

**TOPO: A TALE
ABOUT ENGLISH
CHILDREN IN ITALY**

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Topo: A Tale About English Children in Italy by G. E. Brunefille & Kate Greenaway

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G. E. BRUNEFILLE & KATE GREENAWAY

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A Tale about English Children in Italy

BY

G. E. BRUNEFILLE

WITH 44 PEN-AND-INK ILLUSTRATIONS

By KATE GREENAWAY



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TOPO.

CHAPTER I.

"CASA WEBB."

ONCE upon a time, and not so very long ago, there were three little children in a great big room in a large stone house, built by an Englishman named Webb, some years ago, among the mountains of North Italy, not very far from the sea and not very far from the Alps.

Now these three little children were English, and

how did they come to be up among the Italian mountains?

They were the children of Mr. and Mrs. Lynne, and it was because of the delicate state of their mother's health that they could not remain in England. The doctors all said that Mrs. Lynne would die if she stayed there, and that she must go to Italy.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Lynne were very sorry to leave their nice comfortable home in England, but after some time spent in wandering every summer, at last they settled down in this great old palace of a house, perched upon the side of a mountain, surrounded with forests of chestnut-trees and vineyards; for the mountain side sloped to the south, and was not barren and rocky like the mountains you see in pictures, but very fertile, and as it was sheltered from the cold north and east winds it was warm in winter and yet not too hot in the summer months, for it lay high above the scorching plains among cool breezes.

The house was called "Casa Webb," which means "Webb house," and was very beautifully situated. There was a fine prospect from the front lawn right

across plains and corn-fields, and olive and mulberry plantations, and pleasant white-washed villages with their square church towers, and there was a view of the Mediterranean Sea away in the far distance.

In the rear of the house was a magnificent garden, with vines, and pomegranates, and orange and lemon trees, and gorgeous flowers, and fountains, and statues, and peacocks strutting about. There were also shady bowers and summer houses, not of trellis work, but built of solid stone, which were cool on the hottest day.

When the family first came to reside in Italy they brought with them their English servants, who, however, soon became home-sick, and could never get accustomed to the queer outlandish ways, and after a while they went back. Then Mr. and Mrs. Lynne had to engage Italian servants, like other English families who resided in the neighbourhood. Many other English people, some for the sake of their health,

