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Poor Skinny began to cry again, but it was for joy this time and not for disappointment. Pansie put up her fat little hand to wipe the tears away, and said, so prettily,—

‘Don’t cry, don’t cry. You are a good little girl, and I will give you ever so much more cake.’

And off she trotted for a fresh supply from the pantry. Pansie thought everything could be cured by plenty of cake. But Skinny did not eat a very great deal, after all, not half so much as we kept bringing for her. She seemed as if she was almost too happy to eat when she had the shilling to take home to her mother. Whilst we were still talking to her and asking her questions, and filling her mug with very sweet tea, and trying to make her eat more bread and butter, the church clock struck four, and she jumped up as if a cannon had been fired close to her. I daresay she had never thought how the time was going, for she was so glad to have a treat, after all. She told us she must go home directly, for the neighbour who had come to sit with her mother could not stay later than four o’clock, and she was so afraid her mother would want something if she was left alone in the house.