

— and then the name flared out, and she understood. The paper lay at her feet now. ‘I shall go to that concert’ she said. She felt not the slightest emotion or surprise. She only wanted to lay her plans carefully . . . but no inspiration came. At lunch time Chaddie brought in her tray. ‘We’re all going over to the Hutt this afternoon till tomorrow’ she said. ‘You won’t mind being here, just with the Cook, as you’re so much better. Dick has asked us all and the Governor is going to be there.’

When they had all gone it was already six o’clock. The Recital commenced at eight. She rang the bell, and when the maid appeared she motioned her to a chair. ‘Now please listen’ she [said] authoritatively. ‘Look what lies on the table.’ Ten sovereigns were<sup>2</sup> (pp34-43)

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### *The Tale of the Three*

<sup>3</sup>Vera Margaret, Charlotte Mary and K.M. were cleaning out the doll’s house. There were three dippers of water on the floor, three little pieces of real monkey brand,<sup>4</sup> and in their hand they held three little rags — of various degrees of dirtiness. They were being systematic thorough little souls and their cheeks were flaming, their hands aching with the exertion. ‘It’s the chimleys’ said K.M., polishing these articles with tremendous verve. ‘All the dust seems to fly into them.’ ‘On them’ corrected C.M. in her careful cool little voice. ‘They haven’t got any regular insides you know.’ Vera Margaret was working at the windows, trying to clean the little square of glass without washing away the thin red line of paint which was the dividing line between the bottom and top panes. ‘How pleased all the family will be’ she said, ‘to find everything so fresh and neat.’

Outside the nursery window the rain was falling in torrents. They peeked through and saw the long wet garden, the paddocks, and, far away the bush-covered hills were hardly to be seen . . . Early in the morning when they had been allowed to put some sacking over their heads and run across the courtyard into the feedroom to see Pat and get the clean boots, he had called the day a “Southerly busted” and they knew that meant “a big wetness and then a blow” as K.M. graphically described it. (pp44-46)

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### *[London]*<sup>5</sup>

Away behind the line of the dark houses there is a sound like the call of the sea after a storm — passionate, solemn, strong. I am leaning far far out of the window in the warm still night air. Down below in the Mews the little lamp is singing a quiet song . . . it is the one glow of light in all