

ing and unclenching at the sides to the flaming face and the little eyes filled with loathing.

"Get back to the kids on the pier," he said. "Chester and I will manage by ourselves."

* * * * *

Emily

Jane Bachman

EMILY'S brown curls bounced as she jumped from the car and stood looking around her. Muffled noises came from underneath the car where her father was fixing something. Her mother sat in the front seat fanning herself with a handkerchief. Her eyes were closed. Emily watched a yellow-haired boy across the road who was jumping rope. He was very good at it and he seemed to be counting to himself. She went to stand closer and was surprised when he spoke.

"Hi," he said.

"Hello," Emily said gravely. "Do you like to skip rope?"

"Sure—when there's nothing else to do."

"My goodness. What else is there to do—around here." Emily emphasized the "around here."

He stopped in the middle of a particularly good skip and stared at Emily. "Where you from?" His eyes narrowed.

"Oh," Emily said loftily, "back there." She pointed down the road. "Elmwood."

He skipped twice and then dropped to the ground. "My name's Jackie."

Emily smiled and sat on a stone at the end of the path that led to the house. "I suppose you live there?" she asked.

He nodded.

"But what a funny house." Emily blinked. It was the strangest house she had ever seen. In fact, it wasn't one house—it was two; one in front of the other.

"It's not funny. Everybody has a house like it."

"Everybody does not," Emily said scornfully. "I haven't. Mine's brick and glass. And I only live in one house."

"So do I. The other's for my brother and his kids."

"Your brother? But . . ."

"I have four brothers, and a lot of sisters."

"My goodness, how many?" Emily caught her breath.

"Oh, 'bout five I guess."

"Well, I don't. Mother says children are hard on a house."

"C'mon, I'll show you the barn," Jackie said.

"Will I get my dress dirty?"

"Well," he crossed his arms and looked at her. "You might."

"Then I can't. I have to stay clean." Emily sat on the stone again and looked at Jakie. She considered asking about his hair, decided not to and then changed her mind again. "Jakie," she began, "Your hair is cut funny." She finished in a rush.

It was his turn to stare. Emily wished she hadn't asked, but she had to know.

"My clothes are funny too, huh," Jakie said. He swung the rope violently around his head. "I haven't got buttons on 'em and they're blue—Amish blue," he yelled.

Emily sat up straighter. "Well, you don't have to shout," she said indignantly. "I was just wondering, that's all."

Jakie said nothing.

"Well, goodness, don't be so cross. I didn't mean to make you mad. I really like blue," she added.

Still nothing from Jakie.

She tried a question. "Where do you go to school?"

He looked at the ground and then jerked his head sideways. "Down that way. A brick school. All of us Amish do. We go in the mornings and we don't have to go when it gets warm. We help with the planting then."

Emily's eyes sparkled. "Only in the winter and just in the mornings. I'd like that."

"I like it. Even before the grass gets green and the sap runs, I help with the plowing. And then we don't go back till all the canning's done and the apples are gone."

Emily considered this a minute. "I have to go to school almost all the time. And then I take dancing lessons and piano lessons. And I really don't have much time for anything else," she added archly.

"Not for sliding in the winter time or fishing? We have a stream with lots of fish in it. . . ." Jakie laughed, a little chuckle. "I guess I wouldn't like to live in Elmwood."

"But there are things to do there too . . ."

"No, I wouldn't like it."

"How do you know?"

Jakie shook his head and started to jump rope again.

"But . . ." Emily began, and then she heard her mother call. "But, Jakie, you'd like it . . ."

"Your mother's calling," he said. "G'bye."

Emily got up and smoothed her dress. She walked slowly toward the car, and then turned for an instant to gaze at him. Her mother called again—this time with insistence. Emily bit her lip and then started across the gravel road. She climbed into the back seat of the car and leaned back feeling the cool leather on her legs. Her father started the motor and her mother said something about being late. Emily looked out the back window at Jakie, but he was still skipping rope. She waved and waved, but he didn't wave back. Soon he was just a speck hopping up and down in the sunshine.