

# Grandma's Memories

Mary D. Brine

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GRANDMA'S MEMORIES

BY MARY D. BRINE

Author of "Grandma's Attic Treasures"

DEDICATED TO THOSE  
DEAR ONES WHOSE FACES ARE TURNED  
TOWARD THE SUNSET

ILLUSTRATED

1888.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

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Frontispiece \_Walter Pag\_

"Only a lullaby, gentle and low"

"Grandma's a maiden"

'lo Grandma's girl-life comes some woe"

"The young head is lain"

"Grandma now is a bride"

"On the sunny young head"

"Soft and low is the little one's breath"

"Learns that sweet lesson so old and so new"

"As he looks in my face"

"Mid the farewells that are merry, yet sad"

"On Grandma's thin cheek falls a kiss"

"Draws near the old chair, and sits close at her side"

"The gift of a grandchild"

Headpiece--"Evening and the Bells" \_A. W. Parsm\_

Head and Tailpiece--Vignettes \_R A. Bell\_

GRANDMA'S MEMORIES.

[Illustration]

GRANDMA'S MEMORIES.

The mantle of evening is veiling the sky,  
And over the landscape its soft shadows lie;  
The old year is passing, a new year will reign,  
Ere earth shall awaken to day-dawn again.

Dear Grandma has folded her knitting away,  
And muses alone at the close of the day;  
While the old clock ticks solemnly off, one by one,  
The moments yet left to the year almost done.

Out from the shadows fast filling the room,  
Out from the dying year's gathering gloom,  
Many sweet pictures of past happy years

Come flitting again with their hopes and their fears.

On the broad hearthstone the dull embers glow,  
The old year's last hours are quiet and slow;  
But back to the Past, with its pleasures and pain--  
Of the Present unmindful, she wanders again.

She is seeing dear faces, and clasping the hand  
Of many a friend in the shadowy land,  
And the ghosts of old years she has watched in and out,  
Come forth from the shadows and hedge her about.

Hark! What is that stealing thro' silence and gloom,  
To fill with sweet melody Grandma's lone room?  
What brings that fond smile, and dispels every trace  
Of sadness and tears on the dear, aged face?

[Illustration]

Only a lullaby, gentle and low,  
Which a mother, while rocking her babe to and fro,  
Croons over and over, for baby alone,  
Till far into dreamland his spirit hath flown.

Only the lullaby all mothers love,  
Listened to daily by angels above;  
The dear, quaint old song which will ever seem best  
To sing to our babies and lull them to rest--

\_The Lullaby\_.

[Illustration: Music Sheet detail:]

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed;  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently fall upon thy head."

Crooning it softly, and crooning it low,  
Rocking and nestling with--"By-baby-O!"  
Loving the melody known the world o'er,  
And adding sweet words that our baby loves more.

So sings this mother to baby to-night,  
While nearer and nearer the dream-angel bright  
Is hovering 'mid shadows, till baby ere long  
Lies slumbering, and hushed is the lullaby song.

While mother takes up a new duty, and so  
From one to another will busily go.  
But the dear aged heart in the room just beyond,  
Still lingers and rests amid memories fond.

The strains of the lullaby bear her away  
O'er the lapse of long years to her own childhood's.  
She is living again 'neath her babyhood's skies  
Where sunshine is dancing before her blue eyes.

[Illustration: Grandma's a maiden]

She sees her dear mother, and hears the sweet voice,  
Whose fond, tender tones made her young heart rejoice,  
She climbs to the arms ever patient to bear  
The wee, tired toddler, and all burdens share.

How well she recalls the sweet hour of rest,  
When nestling her head on that dear mother's breast,  
She sank into slumber, lulled gently and low,  
By the strains of the soft old-time lullaby--O!

Again does she listen to every fond word  
That love on the lips of the singer hath stirred;  
The "By-oh, my baby!" which mother knows best,  
Will comfort and soothe the young child to its rest.

And Grandma forgets the deep lines on her face,  
Which tell of the years--the years long flown apace;  
She does not remember that Time has left snow  
On the head that was golden so long, long ago.

[Illustration]

She is only a child as she listens to-night--  
With a sense of the old childish rest and delight--  
To the voice of the mother who so long ago  
Sat singing to \_her\_ in the firelight's glow--

[Illustration: tune in G major and words: By, by, O baby! baby by O!]

But childhood is merged into girlhood at last,  
(The sweet years of "baby-life" vanish so fast!)  
And Grandma's a maiden, so dainty and fair,  
Of girlhood's bright visions content with her share.

How merrily now glide the hours away!  
And yet, as comes off on a fair Summer's day,  
A cloud that o'ershadows its fairness, e'en so  
To Grandma's girl-life now and then comes some woe

[Illustration]

To grieve and to wound it, and hide from blue eyes  
The still deeper blue of the beautiful skies;  
And how many times, just for comfort and rest,  
The young head is lain upon mother's dear breast!

And tho' she's no longer the "baby," yet see,  
The mother's arms clasp her all pityingly,  
And turning once more to the "lullaby--O!"  
She sings to her girl all so sweetly and low,

The nursery melody known the world o'er,  
As she soothes, pets and comforts the young heart so sore.  
Yes, Grandma is only a young girl to-night,  
As she muses alone in the dim firelight.

\* \* \* \* \*

The picture has changed, Grandma now is a bride,  
The choice of her heart proudly stands at her side;  
She is living again the sweet life of those days  
When she first knew a husband's devotion and praise.

[Illustration: Grandma now is a bride]

To the faded old cheek springs again the warm blush,  
The old years are young with the spring-time's soft flush,  
The dear, dim blue eyes borrow youth's ardent glow,  
As fast thro' her brain old-time memories flow.

But ah! a light footstep within the lone room  
Hath scattered the dream; loving eyes pierce the gloom,  
A lithesome young figure at Grandma's side kneels,  
A firm youthful hand into Grandma's hand steals.

"Ah, Grandma, my Grandma, the smile on your face  
Is proof that some pleasure has there left its trace;  
Now, what were your thoughts? for I know they were far  
Away from the \_Present\_, as earth from yon star?"

"My baby is sleeping, I've nothing to do,  
Let me sit in the gloaming, dear granny, with you;  
The clock will soon ring us the hour of nine,  
Please talk to \_me\_, Grandma, of dear auld lang syne."

[Illustration]

On the sunny young head Grandma's aged hand lies,  
As she meets with her own the young mother's blue eyes,  
For dear to her soul is this grandchild so fair,  
Who has borrowed \_her\_ youth in her soft eyes and hair.

"Ah, child, down the vista of 'dear auld lang syne,'  
Full soon will the torches of memory shine  
For you, tho' life's summer seems scarcely begun,  
And your head is yet golden 'neath morn's golden sun.

"For Time flies so fast; listen, dearie, I, too,  
Feel that Summer again. A young mother like you,  
I am holding \_my\_ baby all close to my breast,  
And with the old lullaby lull her to rest.

"I can feel once again, as I rock to and fro,  
The weight of the dear little head. Soft and low  
Is the little one's breath on the cheek which I press  
'Gainst her sweet baby-lips in a loving caress--

"As I sing o'er and o'er the quaint lullaby song  
(That will never grow wearisome tho' life be long),  
And watch the sweet drowsiness creeping apace,  
Till sleep holds the wee one in tender embrace.

[Illustration:]

"\_Soft and low is the little one's breath\_  
While yet I am crooning so softly and low--

[Illustration: Music G major and words: By, by, O baby, by, by baby]

Unheeding the moments as swiftly they fly, with  
By, by, O baby, dear baby by.

"Oh' the deep peace which can never be known,  
Can never be felt, save by 'mother' alone!  
As clasping, and folding, so close to her heart,  
The helpless young life of her own life a part--

"She dreams as she sings, of a future so fair,  
Awaiting the child of her love and her care!  
And welcomes the visions that day after day  
With baby's sweet presence will nestle and stay.

"Time passes, my \_baby\_ has suddenly flown,  
And left me a daughter to maidenhood grown.  
As \_I\_ did, e'en so does my bonny maid do,  
And--learns that sweet lesson so old and so new.

"For \_her\_ comes a day when the wedding bells ring,  
And my darling to other than 'mother' must cling.  
Like mother, like daughter,' 'like father, like son,'  
'Tis an adage will live till all living be done."

Grandma pauses a moment. Her listener cries,  
With a sweet look of sympathy in her young eyes:  
"And then you were lonely, poor Grandma! I know,  
But so was--my \_great\_ grandmama, long ago."

A smile lights the dear, aged face, and again  
Grandma takes up her story. "Yes, dearie, but then  
It wasn't for long, because, darling, you see,  
A gift \_I\_ once gave was soon given to me.

[Illustration: "\_Learns that sweet lesson so old and so new\_"]

"The gift of a grandchild as fair and as sweet  
As the baby \_my\_ mother's heart bounded to meet;  
Oh, how my fond prayers 'rose in gratitude true,  
For the blessings of daughter and granddaughter too!

"It seems but to-day! Oh, how proud am I now  
As I lay welcome kisses on baby's wee brow!  
A \_Grandmother, I?\_ How the bright years have flown  
Since I was a child scarce to maidenhood grown!

"And now in my arms, looking up in my eyes,  
With orbs that are bluer than June's sunny skies,  
Behold my own grandchild! Ah, verily, youth  
'On double wings flies,' Grandpa says in good truth,

"As he looks in my face where no longer the rose  
In my once dimpled cheeks in its loveliness grows,  
And marks the white locks mingling faster each day  
With the brown that old Time is fast stealing away.

[Illustration: "\_As he looks in my face\_"]

"And I, as he kisses our grandchild so fair,  
Note how soon has vanished the once raven hair  
That crowned his dear head on the day when he came  
To endow me with all his possessions and name.

"So we grow old together, my husband and I,  
Walking steadily on 'neath life's changeable sky,  
As 'Grandpa' and 'Grandma' to little ones dear,  
Who come round our hearthstone with comfort and cheer.

"And dearly I love the wee darlings to hold,  
And cuddle, and close to my warm heart enfold  
The dear precious forms, singing low o'er and o'er,  
The lullaby song I have sung long before.

"The song which has sung their own mother to rest,  
The song which hushed me on my dear mother's breast,  
The song which belongs to the years long gone past,  
But which mother love thro' all time will hold fast

"And now comes a day when another fair bride  
From babyhood grown, stands so proudly beside  
The man of her choice; and her sweet eyes of blue  
Are glowing with happiness tender and true.

"Within Grandma's arms for a moment she stands,  
Then bows her bright head 'neath the trembling old hands  
Uplifted to bless her, as Grandma's heart prays  
That heaven may keep her thro' long sunny days.

"To father and mother sweet kisses of love,  
And prayers that God send truest peace from above;  
Thus 'mid the farewells that are merry, yet sad,  
My grandchild has entered her new life so glad.

\* \* \* \* \*

"And lo! on this night while old Grandma is sitting  
Alone in the gloaming, while moments are flitting  
And bearing on wings that are sure and so fast  
The year that now is, to the years that are past--

[Illustration: "Mid the farewells that are merry yet sad"]

"A sweet voice comes softly within my lone room,  
And sweet words float tenderly in thro' the gloom,  
As sings my dear grandchild so gently and low,  
To my little great-grandchild the 'lullaby--O.'

"Which, catching my senses as idly they stray  
On the pinions of memory, bears me away  
To the far-distant realms of my own childhood's shore,  
Where the quaint old-time melody greets me once more.

"Aye! dearie, 'tis hard when one's memory is straying--  
And back 'mongst the old scenes so fondly delaying--  
'Tis hard to wake up to the fact that old age  
In life's book of years will soon turn the last page.



"Yet, dearie, I look on your young, happy face,  
All tender with motherhood's newly-taught grace,  
And realize, indeed, that Time steadily flies,  
Nor lingers to dally 'neath youth's joyous skies!

[Illustration: "\_On Grandma's thin cheek falls a kiss\_" ]

"But speed as he may, be it never so fast,  
The thoughts which go winging their way to the Past  
Are swifter than Time, as you'll learn on some day  
When you, like your Grandma, are wrinkled and grey."

On Grandma's thin cheek falls a kiss soft and sweet,  
Ere the young mother hastens with step all so fleet,  
To quiet her baby, whose startled grieved cry  
Can only be hushed with the old lullaby--

[Illustration: Words and music:

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed." ]

Crooning it softly, and crooning it low,  
Till again into slumber-land baby will go,  
While Grandma still sits in the shadowy room  
And smiles as the lullaby floats thro' the gloom.

Now, as she sits thinking and smiling the while,  
Behold! Grandpa enters, and answering her smile  
(Which even the gloom from his eyes cannot hide),  
Draws near the old chair, and sits close at her side.

Their hands steal together; dear hands, which have clung  
Thro' weal and thro' woe from the years which were young  
Till now, when by age made unsteady and weak,  
They yet tell the love which e'en lips may not speak.

"Dear heart!" murmurs Grandpa, "I'm thinking to-night--  
As I look at the heavens with starlight so bright--  
And note how the moments so surely and fast,  
Will bring us the close of the year almost past--

"I'm thinking how like to old age it does seem,  
And how o'er life's evening for you and me gleam  
The stars of God's mercies, to guide on their way  
The souls which are speeding towards heaven's glad day."

"Ay, John," answers Grandma, "like children are we  
In the 'arms everlasting' just longing to be;  
Full soon you and I will be summoned to rest,  
And close tired eyes on the dear Father's breast."

[Illustration]

Still softly and sweetly from out the next room  
Still floating and lingering 'mid shadow and gloom--  
The sound of the soft murmured "lullaby--O!"  
Is heard, while the mother sings gently and low--

[Illustration: Music Sheet detail:

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed."  
And Grandpa and Grandma draw nearer together,  
And on Grandpa's shoulder lies Grandma's grey head,

As closely he holds to his fond aged heart  
The wife from whose love he holds no thought apart.  
And so, while their fancies to auld lang syne cling,  
They lift their old voices, and quaveringly sing

Way thro' to its end the dear lullaby song,  
So dear to them both for the years long ago,  
And straight from their hearts doth the melody flow,  
Tho' the tremulous notes are so faltering and slow.

[Illustration: Music Sheet detail:

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed;  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently fall upon thy head."]

And now the sweet music hath reached other ears;  
The baby's young mother the lullaby hears,  
And, beckoning \_her\_ mother, they presently stand  
Within the dim doorway, and hand clasping hand--

They listen and smile--yet with tears in their eyes--  
To the soft notes which out from the shadows arise  
From the hearts that old Time with his years and his--  
Could not rob of the sunshine of long, long ago

The clock is still ticking the moments away;  
'Tis but a short time ere the old King must lay  
His sceptre, his crown, and his burdens aside,  
That the new King may come with the world to abide.

And still the old grandparents quietly sit,  
Unmindful of moments, tho' fast they may flit  
Towards the hour of midnight, till gently at last  
Their daughter reminds them that "bedtime is past."

"Ay, daughter," says Grandma, "'tis late without doubt,  
But father and I'll see this dear old year out;  
It has been a kind year, fraught with peace from above,  
And it brought us a dear great-grandbaby to love.

"It has borne us thro' duties, or sorry or glad,  
And helped us find balm when our spirits were sad;  
It found us together in health and in peace,  
And leaves us together tho' \_its own\_ life must cease.

[Illustration]

"And so we will watch it fade softly from earth,  
And welcome the New Year to which God gives birth  
And may the dear Lord who for our sakes was born,  
Send blessings anew on the New Year's glad morn."

Now hark! for the bells in the old tower's steeple  
Ring out with a clang to the world and its people;  
And merrily sounding afar and anear,  
Proclaim the glad tidings, "The New Year is here!"

And from other steeples the noise is resounding,  
As jubilant bells the same story are sounding;  
And so 'mid the clanging, the poor old year dies,  
And the new youthful year opens wondering eyes

And so does the baby! So frightened is he,  
His shrill cry rings out with the bells' jubilee,  
And quick to his side the young mother has sped,  
To bend o'er her baby's her own golden head

While Grandpa and Grandma are listening to hear,  
'Mid the clanging of bells, the young voice sweet and clear,  
Which tenderly lays on the New Year the song  
Of the dear "Old-time lullaby" cherished so long

So softly it floats thro' the shadowy gloom  
Which tenderly broods o'er the old fashioned room,  
Where Grandma and Grandpa, while steeple bells ring,  
Again lift their tremulous voices and sing--

[Illustration: Musical score G major, text follows:]

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber, Holy  
angels guard thy bed, Heavenly .. blessings  
without number Gently fall upon thy head."

[Illustration]  
CRADLE HYMN.  
\_By Isaac Watts, D.D.\_

Hush, my dear! Lie still, and slumber!  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings, without number,  
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe! Thy food and raiment,  
House and home, thy friends provide;  
All without thy care or payment,  
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended  
Than the Son of God could be,  
When from heaven He descended,  
And became a child like thee!

Soft and easy is thy cradle:  
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,  
When His birth-place was a stable,  
And His softest bed was hay.

Blessed Babe! What glorious features,--  
Spotless fair, divinely bright!  
Must he dwell with brutal creatures?  
How could angels bear the sight?

Was there nothing but a manger,  
Cursed sinners could afford,  
To receive the Heavenly Stranger?  
Did they thus affront the Lord?

Soft, my child! I did not chide thee,  
Though my song might sound too hard;  
'Tis thy mother sits beside thee,  
And her arm shall be thy guard.

Yet to read the shameful story,  
How the Jews abused their King;  
How they served the Lord of Glory,  
Makes me angry while I sing.

See the kinder shepherds round Him,  
Telling wonders from the sky!  
Where they sought Him, there they found Him,  
With His Virgin-Mother by.

See the lovely Babe a-dressing:  
Lovely Infant, how He smiled!  
When He wept, His Mother's blessing  
Sooth'd and hush'd the Holy Child.

Lo, He slumbers in a manger,  
Where the horned oxen fed!  
Peace, my darling, here's no danger;  
There's no ox a-near thy bed.

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,  
Save my dear from burning flame,  
Bitter groans and endless crying,  
That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,  
Trust and love Him all thy days;  
Then go dwell for ever near Him,  
See His face, and sing His praise!

I could give thee thousand kisses!  
Hoping what I most desire;  
Not a mother's fondest wishes  
Can to greater joys aspire!

[Illustration]  
\_L'ENVOI.\_

\_Dear aged friends, and loved ones who have turned  
Your faces toward the glowing sunset sky,  
While far below on paths that ye have trod,  
Life's mingled lights and shadows softly lie:  
May Peace be with you as you journey on  
To reach the summit of life's shadowed hill,  
And tho' the way seem toilsome here and there,

May Hope and Faith your hearts with courage fill.  
Bear with you, as you go, our grateful prayers  
For your dear lives by heavenly mercy spared  
So long to us who love you, and with whom  
Life's burdens, great or small, your love hath shared.  
The crimson glory of the sunset sky  
Lies all about you, and falls gently down  
Upon your dear, grey heads, as tho' our Lord  
Hath wished already His loved saints to crown.  
Lift up your tired eyes "Unto the hills  
Whence cometh help," for lo! the Father stands  
To give you greeting, and to welcome you--  
When night brings rest--with tender, gracious hands.\_

M. D. B.

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