

POLLY BROWN'S STORY PAGE

for Boys and Girls

-THE IRON COW-



WHEN I was as little as some of you now, The most wonderful thing I did own— The most beautiful thing that you could desire— The most lovable thing ever known. It was silver, with streaks that came off on my cheeks When I slept on it long in warm weather. Its eyes were bright red, and 'twas very well bred, And happy we lived all together.

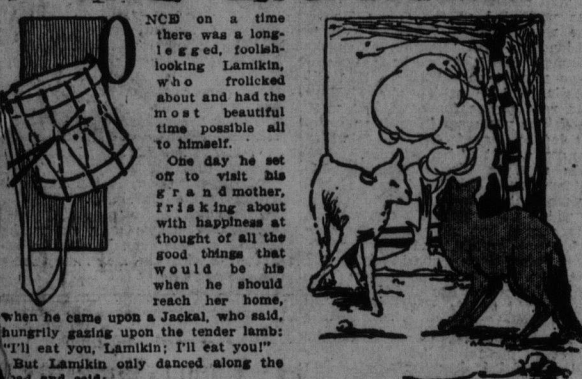
And you must know now, 'twas a great Iron Cow, That stood 'most as tall as myself. At night she did sleep on a chair by my bed, Though sometimes she slept on the shelf. How sad was the day when the high shelf gave way, And she tumbled right over and died. I swept up the pieces, and for a whole week And for more than a week I just cried.

'Twas just ages ago, as no doubt you know; But I trust that some time or other, When my time allows, I'll go search for such cows, And just possibly find me another. Of all those I've seen, there's a pitiful lack— They never seem right, to my mind; For either their eyes are not red, but plain black, Or the tails put on crooked behind!

And if eyes and tail are just right (which they're not), It is only too sure to be found That the feet are too big, or the ears are all wrong, Or the beast is too fat all around!

KATHERINE FAITH.

THE LAMINKIN



NCE on a time there was a long-legged, foolish-looking Laminkin, who troicked about and had the most beautiful time possible all to himself. One day he set off to visit his grandfather, who was a very old man, and he was very much surprised to find that he was not the only one who was old. He found that his grandfather was not the only one who was old, but that there were many other old people in the village. He was very much surprised to find that he was not the only one who was old, but that there were many other old people in the village. He was very much surprised to find that he was not the only one who was old, but that there were many other old people in the village.

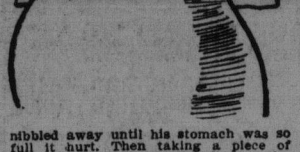


"You see, children," said Mrs. Mouse, wishing to impress the matter upon their minds very strongly, "cats are sly, prowling, sneaking creatures, always lurking behind furniture or in dark corners when you have no idea they are near; and they can smell you, too, a long distance; I really often wish mice didn't have such a sweet odor; of course, we should be less attractive, but our lives would be safer."

Billy and Tommy were obedient mouselets, as a rule; they played around the home nest all day or made short excursions through the walls, scrambling along the ridges of plaster between the laths. In this way they got up good appetites and were ready at night to go out in search of food.

One night Billy went out by himself. Mrs. Mouse was busy washing Tommy's face and paws, which he had somehow got very dirty, and Billy was too impatient to wait. He kept going up until he reached a room on the top floor, where, to his great delight, he found, standing on a trunk, a bowl of goodies: little cakes with butter and sugar in them. They were delicious. Billy wished that Tommy had come, too.

"I'll eat all I can," thought he, "and then I'll carry some home." So he



sniffed away until his stomach was so full it hurt. Then taking a piece of cake in his mouth he slipped out of the room, down the stairs to the floor below, popped into a hole back of a big wardrobe in the hall, and in two minutes he was in the nest.

His mother and Tommy were there before him, having just returned from a trip to the cellar.

"What have you got?" said Mrs. Mouse. "What have you got?" said Mrs. Mouse. "What have you got?" said Mrs. Mouse.

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his lip in a funny little grin. He loved his mother, but he dearly liked to tease her. Tommy hadn't found anything to eat that night; everything in the cellar was covered, he said. He was so hungry that he ate nearly the whole of Billy's cake without thinking of anybody else, just as some children will, and then they all went to bed.

The next night Billy told his mother he was going up to the cake box in the top room again.

There, and if ever there was a sorry mouse, he was one. Fortunately, the water reached nearly to the top of the pitcher, and after he had recovered a little from the shock of the cold bath and had sneezed some of the water out of his nose, he succeeded in catching hold of the edge with his paws and pulling himself up. But law! His fur coat and trousers were so soaked and heavy they seemed like lead. He tumbled over and fell clear to the floor—pop!

"You'd better not, William," said Mrs. Mouse, "it isn't safe to go two nights in succession to the same place. They'll set some sort of a trap for you, mark my words."

But Billy wouldn't listen; he scampered off through a little private passage in the wall, up until he reached the hole back of the wardrobe, and peered out for signs of cats; seeing none he was out, up the stairs and on the trunk before you could say Jack Robinson.

It is very disappointing, but it must be told: the box of cakes had been taken away.

Billy remembered his mother's reproof just in time; he shut his mouth tightly, choking back a big word, and sat up and looked around it was moonlight, and he could see things in the room quite plainly. On a tall desk near the trunk were some dishes of different shapes. He was very anxious to take home something to prove to his mother how much wiser he was than she, and he thought there might be food in those dishes; so he jumped for the desk, just caught the edge and scrambled up.

"Nothing here," he said to himself, as he snail around; "it's very provoking that that cat should be so clever, over on the stand in the corner; just as like as not they've put those cakes in there to the top. I'll show Mother Mouse I know a thing or two."

He chuckled, steadying himself on the edge of the pitcher, he tried to peer inside. "Nothing there, either, I guess. It looks just like a piece of cake, but it's not."

"Squeak, squeak, squeak! Splash, splash, splash! Splutter, splutter, splutter!" The pitcher was full of hot water, and Billy had fallen head first into it. He was so hot that he could hardly see, and he was so wet that he was dripping all over the place. He was so hot that he could hardly see, and he was so wet that he was dripping all over the place.

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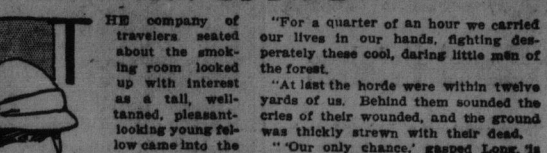
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A FIGHT WITH MONKEYS IN JAVA



HE company of travelers seated about the smoking room looked up with interest as a tall, well-tanned, pleasant-looking young fellow came into the room and sat down unobtrusively near the doorway, lighting a cigar.

"Come now, Parker," said one, "we've never heard the outcome of that tiger hunt down in Java. You and Long bag many?"

Parker smiled pleasantly, and settled into his chair. "As far as tigers are concerned, the trip was a dismal failure," said he. "But our adventures along other lines were anything but uninteresting. We landed at the very beginning of the rainy season and consequently had little chance to bag tigers."

He tipped the ashes from his cigar and smiled again. "It took a week to complete our preparations, and as soon as the preliminaries were over we pushed up into the interior some 200 miles, where we at last struck a little kampong or village called Kress. Here we learned that the nearest white man lived some sixty miles away. We were not in a hurry to leave, as though the island couple of centuries. Luckily both Long and myself knew enough Javanese for all practical purposes and within a week were fairly well established."

"One day afternoon Long and I were stretched out napping in the controller's mess, when a mob of village folk, men, women and children, burst into the place with the news that a great tribe of brown monkeys were about to invade the communal corn patch, which stretched for some thirty acres a mile distant, and refused to be driven off."

"The poor creatures besought us to come to their rescue with our firearms. Accordingly we left our rifles behind, and seizing our double ten-bore breech-loaders and our bandoliers we started post haste for the corn patch at the forest edge, followed by many of the native men. Each of us had fifty rounds of brass cartridges in his bandoliers, the largest size shot obtainable, from a point of vantage we soon saw a huge brown monkey walking along with some ripe coconuts in his hand. The great beast hurried on in the least when he caught sight of us."

"When we were about seventy yards from the animal I could stand it no longer, and although Long whispered that we were too far away and I let drive. The shot must have startled him somewhere above the stomach, for he merely staggered then, and he himself started toward the scrub."

"We had expected the sound of the firearms to scare the whole hundred animals away. Probably, however, they had never heard the sound of firearms, for they certainly showed not the least fear."

"Instead, they gathered into the semblance of a line at the point where their comrades had entered the brush and began a steady advance. We were astounded. Hearing the noise of flying feet behind us, we glanced back only to realize that every native had taken to the beasts as best we knew how."

"They had made such a brave showing with their native weapons, which were children in Java carry at all times, that the movement was a complete surprise to us. The noise of the monkeys' chattering became louder and louder, but that our rifles were so far away that we could not do much. One huge gorilla-like fellow seemed to be the left-hand trigger. I moved the gun muzzle along, moving him down with the other barrel. Long stood in front of me as I reloaded, killing many of his ten-bore."

"When a leader fell the line invariably paused to appoint a new one. Long and I repeated our tactics with like results. A very little of this, we concluded, would be enough to beat them; but we were mistaken. Time after time with a bravery and endurance which were amazing they advanced nearer and nearer every time, and our charges, heavy though they were, much more often wounded than killed. Perhaps the only thing that saved us was the halting of the animals at the approach of a new leader every time a commander fell. Had they adopted the tactics of rushing us, we had had no chance whatever. It was not long before we realized the disquieting fact."

"Very long time ago a certain star, looking down on the earth, saw that it was very fair and longed to come down, and live with the Red Children, who were so happy in their sports and pleasures. Each day she came nearer and nearer to earth, until she swung just over the treetops. The people watched her anxiously, not knowing whether she was an omen of evil or good. At last the star was near enough to speak to them."

"Red Children," said she, "I wish to dwell near you always so that I may gaze into the clear surface of your rippling lake-mirror, dance with your swaying, sweet-smelling flowers, listen to the music of your singing birds, and the laughter of your little ones."

"The Red Children were overjoyed, and suggested the cool, dark forest beside the lofty mountain top, the gold heart of the wild rose blowing on the hillside. But the star said that these were all too far away. She preferred rather to live where she might sometimes feel the tiny brown hands of the toddling Indian children touching her, where they might continually play about her and be always where she might hear them at their happy play."

"At last a brave young chief thought that perhaps the lake might do. 'Why not?' he cried. 'Here we spend the greater part of every day. The sunbeams love to dance upon its bosom, and the stars and clouds are reflected in its many mirrors.'"

"Why not, indeed?" cried the star. "Let the Red Children watch for me." So it came about that on the very next night the star sped softly down to the sound of sweetest music. For some time the Red Children waited breathlessly, seeming to expect a great disaster, but everything was very still and quiet. Apparently the star had entirely disappeared, and the Indians were so tired that they sought their wigwams for the night."

"But lo! on the following day a beautiful fire with great white petals and a warm golden heart floated on the waters where the star had disappeared. Appoint a place where I may make my home."

All Fool's Day

THE custom of making April fools is said to have originated with Noah when he sent the dove out on the first day of the first month among the Hebrews, which answers to our April. It was thought proper to make this day a day of fooling, and to punish whoever forgot the occasion by sending them some fruitless errand, similar to the unsuccessful mission which the bird of old was sent. Many tales are told of April Fool's day, among them the following:

Prince and Princess of Cornwall were confined in the wing of the king's castle; disguised as peasants, he and his wife escaped in the early morning. As they stole quietly out of the small wood a certain maid-servant, recognizing them and hastened to the guardhouse to raise the alarm. The king, however, forgot that it was All Fool's day, but they had not, and decided to be made game of their own making. The royal fugitives were making good their escape.

In many European countries it seems to be a common custom to send people on fruitless errands and expectations that are sure to end in disappointment on this day.

A LEGEND OF the WATER-LILY

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