



HERE'S

JUGGINS

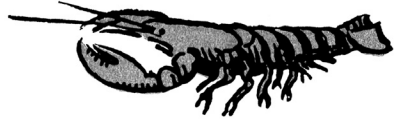


THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

BY AMY WENTWORTH STONE

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CHAPTER I

THE SURPRISE

JUGGINS LIVED IN a little fishing village called Blue Harbor, in the littlest house in the village. It had two rooms and four windows and a door and a little green pump in the kitchen where she washed her face and hands every morning. Her real name was Lucy Belle Tibbetts, but her daddy called her Juggins.

Her daddy, big Tom Tibbetts, was a fisherman, and so was Juggins. Behind the house by the road was a board sign, which said:

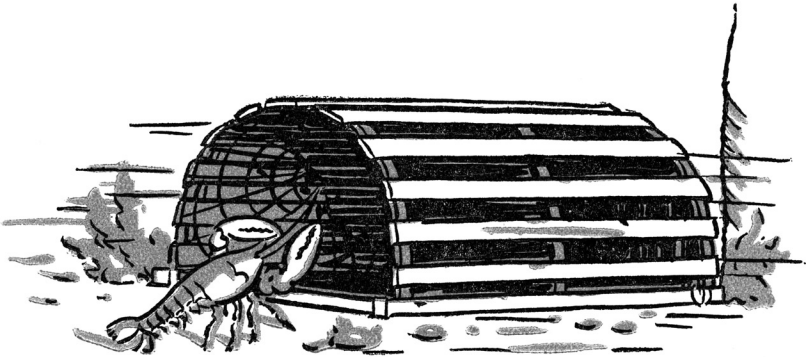
T. TIBBETTS
FRESH LOBSTERS—LIVE OR BOILED

And under it was nailed a small shingle, reading:

*L. B. TIBBETTS
CUNNERS FOR CATS—
NICE FAT SNAILS AND ANGLE WORMS
FOR FISHERMEN*

Every summer morning Juggins and Daddy rowed out of the harbor in the big dory to pull their lobster traps, and when it rained, Juggins wore a little sou'wester and a slicker just like Daddy's.

Here is a picture of one of Juggins' lobster traps just after she and Daddy had dropped it over the side of the dory, down to the bottom of the ocean where



the lobsters crawl around. Juggins and Daddy were up in the dory, on top of the water, at the other end of the rope, and they were tying it to a little stick of

wood called a lobster buoy, so they would be able to find the trap right away when they came out the next day to pull it up.

There must have been a lot of lobsters in it when they pulled it, for they were beginning to go in through the little round door. Juggins had put a piece of fish inside that smelled very good, and big lobsters, middle-sized lobsters, and baby lobsters all went walking in. They did not know that the little round hole was a trap door and that when they were once inside, they could never get out again until Juggins and Daddy came to open the trap. Juggins always felt sorry for the baby lobsters.

“They are so little,” said Juggins. “I don’t like to have anybody boil them and eat them up.”

So when she helped Daddy take the lobsters out of the traps, Juggins always stood up in the dory and threw the babies back into the water, as far away from the traps as she could.

One morning when Juggins woke up, she remembered, even before she opened her eyes, that something nice was going to happen. On Mondays

after breakfast, she always took lobsters up to Madame Eliot's big gray cottage on the hill, and Madame Eliot had told her that the next time she came up with the lobsters, she would find a surprise waiting for her. For a whole week Juggins had been thinking about that surprise and wondering what it could possibly be. Daddy had had a twinkle in his eye, as if he knew all about it.

“Is it a real surprise?” said Juggins to Daddy. “Or is it just a nice, fat banana?”

But Daddy would not say a word.

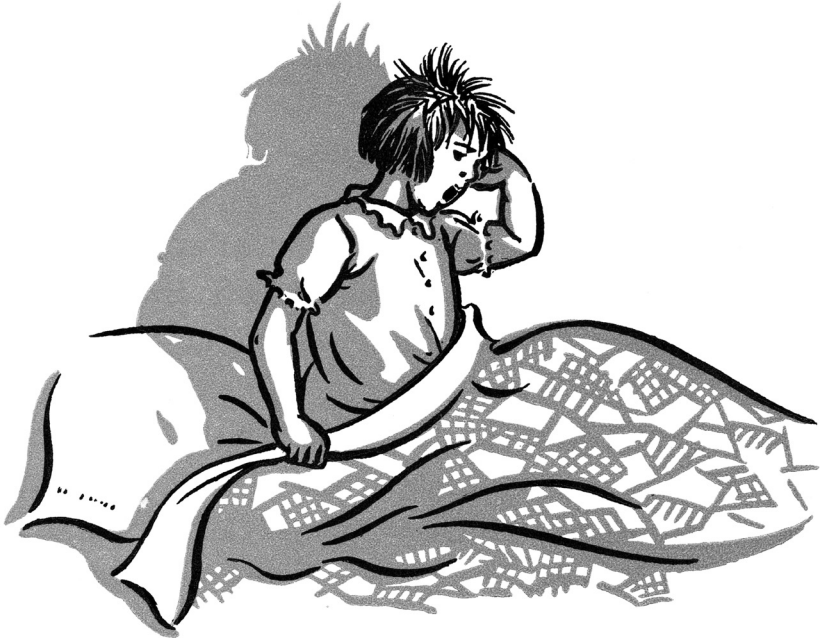
And now it was Monday morning.

Juggins pushed back her patchwork quilt and sat up in bed. The little bare room was full of bright sunshine, and Daddy's bed in the other corner was empty. He must be getting breakfast now. Juggins could hear something sizzling on the wood stove in the kitchen, and there was a jolly smell of fried cunners all through the little house. Cunners are little fish that smell ever so good when they are cooking for breakfast. Juggins peeked over the foot of the bed into the kitchen. She did not see Daddy, but she saw

something else. The little pans which she and Daddy had put on the floor the night before, under the leaks in the roof, had water in them. It must have rained in the night.

“Oh, goody!” said Juggins.

Sometimes when it rained, the wind blew on one side of the roof, and then the rain came down through the leak at the foot of Daddy’s bed; and sometimes it blew the other way, and then the rain came down through the leak at the foot of Juggins’ bed. Daddy and Juggins had made up a nice game about this.



Whoever had the most water in their pan after a stormy night might choose any cup in the whole house for breakfast—even the best blue china one on the top shelf. Juggins always chose that one. It had rosebuds around the edge, and she felt like a princess when Daddy poured her milk into it. Juggins liked the leaks in the roof, and she felt sorry when Daddy said that they must work hard at the lobster traps to earn enough money to mend the roof before next winter.

“Don’t let’s earn *too* much money,” said Juggins.

“Don’t you want a new dress to wear to school?” said Daddy.

“Oh, yes,” said Juggins. She had forgotten that she had only one real dress.

But the leaky roof was fun.

This morning Juggins thought that her pan looked very full. She jumped out of bed in her white cotton nightie and ran to see. Sure enough, the water was up to the brim. Then she went and looked in Daddy’s. It was only half full.

“Goody,” said Juggins again.

Then she ran into the kitchen to find Daddy, but he

was not there. She looked out between the blue cotton curtains of the back window. She could see the road and the pasture sloping up to the big cottages where the summer people lived. Sometimes Daddy went up very early to Madame Eliot's with mackerel for her breakfast. But there was no one on the hill now.

Then she looked out between the blue cotton curtains of the front window, and there he was, coming up the path from the float, with a pail of something in his hand.

"Hello," called Juggins between the curtains, "I won!"

"Sure you did," said Daddy, setting the pail down under the window. Then Juggins saw that it was full of live lobsters, all green and wiggly.

"I suppose I shall have to go up with the lobsters myself this morning," said Daddy, looking at the white nightie.

"Oh, no," cried Juggins, and she scampered into the bedroom and began to dress as fast as she could. She put on her blue shirt and fisherman's overalls and buckled her sandals. Last of all, she tied a strip of blue

cotton around her yellow topknot, to keep it out of her eyes. Then she ran into the kitchen.

She was in such a hurry that she almost forgot to wash her face and hands at the little green pump. When she was all ready, she brought the cornbread and the rosebud cup from the cupboard while Daddy took the cunners, all crisp and brown, from the stove. Then they sat down at the little table and had a very nice breakfast. Juggins had caught the cunners the night before with her own little fish pole and line, so they were very fresh indeed. And the milk was so good in the rosebud cup that Daddy had to fill it three times.

When they had eaten all the breakfast, they went outside and Daddy tied the lobsters together with a piece of string because the pail was too heavy for Juggins to carry up the hill. There were six middle-sized lobsters and one big grandfather lobster. Daddy put wooden plugs between the claws of Grandfather Lobster, to keep him from snapping. Grandfather lobsters have very bad tempers indeed. Juggins could hardly wait for Daddy to tie the last knot.

As soon as the lobsters were ready, she picked up the string and walked off across the grass as fast as she could. She wanted to run, but it was never a good plan to run with lobsters because they bumped against your legs. Juggins had known a great many lobsters, and she was not a bit afraid of them, but they were very snappy, and they did not like dangling on a string.

Juggins walked across the road and up the little path through the pasture. As she went along, she was very happy because she was thinking about the surprise. After a while she saw that the plug had dropped from between one of Grandfather Lobster's claws. It must have caught in one of the bayberry bushes along the path and been pulled out. Juggins put down the lobsters and hunted all around in the bayberry and sweet fern for the plug, but she could not find it. So she picked up the lobsters and started on again. But now she had to walk more slowly because she had to hold Grandfather Lobster's snappy claw away from her legs. It seemed a long way to Madame Eliot's this morning, and Juggins began to be afraid that she would be too late for the surprise.

At last the big gray cottage among the spruce trees came in sight, and in a minute Juggins was knocking at the kitchen door. She knocked and knocked and knocked, but nobody came. Perhaps, thought Juggins, Katie, the maid, was giving Madame Eliot her breakfast on the front porch—she sometimes did that when the sun was bright and the sea was blue. So Juggins put her lobsters on the grass by the doorstep and tiptoed around to the front of the cottage. It seemed to Juggins the biggest house in the world, and it made her want to walk on tiptoe. When she came to the porch, there was Madame Eliot at a little table, sipping her coffee. With her shimmery dress and white hair, she looked to Juggins just like a queen. And there beside her was a plate of nice, fat bananas.

“Good morning, Lucy Belle,” said Madame Eliot, smiling down at Juggins. “Are you our lobsterman this morning?”

“Yes’m,” said Juggins, at the foot of the steps, her hands behind her.

“And have you seen the surprise yet?” said Madame Eliot.

“I—I don’t know,” said Juggins, looking out of the corner of her eye at the bananas.

Just then something happened.

There were suddenly shrill screams from the side of the house, and around the corner came a little boy. Juggins had never seen him before, and she wondered how such a thin little boy could possibly make such a loud noise. He was running as if something very bad indeed were behind him. And something was.

“Why, Joey!” cried Madame Eliot, getting quickly up from her chair. “What *is* the matter?”

“Oh, oh, oh!” cried Juggins.

“Granny, Granny, *Granny!*” cried Joey, scrambling up the porch steps, “Takey Toff! *Takey Toff!* TAKEY TOFF!” And he buried his face in Madame Eliot’s skirt.

And there, holding fast to the seat of Joey’s shorts, was Grandfather Lobster, with all the other lobsters trailing behind on the string!

Juggins scrambled up the steps after Joey and took hold of Grandfather Lobster. Then she pulled and pulled until off he came, with a piece of Joey’s shorts tight in his claw.

“Oh, dear,” said Juggins, looking at the shorts with a very scared little round face.

As soon as Juggins had taken off Grandfather Lobster, Joey stopped screaming. He felt around behind him with his hand, and when he was sure that there was nothing there but a hole, he lifted his head from Madame Eliot's skirt and looked at Juggins. As soon as he saw her, he began to laugh. She was still holding Grandfather Lobster.

“Hello,” said Joey to Juggins, “I'm going to stay here all summer. Can you play with me? I'm the s'prise!”

And Juggins thought that he was a *real* one!



So Juggins sat on the doorstep beside Daddy.



HERE'S JUGGINS



Lucy Belle Tibbetts is almost as good a fisherman as her father, who calls her Juggins. The two of them enjoy their simple life in the littlest house in the village of Blue Harbor. This summer is especially full of adventure for Juggins and her new friend Joey, who explore by land and water, sell lobsters, adopt a baby seal, and most importantly catch a thief! *Here's Juggins* is a delightful story of family and friendship, imagination and determination, and looking for the good in the world around you.




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