

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
Mommssen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer Bebel Proust
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke George
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 Moltke
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo
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Six Little Bunkers at Mammy June's

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MAMMY JUNE TREATS THE CHILDREN TO A "TAFFY PULL."
Six Little Bunkers at Mammy June's. Frontispiece — (Page 142)

[1]

SIX LITTLE BUNKERS AT MAMMY JUNE'S

CHAPTER I

AN ESKIMO IGLOO

"How could William get the croup that way?" Violet asked with much emphasis.

Of course, Vi was always asking questions—so many questions, indeed, that it was often impossible for her elders to answer them all; and certainly Rose and Russ Bunker, who were putting together a "cut-up" puzzle on the table, could not be bothered by Vi's insistence.

"I don't see how he could have got the croup that way," repeated the smaller girl. There were six of the little Bunkers, and Vi and Laddie were twins. She said to Laddie, who was looking on at the puzzle making: "Do you know how William did it, Laddie?" [2]

Laddie, whose real name wasn't "Laddie" at all, but Fillmore Bunker, shook his head decidedly.

"I don't know," he told his twin sister. "Not unless it is a riddle: 'How did William get the croup?'"

"He hasn't got the croup," put in Rose, for just a moment giving the twins her attention.

"Why—ee!" cried Vi. "Aunt Jo said he had!"

"She didn't," returned Rose rather shortly and not at all politely.

"She did so!" rejoined Vi instantly, for although she and Rose loved each other very much they were not always in agreement. Vi's gray eyes snapped she was so vexed. "Aunt Jo said that a window got broke in—in the neu-ral-gi-a and William had to drive a long way yesterday and the wind blew on him and he got the croup."

"Was that the way of it?" said Laddie, thoughtfully. "Wait a minute, Vi. I've most got it— —"

"You're not going to have the croup!" declared his twin. "You never had it! But I have had the crou [3] p, and I didn't catch it the way William did."

"No-o," admitted Laddie. "But—but I'm catching a new riddle if you'd only wait a minute for me to get it straight."

"Pooh!" said Vi. "Who cares anything about your old riddle? Br-r-r! it's cold in this room. Maybe we'll all get the croup if we can't have a better fire."

"It isn't the croup you mean, Vi," put in Rose again, but without stopping to explain to her smaller sister where and how she was wrong about William's illness.

"Say, Russ, why don't the steampipes hum any more?" broke in the voice of Margy, the next to the very littlest Bunker, who was playing with that latter very important person at one of the great windows overlooking the street.

Russ chuckled. He had just put the very last crooked piece of the puzzle into place.

"You don't expect to see humming birds in winter, do you, Margy?" he asked.

"Just the same, winter is the time for steampipes to hum," said Rose, shivering a little. "Oh! See! It's beginning to snow!"

[4] "So 'tis," cried Russ, who was the oldest of the six. "Supposing it should be a blizzard, Rose Bunker?"

"S'posing it should!" repeated his sister, quite as much excited as Russ was at such a prospect.

"Buzzards fly and eat dead things. We saw 'em in Texas at Cowboy Jack's," announced Laddie, forgetting his riddle-making for the moment.

"That is right, Laddie," agreed Rose kindly. "But we're not talking about buzzards, but about blizzards. Blizzards are big snowstorms—bigger than you ever remember, I guess."

"Oh!" said Laddie doubtfully. "Were we talking about—about blizzards?"

"No, we weren't!" exclaimed Vi, almost stamping her foot. "We were talking about William's croup — —"

"He hasn't got the croup, I tell you, Vi," Rose said wearily.

"He has. Aunt Jo — —"

"In the first place," interrupted Rose quite decidedly, "only children have croup. It isn't a grown-up disease."

[5] This announcement silenced even Violet for the moment. She stared at her older sister, round-eyed.

"Do — do diseases have to grow up, too?" she finally gasped.

"Oh, dear me, Vi Bunker!" exclaimed Rose, "I wish you didn't ask so many questions."

"Why not?" promptly inquired the smaller girl.

"We-ell, it's so hard to answer them," Rose frankly admitted. "Diseases don't grow up, I guess, but folks grow up and leave diseases like croup, and measles, and chicken-pox, behind them."

"And cut fingers and bumps?" asked Laddie, who had almost forgotten the riddle about William's croup that he was striving to make.

But Vi did not forget the croup. One could trust Vi never to forget anything about which she once set out to gather information.

"But how did William catch the croup through a broken window in the neu-ral-gi-a?" she demanded. "When I had croup I got my feet wet first."

"He hasn't got the croup!" Rose cried [6] again, while Russ began to laugh heartily.

"Oh, Vi!" Russ said, "you got it twisted. William caught cold driving Aunt Jo's coupé with the window broken in it. He's got neuralgia from that."

"And isn't there any croup about it?" Laddie demanded rather sadly. "Then I'll have to start making my riddle all over again."

"Will that be awful hard to do, Laddie?" asked his twin. "Why! making riddles must be worse than having neu-ral-gi-a — or croup."

"Well, it's harder," sighed her brother. "It's easy to catch—Oh! Oh! Russ! Rose! I got it!"

"You haven't neuralgia, like poor William," announced Rose with confidence.

"Listen!" announced the glowing Laddie. "What is it that's so easy to catch but nobody runs after?"

"Huh! is that a riddle?" asked Russ.

"Course it's a riddle."

"A wubber ball," guessed Mun Bun, coming from the window against the panes of which the snow was now beating rapidly.

"No," Laddie said. [7]

"A coupé!" exclaimed Violet.

"Huh! No!" said her twin in disdain.

Margy asked if he meant a kittie. She had been chasing one all over the house that morning while Russ and Rose had been to market with their aunt, and she did not think a kitten easy to catch at all.

"'Tisn't anything with a tail or claws," crowed the delighted Laddie.

"I bet it's that neuralgia William's got," laughed Russ.

"No-o. It isn't just that," his smaller brother said.

"And you'd better not say 'bet,' Russ Bunker," advised Rose wisely. "You know Aunt Jo says that's not nice."

"You just said it," Russ rejoined, grinning. "Twice."

"Oh, I never did!" cried his sister.

"Didn't you just say I'd 'better not say bet?'" demanded Russ. "Well, then count 'em! 'Bet' out of 'better' is one, and 'bet' makes two— —"

"I never said it the way you did," began Rose, q [8] uite put out, when Laddie began to clamor:

"Tell me my riddle! You can't—none of you. 'What is it that's so easy to catch but nobody runs after?'"

"I don't know, Laddie," said Rose.

"I give it up," said Russ.

"Do you all give it up?" cried Laddie, almost dancing in his glee.

"What is it?" asked Vi.

"Why, the thing that's so easy to catch but nobody runs after, is a cold!" announced her twin very proudly.

"And I'm so-o cold," announced Mun Bun, hanging to Rose's skirt while the older ones laughed with Laddie. "Don't Aunt Jo ever have it warm in her house—like it is at home?"

"Of course she does, Mun Bun," said Rose, quickly hugging the little fellow. "But poor William is sick and nobody knows how to tend to the heating plant as well as he does. And so—Why, Russ, Mun Bun is cold! His hands are like ice."

"And so are my hands!" cried Margy, running hastily from the window. "We've been trying to catch the snowflakes through the windowpane."

"No wonder your hands are cold," said Rose admonishingly.

Russ began to cast about in his ingenious mind for some means of getting the younger children's attention off the discomfort of a room the temperature of which was down to sixty. In one corner were two stacks of sectional bookcases which Aunt Jo had just bought, but which had no books in them and no glass fronts. Russ considered them for a moment, and then looked all about the room.

"I tell you what," he said, slowly. "You know when they took us to the Sportsman's Show last week at Mechanic's Hall? Don't you remember about that Eskimo igloo that they had built of ice in the middle of the skating pond? Let's build an igloo like that, and get into it and keep warm."

"O-oo!" gasped Vi, "how can you do that?"

"Where will you get any ice?" Laddie demanded.

"Goodness! it's cold enough in here without bringing in ice," announced Rose with confidence. [10]

"We won't build the igloo of ice blocks," said Russ quite calmly. "But we'll make believe it is ice."

"I'd rather do that," Laddie agreed. "For make-believe ice can't be so wet and cold as real ice, can it?"

"What you going to make your make-believe ice out of, Russ?" demanded Vi, the exceedingly practical.

Russ at once set them all to work, clearing the middle of the room and bringing up hassocks and small benches and some other articles that could be used in the construction of the indoor igloo. He brought the sections of the new bookcase, one piece at a time.

Russ really exhibited some skill in building up the walls of the hut in the middle of the floor. When it was completed it was rather a tight fit for all six of the little Bunkers to squeeze inside, but they did it. And the activities of building the igloo had warmed even Mun Bun.

"You know," said Rose thoughtfully, "Eskimos live in these igloos and eat blubber, and don't go out at all while it is snowing, same as it does now." [11]

"Why don't they go out?" asked Vi.

"Because it is cold," said Russ.

"And why do they eat blubber?"

"Because they are hungry," said Rose.

"What's blubber, anyway?" asked the inquisitive one. "Is it like candy?"

"It's more like candles," answered Russ, laughing.

Just then Laddie kicked excitedly.

"I bet I can make another riddle!" he cried.

"Now, you see, Russ Bunker?" Rose admonished. "Laddie has got that word, too."

"Hey, stop kicking, Laddie!" cried Russ.

But in his excitement the boy twin had put his foot right through the wall of the igloo! At least, he had kicked one of the boxes out of place and the whole structure began to wobble.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" shrieked Vi. "It's falling."

"Get Mun Bun out," gasped Rose, thinking first of all of the littlest Bunker.

But just then the heaped up boxes came down with a crash and the six little Bunkers [12] were buried under the ruins of their "igloo."

CHAPTER II

THE SNOWMAN

A corner of one of the overturned bookcase sections struck Russ Bunker's head with considerable force—actually cutting the skin and bringing blood. Big as he was, the oldest Bunker yelled loudly.

Then, of course, everybody yelled. Quite a panic followed. When Aunt Jo and Mother Bunker came running to the front room where all this had taken place the Eskimo igloo looked very much like a pile of boxes with a young earthquake at work beneath it!

"For the good land's sake!" gasped Aunt Jo, who usually was very particular about her speech, but who on this occasion was startled into an exclamation. "What is happening?"

"Get off my head, Vi!" wailed Laddie, from somewhere under the tottering pile. "It's not to sit on."

"Oh! Oh!" cried Rose. "Russ is all bloody! Oh, dear!"

"I'm not cold any more," cried Mun Bun. "Let me out! I'll be good!"

But Russ Bunker was neither crying nor struggling. He was a good deal of a man, for a nine-and-a-half-year-old boy. Being the oldest of the six little Bunkers there were certain duties which fell to his lot, and he understood that one of them was to keep cool when anything happened to excite or frighten his brothers and sisters.

The whack he had got on the head, and even the trickle of blood down his face, did not cause Russ to lose his head. No, indeed. He, and the other little Bunkers, had been in innumerable scrapes before, and the wreck of the Eskimo igloo was nothing provided Aunt Jo did not make a lot out of it. It just crossed Russ' mind that he ought to have asked his aunt before he used the sectional bookcases for building-blocks.

Naturally of an inventive turn of mind, Russ was constantly building new things—make-believe houses, engines, automobiles, [14] steamboats, and the like—usually with a merry whistle on his

lips, too. He was a cheerful boy and almost always considered the safety and pleasure of his brothers and sisters first.

In companionship with Rose, who was a year younger, the boy cared for the other four little Bunkers so successfully that Mother Bunker and Daddy Bunker were seldom troubled in their minds regarding any of the children. Rose was a particularly helpful little girl, and assisted Mother Bunker a good deal. She was a real little housewife.

Vi and Laddie, the twins, were both very active children—active with their tongues as well as their bodies. Violet's inquisitiveness knew no bounds. She wanted to know about every little thing that happened about her. Daddy Bunker said he was sure she must ask questions in her sleep. Laddie was an inveterate riddle-asker. He learned every riddle he heard; and he tried to make up riddles about everything that happened. Sometimes he was successful, and sometimes he was not. But he always tried again, having a persevering temperament.

[15] The smallest Bunkers—Margy, whose real name was Margaret, and Mun Bun, whose real name was Monroe Ford—were quite as anxious to get out from under the heap of boxes as the others. Mother Bunker and Aunt Jo ran to their assistance, and soon the six were on their feet to be hugged and scolded a little by both their mother and aunt.

"But they do get into such mischief all the time," sighed Mother Bunker. "I shall be glad when Daddy gets back and decides what to do for the winter. I don't know whether we shall go right back to Pineville or not."

For it was in Pineville, Pennsylvania, that we first met the six little Bunkers and in the first volume of this series went with them on a nice vacation to Mother Bunker's mother. The book telling of this is called "Six Little Bunkers at Grandma Bell's."

After that lovely visit in Maine the six little Bunkers had gone to stay for a time with each of the following very delightful relatives and friends: To Aunt Jo's in Boston, where they were now for a second visit over the Thanksgiving holidays; to Cousin Tom's; to

Grandpa Ford's; to Uncle Fred's; to Capt [16] ain Ben's; and last of all to Cowboy Jack's.

In that last book, "Six Little Bunkers at Cowboy Jack's," they had enjoyed themselves so much that they were always talking about it. And now, as Vi managed to crawl out from under the wreck of the Eskimo igloo, she announced:

"That iggilyoo isn't half as nice to live in as Chief Black Bear's wigwam was at Cowboy Jack's. You 'member that wigwam, Russ?"

"I remember it, all right," said Russ, rather ruefully touching the cut above his temple and bringing away his finger again to look at the blood upon it. "Say, is it going to keep right on bleeding, Mother?"

"Not for long," declared Mother Bunker. "But I think you were rightly punished, Russ. Suppose the corner of the section had cut Mun Bun's head?"

"I should have been awful sorry," admitted Russ. "I guess I didn't think much, Mother. I was only trying to amuse 'em 'cause they were cold."

"It is cold in here, Amy. Don't scold the boy. See! The storm is getting worse. I don't know what we shall do about the fire. [17] Parker and Annie don't seem to know what to do about the heater and I'm sure I don't. Oh, dear!"

"B-r-rrr!" shivered Mother Bunker. "I am not fond of your New England winters, Jo. I hope we shall go South— —"

"Oh, Mother!" cried Rose excitedly. "Shall we really go down South with Daddy? Won't that be glorious?"

"I guess it's warm down there," said Laddie. "Or maybe the steampipes hum."

"Do the steampipes hum down South?" asked Violet.

While the four older children were exceedingly interested in this new proposal for excitement and adventure, Margy and Mun Bun had returned to the great window that overlooked the street and the front steps. They flattened their noses against the cold pane and stared down into the driving snow. Within this short time, since the

storm had begun, everything was white and the few people passing in the street were like snowmen, for the white flakes stuck to their coats and other wraps.

"Oh, see that man!" Margy c [18] ried to Mun Bun. "He almost fell down."

"He's not a man," said her little brother with confidence. "He's a boy."

"Oh! He's a black boy—a colored boy. That's right, so he is."

The figure in the snow stumbled along the sidewalk, clinging to the iron railings. When he reached the steps of Aunt Jo's house he slipped down upon the second step and seemed unable to get up again. His body sagged against the iron railing post, and soon the snow began to heap on him and about him.

"Oh!" gasped Margy. "He is a reg'lar snowman."

"He's a black snowman," said Mun Bun. "It must be freezing cold out there, Margy."

"Of course it is. He'll turn into a nicicle if he stays there on the steps," declared the little girl, with some anxiety.

"And he hasn't a coat and scarf like you and me," Mun Bun said. "Maybe he hasn't any Grandma Bell to knit scarfs for him."

"I believe we ought to help him, Mun Bun," said Margy, decidedly. "We have plenty of coats."

"And scarfs," agreed Mun Bun. "Let's." [19]

So they immediately left the room quite unnoticed by the older people in it. This is a remarkable fact. Whenever Margy and Mun Bun had mischief in mind they never asked Mother about it. Now, why was that, do you suppose?

The two little ones went swiftly downstairs into the front hall. Both had coats and caps and scarfs hung on pegs in a little dressing-room near the big door. They knew that they should not touch the outer garments belonging to the older children; but they got their own wraps.