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Dimbie's Dustman Tales

By M O. TAYLOR

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IX.

DIMBIE was out in the garden one lovely, warm day in Spring, when everything was trying its hardest to grow. She had just rolled over a big stone and the ants were in a terrible state of mind about having their home upset like that, especially

"SCURRY"

Scurry was very busy running to and from the ant-hill; Dimbie sat on the grass and watched her.

"Please move out of my way, I haven't time to go all round you," said a tiny voice.

Dimbie gave a big jump, and then she remembered and said softly to herself.

"When you're in Insect Land do as insects do," and the next minute she was down in the ant-hill with Scurry.

"Worry worry Scurry Scurry, Why are you In such a hurry."

sang Dimbie.

"Oh! don't be so silly," said Scurry crossly. "Just look at all I have to do; and if you're going to stay you'll have to help; we all work here."

"So I will," said Dimbie. "You needn't be so cross; tell me what to do."

"Well, first of all we must go and milk the cow," said Scurry.

"Milk the cow," said Dimbie with round eyes, "why, I didn't know you had one."

"Of course we do," said Scurry. "Don't you?"

"Why, yes. But how funny for ants to have cows."

"It isn't funny at all," said Scurry. "We have everything that you have; soldiers, and houses, and servants, and cows, and everything; and we're very, very strong, much stronger than anyone in your big world; much stronger than anything alive, because we can carry things five or six times as heavy as ourselves and nothing in your world can do that," said Scurry proudly.

Scurry's cow was just a little green fly sitting on a rose bush.

"What a funny cow," said Dimbie. "Where are its horns?"

"On its back," said Scurry.

Dimbie looked and saw two little straight horns sticking up each side. Scurry spoke very gently to her little cow and stroked its horns with her feelers, and that was the way she milked it. Dimbie tasted some of the milk and it was just like honey.

When Scurry had finished she tucked her cow under her arm and walked off. "Wasn't that funny?"

"I carry my cow wherever I go," said Scurry, "then no one can steal her."

Dimbie was much too surprised to say anything; she could only look.

"Now," said Scurry, when she had put the cow in a little shed made of leaves and fastened her in quite safely, "we'll tidy the babies and take them out in the sun."

There were about a hundred thousand babies all waiting to be tidied. Scurry was very quick; she had some hairs on her back leg which she used to brush the babies with, and a funny little sharp claw for a comb.

"Where's your brush and comb?" said Scurry.

"Oh, it's in my bedroom at home," said Dimbie.

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"There's a silly place to have it," said Scurry.

When the babies were all clean they had to be carried to the top of the ant-hill. Oh dear, how tired Dimbie was when they were all up, and no sooner were they out in the sun than they had to be taken down in the shade because it was too hot. I'm afraid Dimbie was very tired and cross now, and she told Scurry she really couldn't carry another baby.

"Why I must have carried thousands," said Dimbie nearly crying.

"Don't talk such nonsense," said Scurry crossly, who was carrying five babies at once. "Why you've only just begun; they've all got to be taken up again when it gets cooler."

"Well, I'm not going to carry another one," said Dimbie.

"You'll go on till I tell you to stop," said Scurry.

And then Dimbie did a very naughty thing. She took the little ant baby and rolled it down the hill.

"Cruel, wicked girl," screamed Scurry. "I'll bite you hard," and she ran at Dimbie and gave her such a hard bite, which made her scream so loudly that Mother came running one way and Scurry skidaddled the other.

"Oh Scurry bit me," said Dimbie. Mother laughed, and said: "Dreaming again, little girlie."

But Dimbie was right.

"Let the peace of God rule in your heart. There is a peace that will enter there, if you do not thwart it; there is a spirit that will take possession of your soul, provided that you do not quench it."

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