

about telling the time. It is different with the months and years. I know another year has gone when another Christmas comes, and I know the different seasons by all the out-of-door things that grow and bloom and die, and by whether it is hot or cold. Roland's secret ceased being such so long ago that I feel at liberty to tell about it now; but he only told Charlie then because he wanted Charlie to go down to the bars and blow the horn for him, so that he might know when to come home to dinner and supper. Charlie did it faithfully, and never told until Roland said he might, although the children all teased him to know why he blew the horn, and even the sweet sister would sing a thing they called the "Bugle Song" to Helen to make her laugh whenever they heard the horn.

This was the secret. Madame was going to have a birthday in about three weeks: all the children were making something to give her, and I heard them say, to my great joy, that Mr. Rob was coming home on purpose for it. Roland had had a great deal of trouble, he told me, to think of anything that he could make which Madame would really like, and he said he did not believe he would have thought of anything in time if we had not happened one day in the woods to come across an old grapevine which had sprawled itself over two or three trees, and was full of the most curiously-shaped branches, gnarled and twisted as if the grapevine had made a face and stayed that way, as Aunt Nancy used to say Phil would do if he didn't stop making faces when he was angry.