

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
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
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Descartes Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Strachwitz Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Nietzsche Nansen Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
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Dorothy Dale's Queer Holidays

Margaret Penrose

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"SHE PROCEEDED TO BRING OUT FROM THE CLOSET THE
'GHOST'"

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DOROTHY DALE'S QUEER HOLIDAYS

CHAPTER I

THE SAME OLD TAVIA

"She very probably will miss her train, we will miss her at the station, she will take a ride up with old Bill Mason, stay talking to him until dinner is too cold to wait any longer; then—then—well, she may steal in through a window and give you a midnight scare, just for a joke. That's my recollection of Miss Tavia."

"Nat, you're too mean—Tavia is not always late, and she doesn't purposely upset plans. Some things can't be prevented."

"Right, little coz, they can't. That's right. Tavia is one of the things that can't be prevented from— —"

"Quit! quit there! Easy with young ladies' names! You don't have to—to put her up for the registry," and the last speaker swung around in mock challenge, with his fist very close to his brother's aristocratic nose.

The three were Dorothy, Ned and Nat. Dorothy Dale was the "coz," a very pretty and attractive young girl, while her two good-looking cousins, Ned the elder and Nat the jollier, were sons of Mrs. Winthrop White, of North Birchland.

Dorothy, with her father, Major Dale, and her two brothers, Joe and Roger, the latter about two years younger than his brother, who was not yet in his 'teens, made her home with Major Dale's sister, Mrs. White, where they had lived for the past few years. It was now holiday time, and Dorothy was awaiting the arrival of her chum, Tavia Travers, of Dalton, the former home of the Dales.

We may say Dorothy was waiting, but the boys were—well, they may have had to wait until Miss Tavia got there, but one of them, Nat, evidently did not find "waiting" very pleasant employment. The fact was, Tavia was a very good friend of Nat, and because of

this his brother enjoyed teasing Dorothy about her chum's shortcomings, especially when Nat was within hearing.

"She said the 4:10, didn't she?" asked Nat for the fourth time in as many minutes.

"And meant the 10:04," put in Ned, before Dorothy could reply.

"Neddie, I've warned you — —" and Nat "squared off" in a threatening manner.

"Boys! boys!" pleaded Dorothy, stepping in between them with her hands raised to prevent possible trouble.

"Well, if you insist," said Nat, with a very gallant bow. "In deference to a lady's presence I will not exterminate the — the bug."

"Bug!" echoed Ned, stepping closer.

"Yes, I said bug," repeated his brother. "They are such — such unpleasant things to have to exterminate."

The two boys had now assumed attitudes generally supposed to be the very best possible in preparation for a fistic encounter, and Dorothy had just jumped upon a chair to be able to reach her taller cousin and prevent anything serious happening, when a very gentle voice from the doorway interrupted the little scene.

"Children! children!" exclaimed Mrs. White, "Boxing in the library!"

Instantly the trio turned toward this beautiful woman, for she was beautiful indeed.

So stately, so tall, so queenly, and gowned in such a simple yet attractive house robe. Youth may have its glories, but surely mature womanhood has its compensations, for a queenly woman, in the ease and luxury of home costume, is to the eye of love and to the eyes of discriminating persons the most beautiful of all the pictures that femininity is capable of inspiring.

Such was Mrs. White, and no wonder, indeed, that she had such good-looking sons, and no wonder, either, that Dorothy Dale was proud to be told that she resembled her Aunt Winnie.

Mrs. White's Christian name was Ruth, but the Dale children, having another aunt of that name, had always called this one Aunt Winnie, a sort of contraction from the name of Mrs. White's late husband—Winthrop.

This afternoon, when our story opens, was one of those tiresome "strips of time," with nothing to mark it as different from any other occasion, but, as Nat expressed it, "everything seemed to be hanging around, waiting for Christmas, like New York, on Sunday, waiting for Monday."

The little party were vainly trying to make themselves happy in the library, where every reasonable comfort and luxury surrounded them, for The Cedars, as this country estate was called, was a very beautiful place, its interior arrangements reflected not only ample means, but a display of the finely original and cultured taste for which Mrs. White was famous.

Mrs. White was not afflicted with the "clutter" habit, and, in consequence, her room rested instead of tiring those fortunate enough to be welcomed within the portals of The Cedars.

So on this afternoon the wintry winds outside accentuated the comforts within, and our friends, while restless and naturally impatient for the arrival of Tavia, could not but appreciate their happy circumstances.

You may not all be acquainted with the books of this series, in which are related many important events in the lives of Dorothy Dale, her family and her friends, so something about the volumes that precede this will not be out of place.

In the first book, "Dorothy Dale; a Girl of To-day," was told of Dorothy's home life in the little village of Dalton. There Dorothy and her friend Tavia grew like two flowers in the same garden—very different from each other, but both necessary to the beauty of the spot.

The dangers of the country to children who venture too far out in the fields and woods were shown in the startling experience Dorothy and Tavia had when Miles Anderson, a cunning lunatic, followed them from place to place, terrifying them with the idea of

obtaining from Dorothy some information which would enable him to get control of some money left to a little orphan — Nellie Burlock.

Real country life had its joys, however, as Dorothy and Tavia found, for they had many happy times in Dalton.

In the second volume, "Dorothy Dale at Glenwood School," there is given the natural sequence to such an auspicious beginning as the days at Dalton.

There were jolly girls at Glenwood, and some strange "doings" took place, all of which went to show that a girl need not go to college to have plenty of fun out of her schooldays, but that the boarding-school, or seminary, is well qualified to afford all the "prank possibilities" of real, grown-up school life.

In "Dorothy Dale's Great Secret," the third of the series, there is shown what it means for a girl to be allowed too much liberty; to grow ambitious before she has grown wise; to act imprudently, and then to have to suffer the consequences.

It was Tavia who ran away to go on the stage, it was Dorothy who found her and brought her back. And Dorothy kept her "secret," though what it cost her only she knew.

The book immediately preceding this volume, entitled "Dorothy Dale and her Chums," tells the story of Dorothy, Tavia, Urania, a gypsy girl, and Miette, a little French lass. Dorothy had plenty of trouble trying to civilize Urania, and quite as much trying to save Miette some strange hardships. Dorothy was instrumental in bringing Miette into her own family rights, and if she did not entirely succeed in "taming" Urania, she at least improved her marvelously.

In all four of the preceding books the friends, whose acquaintance some of you are forming for the first time, played their respective parts as best they might, and now, as we find them on this wintry afternoon, they are ready to take part in other scenes, no less interesting, I hope.

Dorothy, Ned and Nat, at the sound of Mrs. White's admonition as she entered the library, turned to look at her in some surprise, for they were taken unawares.

Ned and Nat were always going to "fight," but they never actually did get at it. In fact, they were both blessed with a reasonable amount of good nature, and this, coupled with correct training, was destined to make them men of patience and common sense.

Of course, this time they were only joking, so the "boxing" their mother had somewhat jestingly accused them of was all part of the game.

Dorothy smoothed the cushions of the divan as her aunt advanced into the room. Ned and Nat both attempted to poke the same log in the open grate with the same poker, and the blaze that most unexpectedly shot up at this interference with a well-regulated fire, attending strictly to its own affairs, caused both young men to leap quickly back out of reach of a shower of sparks.

"Whew!" exclaimed Nat, falling over an ottoman that Dorothy had been lately sitting on, and landing very ungracefully at his mother's feet. "Mother, I adore you!" he suddenly exclaimed as he found himself in a suppliant attitude. "Only," he went on ruefully, rubbing his shins, "I did not intend to adore you quite so hard."

"A three-bagger," joked Ned, for indeed his brother's position over the "bag" was not unlike that of a baseball player "hugging the base."

"But you were just saying, as I came in," spoke Mrs. White, "something about Tavia's coming. She has not sent any word—any regrets, or anything of that sort, has she?"

"Why, no," answered Dorothy, "We were just saying that she might be here before we know it—"

"Who said that?" demanded Nat, promptly scrambling to his feet.

"*Before* we know it," repeated Ned, with special emphasis on the "before."

"However do you bear with them, Doro dear?" asked Mrs. White. "They seem to grow more unmanageable every day."

Then Dorothy, making herself heard above the argument, said:

"Boys, if we are going to meet Tavia—"

"If we are going to meet her!" exclaimed Nat, interrupting his pretty cousin, and putting a great deal of emphasis on the first word. "There's no 'if' in this deal. We are going," and he sprang up and continued springing until he reached his own room, where he proceeded to "slick up some," as he expressed it, while Ned, and Dorothy, too, prepared for the run to the depot in the Fire Bird, as speedy an automobile as could be found in all the country around North Birchland.

"Take plenty of robes," cautioned Mrs. White as the machine puffed and throbbled up to the front door. "It's getting colder, I think, and may snow at any moment."

"No such luck," grumbled Nat. "I never saw such fine, cold weather, and not a flake of snow. What's that about a 'green Christmas, and a fat graveyard'? Isn't there some proverb to that effect?"

"Oh, I surely think it will snow before Christmas," said Dorothy. "And we have plenty of robes, auntie, if the storm should come up suddenly."

"Come down, you mean," teased Ned, who seemed to be in just the proper mood for that sort of thing.

Dorothy laughed in retort. She enjoyed her cousins' good nature, and was never offended at their way of making fun at her expense.

Presently all was in readiness, and the Fire Bird swung out on the cedar-lined road and into the broad highway that led to the railroad station.

"I would just like to bet," remarked the persistent Ned as the station came into view at the end of the long road, "I would just like to bet almost anything that she will not come."

"Take you up!" answered Nat quickly. "I know she'll come."

"Oh, you feel her presence near," joked Ned. "Well, if she comes on time this trip there may be some hope for the poor wretch who may expect her to make good when he has fixed it up with the parson, the organist and — —"

"Silly!" cried Dorothy gaily. "A man never pays the organist at — at an affair of that kind," and she blushed prettily.

"No?" questioned Ned in surprise. "Glad to hear it. Here, Nat, take this wheel while I make a note of it. A little thing like that is worth remembering," and he pretended to take out a notebook and jot it down.

When the train glided into the station, with a shrill screeching protest from the sparking wheels and brakes, and when quite a number of persons had alighted and gone their several ways, Dorothy and Nat, who had peered hopefully and anxiously at each passenger, looked rather ruefully at each other. Tavia had not come.

"Well?" asked Nat.

"Let's wait a little longer," suggested Dorothy.

Finally the train started up again, the private carriages and hired hacks had been driven off with scores of passengers and their baggage. Then, and not until she had looked up and down the deserted platforms, did Dorothy admit to Nat:

"She hasn't come!"

"Looks like it," replied the lad, plainly very much disappointed.

Ned, who could see what had happened, clapped his gloved hands in unholy glee.

"Didn't I tell you she'd duck?" he demanded triumphantly. "Didn't I tell you so?"

"Aw shut up!" growled Nat in pardonable anger.

"Ha! ha!" laughed his brother.

"Well, you're enough to hoodoo the whole thing," retorted Nat.

But Ned simply had to laugh—he couldn't help it, and when Dorothy and Nat took their places again in the machine Ned was chuckling and gasping in a manner that threatened to do serious damage to his entire vocal apparatus.

"It would have been a pity to have disappointed you in your fun," remarked Nat sarcastically after a particularly gleeful yelp from Ned. "What you would have missed had she come!"

"But I can't understand it," said Dorothy. "There is no other train until eight o'clock to-night."

"And that's a local that stops at every white-washed fence," added Nat.

"Oh, well, then she'll have plenty of time to think of the fine dinner she has missed," went on his brother. "Of all mean traits, I count that of being late the very meanest a nice girl can have."

"Oh, so then she is nice?" inquired Dorothy with a smile.

"Well, she can be—sometimes. But she was not to-day—eh, Nat?"

"For the land sake, say your prayers, or do—do something!" exclaimed his irritated brother.

"I might," retorted Ned, "but, being good is such a lonesome job, as some poet has remarked. Now, having fun is—"

"Look out there!" cautioned Nat suddenly. "You nearly ran over Mrs. Brocade's pet pup."

A tiny dog, of the much-admired, white-silk variety, was barking vigorously at the Fire Bird on account of the danger to which it had been subjected by the fat tires. And the dog's mistress, Mrs. Broadbent, nicknamed "Brocade" on account of her weakness for old-time silks and satins, was saying things about the auto party in much the same sort of aggrieved tones that the favorite dog was using.

"Wait until she meets you at the post-office," Nat reminded Ned. "Maybe she won't rustle her silks and satins at you."

But Ned only laughed, and kept on laughing as his mother appeared in the vestibule with a puzzled look at the empty seat in the tonneau of the Fire Bird.

Dorothy was the first to reach the porch.

"She didn't come," was her wholly unnecessary remark as Mrs. White opened the outer door.

"Isn't that strange!" replied the aunt. "Do you suppose anything could have happened?"

"I don't know. I hope not. She promised so definitely that I can't understand it," went on Dorothy.

Nat remained in the car as Ned drove it to the garage.

"I'm so sorry, after all the extra trouble to get up a good dinner," apologized Dorothy as she laid aside her wraps.

"Oh, well, we can all enjoy that," replied Mrs. White, "although, of course, we had counted on Tavia's presence. She is so jolly that the boys will be much disappointed."

"I'm just ashamed of her," went on Dorothy in a burst of indignation. "She should have learned by this time to keep her word, or else send some message."

"Yes, I am afraid Tavia does not care for the conventionalities of polite society," remarked Mrs. White. "In fact, I almost suspect she enjoys disregarding them. But never mind! we must not condemn her unheard."

CHAPTER II

WHAT HAPPENED TO TAVIA

It must not be understood that Nat was a very silly boy. Not at all. He did like Tavia, but he liked his own sweet cousin Dorothy, and would have been just as disappointed, if not more so, had it been Dorothy who had missed her train and not Tavia.

But the fact that all seemed to need Tavia to finish up the holiday plans, and that now she had not come put Nat in a very restless mood, and when the dinner, which was served immediately upon the return from the depot, was over, Nat decided he would find something to do that would occupy his time until the eight o'clock train, when, of course, they would again go to the station.

Electricity was this young man's "hobby," and he had already fitted up the cellar with all sorts of wires and attachments for regulating the household affairs, such as turning on the heat by touching a button in the stable where the hired man, John, had his quarters, and lighting the gas in the coal-cellar by touching a button at the cook's elbow; in fact, Nat really did arrange a number of most convenient contrivances, but the family, all except Joe and Roger, thought his talent misapplied. They insisted he ought to study "rail-roading."

"Or laying pipes," Ned would tell him when Nat pointed out some improvement in the miniature telephone system.

But Joe and Roger loved to watch their big cousin make the sparks and turn on the signals, the latter task always being assigned to Roger, who had a very small engine of his own to practice on.

"Come on, boys," said Nat to the youngsters, when, dinner being over, Major Dale and his sister, Mrs. White, went to "figure out Christmas secrets," and Dorothy turned to the piano to put in her time until the hour for going out again, "come on, and we'll rig up something."