

WHY HE WAS WHIPPED.

Author Unknown

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He was seven years old, lived in Cheyenne, and his name was Tommy. Moreover he was going to school for the first time in his life. Out here little people are not allowed to attend school when they are five or six, for the Law says: "Children under seven must not go to school."

But now Tommy was seven and had been to school two weeks, and such delightful weeks! Every day mamma listened to long accounts of how "me and Dick Ray played marbles," and "us fellers cracked the whip." There was another thing that he used to tell mamma about, something that in those first days he always spoke of in the most subdued tones, and that—I am sorry to record it of any school, much more a Cheyenne school—was the numerous whippings that were administered to various little boys and girls. There was something painfully fascinating about those whippings to restless, mischievous little Tommy who had never learned the art of sitting still. He knew his turn might come at any moment and one night he cried out in his sleep: "Oh, dear, what will become of me if I get whipped!" But as the days passed on and this possible retribution overtook him not, his fears gradually forsook him, and instead of speaking pitifully of "those poor little children who were whipped," he mentioned them in a causal off-hand manner as, "those cry-babies, you know?" One afternoon mamma saw him sitting on the porch, slapping his little fat hand with a strap. "Tommy, child, what in the world are you doing?" she asked.

Into his pocket he thrust the strap, and the pink cheeks grew pinker still as their owner answered:

"I—I—was just seeing—how hard I could hit my hand—without crying;" and he disappeared around the side of the house before mamma could ask any more questions.

The next day Tommy's seatmate, Dicky Ray, was naughty in school, and Miss Linnet called him up, opened her desk, took out a little riding whip—it was a bright blue one—and then and there administered punishment. And because he cried, when recess came, Tommy said: "Isn't Dick Ray just a reg'lar girl cry-baby?" (He had learned that word from some of the big boys, but, mind you! he never dared to say it before his mother.)

Dick's face flushed with anger. "Never you mind, Tommy Brown," said he, "Just wait till you get whipped and we'll see a truly girl-cry-baby then, won't we, Daisy?"

And blue-eyed Daisy, who was the idol of their hearts, nodded her curly little head in the most emphatic manner, and said she "wouldn't be one bit s'prised if he'd holler so loud that hey would hear him way down in Colorado."

Tommy stood aghast! for, really and truly, he wasn't quite so stony-hearted a little mortal as he appeared to be; he had been secretly rather sorry for Dick, but—he wanted Daisy to think that he himself was big and manly, and he had the opinion that this was just the way to win her admiration. But all this time HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT DAISY DID—that Dick's pockets were full of sugar-plums; tiptop ones too, for Daisy had tasted them, and knew that little packets of them would from time to time find their way into her chubby hand.

All the rest of the morning Tommy kept thinking, thinking, thinking. One thing was certain: the present situation was not to be endured one moment longer than was absolutely necessary. But what could he do? Should he fight

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Dicky? This plan was rejected at once, on high, moral grounds. Well, then, supposing some dark night he should see Daisy on the street, just grab her, hold on tight and say: "Now, Daisy Rivers, I won't let you go till you promise you'll like me a great deal betterer than you do Dick Ray." There seemed something nice about this plan, very nice; the more Tommy thought of it, the better he liked it; only there were two objections to it. Firstly: Daisy never by any chance ventured out doors after dark. Secondly: Neither did Tom.

Both objections being insurmountable, this delightful scheme was reluctantly abandoned, and the thinking process went on harder than ever, till at last—oh, oh! if he only dared! What a triumph it would be! But then he couldn't—yes, he could too. Didn't she say that she "wouldn't be one bit s'prised if he hollered so loud that they would hear him way down in Colorado?" Colorado, indeed! He'd show her there was one boy in the school who wasn't a girl—cry—baby!

Yes, actually, foolish Tommy had decided to prove his manhood by being whipped, and that that interesting little event should take place that very afternoon!

What did he do? He whispered six times!

Had it been any other child, he would surely have been punished; but Miss Linnet knew both Tommy and his mamma quite well, and therefore she knew also, quite well, that only a few days ago the one horror of Tommy's life had been the thought that he might possibly be whipped. Then too, it was his first term at school, and hitherto he had been very good. So she decided to keep him after school and talk to him of the sinfulness of bad conduct in general, and of whispering in particular. This plan she faithfully carried out, and the little culprit's heart so melted within him that he climbed up on his teacher's lap, put his arms around her neck and kissed her, crying he would never be so naughty again. He was just going to tell her all about Daisy, when in walked a friend of Miss Linnet's, so he went home instead. The next morning he started for school with the firm determination to be a good child, and I really believe he would have been had not that provoking little witch of a Daisy marched past him in a very independent manner, her saucy nose away up in the air, and a scornful look in the pretty blue eyes. It was more than flesh and blood could stand. All Tom's good resolutions flew sky-high.

When twelve o'clock came Miss Linnet's list of delinquents begun in this wise:

WHISPER MARKS.	Thomas Brown	15
	Melinda Jones	11

There was great excitement among the little people. How dared any one be so dreadfully bad! Tommy's heart sank, sank, sank, when Miss Linnet said: "When school begins this afternoon I shall punish Tommy and Melinda."

And she did! She called them both up on the platform, made them clasp hands and stand with their backs against the blackboard, then wrote just above their heads:

Thomas Brown and	Partners in disgrace.
Melinda Jones	15 plus 11 = 26.

Oh, how mortified and ashamed Tommy was! If only she had whipped him, or if it had been some other girl. But MELINDA JONES!!! At the end of ten minutes Miss Linnet let them take their seats; but Tommy's heart burned within him. DAISY HAD LAUGHED WHEN HE STOOD THERE HOLDING MELINDA'S HAND! There were deep crimson spots on Tommy's cheeks all that afternoon and a resolute, determined look in his bright brown eyes, but he was very still and quiet.

Later in the day the children were startled by a sudden commotion on the other side of the room. Daisy was

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writing on her slate and Melinda Jones, in passing to her seat, accidentally knocked it out of her hands; without a moment's hesitation, Daisy, by way of expressing her feelings, snatched her slate and promptly administered such a sounding "whack!" on Melinda's back and shoulders as brought a shriek of anguish from that poor, little unfortunate who began to think that if all the days of her life were to be like unto this day, existence would certainly prove a burden.

Just about two minutes later Miss Linnet was standing by her desk, a ruler in one hand and Daisy's open palm in the other, while Daisy herself, miserable little culprit, stood white and trembling before her. As she raised the ruler to give the first blow, Tommy sprang forward, placing himself at Daisy's side, put his open palm over hers, and with tears in his eyes, pleaded in this wise:

"Please, Miss Linnet, whip me instead! She is only just a little girl and I KNOW she'll cry, it will hurt her so! I'd rather it would be me every time than Daisy—truly I won't cry. Oh, please whip me!"

And Miss Linnet did whip him, while Daisy, filled with remorse, clung to him sobbing as if her heart would break. To be sure, somebody who ought to know, told me it was the lightest "feruling" ever child received; but Daisy and Tommy both assured their mothers that it was the "dreadfulest, cruelest, hardest whipping ever was."

"And did my little man cry?" asked mamma.

"No, indeed! I stood up big as I could, looked at Daisy and smiled, 'cause I was so glad it wasn't her."

Then that proud and happy mamma took him in her arms and kissed him; and right in the midst of the kissing in walked Daisy.

"Would Tommy please come and take supper with her?"

Of course he would, and they walked off hand in hand. When they passed Dicky's house Tommy suggested. "S'posing they forgive Dick and let him go 'long too." And Daisy agreeing, they called that young gentleman out and magnanimously informed him that he was forgiven and might come and have supper with them.

What in the world they had to forgive, nobody knows; but then, so long as forgiveness proved such an eminently satisfactory arrangement, all round—why, nobody need care.

The children waited outside the gate while Dick coaxed his mother to let him go, and standing there, hand in hand, Daisy plucked up heart of grace and with very rosy cheeks and an air about her of general penitence, said something very sweet in a very small voice:

"I'm sorry you were whipped, and oh, Tommy, I wish I hadn't said you'd holler!"

Mrs. AMY TERESE POWELSON.