass and looked at every single pansy. Honey Bunch was so glad she had planted them for him and explained to him that she was going to plant some pansy seeds in August and have more plants for next year.

"This is absolutely the nicest garden I was ever in," said Uncle Peter, when he had seen it all and Honey Bunch had told him about all the flowers.

Honey Bunch had placed the little red wheelbarrow at a corner of the garden, and when Uncle Peter was called into the house for a moment she walked close to inspect her gift. First she looked at the outside of the barrow and then she looked inside. Then, all at once, Honey Bunch gave a gasp.

And not without reason, for in the wheelbarrow, crouched in a heap, was a big green toad. And as Honey Bunch stared at the toad, it suddenly gave a hop right towards her!

CHAPTER IX

PLAYING PIRATES

HONEY BUNCH had both her hands outstretched, and what did that big green toad do but land right on the back of one hand!

"Oh! oh!" screamed the little girl, and threw up both hands. But the toad had already taken another hop, this time to the ground, and now it went on hopping until it disappeared under a stone of the back porch.

"What was the trouble?" asked Uncle Peter when he came back. After Honey Bunch had told him he merely smiled.

"The hoptoad wouldn't hurt you," he said. "I guess he was just as much scared as you were. Hoptoads are very useful in a garden, for they eat up many insects that hurt the plants."

"Well, if he doesn't scare me any more I won't scare him," said Honey Bunch.

Of course Honey Bunch did not tell her uncle about the secret flowers. When he saw the plants which had grown from the seeds Mrs. Lancaster had given Honey Bunch, Uncle Peter looked interested.

"Those flowers are a secret," explained Honey Bunch hastily. "I can't tell you 'bout them at all. Not even the name."

"I think I know the name," said Uncle Peter, smiling.

"Whisper it," commanded Honey Bunch, "and if it is right I'll say 'yes,' but you mustn't ask where they came from or anything like that."

Uncle Peter promised not to ask a single question and then he stooped down and whispered something in Honey Bunch's ear.

"Oh, yes!" she said quickly. "They are! But how did you know?"

"I recognized the leaf," answered Uncle Peter. "Grandmother used to raise them in her garden—I'm sure your mother remembers."

"I told her," said Honey Bunch. "I always

tell Mother my secrets. But Norman doesn't know, nor Ida, and maybe Daddy doesn't."

Uncle Peter declared that he thought secrets were exciting, and then he offered to give Honey Bunch a ride in her new wheelbarrow. They went out on the front walk, which was of cement, for the ride and Ida Camp saw them and Anna Martin and Grace Winters—little girls who lived on the same street. Uncle Peter gave each of them a ride around the block and by the time each had had her turn it was nearly half-past five and Mr. Morton came home and asked if he could have his clove pink to wear in his button-hole, now that Uncle Peter had seen the garden.

It really was too bad that Uncle Peter had to go away the next morning, because every one loved to have him in the house. He put Honey Bunch to bed and told her stories of England, where he was going with Julie's daddy, and promised to bring her something when he came back in the fall. He made them all laugh at breakfast the next morning, but

when he saw that Mrs. Morton felt bad because he could not stay longer, he suggested that she go with him on the train and see Julie's mother.

"I can't stay away from home over night," said Mrs. Morton, "and I don't want to take Honey Bunch down to Glenhaven. Norma will be busy getting you off."

"Then ride a few stations with me. I'll take a local to the junction and catch the express there," suggested Uncle Peter.

"I'll take you both down in the car," offered Mr. Morton. "I can stop at Paxton and get some papers signed on the way back, so you need not feel that I am losing time. We'll be back to-night, Edith," he added to Honey Bunch's mother.

So it was decided that Uncle Peter and Honey Bunch's daddy and mother were to motor to Glenhaven and that Honey Bunch and Mrs. Miller—who had come bright and early to finish her cleaning—should keep house for that day. Honey Bunch kissed Uncle Peter an extra kiss because he was going away across

the ocean and then she waved good-bye till the car had turned the corner.

"Honey Bunch!" called Mrs. Miller, "I do believe that cat is on your flowers again."

Honey Bunch rushed out to her garden and chased Lady Clare away from the nasturtiums. She chased her so hard that she was out of breath, and when she looked up and saw Mrs. Lancaster sitting in her wheel-chair by the fence she had no breath to use in talking for a moment or two.

"I couldn't stay away, you see," said the old lady. "Was that your uncle in the car that passed me this morning? Your mother leaned out and bowed and I thought your uncle must be sitting on the front seat with your father. So, I thought, I'll go and see my little friend and her garden and ask her what he said about her garden."

Honey Bunch had felt just the least bit lonely when the three people she loved so dearly had driven away and left her on the front step, but she forgot that unhappy feeling at once now.

"Uncle Peter brought me a wheelbarrow!" she said. "And he thinks Spot is lovely. He says my garden is the nicest garden he was ever in!"

"And his pansies?" asked Mrs. Lancaster. "Did he like his pansies?"

"Oh, yes!" replied Honey Bunch. "He said they were like faces and he talked to them all. I picked them to have in the house and he wore five of them in his buttonhole this morning. I'm going to press some of the prettiest ones for him in a book."

"That will be lovely," Mrs. Lancaster declared.

"And he knew the name of the secret flowers—I didn't tell him a single thing!" said Honey Bunch. "He said he would whisper it to me, and he guessed right. He said his grandma used to have them growing in her garden. You don't care if Uncle Peter knew the name of the flowers, do you, Mrs. Lancaster?"

"No, indeed," Mrs. Lancaster assured her. "Of course not. As soon as they bloom—and

they are almost ready—many people will recognize the flower. But I am hoping they may be larger and more magnificent in color than the ordinary variety.”

Honey Bunch picked her nasturtiums that morning and she gave away her first bouquet. That is always a lovely garden experience—to give away your first bouquet. Of course Honey Bunch gave hers to Mrs. Lancaster and the little old lady said that she would take the flowers home and put them in water and make them last as long as possible.

“Haven’t you any garden at all?” asked Honey Bunch. “Just a little one?”

“No garden at all,” replied the old lady sadly. “This is the first year I can remember that I haven’t had a piece of ground to do with as I liked. Well, never mind, I’ll come and look at your garden. This is the first garden you’ve ever had, so we rather even things up.”

Honey Bunch and Mrs. Miller had lunch together, and very good it was. They had charlotte russe for dessert. Mrs. Morton had

stopped at the baker's and asked him to send them some charlottes as a surprise.

"And now what are you going to do this afternoon?" asked Mrs. Miller, when lunch was over. "I want to wash the upstairs windows. Can you amuse yourself without going out into the street?"

"I'll go out in the yard and see if Norman will come over and play with my new wheelbarrow," said Honey Bunch. "If Ida's mother doesn't take her downtown, she is coming, too."

"That will be nice," declared busy Mrs. Miller, filling her pail with hot water at the kitchen sink. "I won't have to worry about you as long as you stay quietly in the yard."

"Could I help you wash windows?" asked Honey Bunch helpfully. "Maybe I could put them up and down for you while you wash them."

"No, thank you," returned Mrs. Miller politely. "Two people can't wash windows very well. You run along and play, Honey Bunch, and I'll be through before you know it."

Honey Bunch found Norman on the fence when she went out into the yard. But he wasn't alone. There were five other boys with him, and it was lucky that fence was strongly built. Six lively boys can "bend" a fence as Honey Bunch said, when she saw them.

"Don't bend the fence," she begged them. "Lady Clare likes to sit on it. She can't sit on the iron fences because they haven't any railings."

"We won't bend the fence," promised Norman. "What we ought to do is dig it up and carry it away; we're pirates and we need a plank for our enemies to walk. But this fence would be pretty heavy to tear down," he added.

Honey Bunch was relieved to find that he didn't mean to take the fence down and use it for planks.

"Are you playing pirates again?" she asked Norman. "Who's chief?"

"I am," he informed her. "And we're out

for loot. Have you any loot? Hand it over!" and he tried to look as fierce as the pictures of pirates he had seen.

"I—I haven't any loot," stammered Honey Bunch. "Oh, here come Ida and the girls!"

There were seven little girls coming in at the side gate—Ida Camp, of course; Anna Martin, Grace Winters, Mary and Fannie Graham and Kitty and Cora Williams.

"Hello, Honey Bunch!" was their greeting. "We met Ida and she said she was coming to see you. What nice flowers you have!"

"Oh, don't bother looking at the garden," said Norman, who had been over earlier in the day to measure the stalks of his sunflowers. They were very tall and he measured them nearly every morning.

"We're pirates," he informed the girls, "and we need some treasure. Haven't you some treasure we could take, just for fun?"

"What kind of treasure?" demanded Cora Williams.

"Well, like that pin you have on," said Nor-

man, pointing to a little gold pin Cora wore in her white blouse. "Pirates always take pins and things."

"You'd lose it," retorted Cora.

"No, we wouldn't," said Norman earnestly. "Listen—here's how we'll play: We are pirates and we come over into the yard and seize your treasures. The yard is another ship. Then we drop overboard and swim away and after we're through playing we give the treasure back to you. Come on and play, will you?"

"How are you going to drop overboard?" asked the practical Cora, who was more interested in the details of the game than in the actual playing. "How are you going to drop overboard, Norman, when you are in a yard?"

"You're just like a girl!" cried Norman. "The fence is the side of the ship, silly! We jump over the fence and the ocean is in my yard. Will you play? Come on, we won't lose a thing."

The eight little girls were not very enthusiastic about playing this game, but after the

pirates had solemnly promised to give back every bit of treasure they took, they finally consented.

"You just sit down on the grass and pretend you don't know we are around," directed Norman. "And don't yell when we do. Pirates can make all the noise they want to, but Mrs. Farriday might tell us to keep quiet if we all yelled at once."

The girls sat down and pretended that they had no idea of the six pirates lurking so near at hand. To be sure Cora Williams shrieked when she saw a head peeping over the fence, but Cora was easily excited always.

"Come on, men!" suddenly shouted Norman, scrambling over the fence. "Up and at 'em!"

The pirates scrambled and climbed and fell over the fence, one of them, a boy named Teddy Gray, having a terrible time to get over. He was a fat little boy and couldn't climb as well as the others. Norman had to go back and help him over at last, and, dear me, didn't he scold the unlucky pirate!

"Treasure!" croaked Norman, leading his men up to the girls seated in a circle on the grass. "Hand over your treasure or take the consequences—What are you laughing at?" he asked them fiercely.

"You look so funny!" giggled Cora Williams, handing him her gold pin. "I never saw a pirate chief look the way you do."

"Never mind my looks," said the pirate chief, with a frown. "Hand over your treasure or take the consequences!"

CHAPTER X

LOST TREASURE

NO ONE wanted to take the consequences—they were not quite sure what “consequences” might be, but Norman made it sound as though it were something to be avoided—so obediently they handed over the treasure the pirate chief demanded.

Honey Bunch had a little forget-me-not locket on a gold chain and a tiny gold ring set with a blue stone, and she gave up these. She could not unfasten the chain, and Norman obligingly helped her with the catch. Ida Camp wore a ring with a red stone, Grace Winters had a gold pin like Cora’s and Mary and Fannie Graham, who always dressed exactly alike, each wore a chain of pink beads. They gave these to the pirates. Kitty Williams, Cora’s sister, gave them her make-believe wrist watch—it wasn’t a real watch, but

it looked like one and Kitty loved to wear it. As for Anna Martin, she had happened to wear her aunt's gold pencil on a black silk cord around her neck, and as she had taken it without asking, she said that the pirates must not have it—if they lost it, what could she say to her aunt?

"We won't lose it," argued Norman. "We're not going to lose anything. Let me have the pencil, Anna, and I'll give it back to you the first thing."

So Anna let him take the pencil.

"Now we drop over the side of the ship," Norman said, when he had the pencil—he put the cord around his neck and let the pencil dangle—"and we must escape before you can call for help. Over the side, men!" he shouted.

The pirates, holding their treasure carefully in their hands, made a dash for the fence. They had reached it and some were half way over and the rest just beginning to scramble up, when loud and clear and shrill they heard the noise of the fire engines!

Now, making believe to be pirates was all right, as a game, but it could never be as exciting as going to a real fire. The boys forgot they were pirates the moment the first engine clattered down the street. Those who were over the fence went on, climbing the fences between Norman's house and the next street. The boys who had not yet started to climb, dashed for the gate in Honey Bunch's yard.

"Fire!" they shrieked. "Come on—fire! I'll bet it's near here!"

Norman said that every time the fire engines went past and he never failed to follow them, though usually the fire was so far away that he met the engines coming back before he could find out where the fire was.

"Let's go!" cried Cora Williams. "Perhaps it is near here."

"Honey Bunch!" Mrs. Miller put up the window she was cleaning and leaned out—it was the second story hall window, Honey Bunch noticed.

"Honey Bunch," called Mrs. Miller, "don't you go chasing after those engines.

Like as not the fire is a mile or two off. You'll see them coming back before long."

"We'll go out and sit on the front steps and watch," suggested Honey Bunch.

But Cora wanted to go to the fire, and she and her sister Kitty and Grace Winters started to run after the apparatus that was whirling up the street, one motor after another so fast that you could hardly see the firemen struggling into their coats.

The other little girls sat down with Honey Bunch and watched. It was exciting, just to do that. The sun was hot, but people ran past the house trying to run as fast as the fire engines. Of course they couldn't, but they could try. They saw fat men running, wiping their red faces with their handkerchiefs as they ran. They saw little boys, like Norman Clark, running, their dogs following them. Big girls and little girls and "grown-up women," as Honey Bunch said, hurried by. One and all, they were eager to find out where the fire was and see what was burning.

"Suppose your house got on fire," said Ida Camp to Honey Bunch. "What would you do?"

"I'd tell Daddy," answered Honey Bunch.

"But he wouldn't be home—he isn't home now," said Ida. "If your house was on fire now, you couldn't tell him, because he wouldn't be here."

"I could telephone him," persisted Honey Bunch.

"Well—maybe," admitted Ida. "But maybe he wouldn't like it. If our house got on fire, do you know what I'd do?"

"No," said Honey Bunch. "What would you?"

"I'd tell my brother," declared Ida. "He could put a fire out, just as easy. Once there was a brush fire on a vacant lot and he put it out."

Honey Bunch wanted to remind Ida that her brother might not be at home when the house was on fire, but she didn't. Honey Bunch seldom argued.

"Huh, your brother might not be home, Ida," said Anna Martin, who didn't mind arguing. "What would you do then?"

"He would too be home," declared Ida.

And nothing they could say would make her change her mind. She knew that if ever her house was on fire her brother would be there to put it out. That was all there was to it.

"How silly you are!" said Anna, losing patience at last. "Anyway, here the engines are coming back. I don't believe it was much of a fire."

And it wasn't. They found that out before the boys and Cora and Kitty and Grace came straggling back, warm and tired from their long run. A man riding past the house on a bicycle told them that it had been a "brush fire."

"Nothing but some trash burning," reported Kitty Williams, when she came back. "It was out before we got there. But there was a crowd and the hook and ladder was out. You missed it."

Honey Bunch didn't mind missing the brush fire, and she was glad she had not gone. Kitty was tired and cross, and so were Cora and Grace.

"I have to go home and put on a clean dress now," said Grace. "My Uncle John is coming to dinner to-night. Where's my gold pin, Teddy?"

Teddy Gray was the pirate who had taken Grace's pin.

"Yes, and give me back my gold pencil," said Anna Martin. "It's time for me to go home. You took my pencil, Norman."

Norman felt in all his pockets.

"That's funny," he said. "I don't know where I put it."

Teddy gave Grace her pin and Lester Fox, another one of the pirates, handed Kitty Williams her make-believe wrist watch. But Paul Niles couldn't find the string of pink beads he had taken from Fannie Graham and Norman couldn't find the gold pencil.

"I don't know what I've done with your locket, either, Honey Bunch," he said, looking

worried. "Here's your ring in my pocket all right. But the locket and chain—I don't know how I could lose them."

Dear me, those pirates were uncomfortable. Albert Barnes gave the string of pink beads he had taken from Mary Graham back to her and he gave Ida Camp her ring with the red stone in it. But the gold pencil that belonged to Anna's aunt and Honey Bunch's forget-me-not locket and chain and the pink beads that were Fannie Graham's, seemed to be lost.

"Perhaps you dropped them in the yard," suggested Honey Bunch. "Let's go look."

They went back into the yard and looked carefully—in the grass where the girls had been sitting when the pirates attacked them and along the fence where the pirates had scrambled up to leap over the side of the ship. But no gold pencil and no locket and no chain of pink beads could they find.

"I knew it!" scolded Anna Martin. "I knew you'd lose my pencil if I let you have it. And my Aunt Margaret will be so cross.

She didn't know I was going to wear it to-day."

"My lovely pink beads!" cried Fannie Graham, bursting into tears. "Daddy gave them to me for my birthday, and they're just like Mary's. Oh, dear, I don't see how you ever thought of such a silly game!" she added, forgetting to cry and looking at Norman as though she thought him a very foolish boy indeed.

"I didn't mean to lose them—and Paul didn't mean to, either," said Norman uncomfortably. "Perhaps we dropped them going to the fire. I'll go look and I'll ask every one I meet if they saw a pencil or a locket or a chain of beads."

He did go, but though he went all the way to the lot where the brush fire had been and though he stopped each person he met and asked him about the pencil and locket and beads, no one had seen any of the three missing things. The girls went home, except Anna Martin, who stayed to look again in the yard,

and the pirates went home, too. They didn't feel like playing any more that day.

"I wouldn't mind so much, if it was my pencil," said Anna, down on her hands and knees among Norman's sunflowers. "But I think it's mean when I just borrowed Aunt Margaret's pencil and cord to wear a little while that you had to go and lose it."

"I'll buy her another one," promised Norman. "Only she'll have to wait till I save some money. I have eight cents in my tin soldier bank now. How much do gold pencils cost?"

Anna didn't know, but she thought they must cost a great deal.

"I'll have to buy Honey Bunch a locket and chain first," said Norman firmly. "I guess she doesn't like it because I lost her locket, but she doesn't make a fuss. I don't see any use making a fuss when something is lost. If it's lost, it's lost and you can't help it."

"If you had lost your aunt's gold pencil, Norman Clark, you'd make a fuss," said Anna, and she was probably right.

It does make a difference, you know, whether we lose something that we have borrowed or something that some one else has borrowed.

Anna finally went home, mourning the loss of her aunt's pencil, and Norman went into his house to count the pennies in his bank again. Honey Bunch sat on the side porch and stared at her garden.

"I wish I had my locket," she said to herself. "Norman had it in his hand before the fire engines went by, I know he did; I saw it. He must have dropped it."

Mr. and Mrs. Morton came home just before dinner time that evening and there was so much to tell Honey Bunch about Glenhaven and about Aunt Norma and Julie and Uncle Peter and Uncle Fred, Julie's daddy, and the messages they had sent Honey Bunch, that the little girl forgot about her lost locket.

She remembered it, though, when she was going to bed and she told her mother about the pirate game and what had happened that afternoon.

"Oh, dear, I'm so sorry," said Mrs. Morton when she heard the story. "That was the first locket Daddy bought for you, Honey Bunch; he gave it to you when you were a tiny baby. And I'm sorry for Anna and Fannie, too. Norman must be a very careless little boy. Did you look carefully in the yard to make sure that he didn't drop your locket in the grass or among the flowers?"

Honey Bunch said, yes, they had all looked carefully and her daddy said he would go out early the next morning and look again. He did, but he could not find any of the lost treasures.

"I think it would be better if the pirates used make-believe treasure next time," said Mr. Morton at breakfast. "And I'd recommend a make-believe fence in the bargain. Norman's father and I will have to put up a brace or two on the fence we have now or it will come down suddenly some day, I'm afraid."

CHAPTER XI

THE SECRET FLOWERS

HONEY BUNCH might have grieved more over her lost locket if something else had not happened almost at once. This something else was most important. The secret flowers bloomed!

"Honey Bunch," said Mrs. Farriday, leaning out of her kitchen window and staring at the square plot of ground where Honey Bunch had planted the seeds the old lady had given her, "for pity's sake, what kind of flowers are those?"

Mrs. Lancaster had told Honey Bunch that as soon as the flowers bloomed they would no longer be a secret; she might then tell any one who asked her what the flowers were.

"They're snapdragons, Mrs. Farriday," said Honey Bunch proudly. "Aren't they pretty?"

"Pretty!" repeated Mrs. Farriday. "They're magnificent. I never saw such flowers in my life, never. They're twice as large as any snapdragon I ever saw and as for color—well, I never saw such color!"

Honey Bunch could hardly wait for Mrs. Lancaster to come in her wheel-chair that morning. She wanted to show her the flowers and tell her what Mrs. Farriday had said.

But though she waited and waited, Mrs. Lancaster did not come. When it was long past her usual time, Honey Bunch knew that she was not coming.

"Mother," said Honey Bunch, going up the back porch steps and pressing her little nose against the screen door till it looked like a little plaid nose, "couldn't I take Mrs. Lancaster a bouquet of flowers? She didn't come this morning and I want to tell her about the secret flowers."

Mrs. Morton was working in the kitchen. She had been out in the garden and had seen the beautiful new flowers, and she thought, as Mrs. Farriday did, that they were won-

derful. Now she shut the oven door carefully and came out on the porch beside Honey Bunch.

"Do you know where Mrs. Lancaster lives, dear?" she asked thoughtfully.

"Yes, Mother," said Honey Bunch. "She lives in the yellow brick house on the next block. Her cousin has a boarding house in it, and Mrs. Lancaster lives there. They haven't any garden at all, Mother—just a cement place to hang the clothes in. Mrs. Miller says cement is very bad for your feet—maybe that is why Mrs. Lancaster is lame."

"Oh, no, dear," Mrs. Morton said quickly. "I think she must have been lame before she came to live with the cousin. Well, if you want to take her some flowers, I think that will be lovely. You may take a fresh sponge cake, too, and say your mother sent it to her."

Honey Bunch's garden was worth looking at now. Gardens pay back all the love and care given them, and Honey Bunch had loved her garden and cared for it faithfully. The nasturtiums were blooming and the sweet

peas and the clove pinks, though they had not so many flowers as at first. By and by, her daddy told Honey Bunch, they would stop blooming and rest. Norman's sunflowers were just about ready to smile at the sun. Norman was watching them every day. He said they were going to be the finest sunflowers on the block and already they were the tallest.

Ida Camp's red poppies made a beautiful splash of color against the green of the garden, and the scarlet sage that Honey Bunch had planted for her cousin Julie was just as bright a red. Honey Bunch had flowers to pick every day now. She had planted other seeds that her daddy had brought her—sweet alyssum, a pretty white flower; some golden glow, which would not bloom till later in the season when some of the other flowers were resting; and some lovely bluebells that, Daddy said, just matched Honey Bunch's blue eyes. Then, of course, there were the marigolds she had planted for the Turner twins and the

heliotrope. Oh, Honey Bunch had a fragrant garden indeed!

She took her little scissors and began to snip flowers to go into her bouquet for Mrs. Lancaster. She thought it would be nice to put some of each flower in, and she was sorry that Mrs. Miller's rose bush had no roses on it. It was growing beautifully, was that rose bush—dear me, there was no reason why it shouldn't, with Honey Bunch and Mrs. Miller both tending to it. Mrs. Miller carried out a pan of soap suds once a week and poured it over her bush. This, she said, kept the bugs away from its glossy green leaves. Honey Bunch carefully picked off any little bugs she found on it during the week, and so the bush thrived and grew and Mr. Morton said they might expect to find roses on it next year.

"What are you doing?" asked Norman Clark, climbing up on the fence to look over at Honey Bunch.

"Picking flowers," said Honey Bunch.

"I'm going to take a bouquet to Mrs. Lancaster—she didn't come this morning. Mother!" she called, raising her voice, "Mother, do you care if I cut a piece of your heliotrope?"

"Of course not, Honey Bunch!" Mrs. Morton called back quickly. "It really is your own heliotrope—cut it by all means."

"Don't you cut my sunflowers, though," said Norman. "I guess they'll be out to-morrow, don't you, Honey Bunch?"

"Maybe," replied Honey Bunch, laughing to think of a sunflower in her bouquet.

"What are those flowers?" asked Norman, pointing to the secret flowers. "I never saw those before. Aren't they the ones Mrs. Lancaster gave you?"

"Yes, they are," replied Honey Bunch, nodding her head. "They are snapdragons. And Mrs. Farriday said she never saw flowers like them. Aren't they lovely, Norman?"

"They're pretty," admitted Norman. "But I like sunflowers better. Sunflowers are my favorite flowers. My goodness, Honey

Bunch, are you going to take Mrs. Lancaster all the flowers you have in your garden?"

"I won't cut any more," said Honey Bunch, looking with pride at the beautiful bunch she held in her hand. "You didn't find Anna's gold pencil, did you, Norman?"

Norman frowned and shook his head.

"I found a pencil in the gutter yesterday and I took it to Anna," he said, "but she said it wasn't her aunt's. Her aunt's pencil was gold and this one was silver—Anna called it tin. I saved it. Want it, Honey Bunch? I guess you can scour it bright."

"No, thank you, I don't need a pencil," answered Honey Bunch politely, and Norman put the battered tin pencil he had found back in his pocket. He was glad Honey Bunch did not want it, for he thought he could trade it to Teddy Gray for a broken penknife he had.

Honey Bunch left Norman sitting on the fence and went into the kitchen to get the sponge cake. Her mother had it ready for her, a round sponge cake with a hole in the

center and wrapped in waxed paper and a white napkin over that. Mrs. Morton tied up the flowers for Honey Bunch with a string and then the little girl was ready.

"Don't stay long, dear," said her mother, giving her a kiss, "and be careful when you cross the street."

Honey Bunch promised to remember and started off. She felt very important, quite as if she were grown up and going calling. She carried the cake in one hand and the flowers in the other.

"Well, how do you do!" said some one, as she stood at the curb, waiting for the automobiles to go by so she could cross the street. There was just one street to cross before she came to the block where Mrs. Lancaster lived, and there were not many automobiles in the section of Barham where Honey Bunch lived. Still, a little girl must be careful if there is only one automobile coming when she wants to cross the street.

"You remember me, don't you, Honey Bunch?" said the some one who had spoken

to her. "Are those flowers from your garden?"

It was the clerk from the seed store, and Honey Bunch remembered him right away. She showed him her flowers and told him about the garden and he said that a bouquet like that was worth all the year's advertising his store had done. Then he took Honey Bunch across the street—though he didn't seem to watch the traffic, nothing ran over them—and shook hands with her and went on. He said he had to go to the freight office of the railroad to find out why some seeds his store had shipped had never been delivered.

Without a bit of trouble, Honey Bunch found the yellow brick house where Mrs. Lancaster lived. It was the only brick house on the block, for the others were frame. Honey Bunch marched up the stone steps and punched the bell bravely.

"Is Mrs. Lancaster at home?" she asked, when a tall, thin woman, in a brown apron, came to the door.

The apron had white spots on it and it reminded Honey Bunch of Spot, the oilcloth dog Mrs. Lancaster had made for her garden. Only Spot was white with brown spots and the apron was brown with white spots.

"Yes, Mrs. Lancaster is in," said the woman kindly. "But she doesn't feel well today. She hasn't been out this morning. Do you want to see her?"

Honey Bunch said she wanted to see Mrs. Lancaster very much.

"Then you sit down here on this bench, and I'll go tell her," said the woman, disappearing into the back hall, which was dark and shadowy.

Honey Bunch sat down and found herself staring directly at Mrs. Lancaster's wheelchair.

"I wonder how she gets down the steps?" thought the little girl.

Before she could puzzle this out, the woman with the brown apron came back, smiling.

"You're the little girl with the garden, aren't you?" she asked. "Jen—that's my cousin, Mrs. Lancaster—is always talking about you. If you'll come with me, I'll show you her room."

Honey Bunch followed her down the hall and into a room which, to her surprise, was a bedroom. Honey Bunch had never heard of a bedroom on the first floor of a house. She had supposed that every one went upstairs to sleep.

"Why, Honey Bunch, what a dear little girl you are to come and see me," cried Mrs. Lancaster joyfully.

She was sitting up in bed and she did not look ill. She explained that she had been lammer than usual that morning and had not felt like going out in her chair. She was delighted with the flowers and the cake, and her cousin, whom she introduced to Honey Bunch as Miss Hastings, brought her a vase of water for the flowers and a plate for the cake. Then she went away.

"Mrs. Lancaster," said Honey Bunch with shining eyes, "the secret flowers bloomed—the snapdragons, you know."

"I thought they would this week," declared the old lady, her black eyes sparkling, too. "And what do you think of them, Honey Bunch?"

"They are lovely," said Honey Bunch. "So big and such pretty colors. Mrs. Farriday, who lives next door to us, says she never saw flowers like them."

"And for a very good reason," announced Mrs. Lancaster. "She never saw flowers like them, because there never were any flowers like them. My husband saved the seed and tended that strain for years. I wish he could see your garden this minute."

Honey Bunch stayed a little longer and when she said she must go, Mrs. Lancaster declared that she felt quite well again.

"You do me more good than medicine, Honey Bunch," she said cheerfully. "I do believe, if you were watching me, that I could wheel my chair down the steps and never

HONEY BUNCH:
HER FIRST LITTLE GARDEN

bother with the runway one of the boarders built for me. I'll be around and look at the snapdragons to-morrow, dear. Be sure you thank your mother for the cake."

"Yes'm, I'll thank her for you," replied Honey Bunch. "I can't forget, for Mother'll say, 'Did you have a good time with Mrs. Lancaster, Honey Bunch?' and I'll say that I had a good time and then I'll remember to say that you thank her for the cake."

Mrs. Lancaster laughed a little, but she looked pleased, and then she and Honey Bunch said good-bye.

CHAPTER XII

UNCLE PETER'S JOKE

HONEY BUNCH went home to tell her mother about her visit and to ask her what a runway was. She understood at once how the old lady could wheel her chair down the steps when Mrs. Morton explained that the kind of runway she meant was like the "gang-planks" Honey Bunch had walked across when she went on the ferryboats in New York. Honey Bunch had had a trip on the ferryboat once or twice during her visit to the Turner twins, Bobby and Tess.

Mrs. Lancaster had said that a visit from Honey Bunch did her more good than medicine, so that may have been the reason she appeared bright and early the next morning in her wheel-chair close to the fence behind which was Honey Bunch's garden. Honey Bunch had often asked her to wheel her chair

in at the side gate and see the garden close at hand, but Mrs. Lancaster would never come inside the fence.

This morning Mrs. Morton saw her from the window and waved to her. She had discovered that the old lady would rather talk to Honey Bunch and that she was not comfortable when older people were about. So kind Mrs. Morton always managed to speak to her and say "good morning," but she did not often come down the walk to the fence.

"I think she is queer," Norman Clark had once said to Honey Bunch.

Honey Bunch had cried, and that made Norman feel bad and Mrs. Morton had to comfort them both.

"You mustn't speak unkindly of Honey Bunch's friends, Norman," she said to the little boy, "and I'm sure you didn't mean to. Honey Bunch is sure, too, aren't you, dear? Mrs. Lancaster is an old lady, and when one has white hair she should never be called 'queer,' whatever she may do. You didn't think she was odd when she made Spot for

Honey Bunch, Norman, nor when she told you your sunflowers were taller than any she had ever seen. Just because she doesn't want to come into the garden is no reason why you should say she is queer. But Honey Bunch isn't going to cry any more, because she knows you didn't understand."

When Mrs. Lancaster saw the snapdragons that had blossomed from the seed she had given Honey Bunch, she did not say a word at first. She nodded her head slowly, several times.

"Just as I thought," she said at last. "Just as I thought. It is truly magnificent, the finest that grows. You must have what they call the 'growing touch,' Honey Bunch. Your whole garden is lovely, but the snapdragon is loveliest of all."

"What is the 'growing touch?'" asked Honey Bunch, looking at her small hands as though she thought it might be something that showed in her strong, brown little fingers.

"Oh, the growing touch is the magic that makes flowers grow for those who love them,"

explained Mrs. Lancaster. "Well, I must be going back—my cousin made me promise not to stay out long to-day. How is Spot standing the showers, Honey Bunch?"

"He doesn't get wet a bit," answered Honey Bunch. "I feel of him after it stops raining every time and he is just as dry! I love him very much, Mrs. Lancaster."

The old lady smiled and said she was glad to hear it.

"Norman's sunflowers are out, too, I see," she remarked, turning her chair around. "I expect I'll hear him shout 'way up to our house, when he finds out what has happened."

She wheeled herself away rapidly and Honey Bunch ran out to meet the postman. There were three post cards for her, all from Uncle Peter.

"He'd be sorry if he knew my forget-me-not locket was lost," she thought, as she ran upstairs to ask her mother to read the post cards to her. "His picture was in it."

Honey Bunch missed her pretty locket more than any one suspected. Anna Martin

scolded a great deal about her aunt's pencil and Fannie Graham had cried so much over her lost beads that her daddy had bought her a new string to take their place. But Honey Bunch hardly mentioned her locket. She thought about it, though, and wished for it back.

Uncle Peter had written the three post cards from a suburb of London, the great city in England where he and Uncle Fred, Julie's daddy, were staying. Each card showed the picture of a garden, and Uncle Peter had told something about the flowers on each card.

"They are making great preparations for a flower show here in a week or two," he wrote on one card. "Doesn't Barham hold something like that every year? If they do, be sure you exhibit, Honey Bunch—you may carry off the prize."

Honey Bunch laughed a little over this message.

"Is there a flower show here, Mother?" she asked. "Could I go in it?"

"Why, darling, I know so little about it,

"I'm afraid I can't tell you," answered Mrs. Morton. "I imagine those who exhibit flowers have large gardens and gardeners to grow their flowers. I hardly think a little girl could enter her flowers in a real flower show. Uncle Peter is teasing."

Honey Bunch forgot the flower show just then, for she heard a shout from Norman. He had climbed up to his favorite place on the fence and had seen his sunflowers. He was delighted with them.

"Honey Bunch! Honey Bunch!" he was shouting. "Come on out and look at my sunflowers! Bring me a tape measure—I want to measure them."

Honey Bunch laughed and her mother laughed and Mrs. Farriday, who had heard the commotion and came running to her window, laughed, too.

"They are fine sunflowers, Norman," said Mrs. Farriday, when she saw them. "I'll have to get Honey Bunch to help me with my garden next year. My flowers don't compare with hers. Yesterday afternoon there were

two women going by, Honey Bunch, and they saw your snapdragons. I couldn't help hearing what they said.

"'I never saw such colors in my life,' said one.

"And the other said she thought they were the largest blossoms ever grown and the most perfect in shape."

Honey Bunch was very happy. Her first little garden was growing beautifully and giving other people pleasure. And a garden, her mother had told her long ago, is meant to give pleasure.

Something sad and something glad happened to Honey Bunch this same day. Raking her neat paths between the beds of flowers, she found a little dead bumble bee. No one could tell her what had made it die, but Honey Bunch finally decided he had overworked, carrying honey to his family. She rather thought he had tried to carry too much honey at one time and had broken his back. Yes, that was it, she was sure.

Honey Bunch found a nice, little white box

in Mother's sewing basket, an empty box that Mrs. Morton said she might take. Then she put the bumble bee in that and asked her mother to write "Mr. Bumble Bee" on a little white card—this was to be his tombstone, and a very good one it was.

Honey Bunch put the dead bee in the box and dug a little hole under Mrs. Miller's cabbage rose bush. She put the box in the hole and covered it up and put the card into the ground so that just the name showed. Then she sang, all to herself, "How doth the little busy bee improve each shining hour," which she thought was appropriate. This was the only song Mrs. Miller had ever been heard to sing, and she never sang any more than that. Honey Bunch once asked her how did the little busy bee improve each shining hour? And Mrs. Miller had answered that it gathered honey. That was why Honey Bunch was sure this was the right song to sing for the dead little bee.

She had cried a little tear or two, back of the rose bush where no one would see her, and

was just going to finish raking the path when she heard Mrs. Miller calling her. Mrs. Morton had gone downtown and Honey Bunch and Mrs. Miller were the only ones at home.

"Honey Bunch! Honey Bunch!" called Mrs. Miller. "Where are you?"

Honey Bunch wiped her eyes and came out where Mrs. Miller could see her.

"Here's some one to see you, dearie," said Mrs. Miller.

Honey Bunch looked, and there was the clerk from the seed store, smiling at her.

"I heard about your garden, Honey Bunch," he said, "and I had to come to see it. But where on earth did you get snap-dragon like that?"

He was staring at the secret flowers Mrs. Lancaster had given Honey Bunch.

"Some one was in the store this morning, and all they could talk about were the snap-dragons they had seen," explained the clerk. "Mr. Anderson, the head of the firm, heard them and he was interested. You know he is

president of the Annual Flower Show. This man who was talking about the garden said he had noticed the name-plate on the door of the house—that it was 'Morton.' But I never thought that it was your garden till I saw you."

Honey Bunch took the clerk all around and showed him her flowers. He remembered the seeds and the pansy plants and he remembered the bouquet he had seen her carrying to Mrs. Lancaster. He thought Spot, the scare cat, was wonderful and he insisted on holding Lady Clare up to Spot to see if she wouldn't be scared. Of course she wasn't—nothing ever really frightened Lady Clare. She behaved much better about going to sleep on the flowers now—it was really because the plants were too tall for her to lie down on them comfortably, but Honey Bunch hoped it was because Lady Clare had learned that a cat is not supposed to go to sleep on flower beds.

The seed store clerk—his name was Mr. Fredericks—saw all the garden and he thought it lovely and said so. But he kept

looking at the snapdragons and praising them, and at last he said:

"Honey Bunch, why don't you have an exhibit in the flower show? The entries are still open and your snapdragons will be at their best in about two weeks, when the show starts. We have blanks down at the store, and your daddy will fill them out for you. I wanted to stay and see your mother, but I must get back to the store. You'd better go in the show, Honey Bunch—that's my advice."

As soon as Mrs. Morton came home, Honey Bunch and Mrs. Miller told her what Mr. Fredericks had said. Mrs. Morton thought that if Honey Bunch wanted to have some flowers in the show, she might, but they must first ask her daddy.

"Could I be in the flower show, Daddy?" asked Honey Bunch, the moment her daddy came up the front steps that night. "The seed store man says to take his advice and go in. And Uncle Peter said maybe I would win a prize."

Mr. Morton laughed as he looked at Honey Bunch's mother.

"Our little gardener seems to be getting famous," he said. "Two men stopped me on the street this evening and asked me where we got the seed for that snapdragon. You know the old-fashioned flowers are being grown again and every one thinks it is the finest specimen they have seen. I begin to think Honey Bunch will have to go in the show and try her luck."

When Honey Bunch told Norman that she was going to have an entry in the Barham Annual Flower Show, he said he knew his sunflowers would carry off the prize.

"Not show the sunflowers?" he said, when Honey Bunch told him she was planning to enter her snapdragons. "Huh, you'll be sorry—there won't be any sunflowers there half the size of these."

CHAPTER XIII

THE FLOWER SHOW

HONEY BUNCH could not talk of anything now but the flower show. She had not a very clear idea what a flower show was like, but she wanted to be "in" it and she wanted to show the snapdragons and the sunflowers.

"For pity's sake, Honey Bunch," said Mrs. Miller when she heard this, "what do you want to take common old sunflowers to a flower show for? Don't you know people will have their nicest flowers on exhibit? The snapdragons are nice, but they don't compare in my mind to the bluebells. I'd show those if I were you."

Next to her cabbage rose bush—which would not bloom till the next year—Mrs. Miller admired the bluebells in Honey Bunch's garden. Indeed, it was odd, but every one who heard that Honey Bunch was

talking about being an exhibitor in the flower show wanted her to show the flowers she had planted for them.

"Those red poppies are much the prettiest flowers you have, Honey Bunch," urged Ida Camp. "Show those."

Stub wrote to say she hoped her sweet peas would win a prize and Julie sent a postal card from Glenhaven to ask that her scarlet sage be taken to the exhibit. The Turner twins did not hear about the show, or they would surely have written to Honey Bunch and asked her to take their marigolds.

Honey Bunch was worried a little, for she liked to please every one, but her daddy laughed.

"I'll get your blanks at the seed store, dear," he promised, when it was really decided that Honey Bunch should go in the flower show and compete with older and more experienced gardeners. "The snapdragon is your choice, isn't it? Very well then, snapdragon it shall be."

But when Mr. Morton came home that

night he was laughing again. He told Honey Bunch that he had filled out the entry blanks for her and that she had nothing more to do till the morning of the day the show opened.

"I'll take you and your flowers down in the car then," he said, "and Mother and I will arrange your exhibit for you. But, Honey Bunch, Norman is going to have his wish and you are going to show his sunflowers."

"How nice!" beamed Honey Bunch. "Norman will be as glad—as glad as anything! He says they are the largest sunflowers that ever grew."

"I don't know about that," said Mr. Morton, still smiling. "But the flower show has what is called a 'novelty class'; that means people may enter flowers that are odd and unusual, instead of lovely or fragrant or perfect in size. I filled out a blank for you for that class and you may take the sunflowers down for your entry."

When Honey Bunch told Mrs. Lancaster that she was going to show the snapdragons

at the flower show, the old lady seemed pleased.

"And you'll come to see them, won't you?" coaxed Honey Bunch. "Daddy says he will take you in the car and you won't have to walk a bit. Please, Mrs. Lancaster, you like flowers so much!"

Mrs. Lancaster shook her head firmly.

"No, indeed," she said. "I wouldn't think of such a thing. I wouldn't be caught in a chattering crowd like that, even if I was to get the first prize for being there. You can tell me all about the show, Honey Bunch, and that will do just as well. In the town where my husband and I used to live, many is the show I've been to."

Honey Bunch was disappointed, but she tried not to show it. She made up her mind to take the best of care of her flowers so that they would be in perfect condition to show. She gave them very little water now, for they did not need it; the roots were strong and had reached down so far into the earth that they had found moist dirt and could get along

nicely, even if it did not rain for days at a time.

Norman was so anxious about his sunflowers that he came and looked at them twice a day. He refused to be put out even when Anna Martin found him smoothing out the crumpled green leaves under the big heavy flowers and laughed at him. Anna never saw Norman now that she did not ask him if he had found her aunt's gold pencil. Honey Bunch wished she would not do that. Fannie Graham did not say anything about her beads, but that, Anna said, was because she had another string to wear.

"My aunt hasn't another pencil," insisted Anna.

"But if Norman found the pencil, he would tell you," said Honey Bunch. "I don't think it is exactly polite to ask him about it, Anna."

"It wasn't polite to lose it," retorted Anna.

The morning of the day the flower show was to open, Honey Bunch was awake and dressed a whole hour earlier than usual. She said she felt as though it were Christmas.

"That is, I feel that way inside of me," she explained. "I know it isn't Christmas—it is summer time and it can't be Christmas in summer. Isn't it time to go yet, Mother?"

Although she rather hated to do it, Honey Bunch cut nearly all her beautiful snapdragons to go to the show and all but one of the sunflowers. Her daddy put the flowers into a large pan with water in it and took Honey Bunch and her mother and the pan and the posies all in the car down to the big brick hall where the show was to be held.

You would have thought you were in a garden the moment you stepped inside that hall. There were masses of flowers everywhere and little green trees growing in tubs and it smelled like all the lovely gardens of the earth rolled into one.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Honey Bunch, wrinkling her nose in delight. "Smell, Mother!"

Mrs. Morton laughed and asked Mr. Morton to put the flowers they had brought down on a square table. This was to be Honey Bunch's place, and she and her mother worked

busily the rest of the morning, just as every one else in that hall was working.

"You see, Honey Bunch," said Mrs. Morton, who often talked to her little girl seriously, "the flowers are what we wish to show—it isn't like a fair where each one tries to make her table look attractive. So I think we'll try to make the snapdragons look as they do when they grow in your garden—as nearly as we can, I mean."

And when they had finished you would have thought that the snapdragons were really growing and not just standing in dishes of water to keep them fresh. The lovely flowers glowed against the green of the leaves and the holders did not show at all. There was a little card tacked to the table which said that this exhibit was shown by Miss Gertrude Marion Morton. There were figures and names on the card, too, which told people what class the exhibit was in and what the Latin name of the snapdragon is—*Antirrhinum* it is, and Honey Bunch couldn't say it at all and I don't believe you can, either—and her

entry blank number, which was number 94.

Norman's sunflowers—Honey Bunch always called them his flowers and never spoke of them as her own—were on another table, among a collection of funny looking flowers, most of which Honey Bunch had never seen growing anywhere before.

"Are you in the children's class, dear?" asked a lady, as Honey Bunch and her mother were putting on their hats to go and get some lunch.

"Why, no, I believe she has entered in the regular class," said Mrs. Morton.

"Well, I'm going to register her in the children's class, too," answered the lady, copying down on a pad she carried the information that was on the card tacked to the table of snapdragons. "She is eligible, and may be in the regular class at the same time. Then," she added in a lower voice, but Honey Bunch heard her, "she will stand more chance of winning a prize; I do hate to see a child disappointed."

"Do you think I'll win a prize, Mother?"

asked Honey Bunch, as they found their places at a table in a restaurant crowded with people who had been working to get ready for the flower show.

Mr. Morton was to come and meet them at half-past two o'clock, for when they went back to the hall the judges would have completed their task and the prizes would be awarded. Then for three days the public might come and see the flowers and hear who had won the prizes. Then the flower show would be over for another year.

"Why, dearie, I don't want you to get your heart set on winning a prize," said Mrs. Morton earnestly. "The very best and most experienced gardeners in Barham have exhibits in this show. You may win one of the little prizes, perhaps, for you are entered in three different classes now, thanks to Mrs. Ketcham, who put you down for the children's class. But, Honey Bunch, it is ever so much more important to raise beautiful flowers than to win a prize for them—the prizes are only

given to encourage us to go on year after year and try to raise lovelier flowers every time we plant."

Mr. Morton came for them before they had quite finished their luncheon, and afterward they took a little walk. Honey Bunch couldn't help thinking about the flower show—which was natural—and she wanted to know how the judges judged the flowers.

"You are too little yet to understand it all, Honey Bunch," said her daddy, "but they look at the flowers and because they know them and have studied and read about them and cultivated them themselves, the judges see much more than we do when we look at a flower. They can see when they are perfectly shaped, if one is more exquisitely colored than another—oh, there are a hundred points that no one but an expert can tell. But we must turn here," he said, glancing at his watch, "if we are to be back at the hall by half-past two."

They turned around and walked back to the hall and did exactly what every one else did

who had flowers on exhibition—went to Honey Bunch's table. That is, they tried to get to it, but the crowd blocked the way.

Suddenly some one spoke to them.

"Mr. Anderson has been looking everywhere for you, Mr. Morton," said Mr. Fredericks, the seed store clerk. "He wants to see your little girl."

Then, pushing gently and asking politely, Mr. Fredericks managed to lead Mr. and Mrs. Morton and Honey Bunch through the crowd, up to Mr. Anderson, the president of the flower show. He was a tall, white-haired gentleman with twinkling eyes, and he knew Mr. Morton at once.

"I want to see Miss Gertrude Marion Morton," he said, smiling down at the little girl. "Is that your name?"

"I'm Honey Bunch," said Honey Bunch clearly, "but I am Gertrude Marion Morton, too."

CHAPTER XIV

HONEY BUNCH WINS A PRIZE

MR. ANDERSON leaned down and lifted Honey Bunch to the table. She stood there among the snapdragons and smiled at the crowd of people who filled the hall. Apparently they all wanted to get as close to the table as possible.

"Do you know what this is?" asked Mr. Anderson of Honey Bunch, holding out a broad blue ribbon with many silver letters on it.

She shook her head. No, she did not know what it was.

"We call it the blue ribbon," said Mr. Anderson. "It means that your flowers have won the first prize in the amateur garden class."

The amateur garden class, her mother had explained to Honey Bunch, meant those who

had worked in their gardens without the help of paid gardeners.

"Oh, Mother!" cried Honey Bunch, leaning over to look down at her mother. "I won a first prize."

"You've another first prize," said Mr. Anderson, taking another ribbon from the table. "This is the blue ribbon for the children's class. Your sunflowers have also won a ribbon for you in the novelty class. And here," he added, taking a box from his pocket, "are the gold pieces that go with the ribbons."

Honey Bunch opened the box. Inside was pink cotton and on the pink cotton were three gold pieces. Honey Bunch knew they were gold pieces, for her uncle Peter sent her one every Christmas. Her mother put them in the bank for her and Honey Bunch was going to save them till some day she had enough to take her to college. She wanted to go to the same college that Uncle Peter went to, but if they wouldn't have girls there, she said she would go to her mother's college.

How the crowd did clap for Honey Bunch!

They were glad she had won the prizes and they whistled and cheered and stamped their feet to tell her so. While they were still making a noise, Mr. Anderson raised his hand.

"I have another announcement to make," he said gravely. "The Grand Prize of the Annual Flower Show of Barham has been awarded to Miss Gertrude Marion Morton for her superb display of an entirely new strain of snapdragon. On behalf of the judges, I present her herewith the check for the prize which is yearly offered from the endowment fund."

Dear me, if the people had made a noise before, you should have heard them then! They laughed and clapped and cheered and all of them tried to shake hands with Honey Bunch at once. She was a little frightened and clung tightly to Mr. Anderson's coat with one hand while in her other she held the slip of pink paper he had given her. She had not understood what he had been saying very well, but she had heard the words "the Grand Prize."

"Did I win first prize, Mother?" she kept asking, shaking hands with one person after another who reached up to her, because Mr. Anderson said to shake hands, but keeping her eyes on her mother all the time.

Well, by and by the crowd moved away a little and walked around to look at the other flowers. Honey Bunch was lifted down from the table and her daddy brought her a cool drink of water. Being excited, Honey Bunch found, made her thirsty.

"Is Honey Bunch still here?" asked Mr. Anderson, coming back with Mr. Fredericks and two strange young men. "These are reporters from the *Standard* and they want to take her picture. And you must tell them about your garden, too, Honey Bunch."

Honey Bunch smiled at the two strangers, though she did not see why any one should want to take her picture. However she patiently did as they asked her and they asked her to do a good deal that afternoon.

First she stood on the table and was photographed among her flowers; then she stood all

alone on a box, her ribbons pinned to her dress and her gold pieces and the cheque in her hand. Then she had to be photographed with the sunflowers. After that the two reporters went home with her and her daddy and mother and saw Honey Bunch's garden. They took a picture of her in the garden, too, and a picture of Spot and even a picture of Lady Clare. And Honey Bunch told them all about her garden and explained how she had planted the favorite flowers of the friends she loved. She showed them Mrs. Miller's cabbage rose bush and she picked a little bouquet for each reporter. When they went away they shook hands with Honey Bunch and told her they had had the pleasantest afternoon they had ever known.

"I knew it!" cried Norman, when Honey Bunch told him the sunflowers had won a first prize. "Now aren't you glad you took them?"

As soon as the evening papers came out every one in Barham knew that Honey Bunch had carried off nearly all the honors of the

flower show. Almost as many people came the next day to see her and her garden as went to the flower show, for the *Standard*, a morning paper, had pictures of Honey Bunch and of her garden spread across two pages. It was most exciting, for the story with the pictures described the garden, and Julie's name and Ida's and Norman's were spelled right out in print.

"I want to send it to Julie," said Honey Bunch, as soon as her mother had finished reading the story to her. "And I want to send it to Stub and to Bobby and Tess. And Uncle Peter—Uncle Peter *said* if I went in the flower show maybe I would win a prize."

Mrs. Morton promised to send a copy of the paper to all the cousins and to Uncle Peter. She put one away, too, for Honey Bunch to have when she had a little girl of her own. That little girl, Mrs. Morton said, would like to read about the garden her mother had when *she* was a little girl.

"And I have to show it to Mrs. Lancaster,"

said Honey Bunch anxiously. "She won't go to the flower show, but she can read about it."

Mrs. Lancaster was delighted when she heard that the snapdragons had won the Grand Prize. Her cheeks got as pink as roses and her black eyes snapped.

"You're a natural-born gardener, Honey Bunch!" she told the little girl. "Not many children would have the patience to take care of a garden as you have. I don't believe you've let a day go by that you haven't been out there, working away. Perseverance pays, Honey Bunch."

Before the flower show closed, Mr. Morton took Ida and Fannie and Mary and Anna and Grace and Cora and Kitty and Norman (and Honey Bunch, of course) in his car to the hall. They saw the prize exhibits and all the other flowers and had ice cream afterward. Norman said he meant to have a garden the next year and the little girls said they meant to have gardens, too.

"That is just why the flower show is held,"

Mr. Morton told them. "When people see how beautiful flowers can be, they plan to plant some for themselves."

"Honey Bunch," said Mr. Morton, the day after he had taken the children to the flower show, "I had a letter to-day and I want to talk to you about it. Suppose you sit on my lap and we'll be businesslike and have a conference. We'll need you, too, Mother."

Mrs. Morton laughed and said she didn't think it was very businesslike for three people to sit in a hammock which might come down any minute. They were on the back porch, which was always cool after sunset.

"Mother and I have been talking about the money you received for the Grand Prize at the flower show, Honey Bunch," said Mr. Morton, "and we think that at least half of it should go to Mrs. Lancaster. She gave you the seed, and from what she has told you, we know her husband had spent many years perfecting it before he died. You would like to give Mrs. Lancaster half the prize, wouldn't you, dear?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy," answered Honey Bunch earnestly. "The seeds were all hers and she showed me how to plant them and told me how to make them grow. The snapdragons are all hers, really they are."

"You were the gardener, dear," her daddy reminded her, giving her a kiss. "The seeds would not have grown without much loving care. Now about this letter—Mr. Anderson has written to me, offering a large sum of money for the seed of this wonderful flower. He wants his firm to have the exclusive control of it. He says that other seed firms will probably write and ask for the seed, and he offers to double any offer they may make because he wants a Barham firm to distribute the seed. The flowers were first grown here, he says, and he wants the city to share in the fame."

"Why does he want the snapdragon seed, Daddy?" asked Honey Bunch, much puzzled.

"To put into little brown envelopes and sell to other people who will plant it in their gardens, dear," said her daddy. "Mr. Anderson

has acres and acres of ground where flowers are raised for their seeds. That is where the seeds we bought there came from—the poppy and the sunflower and the clove pinks, you know.”

“But I should think it would take a lot of seed,” said Honey Bunch thoughtfully, “if every one wants to plant it in gardens, Daddy.”

“So it will, sweetheart,” replied Mr. Morton. “But Mr. Anderson will take the seed you have this year and plant it on his flower farm—it is called a nursery and I must take you and Mother there some day to let you see how acres of flowers look. When the snapdragon has bloomed again next year and gone to seed that seed will be saved, some of it; each year it will be planted and saved, planted and saved. And by and by there will be seed enough for every one who wishes it.”

“Are you going to let Mr. Anderson have the seed, David?” asked Honey Bunch’s mother quickly.

“That is what I wanted to ask Honey Bunch,” said Mr. Morton. “Do you want to

sell the snapdragon seed to Mr. Anderson, dear?"

Honey Bunch did not reply for a minute. She was thinking so hard that she couldn't find the words she wanted. Her blue eyes grew larger and larger and she almost fell out of the hammock. She was excited.

"Daddy!" she cried. "Daddy! Make him give the money to Mrs. Lancaster! Then she can go and get mended and her feet will walk. And she will come to the flower show next year."

Well, that is just what they did do. Mr. Morton went to see Mrs. Lancaster, and though at first the old lady declared that she wouldn't touch the money and was really angry at the suggestion, by and by she changed her mind.

"I gave those seeds to Honey Bunch, and they are hers," she said at first. "She made them grow—I hadn't a thing to do with it. My husband spent his life raising flowers and he never won a prize. You see, it is all because Honey Bunch was the gardener."

But after Mr. Morton had talked to her a little longer and explained that he was not willing for his little girl to keep all the Grand Prize money or to take any of the money offered for the seed unless Mrs. Lancaster would accept half for herself, she consented.

"I won't say I don't need money, for I do," she said. "I can have those electrical treatments my doctor wants me to try and they may cure my lameness; and I can pay Miss Hastings my board, though she always says she won't take a cent because I'm her relative. But I'll take this money, Mr. Morton, on just one condition."

"And what is that?" asked Honey Bunch's daddy, smiling.

"That the seed is named, and the name registered," announced Mrs. Lancaster, smiling. "And it must be known as 'Honey Bunch Snapdragon.'"

CHAPTER XV

WHAT HONEY BUNCH FOUND

"I THINK it is a funny name for a flower," declared Norman Clark, balancing himself on the fence. "Honey Bunch Snapdragon! Who ever heard of a flower with a name like that?"

"Huh, Norman Clark, I guess you wouldn't think it was funny if some one named a sunflower after you," retorted Ida Camp. "You'd think it was pretty nice if there was a sunflower picture in a catalogue with 'Norman Clark Sunflower' printed under it."

Honey Bunch, Ida and Norman were out in the yard together. Ida and Norman were watching Honey Bunch, who was busy. She was planting the pansy seed that next year would bloom with pansies for Uncle Peter.

It was August now, and the flower show had been over for weeks. Mrs. Lancaster had gone

to the Barham hospital where she was "getting better every day," as she wrote Honey Bunch. She would not let any one come to see her. She said that she did not want her friends to see her while she was being made over, but that as soon as she was home again, she would be glad to have them come to see her.

Mr. Anderson had bought the snapdragon seed and paid so much money for it that Honey Bunch was sure she could have gone to college at once, if she had been old enough. Half the money Mr. Morton gave to Mrs. Lancaster and half the amount written on the check Mr. Anderson had given Honey Bunch for the Grand Prize.

"All you have to do now," Uncle Peter wrote to Honey Bunch, when he heard the wonderful news, "is to grow as fast as you can and be ready to go to college when you are eighteen. I've shown your picture to the man who grows the finest roses in England, and he thinks you had better come over here and raise flowers instead of going to college; but

I tell him you can't do that because I expect to stay in the United States, once I get back, and of course you are never going to live very far from your Uncle Peter, are you?"

"Of course not," said Honey Bunch, when her mother read this letter aloud to her. "I am going to keep house for Uncle Peter when I grow up; he said I could. And we are going to have ice cream every night for dinner."

Uncle Peter was coming home in September and Honey Bunch was anxious to have her pansy seed in before he came. As soon as her daddy said it was time to sow it, she had gone down to the seed store and told Mr. Fredericks what she wanted. She knew every one in the store now, and if Mr. Anderson was in his little glass office, she would go in and speak to him. He always asked her about her garden and one day he showed her some sheets of paper. He said they were proofs of his catalogue for the next year. On one page it read "Honey Bunch Snapdragon," and that, Mr. Anderson said, was the snapdragon seed which had been named for her.

This afternoon Honey Bunch had started to sow her pansy seed and Ida Camp had seen her from her porch and come over to ask what she was doing. Norman, too, had asked the same question. Honey Bunch was used to answering questions and did not mind. She had told them about the page in the catalogue also.

"I ought to spade up all this dirt," said Honey Bunch, frowning at the ground around Mrs. Miller's rose bush. "It's baked so hard—Daddy says we need rain."

"Why don't you rake it?" suggested Norman, who liked to give advice.

"Well, I could," agreed Honey Bunch. "Hand me the rake, please, Ida; it is back of you—there on the grass."

Ida handed Honey Bunch the rake and went on watching an ant that was trying to climb over a blade of grass.

"Ants don't know much, do they?" said Ida. "This one can't see far or he'd go around to the other end."

"Maybe he wants to go the way he is going,"

argued Norman. "Are you hot, Honey Bunch?"

Honey Bunch mopped her little red face with her handkerchief.

"I'm a little hot," she admitted, "but not much."

"Wait till to-morrow, why don't you?" said Norman. "It may rain to-night; once Mother asked me to water her flowers and I didn't and it poured that night. If I had carried water out to them, it would have been wasted."

"This dirt ought to be raked, anyway," declared Honey Bunch firmly. "Daddy says that when the ground gets baked and cracks like this, the water can't go down through it easily; it would have to rain maybe two days before it would help this rose bush much."

"What a lot you know about gardens, don't you, Honey Bunch?" said Norman respectfully. "Next year will you tell me what to do when I plant mine?"

"She's going to tell me what to do when

I plant mine," said Ida Camp. "You mustn't ask her to help you—you're going to tell me, aren't you, Honey Bunch? I asked first."

"I'll tell you both," promised Honey Bunch, afraid Ida and Norman would be quarreling in another minute.

Ida put her face down close to the grass to watch the ant and when Honey Bunch gave a little cry it startled her so she lost her balance.

"I fell right down on that ant and killed him!" said Ida, looking at Honey Bunch as though she blamed her. "He's a mashed ant now and it's all your fault!"

"I'm sorry," apologized Honey Bunch. "I didn't mean to make you fall down on the ant, Ida. Maybe he isn't dead. Ants are so little they can run away and you don't see them."

"I guess I can see a dead ant!" said the in-lignant Ida. "He's dead, I tell you—I mashed him flat."

"Serves you right for being such a fat girl," declared Norman. "If you were as little as Honey Bunch, Ida, you wouldn't have mashed

him flat. I'll bet Honey Bunch could step on an ant and not hurt him a bit."

Ida was not a fat girl at all. She was rather thin and tall, in fact, for her age. But Norman liked to tease her and he knew she would not like to be called a fat girl.

All this time Honey Bunch had been down on her knees looking at something in the dirt. She had brushed the dirt off the something and rubbed it on her garden apron and now she called to Ida and Norman.

"Look what I've found!" she cried, holding the something up in her fingers for them to see.

Ida looked and so did Norman. They ran over to Honey Bunch and took another look.

"Why—why——" stuttered Ida. "It isn't! How can it be——"

"It *is* Anna Martin's aunt's pencil!" shouted Norman. "It is! Did you find it, Honey Bunch? Where was it? Let's go tell Anna this minute. The fuss she made over that pencil and now we've found it!"

Norman was excited and that may account

for his odd remarks. If he had stopped to think, he would have known that it was natural for Anna to make a "fuss" about the pencil—it wasn't hers and it was a valuable pencil, besides. And if Norman had stopped to think again, he never would have used that little word "we." He had not helped to find the pencil at all—indeed, after the first week or two, he had never looked for it again.

However, Honey Bunch did not mind the "we." She was the happiest of happy little girls to think she had found the pencil. And when Norman happened to say that he wished she had found her locket and chain, instead of the pencil, Honey Bunch looked quite shocked.

"Oh, no!" she said. "I would rather find Anna's pencil. Her aunt scolded her because she took it. My mother didn't scold me because I lost my locket. She said she was sorry, but she knew I couldn't help it."

"Where did you find the pencil?" asked Norman again. "Perhaps you will find your locket, too, Honey Bunch. And it would be

nice if you could find Fannie's beads. Though she doesn't mind so much. She has new beads now."

Apparently Norman thought that Honey Bunch had only to hunt around a little, to discover all the missing treasure.

"I was raking along by the fence," explained Honey Bunch, "and I saw something sticking up out of the dirt. Just like—why, Norman—look!"

Norman looked and Ida looked. She almost pushed him over, so anxious was she to see. Something round and black lay on the heap of dirt Honey Bunch had just turned over—something round and black and attached to a little narrow black chain.

"You've found the locket!" shouted Norman. "It's dirty and green in spots, Honey Bunch, but it must be your locket. Yes—it opens—see, there's your Uncle Peter's picture. Say, do you think your mother can make it shiny again for you? Do you, Honey Bunch? I hope it isn't spoiled!"

They ran into the house, all three of them,

to show Mrs. Morton the locket. As soon as she saw it, she said it wasn't hurt a bit and she washed it and the chain in warm water with soap in it. Then she polished it very long and carefully on a flannel cloth, and there the locket and chain were as bright as new. Honey Bunch put them on at once.

"I wonder if we'll ever have such 'citement again," she said.

She did not know it, of course, but soon she was to have a lot more. The story is called "Her First Days in Camp."

"Poor Fannie's beads are lost forever," said Honey Bunch.

"I think the string probably broke while Teddy Gray was running or climbing the fence," said Mr. Morton, when he came home. "The beads would scatter then, you see, and it would be impossible to find them. The pencil and the locket must have been dropped when the boys scrambled over the fence and as the ground was moist and soft then, they sank in. Perhaps while you hunted for them your feet were pressing them deeper into the earth.

This dry weather has made the ground hard and crumbly, and when you raked it over, you brought up the jewelry. It is lucky the boys lost their treasure before they reached the street, otherwise you might never have found it."

Anna Martin was very glad to get her aunt's pencil back and she said she hoped that Norman would not play pirates again "for a long time."

"I never saw such a girl," grumbled Norman. "Here I take her aunt's pencil back—and your mother made it shiny for her and it isn't hurt a bit—and she knows we haven't played pirates since we lost the treasure. And she doesn't even say 'thank you.'"

Mrs. Miller was in the yard and heard what Norman said. She had brought out a great dishpan of soap suds to throw over her cabbage rose bush. There were no bugs on it, but Mrs. Miller said you never could tell when there might be and she didn't propose to be taken unawares. Lady Clare always ran and jumped on the fence when she saw

Mrs. Miller coming with a pan of soap suds. Once half the soapy water had splashed on the cat's soft fur, and Lady Clare hated water.

"Norman," said Mrs. Miller, putting down her pan to get her breath, "if half the people who ought to, said 'thank you' at the right time, we'd have Thanksgiving every day in the week."

"Flowers always say 'thank you,'" declared Honey Bunch, stopping to pick a bluebell. "They say thank you for everything you do for them. At least those in my garden do."

THE END













