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Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
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The Bobbsey Twins at School

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THE BOBBSEY TWINS AT SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

A CIRCUS TRAIN

"Mamma, how much longer have we got to ride?" asked Nan Bobbsey, turning in her seat in the railroad car, to look at her parents, who sat behind her.

"Are you getting tired?" asked Nan's brother Bert. "If you are I'll sit next to the window, and watch the telegraph poles and trees go by. Maybe that's what tires you, Nan," he added, and his father smiled, for he saw that Bert had two thoughts for himself, and one for his sister.

"No, I'm not tired of the scenery," answered the brown-haired and brown-eyed girl, "but you may sit next the window, Bert, if you like."

"Thanks!" he exclaimed as he scrambled over to the place his sister gave up.

"Are you tired, dearie?" asked Mrs. Bobbsey, leaning forward and smoothing out her daughter's hair with her hand. "If you would like to sit with me and put your head in my lap, papa can go to another seat and—"

"Oh, no, mamma, I'm not as tired as that," and Nan laughed. "I was just wondering how soon we'd be home."

"I'd rather be back at the seashore," said Bert, not turning his gaze from the window, for the train was passing along some fields just then, and in one a boy was driving home some cows to be milked, as evening was coming on Bert was wondering if one of the cows might not chase the boy. Bert didn't really want to see the boy hurt by a cow, of course, but he thought that if the cow was going to take after the boy, anyhow, he might just as well see it. But the cows were very well-behaved, and went along slowly.

"Yes, the seashore was nice," murmured Nan, as she leaned her head back on the cushioned seat, "but I'm glad to be going home again. I want to see some of the girls, and —"

"Yes, and I'll be looking for some of the boys, too," put in Bert. "But school will soon begin, and that's no fun!"

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey smiled at each other, and Mr. Bobbsey, taking out a time-table, looked to see how much longer they would be on the train.

"It's about an hour yet," he said to Nan, and she sighed. Really she was more tired than she cared to let her mother know.

Just ahead of the two Bobbsey children were another set of them. I say "set" for the Bobbsey children came "in sets."

There were two pairs of twins, Bert and Nan, nearly nine years of age, and Flossie and Freddie, almost five. And, whereas the two older children were rather tall and slim, with dark brown hair and eyes, the littler twins were short and fat, and had light hair and blue eyes. The two pairs of twins were quite a contrast, and many persons stopped to look at them as they passed along the street together.

"No, sir," went on Bert musingly, "school's no fun, and it starts about a week after we get home. No chance to have a good time!"

"We've had fun all summer," replied his sister. "I rather like school."

"Mamma, are we going to school this year?" asked Flossie, as she looked back with a quick turning of her head that set her yellow curls to dancing.

"If we are, I'm going to sit with Flossie—can't I?" asked Freddie, kneeling in the seat so that he could face back to his father and mother.

Indeed his request was not strange, since the two younger twins were always together, even more so than their brother and sister.

"Yes, I think you and Freddie will start school regularly this term," said Mrs. Bobbsey, "and, if it can be arranged, you may sit together. We'll see about that. Be careful Freddie, don't put your head out of the window," she cautioned quickly, for the little chap had turned in his seat again, and was leaning forward to see a horse galloping about a field, kicking up its heels at the sound of the puffing engine.

"It's my turn to sit by the window, anyhow," said Flossie.

"It is not! We haven't passed a station yet," disputed Freddie.

"Oh, we have so!" cried his little sister. "Freddie Bobbsey!" and she pointed her finger at him.

"Children—children," said Mrs. Bobbsey reprovingly.

"Are you two taking turns?" asked Bert, smiling with an older brother's superior wisdom.

"Yes," answered Flossie, "he was to have the seat next to the window until we came to a station, and then it's to be my turn until we pass another station, and we have passed one, but he won't change over."

"Well, it was only a little station, anyhow," asserted Freddie, "and it come awful quick after the last one. It isn't fair!"

"There's a seat up ahead for you, Bert," suggested Mr. Bobbsey, as a gentleman got up, when the train approached a station. "You can sit there, and let Flossie or Freddie take your place."

"All right," answered Bert good-naturedly, as he got up.

The train rolled on, the two younger twins each having a window now, and Nan occupying the seat with her little brother. For a time there was quietness, until Mrs. Bobbsey said to her husband:

"Hadn't you better get some of the satchels together, Richard, and tell Dinah what she is to carry?"

"I think I will," he answered, as he went up the car aisle a little way to where a very fat colored woman sat. She was Dinah, the Bobbsey cook, and they took her with them always when going away for the summer. Now they were on their way to their city house, and of course Dinah came back, too.

"Mamma, I'm thirsty," said Flossie, after a bit. "Please may I get a drink?"

"I want one, too," said Freddie quickly, "Come on, Flossie, we'll both go down to the end of the car where the water cooler is."

"There's no cup," Nan said. "I went a little while ago, but a lady let me take her glass."

"And if there was a cup, I would rather they didn't use it," said Mrs. Bobbsey. "One never knows who has last handled a public cup."

"But I want a drink," insisted Flossie, a bit fretfully, for she was tired from the long journey.

"I know it, dear," said her mamma gently, "and I'm getting out the silver cup for you. Only you must be very careful of it, and not drop it, for it is solid silver and will dent, or mar, easily." She was searching in her bags and presently took out a very valuable drinking cup, gold lined and with much engraving on it. The cup had been presented to Flossie and Freddie on their first birthday, and bore each of their names. They were very proud of it.

"Now be careful," warned Mrs. Bobbsey, as she held out the cup. "Hold on to the seats as you walk along."

"I'll carry the cup," said Freddie. "I'm the biggest."

"You are not!" declared his sister quickly. "I'm just as big."

"Well, anyhow, I'm a boy," went on Freddie, and Flossie could not deny this. "And boys always carries things," her brother went on. "I'll carry the cup."

"Very well, but be careful of it," said his mother with a smile, as she handed it to him. The two children went down the aisle of the car. They stopped for a moment at the seat where Dinah was.

"Is Snoop all right?" asked Freddie, peering into a box that was made of slats, with spaces between them for air.

"'Deed an' he am, honey," said Dinah with a smile, laughing so that she shook all over her big, fleshy body.

"I 'spect he's lonesome; aren't you, Snoop?" asked Flossie, poking her finger in one of the cracks, to caress, as well as she could, a fat, black cat. The cat, like Dinah the cook, went with the Bobbseys on all their summer outings.

"Well, maybe he am lonesome," admitted Dinah, with another laugh, "but he's been real good. He hain't yowled once—not once!"

"He'll soon be out of his cage; won't you, snoop?" said Freddie, and then he and his sister went on to the water cooler. Near by they saw something else to look at. This was the sight of a very, very fat lady who occupied nearly all of one seat in the end of the car. She was so large that only a very little baby could have found room beside her.

"Look—look at her." whispered Flossie to Freddie, as they paused. The fat woman's back was toward them, and she seemed to be much interested in looking out of the window.

"She is fat," admitted Freddie. "Did you ever see one so big before?"

"Only in a circus," said Flossie. "She'd make—make two of Dinah," went on her brother.

"She would not," contradicted Flossie quickly. "Cause Dinah's black, and this lady is white."

"That's so," admitted Freddie, with a smile. "I didn't think of that."

A sway of the train nearly made Flossie fall, and she caught quickly at her brother.

"Look out!" he cried. "You 'most knocked the cup down."

"I didn't mean to," spoke Flossie. "Oh, there goes my hat! Get it, Freddie, before someone steps on it!"

Her brother managed to get the hat just as it was sliding under the seat where the fat lady sat.

After some confusion the hat was placed on Flossie's head, and once more she and her brother moved on toward the water cooler. It was getting dusk now, and some of the lamps in the car had been lighted.

Freddie, carrying the cup, filled it with water at the little faucet, and, very politely, offered it to his sister first. Freddie was no better than most boys of his age, but he did not forget some of the little polite ways his mamma was continually teaching him. One of these was "ladies first," though Freddie did not always carry it out, especially when he was in a hurry.

"Do you want any more?" he asked, before he would get himself a drink.

"Just a little," said Flossie. "The silver cup doesn't hold much."

"No, I guess it's 'cause there's so much silver in it," replied her brother. "It's worth a lot of money, mamma said."

"Yes, and it's all ours. When I grow up I'm going to have my half made into a bracelet."

"You are?" said Freddie slowly. "If you do there won't be enough left for me to drink out of."

"Well, you can have your share of it made into a watch, and drink out of a glass."

"That's so," agreed Freddie, his face brightening. He gave his sister more water, and then took some himself. As he drank his eyes were constantly looking at the very fat lady who filled so much of her seat. She turned from the window and looked at the two children, smiling broadly. Freddie was somewhat confused, and looked down quickly. Just then the train gave another lurch and Freddie suddenly spilled some of the water on his coat.

"Oh, look what you did!" cried Flossie "And that's your best coat!"

"I—I couldn't help it," stammered Freddie.

"Never mind, little boy," said the fat lady. "It's only clean water. Come here and I'll wipe it off with my handkerchief. I'd come to you, only I'm so stout it's hard enough for me to walk anyhow, and when the train is moving I simply can't do it."

Freddie and Flossie went to her seat, and with a handkerchief, that Flossie said afterward was almost as big as a table cloth, the fat lady wiped the water off Freddie's coat.

The little boy held the silver cup in his hand, and feeling, somehow, that he ought to repay the fat lady's kindness in some way after thanking her, he asked:

"Would you like a drink of water? I can bring it to you if you would."

"Thank you," she answered. "What a kind little boy you are! I saw you give your sister a drink first, too. Yes, I would like a drink. I've been wanting one some time, but I didn't dare get up to go after it."

"I'll get it!" cried Freddie, eager to show what a little man he was. He made his way to the cooler without accident, and then, moving slowly, taking hold of the seat on the way back, so as not to spill the water, he brought the silver cup brimful to the fat lady.

"Oh, what a beautiful cup," she said, as she took it.

"And it cost a lot of money, too," said Flossie. "It's ours—our birthday cup, and when I grow up I'm going to have a bracelet made from my half."

"That will be nice," said the fat lady, as she prepared to drink.

But she never got more than a sip of the water Freddie had so kindly brought her, for, no sooner did her lips touch the cup than there was a grinding, shrieking sound, a jar to the railway coach, and the train came to such a sudden stop that many passengers were thrown from their seats.

Flossie and Freddie sat down suddenly in the aisle, but they were so fat that they did not mind it in the least. As surprised as he was, Freddie noticed that the fat lady was so large that she could not be

thrown out of her seat no matter how suddenly the train stopped. The little Bobbsey boy saw the water from the cup spill all over the fat lady, and she held the silver vessel in her big, pudgy hand, looking curiously at it, as though wondering what had so quickly become of the water.

"It's a wreck—the train's off the track!" a man exclaimed.

"We've hit something!" cried another.

"It's an accident, anyhow," said still a third, and then every one seemed to be talking at once.

Mr. Bobbsey came running down the aisle to where Flossie and Freddie still sat, dazed.

"Are you hurt?" he cried, picking them both up together, which was rather hard to do.

"No—no," said Freddie slowly.

"Oh, papa, what is it?" asked Flossie, wondering whether she was going to cry.

"I don't know, my dear. Nothing serious, I guess. The engineer must have put the brakes on too quickly. I'll look out and see."

Knowing that his children were safe, Mr. Bobbsey put them down and led them back to where his wife was anxiously waiting.

"They're all right," he called. "No one seems to be hurt."

Bert Bobbsey looked out of the window. Though darkness had fallen there seemed to be many lights up ahead of the stopped train. And in the light Bert could see some camels, an elephant or two, a number of horses, and cages containing lions and tigers strung out along the track.

"Why—why, what's this—a circus?" he asked. "Look, Nan! See those monkeys!"

"Why, it is a circus—and the train must have been wrecked!" exclaimed his sister. "Oh mamma, what can it be?"

A brakeman came into the car where the Bobbseys were.

"There's no danger," he said. "Please keep your seats. A circus train that was running ahead of us got off the track, and some of the

animals are loose. Our train nearly ran into an elephant, and that's why the engineer had to stop so suddenly. We will go on soon."

"A circus; eh?" said Mr. Bobbsey. "Well, well! This is an adventure, children. We've run into a circus train! Let's watch them catch the animals."

CHAPTER II

SNOOP IS GONE

"Papa, do you think a tiger would come in here?" asked Freddie, remembering all the stories of wild animals he had heard in his four years.

"Or a lion?" asked Flossie.

"Of course not!" exclaimed Nan. "Can't you see that all the wild animals are still in their cages?"

"Maybe some of 'em are loose," suggested Freddie, and he almost hoped so, as long as his father was there to protect him.

"I guess the circus men can look after them," said Bert. "May I get off, father, and look around?"

"I'd rather you wouldn't, son. You can't tell what may happen."

"Oh, look at that man after the monkey!" cried Nan.

"Yes, and the monkey's gone up on top of the tiger's cage," added Bert. "Say, this is as good as a circus, anyhow!"

Some of the big, flaring lights, used in the tents at night, had been set going so the circus and railroad men could see to work, and this glare gave the Bobbseys and other passengers on the train a chance to see what was going on.

"There's a big elephant!" cried Freddie. "See him push the lion's cage around. Elephants are awful strong!"

"They couldn't push a railroad train," said Flossie.

"They could too!" cried her little brother, quickly.

"They could not. Could they, papa?"

"What?" asked Mr. Bobbsey, absent-mindedly.

"Could an elephant push a railroad train?" asked Flossie.

"I know they could," declared Freddie. "Couldn't they, papa?"

"Now, children, don't argue. Look out of the windows," advised their mother.

And while the circus men are trying to catch the escaped animals I will tell you something more about the Bobbseys, and about the other books, before this one, relating to their doings.

Mr. Richard Bobbsey, and his wife Mary, the parents of the Bobbsey twins, lived in an Eastern city called Lakeport, on Lake Metoka. Mr. Bobbsey was in the lumber business, and the yard, with its great piles of logs and boards, was near the lake, on which the twins often went in boats. There was also a river running into the lake, not far from the saw mill.

Their house was about a quarter of a mile away from the lumber yard, on a fashionable street, and about it was a large lawn, while in the back Sam Johnson, the colored man of all work, and the husband of Dinah, had a fine garden. The Bobbseys had many vegetables from this garden.

There was also a barn near the house, and in this the children had many good times. Flossie and Freddie played there more than did Nan and Bert, who were growing too old for games of that sort.

As I have said, Bert and Nan were rather tall and thin, while Flossie and Freddie were short and fat. Mr. Bobbsey used often to call Flossie his "Fat Fairy," which always made her laugh. And Freddie had a pet name, too. It was "Fat Fireman," for he often played that he was a fireman; putting out make-believe fires, and pretending he was a fire engine. Once or twice his father had taken him to see a real fire, and this pleased Freddie very much.

In the first book of this series, called "The Bobbsey Twins," I told you something of the fun the four children had in their home town. They had troubles, too, and Danny Rugg, one of the few bad boys in Lakeport, was the cause of some. Also about a certain broken window; what happened when the twins went coasting, how they had a good time, in an ice boat, and how they did many other things.

Snoop, the fat, black kitten, played a part in the story also. The Bobbsey twins were very fond of Snoop, and had kept him so many years that I suppose he ought to be called a cat, instead of a kitten, now.

After the first winter's fun, told of in the book that began an account of the doings of the Bobbseys, the twins and their parents went to the home of Uncle Daniel Bobbsey, and his wife, Aunt Sarah, in Meadow Brook.

In the book called "The Bobbsey Twins in the Country," I wrote down many of the things that happened during the summer.

If they had fun going off to the country, taking Snoop with them, of course, they had many more good times on arriving at the farm. There was a picnic, jolly times in the woods, a Fourth of July celebration, and though a midnight scare alarmed them for a time, still they did not mind that.

But, though the twins liked the country very much, they soon had a chance to see something of the ocean, and in the third book of the series, called "The Bobbsey Twins at the Seashore," my readers will find out what happened there.

There was fun on the sand, and more fun in the water, and once the little ones got lost on an island. A great storm came up, and a ship was wrecked, and this gave the twins a chance to see the life savers, those brave men who risk their lives to help others.

Then came closing days at Ocean Cliff, the home of Uncle William and Aunt Emily Minturn at Sunset Beach. School was soon to open, and Mr. and Mrs. Bobbsey were anxious to get back to their town home, for Flossie and Freddie were to start regular lessons now, even though it was but in the kindergarten class.

Sa good-byes were said to the ocean, and though Dorothy Minturn cried a little when her cousins Nan and Flossie, and Bert and Freddie, had to leave, still she said she hoped they would come again. And so the Bobbseys were on their way home in the train when the circus accident happened that brought them to a stop.

"And so we nearly ran into an elephant; eh?" said Mr. Bobbsey to the brakeman, who had brought in the news.

"Yes, sir. Our engineer stopped just in time."

"If we had hit him we'd gone off the track," said Freddie.

"No, we wouldn't," declared Flossie, who seemed bound to start a dispute. Perhaps she was so tired that she was fretful.

"Say, can't you two stop disputing all the while?" asked Bert, in a low voice. "You make papa and mamma nervous."

"Well, an elephant is big, anyhow," said Freddie.

"So he is, little Fat Fireman," said Nan, "Come and sit with me, and we can see the men catch the monkeys."

The work of getting the escaped animals back into their cages was going on rapidly. Some of the passengers went out to watch, but the Bobbseys stayed in their seats, Mr. Bobbsey thinking this best. The catching of the monkeys was the hardest work, but soon even this was accomplished.

The wait seemed very tiresome when there was nothing more to watch, and Mr. Bobbsey looked about for some railroad man of whom he could inquire how much longer delay there would be. The conductor came through the car.

"When will we start?" asked Mr. Bobbsey.

"Not for some time, I'm afraid," spoke the ticket-taker. "The wreck is a worse one than I thought at first, and some of the cars of the circus train are across the track so we can't get by. We may be here two hours yet."

"That's too bad. Where are we?"

"Just outside of Whitewood."

"Oh, that's near home!" exclaimed Mrs. Bobbsey. "Why can't we get out, Richard, walk across the fields to the trolley line, and take that home? It won't be far, and we'll be there ever so much quicker."

"Well, we could do that, I suppose," said her husband, slowly.

"That's what a number of passengers did," said the conductor. "There's no danger in going out now—all the animals are back in their cages."