

QUOTATION

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT ON EXTINCTION

Meg led her son away, . . . [but] that shortsighted woman actually gave him a lump of sugar, tucked him in his bed, and forbade any more promenades till morning. . . . Meg returned to her place, and supper was progressing pleasantly, when the little ghost walked again. . .

[Father now took over:] "Demi, go upstairs, and get into your bed, as mamma bids you." . . . Bereft of his cake, defrauded of his frolic, and borne away by a strong hand to that detested bed, poor Demi could not restrain his wrath, but openly defied papa, and kicked and screamed lustily all the way upstairs. The minute he was put into bed on one side, he rolled out on the other, and made for the door, only to be ignominiously caught up by the tail of his little toga and put back again, which lively performance was kept up till the young man's strength gave out, when he devoted himself to roaring at the top of his voice. The vocal exercise usually conquered Meg; but John sat as unmoved as the post which is popularly believed to be deaf. No coaxing, no sugar, no lullaby, no story, even the light was put out. . . .

Sitting on the stairs, outside, Meg wondered at the long silence which followed the uproar; and, after imagining all sorts of impossible accidents, she slipped into the room, to set her fears at rest. Demi lay fast asleep . . . [and so was father!].

From: Alcott, L. M. (1966). *Little women*. New York: Airmont, pp. 414-416. (Original work published 1867.)

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