

**THE STORY HOUR; A  
BOOK FOR THE HOME  
AND THE KINDERGARTEN**

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The story hour; a book for the home and the kindergarten by Kate Douglas Wiggin & Nora A. Smith

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**KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN & NORA A. SMITH**

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AND THE KINDERGARTEN**





"IT WAS THE BOY WHO LIVED ACROSS THE STREET" (page 141)

# THE STORY HOUR

*A BOOK FOR THE HOME AND THE  
KINDERGARTEN*

BY

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

AND

NORA A. SMITH

*Therefore ear and heart open to the genuine story-teller  
as flowers open to the spring sun and the May rain.*

FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL.



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## INTRODUCTION.

STORY-TELLING, like letter-writing, is going out of fashion. There are no modern Scheherzades, and the Sultans nowadays have to be amused in a different fashion. But, for that matter, a hundred poetic pastimes of leisure have fled before the relentless Hurry Demon who governs this prosaic nineteenth century. The Wandering Minstrel is gone, and the Troubadour, and the Court of Love, and the King's Fool, and the Round Table, and with them the Story-Teller.

"Come, tell us a story!" It is the familiar plea of childhood. Unhappy he who has not been assailed with it again and again. Thrice miserable she who can be consigned to worse than oblivion by the scathing criticism, "She does n't know any stories!" and thrice blessed she who is recognized at a glance as a person likely to be full to the brim of them.

There are few preliminaries and no formalities when the Person with a Story is found.

The motherly little sister stands by the side of her chair, two or three of the smaller fry perch on the arms, and the baby climbs up into her lap (such a person always has a capacious lap), and folds his fat hands placidly. Then there is a deep sigh of blissful expectation and an expressive silence, which means, "Now we are ready, please; and if you would be kind enough to begin it with 'Once upon a time,' we should be much obliged; though of course we understand that all the stories in the world can't commence that way, delightful as it would be."

The Person with a Story smiles obligingly (at least it is to be hoped that she does), and retires into a little corner of her brain, to rummage there for something just fitted to the occasion. That same little corner is densely populated, if she is a lover of children. In it are all sorts of heroic dogs, wonderful monkeys, intelligent cats, naughty kittens; virtues masquerading seductively as fairies, and vices hiding in imps; birds agreeing and disagreeing in their little nests, and inevitable small boys in the act of robbing them; busy bees laying up their winter stores, and