

Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

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HUMPTY DUMPTY

"How very careless my cousin must have been to fall from such a very safe wall," murmured Humpty Dumpty, as he dashed his legs over the stone ledge. He whistled a merry tune, swinging his body from side to side in time to the melody.



"Why, I could sit here all day without the slightest danger," thought he. But before he had time to say it aloud, he swayed a little too far to the left, lost his balance and landed on the flagstones below with a crash and a smash.

"Oh, dear," sighed poor Humpty Dumpty, "I do wish some one would come along and patch me up."



Indeed, the battered fellow sadly needed patching. As though in answer to his plea the king's men appeared. But they could do nothing for him, and left him in worse state than before.

A band of good fairies passed that way, however, and took pity upon Humpty Dumpty. They formed a circle and danced merrily around the wounded egg. Then one of them—(I think it must have been the queen)—tapped him with her magic wand, and he was as good as new. Not a bit of yolk or white was missing.



Humpty Dumpty had learned a lesson. He resolved nevermore to trust himself to a wall. And he resolved that he would devote himself thereafter to assisting his brother Humpty Dumpties to avoid accidents. In their behalf he summoned the hens before him, addressing them in this manner:

"Oh, good chickens, knowing how easily we Humpty Dumpties are broken, why do you not try to rake your eggshells stronger? Why don't you eat rubber? I'm sure that would make the shells much more serviceable to us."



In his eagerness to enlist the chickens in his cause, Humpty Dumpty forgot his cautiousness and climbed on a wall behind him. Soon his gestures became so violent that, before he could save himself, he toppled off his perch.

One kind little hen sought the queen of the fairies and told her of Humpty Dumpty's plight. But the queen only shook her head; she answered:

"No, we shall not help him again. We was so vain as to imagine he could help his brothers, when he couldn't even take care of himself. I think he deserved his fate."

So, when the sun came out and shone warmly upon him, poor Humpty Dumpty was "crumbled."



Now, when things went by contraries, Goblins ruled the tiny fairies, who were whipped by these bad slaves;

And discolored bruises crying, Fairies in strange way replying, The end of all goblins decaying, Into violets changed themselves.

So that now this shrinking flower hides itself in leafy bowers From its foe; And its blue and purple taintment, Warning us of future payment, Fades each blow.

When the goblin babes went sleeping, Round their cheeks came a-peeping, To hold better

In the nursery for prankings; Entering with evil nods, They applied the golden-rods, And the lady's-slipper pods, Served for spankings.

Once a goblin chef did wish That he had a nice, big dish For his butter; When his eyes he lifted up, He beheld a butter-cup To hold better

Flow'ers and babies

QUEEN FLORENCE'S STORY OF A MAY DAY TRIUMPH.



MANY, many years had passed since the Pilgrim Fathers landed upon the shores of New England. And it was long ago that the close descendants of those Pilgrims founded the little town of Mayfield, strictly upright and just, yet, withal, seeming to find little joy or cheer in life.

So, first of all, the teacher described to her charges how May Day was celebrated, both in olden and modern times; how some of the ceremonies are derived from Roman observances in honor of the goddess Flora; how the maypole itself was originally used in the worship of nature in the East, and how many new customs, among them a pilgrimage to the fields and meadows, followed by a feast, were introduced by the people of Merry England.

This recital interested every boy and girl so much that when Miss Kitty unfolded her plan it was received with enthusiasm. They were anxious to prepare for the celebration at once. At first they desired to have a king, as well as a queen of May, but their teacher explained that the king of May had passed out of existence a long time before.

How Jacky Won the Prize

JACKY felt bad, indeed, because he was not permitted to enter the contest. You see, father had offered a prize to the boy who captured the largest fish during their excursion to the creek that afternoon. Harry, Robert and Jim were to go. Off they trudged, laden with fishing tackle, while lonely Jacky was left behind.

Soon it became very friskome in the house, with no one to play with but a sleepy cat—a cat that didn't want to play at all. Therefore Jacky ran out of doors through the orchard and into the meadow beyond.

Plunging himself down under the old apple tree, Jacky looked into the brook which rippled along close by. But this only served to make him more dissatisfied with himself. Harry, Robert and Jim were looking into water, too—but they were fishing!

Then a sudden thought came to him. Searching in his pocket, he brought forth a tangled piece of string. Somewhere about his jacket he found a pin, which he carefully bent into a hook. He'd often seen little minnows in the brook, so he was going fishing, too.

A fat worm was found and placed upon the hook, and the cord was tied to the hook, and soon the wee fisherman was busy. The minutes passed, but he didn't notice time now. Wasn't he fishing? He was supremely happy.

All at once there came a tug, and the next instant a big fish leaped right out of the water upon the bank. Quick as a wink, Jacky seized the struggling fellow in his jacket and ran with all his might through the meadow and the orchard, up to the house.

Harry and Robert and Jim came home each with a good catch. Harry claimed the prize for the largest fish. But just as Jacky was about to bestow upon him the splendid fishing-rod, mother and Jacky cried: "Wait! Father was taken out into the kitchen and there was pointed out to him the huge trout Jacky had captured in the brook. It was ever so much bigger than Harry's fish."

So, amid the congratulations of his brothers, Jacky was awarded the prize.

LEGEND OF THE THREE OAKS



THREE brothers stood on the summit of the hill. A pretty hill it was—as pretty as any in Derbyshire—with a pleasing view stretching on all sides. But none of the

brothers felt its beauty this morning, for they were bidding one another good-bye. A little while and they would be separated; gone alike to different parts, perhaps never to meet again.

Two said for further words, they parted. The third stayed at the old home in Derbyshire. You may know how anxiously this brother watched and tended the acorns, and protected the saplings as best he could against all weather.

Days and weeks and years flew by. The three were grown and sturdy; yet no word passed from one brother to another. Then a hard winter came, and one of the oaks succumbed to the heavy blasts that swept over the hill. In sorrow, the third brother folded his arms, bent his head and murmured:

"Now John is dead."

Other years passed. The two remaining oaks thrived and sturdy. Then came a terrific storm. Struck by lightning, another of the oaks lay torn and twisted on the ground. And the brother, standing beside the oak, now prone, muttered sadly to himself:

"Now John is dead. I am alone in the world."

A few days later the man disappeared from his old home, nor was he ever heard of again. Perhaps it may be that the magic of the spell was broken after the death of two of the brothers; for, although ages passed, the oak that remained in Derbyshire, England, but what has become of the third brother? No one seems to know.

A Charming May Basket



YOU can make a nice little May basket by cutting out this design from vari-colored cardboard. The back should be exactly like the front, of course, and the two parts may readily be sewn together or attached in similar manner.

Leading back and forth through the holes with appropriate ribbon, is suggested. An attractive handle you can easily improvise, or use ribbon, if you will.

Steeplechase at Eton



A STEEPLCHASE is held each year at Eton College, in England. There are two events—one open to the "school" and the other to the "juniors." In this year's steeplechase, held some weeks ago, seventy-four boys were entered.

Among those competing in the junior event was the youthful earl of Lisburne. You see him, in the picture above, taking off his walking shoes. He is 16 years old, and the owner of 42,800 acres of land.

You also have a photograph of the runners lined up for the chase. The second figure on the right is a lad also of the nobility. This is Viscount Carlton, the 16-year-old son and heir of the earl of Wharnclyffe.

THE GRATEFUL CHIPMUNK

PATTER we called him. Inasmuch as the name doesn't even hint what kind of animal he was, I might as well tell you that Patter was a chipmunk. And a handsome fellow he was, too—all white underneath, from his forehead to the tip of his tail; a forest of red and brown above, with black and white streaks running lengthwise down his back, and black spreading over the upper surface of his tail. Then he had a cunning little face, with lines of white drawn from the tip of the nose to each ear.



Brother Billy and I were going after nuts one day last fall. Just as we passed Jenkins' barn, something out of the door and ran down the road. Billy threw a stone with all his might, and knocked the poor little thing over. I ran to it, picked it up in my arms and carried it home after I'd scolded Billy, who certainly deserved it.

When father came home he said the animal was a chipmunk, not a squirrel, and that it didn't seem to be very badly hurt, except that one foot was lame. I nursed Patter and cared for him until he was entirely well. By that time he had become so tame that he didn't wish to leave us.

So Patter stayed. I wouldn't have kept him otherwise, because father doesn't believe in caging poor animals.

That was much better off in the woods. But we were very glad that the little fellow did choose to stay. He wasn't any trouble to us at all, and he was just the very nicest pet you could have. He would perch on your shoulder and chatter in a gurgly sort of a way that was very funny. And he'd eat 'most anything we gave him—raw meat, bread, cheese, milk—everything but fish and eggs. He'd go hunting, too, after mice, frogs, flies, beetles, butterflies, moths and other insects. Many a mouse he caught. Indeed, he was a much better mouser than Tabby, who wouldn't do anything but eat what we gave her and then nap.

Patter seemed to be especially fond of me. He never seemed to forget that it was I who bought him home, and nursed him, and he appeared to wish to show how grateful he was whenever he had the opportunity.

Then the darling little chipmunk did something for which I shall always be grateful to him. You see, it was a really and truly beautiful necklace that father presented me on my birthday. And when the necklace disappeared you can't imagine how I grieved. The most tantalizing thing about it all was that I couldn't think where I possibly could have lost it. You see, it hadn't been worn. It still should have been lying snugly in my jewel case.

But Patter was a better detective than I. He knew something was the matter, and I'm sure he felt just as sorry as I. He did all he could to comfort me. Then he looked ever so wise and darted off without even a little squeak of good-bye. He scampered upstairs toward the attic and that was the last I saw of him that afternoon. I supposed he must be hunting mice.

It was almost time for father to reach home, when I heard a patter at my elbow. Turning my head, I saw that dear little chipmunk, tightly gripping in his mouth the lost necklace! You may know how I hugged and petted him. You never saw a chipmunk smile, I suppose, so there isn't much use telling you how Patter looked. But he was mightily happy. So was I, you may be sure.

I didn't know where Patter had found the necklace until he caught at my arm and coaxed me to the attic, where I found, in the wall behind an old trunk, the home of a mouse, where were many little stolen articles. Evidently the jewel case had been open, and a mouse had carried away the necklace.

No amount of money could have bought Patter after that. Even Billy, who didn't like the chipmunk a bit (I s'pose because Patter didn't trust him), admired his coming fellow member and then nap.

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The "Pirates" Score One

DIFFICULT enough it was to obtain Farmer Green's permission to use the old flat-bottomed scow. But Captain Billy Mumford accomplished the task, and the "Bloody Robbers," as a consequence, were jubilant.

That Saturday, they reasoned, would surely be the finest kind of a day. Hain't it rained the last four Saturdays? So it couldn't possibly be bad for "five straight," as Skinny expressed it.

And on Saturday they were going to hitch Jups to the scow and have him tow them up the creek to the best camping ground they could find, where they intended to stay for at least three days. There would be no trouble about Jups, because he had already been "promised" by Joe Stanton's father.

Saturday afternoon came and found every member of the "Bloody Robbers" at the Cove. Provisions were



placed in the custody of Skinny, and Jack Warner appointed lieutenant. These were carefully inspected, and they were ready to hitch up Jups. Just then they heard a shot from around the Bend.

"Come on, let's see who's shootin'!" "Guess it's some one baggin' ducks!" These and many other exclamations came from the group, who promptly deserted the Cove for the Bend. They could start on the scow "most any time you know; but not every minute could they see a "duck shootin'." Joe Stanton paused irresolutely a moment; then he led Jups to the fence and tied him to a post.

The quarter of a mile to the Bend was covered in an exceedingly short time, but when the advance guard of the "Robbers" arrived panting at the spot from where they assumed the sound had come, they heard another shot some distance above. And the more they walked the further "about the shots seemed to sound; until, at last, they decided to return.

"We'll never find a camp 'less we get the boat a-movin' right now," said Skinny emphatically.

The others agreed and trudged back to the Cove as rapidly as their wearied limbs would permit.

But when they reached the Cove they found to their astonishment that Jups was missing. And he was missing the rest of the afternoon. Not until that evening was he found calmly grazing in a meadow owned by Joe Stanton's father. Around his neck was tied a piece of dirty paper, upon which was scrawled the following:

"You fellows think 'ur smart, but you ain't. We keep shootin that gun to draw 'ur awn, maybe you no who tuk 'ur horse now."

"'Tis enemy."

"MIKE FLANNIGAN," "Captain of Bloody Pirates."

The "Robbers" said some horribly nasty things when they read the note. Did they know who stole their horse? They didn't. Mike Flannigan could ride like a "sixer," when bareback, and one and all could swim. They were all good at getting along the lane that led from the Cove, leaving them without means of getting to their camp, for they couldn't get against the stream for any distance, that was certain.

Yes, the "Pirates" had scored one. "But it's our turn next," fiercely declared the "Robbers." And it was.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF PUSSY THE MOUSER



Further adventures of Pussy the Mouser