

**THE NURSERY. A  
MAGAZINE FOR  
YOUNGEST  
READERS. VOLUME III**

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The Nursery. A Magazine for Youngest Readers. Volume III by Fanny P. Seaverns

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**FANNY P. SEAVERNS**

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THE  
NURSERY

A MAGAZINE

FOR YOUNGEST READERS.

BY

*FANNY P. SEAVERN.*

VOLUME III.

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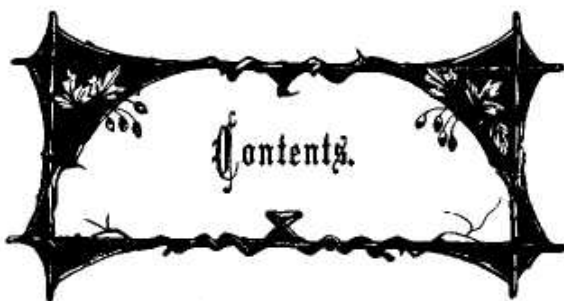
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### THE GREAT SECRET.

WHAT could it have been about ?

Mary leaned her head against Bertha's, and whispered it close to her ear. Frisk was fast asleep on the floor. Of course, he could not hear; and he never would have told anybody if he had heard.

The doll-baby in the carriage could not talk; and even the doll Sophy, in her mother's arms, was too young to tell

tales. There was nobody else in the room. The secret must have been a *very* great secret indeed.

All that day — it was the day before Christmas — the two little girls kept it to themselves, giving each other very wise looks, and exchanging a great many whispers.

At night, as they were going to bed, it was hard work for Mary to keep it any longer. She came very near letting it all out to the nurse.

"Fanny," said she, "Bertha and I have planned such a sur—!"

"Hush!" said Bertha. "You must not tell."

"Fanny will promise not to tell," said Mary.

"Ah, yes! But a secret is a *secret*, you know," said Bertha.

So they went to bed without telling it. How they could have slept with such a great secret on their minds, I do not see. But they did sleep soundly, and woke up bright and early the next morning to find a good lot of Christmas presents.

I found out, soon after breakfast, what the great secret was. You must know that Bertha and Mary each had a bright gold dollar given them on their birthdays. They had had a good many plans about those gold dollars.

At first, they thought they would drop them into a little tin money-box, which they could not open, and then would keep dropping in more and more, and so save all their money for many years, until they got to be rich. But, on second thought, they gave up this plan.

"We shall be just like misers if we do that," said Bertha. "We don't want to be like misers."

"I tell you what," said Mary: "we will spend the money in candy. We can buy lots of splendid almond-candy for two dollars!"

Bertha was fond of candy; but she had a better plan in her head than this.

"Let us keep our money till Christmas," said she, "and then give it away in presents."

"Oh, yes!" said Mary. "That will be nicer even than almond-candy."

Now, the great secret had something to do with these gold dollars. This is the way it came out.

There was a little girl named Susan, about twelve years old, who went round selling needles and thread to earn a living for her poor sick mother. Bertha and Mary stood at the window on Christmas Day, watching for this little girl to pass by; and, when they saw her, they knocked on the window, and beckoned to her to come in.

"A merry Christmas to you, Susan!" said Bertha, seizing her right hand.

"Merry Christmas!" said Mary, taking her left hand.

"Now, Susan," said Bertha, "please shut your eyes and open your hands."

Then they put something into each of her hands.

"Now," said Mary, "shut your hands and open your eyes."

And away they both ran, leaving Susan with the gold dollars in her hands, and tears in her eyes; for she was so pleased, that she could not help crying.

Then I knew very well that the plan of this pleasant surprise was Mary and Bertha's "great secret."

IDA FAY.

