

SLEEPY-TIME TALES THE TALE OF MRS. LADYBUG BY ARTHUR SCOTT BAILEY

CHAPTER V. A Hard Shell.

Rusty Wren hurried home, carrying Mrs. Ladybug despite her frantic efforts to escape. She wriggled all her six legs at the same time. "She'll be pleased with this one," Rusty murmured, as he watched Mrs. Ladybug's struggles. "Mrs. Wren will certainly thank me when I give her this morsel."



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hope I haven't made a mistake. I don't like the taste of that beetle. And he dropped down upon the ground and carefully wiped his bill upon the grass.

"I don't believe the children will notice anything wrong," he muttered. "So far, they've never refused anything that was offered them. But if Mrs. Wren tried to eat that beetle herself, I fear there'll be trouble."

And there was. Rusty knew it a few minutes after, when little Mr. Chippy's son, Chippy, Jr., came sitting up and peeped in his childish voice, "Please, sir, Mrs. Wren wants you at once."

"There was nothing to do except to go home. And Rusty went. He found Mrs. Wren much upset."

"Are you trying to poison us?" she demanded. "No, indeed—my love!" Rusty Wren replied meekly.

"Well, you made a terrible mistake, then," she declared. Meanwhile Rusty Wren was looking all around. Yet he couldn't see the pretty beetle (meaning Mrs. Ladybug) anywhere. "I must have swallowed it anyhow," he thought.

"You must be more careful," his wife told him severely. "That was a horrid tasting beetle that you brought home. It's a queer one. The children—poor dears!—are so hungry that any one of them would have bolted it had I offered it to him."

"Then you ate it yourself," Rusty Wren faltered. "I dropped it upon the ground. And no doubt I'd thrown it away, anyhow, no matter how it tasted."

"Why?" he asked her. "I thought it was a pretty beetle."

"It was pretty enough—I dare say," Mrs. Wren said. "But it had a very hard shell. It wouldn't have been safe to feed it to the children. Nor should I have cared to eat it myself."

"I thought it was a pretty beetle," Rusty said again. "It was such a gay color—bright red, yellow and black. It seemed to me it would please the children, and you too."

Mrs. Wren still seemed to be somewhat out of patience. "When you gather food for the youngsters, never mind about the color of it!" she exclaimed. "If you want to bring me any plumbings, that's another matter. But don't fetch home any more pretty red beetles for them to eat."

"Very well—my love!" said Rusty Wren. And then he slipped away to hunt for food, because his children were still clamoring for more.

Mrs. Wren talked a good deal, afterward, about her terrible experience. Yet she never stopped to think about the pretty beetle—about little Mrs. Ladybug. For Mrs. Ladybug had had a dreadful fright. Luckily she wasn't hurt. But it was a long time before she was her usual busy, able self again. And later, when she told her friends about her adventure, she said that she couldn't understand how Rusty Wren came to make such a mistake.

"I supposed," Mrs. Ladybug declared, "that every bird in Pleasant Valley knew I wasn't good to eat." (Copyright, 1921, by The Metropolitan Newspaper Service.)

Jewel, Flower, Color Symbols for Today By MILDRED MARSHALL. Rare indeed is the talismanic stone which legend assigns for today. It is the star sapphire, an exquisite of purest blue in whose depth is lit a tiny gleaming star. The Sengalese naively believe that the star, which moves as the sapphire is turned this way and that, serves to protect its wearer from harm and the influence of the evil eye, which we moderns term misfortune. Lapis lazuli, sometimes carelessly classed as a species of sapphire, is today's natal stone. It possesses the unique property of guarding its wearer from disease, an especially valuable quality, since those who are born within the span of the blue stone's influence, are destined to travel and adventure in strange lands. Yellow, the sacred color of India, is the hue prescribed by the Hindus for wear today. Those who observe this mystic rule, will find success at the end of any journey undertaken today and they will be untroubled by accident or delay. Reflecting the blue of the sacred stones for today, is its significant

More Truth Than Poetry

By JAMES J. MONTAGUE



THE WEATHER PROFIT

Robin tumbles out of bed, Peels his shiny eye, Tilts his little feathered head Toward the frosty sky. "Sunny southern skies for me Till another Spring, Winter's on the way," says he. "Goose is on the wing."

Long before a flake of snow Flutters from the sky, Jenny Wren says "Time to go. Goose is winging by. Pack your duds and come along To a summer clime. Mr. Goose is never wrong And he says it's time."

Squirrel hustles all about, Storing piles of food That will last the winter out For his furry brood. Storms will soon be breaking loose, Little time to spare; From the sky calls old man Goose: "Honk! Honk! Honk! Beware!"

Farmer with a worried face Patches up the roof, Rustles round to make the place snug and winter proof. There's corn to shuck and feed to grind! And hogs to kill and try, And Winter's never far behind When Mr. Goose goes by!



NATURALLY

Big theatrical productions have been abandoned, probably because the managers can't afford to pay the super taxes.

HOPELESS

We never understood why the Congressional Record never carries any ads till, through a business necessity, we were compelled to read a copy the other day.

WINGS SPROUT LATER

We can't see what Secretary Denby wants of a private airplane. The first requisite of a statesman is to keep his feet on the ground.

flower, the larkspur. For social functions which have material advantages as an underlying motive, the larkspur is an exceptionally fortunate flower. (Copyright, 1921, Wheeler Syndicate, Inc.)

Dog Hill Paragrafts

By George Bingham

Sile Kildew has found an old man at Fickville who has the champion eye-sight of the town. He says



the man drove his Ford over a carpet tack in the road, without even putting on his specs.

Washington Hocks says it looks like when the public begins to find out that a so-called distinguished man is nothing but a common human being after all, they are disappointed in him.

Slim Pickens will probably accept a position with the Bank of Tickville. He wrote to them a while back about the place, and it is a good sign when you don't hear from them right soon.

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Common Sense

By J. J. MUNDY.

A Few Words of Encouragement. If you have never been sick and despondent, you have no idea how much good two or three words of encouragement can do.

A good practical woman, not at all given to moping or to indulging in gloomy thoughts, was heard to say that illness brought her to complete despair, and one day she gave up mentally.

"She mentioned to a friend that 'she expected never to be any better,' but the friend came back with

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Jack and Jill

"Now we're going to have some real mince pie!" This was Jack's announcement when he came home from the office with a cheerful grin.

"Well, haven't you forgotten something?" "Oh, no," he said. He kissed her twice to prove it. "No, in fact I've remembered something. I hope you haven't started making that mince-meat yet?"

"Going to make you help me cut the citron and the apples tonight," she dimpled. "I suppose you hate that?" "Nope," he grinned. "I'm for it, because this is going to be a real mince pie. I've got the stuff."

"What stuff?" "Oh, you know—what I've been talking about." "Not that horrid brandy?" "Sure," said Jack. "Only it isn't horrid, but the best French brandy. I managed to get a fellow I know to let me have a half pint of it today. That's just enough for the mince-meat. Not too much, you understand, just enough to make it taste as if it had a little jazz in it."

"Jazz!" repeated Jill, scornfully. "Dear me, what terrible slang you are talking lately." "Jazz is the only way to describe

mince pie like what I'm thinking about, honey." "I just detest liquor in mince pie," said Jill, plaintively. "Aw, you'll be crazy about this, Jill. Just dump it all in, and say, 'dear, we'll have the neighbors flocking around the door when they smell all that goodness floating out of our kitchen.'"

Jill sighed and accepted the contraband which Jack presented with a winking bow. The first pie made its appearance on the table at dinner on Thursday night. The flaky crust, with its golden tints, and the little slits in its surface which twinkled like spicy stars, stirred the lord and master of the household to fresh oratory.

"Say," he cried, sniffing delightedly, "I could just smell that all the way from the station. My, my! Oh, what a feast this is going to be."

Jill looked demure and he should have taken warning, but blind man, he rattled on like a little boy at his first Christmas tree. He raced through the soup, and hardly noticed the pot roast at all. He scorned the crisp, inviting salad and made a face at the tea biscuit.

"Oh, boy," he cried, "give me that pie!" He handled over a liberal wedge. The very goodness of the opulent filling was enough to make one's eyes sparkle and one's mouth to water. He ate it all without a word, only quaint murmurings of animal relish.

Bowen's Value-Giving Store Genuine Worthington Stone Bake Ware Sale. Includes images of various stone bake ware items and the Bowen's logo.

"Phew!" he said finally, "what a wonderful pie that is. You see what I told you, darling?" "What?" "That brandy was just what you needed to make it right. It gives it just the right edge. It was the very thing. You never could get a pie to taste like that without brandy. Now, could you, hon?"



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