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*(from Bring the Jubilee, by Ward Moore)*

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*It's a healthy fact that the science-fantasy field is constantly producing new authors with freshly individual attitudes. Beside the stories of the Old Masters, and often quite on a level with them, you've been seeing in the past year or two the works of Kris Neville, Chad Oliver, Mildred Clingerman, Zenna Henderson, J. T. M'Intosh — new writers of a stature to guarantee the future high quality of the field. One of the most striking of these, in our opinion, is Philip K. Dick, who made his debut only a few months ago. In The Little Movement, the first of his many contributions to F&SF, Mr. Dick combines a startling idea (which no introduction should even hint at) with a modern simplicity and directness of writing guaranteed to produce nightmares which no Gothic elaboration could rival.*

## *The Little Movement*

by PHILIP K. DICK

THE MAN was sitting on the sidewalk, holding the box shut with his hands. Impatiently the lid of the box moved, straining up against his fingers.

"All right," the man murmured. Sweat rolled down his face, damp, heavy sweat. He opened the box slowly, holding his fingers over the opening. From inside a metallic drumming came, a low insistent vibration, rising frantically as the sunlight filtered into the box.

A small head appeared, round and shiny, and then another. More heads jerked into view, peering, craning to see. "I'm first," one head shrilled. There was a momentary squabble, then quick agreement.

The man sitting on the sidewalk lifted out the little metal figure with trembling hands. He put it down on the sidewalk and began to wind it awkwardly, thick-fingered. It was a brightly painted soldier with helmet and gun, standing at attention. As the man turned the key the little soldier's arms went up and down. It struggled eagerly.

Along the sidewalk two women were coming, talking together. They glanced down curiously at the man sitting on the sidewalk, at the box and the shiny figure in the man's hands.

"Fifty cents," the man muttered. "Get your child something to —"

"Wait!" a faint metallic voice came. "Not them!"

The man broke off abruptly. The two women looked at each other and

then at the man and the little metal figure. They went hurriedly on.

The little soldier gazed up and down the street, at the cars, the shoppers. Suddenly it trembled, rasping in a low, eager voice.

The man swallowed. "Not the kid," he said thickly. He tried to hold onto the figure, but metal fingers dug quickly into his hand. He gasped.

"Tell them to stop!" the figure shrilled. "Make them stop!" The metal figure pulled away and clicked across the sidewalk, its legs stiff and rigid.

The boy and his father slowed to a stop, looking down at it with interest. The sitting man smiled feebly; he watched the figure approach them, turning from side to side, its arms going up and down.

"Get something for your boy. An exciting playmate. Keep him company."

The father grinned, watching the figure coming up to his shoe. The little soldier bumped into the shoe. It wheezed and clicked. It stopped moving.

"Wind it up!" the boy cried.

His father picked up the figure. "How much?"

"Fifty cents." The salesman rose unsteadily, clutching the box against him. "Keep him company. Amuse him."

The father turned the figure over. "You sure you want it, Bobby?"

"Sure! Wind it up!" Bobby reached for the little soldier. "Make it go!"

"I'll buy it," the father said. He reached into his pocket and handed the man a dollar bill.

Clumsily, staring away, the salesman made change.

The situation was excellent.

The little figure lay quietly, thinking everything over. All circumstances had conspired to bring about optimum solution. The Child might not have wanted to stop, or the Adult might not have had any money. Many things might have gone wrong; it was awful even to think about them. But everything had been perfect.

The little figure gazed up in pleasure, where it lay in the back of the car. It had correctly interpreted certain signs: the Adults were in control, and so the Adults had money. They had power, but their power made it difficult to get to them. Their power, and their size. With the Children it was different. *They* were small, and it was easier to talk to them. They accepted everything they heard, and they did what they were told. Or so it was said at the factory.

The little metal figure lay, lost in dreamy, delicious thoughts.

The boy's heart was beating quickly. He ran upstairs and pushed the door open. After he had closed the door carefully he went to the bed and sat down. He looked down at what he held in his hands.

"What's your name?" he said. "What are you called?"

The metal figure did not answer.

"I'll introduce you around. You must get to know everybody. You'll like it here."

Bobby laid the figure down on the bed. He ran to the closet and dragged out a bulging carton of toys.

"This is Bonzo," he said. He held up a pale stuffed rabbit. "And Fred." He turned the rubber pig around for the soldier to see. "And Teddo, of course. This is Teddo."

He carried Teddo to the bed and laid him beside the soldier. Teddo lay silent, gazing up at the ceiling with glassy eyes. Teddo was a brown bear, with wisps of straw poking out of his joints.

"And what shall we call you?" Bobby said. "I think we should have a council and decide." He paused, considering. "I'll wind you up so we can all see how you work."

He began to wind the figure carefully, turning it over on its face. When the key was tight he bent down and set the figure on the floor.

"Go on," Bobby said. The metal figure stood still. Then it began to whirr and click. Across the floor it went, walking with stiff jerks. It changed directions suddenly and headed toward the door. At the door it stopped. Then it turned to some building blocks lying about and began to push them into a heap.

Bobby watched with interest. The little figure struggled with the blocks, piling them into a pyramid. At last it climbed up onto the blocks and turned the key in the lock.

Bobby scratched his head, puzzled. "Why did you do that?" he said. The figure climbed back down and came across the room toward Bobby, clicking and whirring. Bobby and the stuffed animals regarded it with surprise and wonder. The figure reached the bed and halted.

"Lift me up!" it cried impatiently, in its thin, metallic voice. "Hurry up! Don't just sit there!"

Bobby's eyes grew large. He stared, blinking. The stuffed animals said nothing.

"Come on!" the little soldier shouted.

Bobby reached down. The soldier seized his hand tightly. Bobby cried out.

"Be still," the soldier commanded. "Lift me up to the bed. I have things to discuss with you, things of great importance."

Bobby put it down on the bed beside him. The room was silent, except for the faint whirring of the metal figure.

"This is a nice room," the soldier said presently. "A very nice room."

Bobby drew back a little on the bed.

"What's the matter?" the soldier said sharply, turning its head and staring up.

"Nothing."

"What is it?" The little figure peered at him. "You're not afraid of me, are you?"

Bobby shifted uncomfortably.

"Afraid of *me*?" The soldier laughed. "I'm only a little metal man, only six inches high." It laughed again and again. It ceased abruptly. "Listen. I'm going to live here with you for awhile. I won't hurt you; you can count on that. I'm a friend — a good friend."

It peered up a little anxiously. "But I want you to do things for me. You won't mind doing things, will you? Tell me: how many are there of them in your family?"

Bobby hesitated.

"Come, how many of *them*? Adults."

"Three. . . . Daddy, and Mother, and Fowie."

"Fowie? Who is that?"

"My grandmother."

"Three of them." The figure nodded. "I see. Only three. But others come from time to time? Other Adults visit this house?"

Bobby nodded.

"Three. That's not too many. Three are not so much of a problem. According to the factory —"

It broke off. "Good. Listen to me. I don't want you to say anything to them about me. I'm *your* friend, your secret friend. They won't be interested in hearing about me. I'm not going to hurt you, remember. You have nothing to fear. I'm going to live right here, with you."

It watched the boy intently, lingering over the last words.

"I'm going to be a sort of private teacher. I'm going to teach you things, things to do, things to say. Just like a tutor should. Will you like that?"

Silence.

"Of course you'll like it. We could even begin now. Perhaps you want to know the proper way to address me. Do you want to learn that?"

"Address you?" Bobby stared down.

"You are to call me. . . ." The figure paused, hesitating. It drew itself together, proudly. "You are to call me — My Lord."

Bobby leaped up, his hands to his face.

"My Lord," the figure said relentlessly. "My Lord. You don't really need to start now. I'm tired." The figure sagged. "I'm almost run down. Please wind me up again in about an hour."

The figure began to stiffen. It gazed up at the boy. "In an hour. Will you wind me tight? You will, won't you?"

Its voice trailed off into silence.

Bobby nodded slowly. "All right," he murmured. "All right."

It was Tuesday. The window was open, and warm sunlight came drifting into the room. Bobby was away at school; the house was silent and empty. The stuffed animals were back in the closet.

My Lord lay on the dresser, propped up, looking out the window, resting contentedly.

There came a faint humming sound. Something small flew suddenly into the room. The small object circled a few times and then came slowly to rest on the white cloth of the dresser-top, beside the metal soldier. It was a tiny toy airplane.

"How is it going?" the airplane said. "Is everything all right so far?"

"Yes," My Lord said. "And the others?"

"Not so good. Only a handful of them managed to reach Children."

The soldier gasped in pain.

"The largest group fell into the hands of Adults. As you know, that is not satisfactory. It is very difficult to control Adults. They break away, or they wait until the spring is unwound —"

"I know." My Lord nodded glumly.

"The news will most certainly continue to be bad. We must be prepared for it."

"There's more. Tell me!"

"Frankly, about half of them have already been destroyed, stepped on by Adults. A dog is said to have broken up one. There's no doubt of it: our only hope is through Children. We must succeed there, if at all."

The little soldier nodded. The messenger was right, of course. They had never considered that a direct attack against the ruling race, the Adults, would win. Their size, their power, their enormous stride would protect them. The toy venter was a good example. He had tried to break away many times, tried to fool them and get loose. Part of the group had to be wound at all times to watch him, and there was that frightening day when he failed to wind them tight, hoping that —

"You're giving the Child instructions?" the airplane asked. "You're preparing him?"

"Yes. He understands that I'm going to be here. Children seem to be like that. As a subject race they have been taught to accept; it's all they can do. I am another teacher, invading his life, giving him orders. Another voice, telling him that —"

"You've started the second phase?"

"So soon?" My Lord was amazed. "Why? Is it necessary, so quickly?"

"The factory is becoming anxious. Most of the group has been destroyed, as I said."

"I know." My Lord nodded absently. "We expected it, we planned with realism, knowing the chances." It strode back and forth on the dresser-top. "Naturally, many would fall into their hands, the Adults. The Adults are everywhere, in all key positions, important stations. It's the psychology of the ruling race to control each phase of social life. But as long as those who reach Children survive —"

"You were not supposed to know, but outside of yourself, there's only three left. Just three."

"*Three?*" My Lord stared.

"Even those who reached Children have been destroyed right and left. The situation is tragic. That's why they want you to get started with the second phase."

My Lord clenched its fists, its features locked in iron horror. Only three left . . . What hopes they had entertained for this band, venturing out, so little, so dependent on the weather — and on being wound up tight. If only they were larger! The Adults were so huge.

But the Children. What had gone wrong? What had happened to their one chance, their one fragile hope?

"How did it happen? What occurred?"

"No one knows. The factory is in a turmoil. And now they're running short of materials. Some of the machines have broken down and nobody knows how to run them." The airplane coasted toward the edge of the dresser. "I must be getting back. I'll report later to see how you're getting on."

The airplane flew up into the air and out through the open window. My Lord watched it, dazed.

What could have happened? They had been so certain about the Children. It was all planned —

It meditated.

Evening. The boy sat at the table, staring absently at his geography book. He shifted unhappily, turning the pages. At last he closed the book. He slid from his chair and went to the closet. He was reaching into the closet for the bulging carton when a voice came drifting to him from the dresser-top.

"Later. You can play with them later. I must discuss something with you."

The boy turned back to the table, his face listless and tired. He nodded, sinking down against the table, his head on his arm.

"You're not asleep, are you?" My Lord said.

"No."

"Then listen. Tomorrow when you leave school I want you to go to a certain address. It's not far from the school. It's a toy store. Perhaps you know it. Don's Toyland."

"I haven't any money."

"It doesn't matter. This has all been arranged for long in advance. Go to Toyland and say to the man: 'I was told to come for the package.' Can you remember that? 'I was told to come for the package.'"

"What's in the package?"

"Some tools, and some toys for you. To go along with me." The metal figure rubbed its hands together. "Nice modern toys, two toy tanks and a machine gun. And some spare parts for —"

There were footsteps on the stairs outside.

"Don't forget," My Lord said nervously. "You'll do it? This phase of the plan is extremely important."

It wrung its hands together in anxiety.

The boy brushed the last strands of hair into place. He put his cap on and picked up his school books. Outside, the morning was gray and dismal. Rain fell, slowly, soundlessly.

Suddenly the boy set his books down again. He went to the closet and reached inside. His fingers closed over Teddo's leg, and he drew him out.

The boy sat on the bed, holding Teddo against his cheek. For a long time he sat with the stuffed bear, oblivious to everything else.

Abruptly he looked toward the dresser. My Lord was lying outstretched, silent. Bobby went hurriedly back to the closet and laid Teddo into the carton. He crossed the room to the door. As he opened the door the little metal figure on the dresser stirred.

"Remember Don's Toyland. . . ."

The door closed. My Lord heard the Child going heavily down the stairs, clumping unhappily. My Lord exulted. It was working out all right. Bobby wouldn't want to do it, but he would. And once the tools and parts and weapons were safely inside there wouldn't be any chance of failure.

Perhaps they would capture a second factory. Or better yet: build dies and machines themselves to turn out larger Lords. Yes, if only they could be larger, just a little larger. They were so small, so very tiny, only a few inches high. Would the Movement fail, pass away, because they were too tiny, too fragile?



But with tanks and guns! Yet, of all the packages so carefully secreted in the toyshop, this would be the only one, the only one to be —  
Something moved.

My Lord turned quickly. From the closet Teddo came, lumbering slowly. "Bonzo," he said. "Bonzo, go over by the window. I think it came in that way, if I'm not mistaken."

The stuffed rabbit reached the window-sill in one skip. He huddled, gazing outside. "Nothing yet."

"Good." Teddo moved toward the dresser. He looked up. "Little Lord, please come down. You've been up there much too long."

My Lord stared. Fred, the rubber pig, was coming out of the closet. Puffing, he reached the dresser. "I'll go up and get it," he said. "I don't think it will come down by itself. We'll have to help it."

"What are you doing?" My Lord cried. The rubber pig was settling himself on his haunches, his ears down flat against his head. "What's happening?"

Fred leaped. And at the same time Teddo began to climb swiftly, catching onto the handles of the dresser. Expertly; he gained the top. My Lord was edging toward the wall, glancing down at the floor, far below.

"So this is what happened to the others," it murmured. "I understand. An Organization, waiting for us. Then everything is known."

It leaped.

When they had gathered up the pieces and had got them under the carpet, Teddo said:

"That part was easy. Let's hope the rest won't be any harder."

"What do you mean?" Fred said.

"The package of toys. The tanks and guns."

"Oh, we can handle them. Remember how we helped next door when that first little Lord, the first one we ever encountered —"

Teddo laughed. "It did put up quite a fight. It was tougher than this one. But we had the panda bears from across the way."

"We'll do it again," Fred said. "I'm getting so I rather enjoy it."

"Me, too," Bonzo said from the window.

