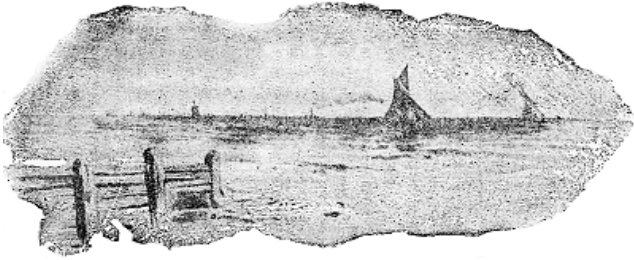


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# THE STOLEN CHILD



Mr. Brown was killed in a railroad accident. When Mrs. Brown heard of it, she was so overcome with grief that she died in a few days, and their baby, only a year and a half old, was left alone in the world.

There was an old lady who lived near. She was very poor, though she had once been the wife of a rich sea captain who was lost, with all his crew, when his ship was driven upon the rocks in a storm. A few of his chests drifted ashore. These were all that were left to the captain's wife of her husband's great fortune; and she always kept them, though she did not consider them of much value. She earned her living by doing fine sewing for wealthy ladies. Once when she was sick and could not work, Mrs. Brown

was very kind to her, and took care of her by day and night till she was well again. For this the old lady was very thankful, and said she hoped she should sometime be able to repay Mrs. Brown for her kindness.

When she heard Mrs. Brown was dead she felt very badly, and went and took the orphan baby to her home. This was a great deal for a poor woman of her age to do; but she remembered how kind his mother had been to her, and she denied herself many comforts for his sake, and loved him and cared for him as her own child.

One day a terrible thing happened. She went to a neighbor's and left the baby sleeping in his crib. She was gone but a few minutes, but on her return, the baby was gone. The door was open. Someone had entered the house and kidnaped him. She was frantic with grief. The neighbors were aroused, and all the neighbors went in search of the child.

They knew that a party of ruffians had been encamped in the forest nearby. They went to the place, but they found only the burnt coals in the spot where their campfires had been. No one knew where they had gone.



The search was continued for several weeks, when the ruffians were found in a distant part of the country, and with them the stolen child. He was so dirty that they hardly knew him, but a pink calico apron which the old lady had made for him was the means by which he was known. He was carried back to the old lady, and great was her joy at seeing him again, and he was as much pleased as she.

She placed him in a bath tub filled with nice warm water, and no child ever enjoyed a bath so much as he. During the whole time he had been with the ruffians he had not been washed, and he seemed to enjoy

scrubbing off the smoke of the dirty camp.

He and the old lady were very happy together, but she worried for fear she should be too poor to take care of him. One day she was looking over the contents of the captain's chests which had been saved from the wreck. In one she found a box which she had never opened before. It was full of bright gold and silver coins and valuable papers. To her great surprise and joy it contained many thousands of dollars, and she was rich again. After this she and baby never lacked for anything money could buy.

When he was grown to adulthood she gave him all her money, and he took care of her and was the support and comfort of her in old age.

Thus kind deeds have their reward.

Summarize this short story.

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