

Our Young Folks

Ugly Mug and Her Magical Glass.

Grandmother Grigg was a jolly old dame, As merry as ever a grig of her name; Her little eyes sparkled from under her cap, And she bit off the ends of her words with a snap, Her nose was an intimate terms with her chin, And the things she loved most were to chatter and spin.

When she gathered her grandchildren close by her knee, Her wheel and her tongue both were busy as bees; The first she used up was a sight to behold, But the wonderful still, were the stories she told.

One night—'twas the night before Christmas—there came A clamor as loud as the clatter of rain, Who begged her—before they were packed off to bed—

To tell them a story "all out of her head;" Not one of the tales from her regular store, But a story they said, they had never heard before. "He! he! something new, eh?" quoth Grandmother Grigg.

"Very well, chits! sit down, till my spindle I rig, And I'll tell you the queer things that once came to pass, Between Miss Ugly Mug and her wonderful glass."

"Ugly Mug! What a name!" all the little ones cried. "Twas a nickname, my dears!" the old grandam replied. "This time, when asleep, was quite pretty to see, But awake, she was as ugly as ugly could be; And this because Miss was subject to fits (Of the sultans, and pouts, and wry faces, my chits, These scattered her pleasant expression that folk Called her Miss Ugly Mug, just by way of a joke; And I think, had I seen her in one of her 'queers,' You'd have found it a very apt nickname, my dears."

"Now it happened one day—'twas the last of the year— A strange looking peddler the window drew near, And saw through the pane such a face, that, good luck!

He jumped, and came very near dropping his pack; But the very next moment he tapped at the door, And asked madam's leave to exhibit his store. He spread out his wares on the floor of the hall, And said he was sure he could please them all. He could fit both the maid and the mistress he knew, And something would suit little pretty too.

"Tis Miss Ugly Mug, at this flattery, sprinkled with dew, And her eyes grew as large as an owl's in the night, To the peddler, with motion provokingly slow, Brought forth a small glass, worth silver or so, And holding it up—"Now, my sweet little friend, If you mind me directions, you'll find in the end 'Tis a magical mirror, and dog-eared, if sold—"

Quoth this queer looking chap,—for its weight in pure gold— And when in a twelvemonth from this I come back, You won't fail to find your mirror for all in my pack."

"You'll not think me rude now, my sweet little miss When I tell you your image reflected in this, Will grow, day by day, still more charming and clear. If you gaze on it faithfully all the new year In the way I direct, thus—Whenever it appears You have cause to inflame those soft eyelids with tears."

When he was from you shall wrinkle that brow, Or set those red lips, as you're frowning just now; Where'er he be, follow or lead, you incline, Just take a look in this mirror of mine, And it'll turn out no pack, at the end of the year, If your image don't prove you a beauty, my dear!"

"Then the peddler, he shouldered his pack and went out, And Miss Ugly Mug looked in the glass, with a pout, To the image she saw seemed so funny and strange, That she laughed—and behold! what a magical change!"

The cross-looking face in an instant was gone, And a lovely young woman smiled into her own; The image that was a bright-eyed little elf, That Miss Ugly Mug felt quite ashamed of herself, And she would do as the peddler had said, And she carried the glass, quite delighted, to bed.

"The road was very dreary and dusty, and wound in and out in the most tiresome way until it seemed to have no end to it, and Davy ran on and on, half-expecting at any moment to feel the Roc's great beak pecking at his back. Fortunately his legs carried him along so remarkably well that he felt he could run for a week; and indeed he might have done so if he had not, at a sharp turn in the road, come suddenly upon a horse and cab. The horse was fast asleep when Davy dashed against him, but he woke up with a start, and, after whistling like a locomotive once or twice in a very alarming manner, went to sleep again. He was a very frowny-looking horse with great lumps at his knees and a long, crooked neck like a camel's; but what attracted Davy's attention particularly was the word "RINNY" painted in whitewash on his side in large letters. He was looking at this, and wonder-

dering if it were the horse's name, when the door of the cab flew open and a man fell out, and after rolling over in the dust, sat up in the middle of the road and began yawning. He was even a more ridiculous-looking object than the horse, being dressed in a clown's suit, with a morning-gown over it by way of a top-coat, and a field-marshal's cocked hat. In fact, if he had not had a whip in his hand no one would over have taken him for a cabman. After yawning heartily, he looked up at Davy and said drowsily: "Where?"

"To B. G.," said Davy, hastily referring to the Hollo keeper's letter. "All right," said the cabman, yawning again. "Climb in, and don't put your feet on the cushions." Now, this was a ridiculous thing for him to say, for when Davy stepped inside he found the only seats were some three-legged stools huddled to gether in the back part of the cab, all the rest of the space being taken up by a large bath-tub that ran across the front end of it. Davy turned on one of the faucets, but nothing came out except some dust and a few small bits of gravel, and he shut it off again, and sitting down on one of the little stools, waited patiently for the cab to start.

Just then the cabman put his head in at the window, and winking at him confidentially, said: "Can you tell me why this horse is like an umbrella?"

"No," said Davy. "Because he's used up," said the cabman.

"I don't think that is a very good conundrum," said Davy.

"So do I," said the cabman. "But it's the best one I can make with this horse. Did you say N. B.?" he asked.

"No," said B. G. said Davy. "All right," said the cabman again, and disappeared from the window. Presently there was a loud tramping overhead, and Davy, putting his head out at the window, saw that the cabman had climbed up on top of the cab and was throwing stones at the horse, which was still sleeping peacefully.

"Oh! don't do that," said Davy, anxiously. "I'd rather get out and walk."

"Well, I wish you would," said the cabman, in a tone of great relief. "This is a very valuable stand, and I don't care to lose my place on it," and Davy accordingly jumped out of the cab and walked away.

Presently there was a clattering of hoofs behind him, and Ribsy came galloping along the road with nothing on but his collar. He was holding his big head high in the air, like a giraffe, and gazing proudly about him as he ran. He stopped short when he saw the little boy, and giving a triumphant whistle, said cheerfully: "How are you again?"

It seemed rather strange to be spoken to by a cab-horse, but Davy answered that he was feeling quite well.

"So am I," said Ribsy. "The fact is, that when it comes to beating a horse about the head with a three-legged stool, if that horse is going to leave at all, it's time he was off."

"I should think it was," said Davy, earnestly. "You'll observe, of course, that I've kent on my shoes and my collar," said Ribsy.

"It is n't genteel to go barefoot, and nothing makes a fellow look so untidy as going about without a collar. The truth is,"—he continued, sitting down in the road on his hind legs, "the truth is, I'm not an ordinary horse by any means. I have a history, and I've arranged in a popular form in six cantos—I mean cantos," he added, hastily correcting himself.

"I'd like to hear it, if you please," said Davy, politely.

"Well, I'm a little hoarse—" began Ribsy.

"I think you're a very big horse," said Davy in great surprise.

"I'm referring to my voice," said Ribsy, haughtily. "No good enough not to interrupt me again;" and giving two or three preliminary whistles to clear his throat, he began:

"It's very confining, this living in stables. And passing one's time amid wagons and carts; I much prefer dining at gentlemen's tables. And living on turkeys and cranberry tarts."

"That's rather a high-toned idea," said Ribsy, proudly.

"Oh! yes, indeed," said Davy, laughing; and Ribsy continued: "As spry as a kid and as trim as a spider. Was I in the days of the Turnip-top Hunt, when I used to get rid of the weight of my sides And canter contentedly in the front."

"By the way, that trick led to my being sold to a circus," said Ribsy. "I suppose you've never been a circus-horse?"

"Never," said Davy.

"Then you don't know anything about it," said Ribsy. "Hero we go again."

"It made me a wreck with no hope of improvement. Too feeble to race with an invalid crab; I'm wry in the neck, with a rickety movement Peculiarly suited for drawing a cab."

"I may as well say here," broke in Ribsy again, "that the price that old Patsey Bolt-Var, the cabman, paid for me was simply ridiculous."

"I find with surprise that I'm constantly sneezing. I'm stiff in the legs, and I'm often for sale; And the blue bottle flies, with their tiresome teasing. Are quite out of reach of my weary old tail."

"I see them!" cried Davy eagerly. "Thank you," said Ribsy, haughtily. "As the next verse is the last, you needn't trouble yourself to make any further observations."

"I think my remarks will determine the question. Of why I am bony and thin as a rail; I'm off for some larks to improve my digestion. And point the stern moral conveyed by my tail."

Here Ribsy got upon his legs again, and after a refreshing fillip with his heels, cantered off along the road, whistling as he went. Two large blue-bottle flies were on his back, and his tail was flying around with an angry whisk like a pin-wheel; but as he disappeared in the distance, the flies were still sitting calmly on the ridge of his spine, apparently enjoying the scenery.

Davy was about to start out again on his journey, when he heard a voice shouting "Hi! Hi!" and looking back, he saw the poor cabman coming along the road at a brisk trot, dragging his cab after him. He had on Ribsy's harness, and seemed to be in a state of tremendous excitement.

"As he came up with Davy, the door of the cab flew open again, and the three-legged stools came tumbling out, followed by a dense cloud of dust.

"Get in! Get in!" shouted the cabman, excitedly. "Never mind the dust, I've turned it on to make believe we're going tremendously fast."

Davy hastily scrambled in, and the cabman started off again. The dust was pouring out of both faucets, and a heavy shower of gravel was rattling into the bath-tub; and, to make matters worse, the cabman was now going along at such an astonishing speed that the cab rocked violently from side to side, like a boat in a stormy sea.

Davy made a frantic effort to shut off the dust, but it seemed to come faster and faster, until he was almost choked. At this moment the cab came suddenly to a stop, and Davy, rushing to the window, found himself staring into a farm-yard, where a red cow stood gazing up at him.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

"Kiss Me, Mamma, I Can't go to Sleep." The child was so sensitive, so like that little shrinking plant that curls at a breath and shuts its heart from the light.

The only beauties she possessed were an exceedingly transparent skin and the most mournful, large blue eyes.

I had been trained by a very stern, strict, conscientious mother, but I was a hardy plant, rebounding after every shock; misfortune could not daunt, though discipline tamed me. I fancied, alas! that I must go through the same routine with this delicate creature; so one day when she had displeased me exceedingly by repeating an offense, I was determined to punish her severely. I was very serious all day, and, upon sending her to her little couch, I said: "Now, my daughter, to punish you, and to show you how very, very naughty you have been, I shall not kiss you to-night."

She stood looking at me, astonishment personified, with her great mournful eyes wide open—I suppose she had forgotten her misconduct then, and I left her with big tears dropping down her cheeks, and her little red lips quivering.

Presently I was sent for. "Oh, mamma, you will kiss me; I can't go to sleep if you don't!" she sobbed, every tone of her voice trembling; and she held out her little hands.

Now came the struggle between love and what I falsely termed duty. My heart said, give her the kiss of peace; my stern nature urged me to persist in my correction, that I might impress the fault upon her mind. That was the way I had been trained, till I was a most submissive child; and I remembered how often I had thanked my mother since for her straightforward course.

I knelt by the bedside. "Mother can't kiss you, Ellen," I whispered, though every word choked me. Her hand touched mine; it was very hot, but I attributed it to her excitement. She turned her little grieving face to the wall; I blamed myself as the fragile form shook with half-suppressed sobs, and saying: "Mother hopes little Ellen will learn to mind her after this," left the room for the night. Alas! in my desire to be severe I forgot to be forgiving.

It must have been twelve o'clock when I was awakened by my nurse. Apprehensive, I ran eagerly to the child's chamber; I had had a fearful dream.

Ellen did not know me. She was sitting up, crimsoned from the forehead to the throat; her eyes so bright that I almost drew back aghast at their glances.

From that night a raging fever drank up her life; and what think you was the incessant plaint poured into my anguished heart? "Oh, kiss me, mamma, do kiss me; I can't go to sleep! You'll kiss your little Ellen, mamma, won't you? I can't go to sleep. I won't be naughty if you'll only kiss me! Oh, kiss me, dear mamma, I can't go to sleep."

Holy little angel! she did go to sleep one gray morning, and she never woke again—never. Her hand was locked in mine, and all my veins grew icy with its gradual chill. Faintly the light faded out of the beautiful eyes; whiter and whiter grew the tremulous lips. She never knew me; but with her last breath she whispered: "I will be good, mamma, if only you'll kiss me."

Kiss her! God knows how passionately, but unavailing, were my kisses on her cheek and lips after that fatal night. God knows how wild were my prayers that she might know, if but only once, that I kissed her. God knows how I would have yielded up my very life, could I have asked forgiveness of that sweet child.

Well, grief is all unavailing now! She lies in her little tomb; there is a marble urn at her head, and a rose bush at her feet; there grow sweet summer flowers; there waves the gentle grass; their birds; sing their matins and vespers; there the blue sky smiles down to day; and there lies buried the freshness of my heart.

Parents, you should have heard the pathos in the voice of that stricken mother, as she said: "There are plants that spring into greater vigor if the pressure of a footstep crush them; but, oh! there are others that even the pearls of the pit bow bend to the earth."

Show the Children Respect.

It will surprise many parents to have it suggested that they should treat their children courteously and respectfully. Yet it is the best education that can be imparted to them. Parents are apt to think that children should be subject to authority and are not to be consulted. But why not? It teaches them to exercise judgment and imparts self respect. The imitative quality in children leads them to reproduce what is most striking in their parents, unless they have a sufficiently positive individuality to map out characters for themselves. Thus, many children reproduce the leading characteristics of the parent who commands most their regard. So, to treat them harshly, or even imperatively, is to create an autocratic disposition in them. It is not a lovely trait. Self respect and elipsence of character are very different from a domineering propensity, which arrogates authority everywhere.

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