Trespassers will be prosecuted

GRACE STUART



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Good Story

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2434
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TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

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2434



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Good story.
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Good

2434

TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

I

PATSY and Pat were away on holiday. They were having an extra week or two, because they had had measles.

Their parents had gone home. They knew the twins would be safe with Farmer Giles, though they were a little doubtful whether Farmer Giles would be safe with the twins ! His lettuces and his eggs had already had serious mishaps ! But Farmer Giles and his wife, being fat and round and rosy, were the kind of people who could look after Patsy and Pat without any difficulty at all.

The twins, then, were left behind. They had a marvellous time, out in the fresh air all day long, drinking lots of Farmer Giles' lovely creamy milk, and almost falling asleep before they got into bed.

You would have thought that they should have been perfectly happy. But no ! There was one thing wrong. The twins had found the most

E/29

wonderful wood. When they peeped through the high hedge they saw that the bluebells were thick and blue under the trees. They seemed bluer than any the twins had ever seen.

Patsy and Pat crept all round the hedge, but there seemed to be very few good openings. Even those had huge boards by them that said, TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED in very big red letters.

They explored farther. The wood changed into a beautiful park, with a stream running through it. There were lovely young deer feeding on the slopes, and little rabbits running about with happy, bobbing tails.

Patsy clasped her hands together. "It's the most wonderful wood in the world," she said. "I'd rather go into that wood than anywhere else I've ever been."

"I've never seen so many 'trespassers' notices," grumbled Pat. "I don't think it's polite to put up so many of them. It's just as if no one could be trusted. Mean, I call it!"

"I know," said Patsy. "It makes me feel that we have simply got to get in. As if we really ought to, I mean!"

When they got back to the farm that day for dinner, Pat asked Farmer Giles about it.

"I say, Farmer Giles," he said, "there do be a wood near your farm where trespassing notices



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do be nearly as thick as trees. Who does be living there ? "

Pat liked trying to imitate Farmer Giles' speech, though his efforts only made Farmer Giles chuckle.

" Aw, 'tis the estates of Sir Richard Jarvis you do be meaning," said Farmer Giles. " A regular old ogre, he be. Shuts himself up there wi' his money and his books and his garden, and do fair fly at anyone who comes near. They do say i' the country that if anyone be caught there, they do disappear, but 'tis all tales. The truth is no one do trespass. They do be more a-feared o' Sir Richard than the——"

" Now, now, father," interrupted Mrs. Giles. " Not in front of the children."

But of course Patsy and Pat knew exactly what he was going to say. After dinner they held a council of war.

" It seems to me," said Pat, " that it's our bounden duty to trespass on that old ogre's land. It must be just awfully bad for him to think he can have everything his own way."

" Yes," said Patsy, nodding her head firmly. " And what is more, I think we ought to convert him. He must need converting very badly. We might turn him into a nice, sweet old gentleman."

" It's just like a girl," grumbled Pat, " never to let anyone be bad for a minute without wanting to convert them."

" I thought *you* said the ogre was bad, too," said Patsy, scoring a point. " I'll tell you what ! You help me with the converting, and I'll help you with the trespassing."

" Right," said Pat. " We'll form ourselves into a Society for Converting the Ogre and Trespassing on Him ! "

" Do you trespass on people ? " asked Patsy. " It doesn't sound quite right."

" It'll do," said Pat. " Don't argue ! "

" I feel a bit nervous," said Patsy, " just the smallest shadow of a bit."

" Remember, we're members of the Courage Society, too, and don't funk," said Pat.

" All right," said the obedient Patsy.

This settled, they went out together and crept round the hedges and walls that enclosed the huge estate. Nowhere did they see a gap, though they



saw plenty of boards telling them that trespassers would be prosecuted.

"I don't see why they need bother about the boards," said Pat in a disgusted voice. "I shouldn't think any trespasser would ever get in."

"We must get in," said Patsy. "Look! The wall here is a bit loose. Try to climb up and then pull me."

Pat climbed all right until he got his hand on the top; then he dropped down again with a loud squeal—and a cut finger!

"Ugh," he said. "The brute! I'm not going to try the wall again!"

Patsy made him a rather lumpy bandage with a handkerchief that was not very clean, and they began again to search the hedge for holes. At last, right down near the ground, they found a fairly big space.

Patsy looked at it doubtfully. " I think," she said, " I might squeeze through." She lay down, although her frock had been quite clean that morning, and began to wriggle. She wriggled and wriggled. Twigs caught her hair and made her eyes water. She got a huge tear in one sleeve and a bad scratch on her arm, but even that was nothing compared with the scratches she got all over her legs.

But she did get through ! And she had widened the hole quite a bit. Pat managed to squeeze himself through with only about half a dozen tears in his suit. At last they were in their enchanted wood.

2

" Oo-oh," said Patsy.

" Oo-oh," said Pat.

It was all so lovely that even Patsy and Pat became silent, and wandered along hand in hand. Everything in the wood seemed lovelier than anything they had ever seen outside.

After a time they came to a great bank of red



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rhododendron. It was so big that they could not find a way round, so they began to make a way through. The bushes were very thick, and they pushed so hard that they did not look where they were going.

Suddenly there was nothing to push against, and they found themselves falling, falling ! It seemed a tremendous long way, though it really wasn't long before—plump ! there they both were, sitting in the middle of a bed of young pansy plants.

" Oh ! " said Patsy.

" Oh ! " said Pat.

At the noise a man who was pruning roses near-by turned round. He was a very shabby

man, dressed in old clothes. He had rather startling blue eyes.

He came over and looked at the twins, and at the young pansy plants on which they were sitting.

" And what may you be doing ? " he asked.

The twins scrambled up, rubbing their bruises. They felt very uncomfortable, but they had to go through with it now.

" We're trespassing ! " said Pat firmly.

" You seem to be," said the man, and he looked again at the pansy plants, which were very crushed where the twins had been sitting.

" I suppose you're the gardener," said Pat.

For a moment the man looked a little surprised. Then he said :

" In a way, you might say I was the head gardener."

Patsy opened her eyes wide. " And you work for the Ogre ? " she asked.

Again the man looked surprised. " Who is the Ogre ? " he asked.

" It's Sir Richard Jarvis ! They call him the Ogre in the village because he's so horrid ! "

To the surprise of the twins the man threw back his head and roared with laughter.

" I don't think it's funny," said Patsy. " Don't you find him terribly hard to work for ? "

The man stopped laughing. " He's a bit gruff and grumbly sometimes," he said. " But you

haven't told me yet why you're trespassing! I shouldn't have thought you'd have done it with a man like that."

"That's just why we're doing it!" said Pat. "We think he's a selfish old thing to put up all those notice-boards. We think we ought to trespass on his land."

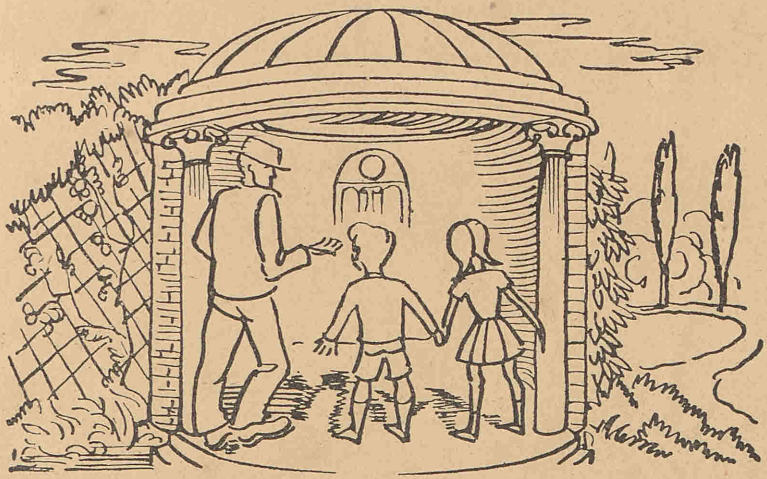
"For his good," added Patsy.

The man looked at them gravely. "You'd better come and tell me about it," he said.

"It's no use telling you," said Pat. "It's the Ogre we want to tell."

"If you told me first," said the man, "I could perhaps take you to the Ogre afterwards."

Patsy and Pat followed him until they came to a perfectly lovely summer-house. The man



went in and invited them to sit down. Pat looked round. "Is it all right?" he said.

"All right?" asked the old man.

"I mean, you being the gardener, and all that," said Pat, feeling a bit awkward at pointing it out. "Do you think we ought to sit in here?"

"Well, you are trespassing, you know," replied the old man, "and, after all, you might as well do it thoroughly. I thought you wanted to trespass as hard as you could. It would be better," he went on, "since you are trespassing, if you were to be found here by the Ogre."

"Yes, I suppose it would," said Pat doubtfully. The twins suddenly felt very small in the large summer-house.

"Now, tell me about it," said the old man.

"It was like this——" said Pat.

"You see——" broke in Patsy.

"All the notices——" said Pat helpfully.

"It didn't seem right——" explained Patsy.

"It makes people want to trespass——" said Pat.

"We were sure he ought to be converted," said Patsy.

"*You* were," explained Pat firmly.

"Well, *you* agreed," argued Patsy.

"Girls always want to convert," said Pat disgustedly.

Their private argument might have continued a long time, but the old man broke in.

"As far as I can make out," he said, "you don't think the Ogre should have put up all those notices. You think he ought to let people trespass if they like! And because he doesn't, you want to convert him."

"Well, it's not quite like that," said Pat.

"We don't really mean people should trespass, but it does look so—so unfriendly to have all those notices. We thought anyone so unfriendly must need making nice again," explained Patsy.

"He can't be really happy, being like that, can he?" insisted Pat.

The old man looked very, very thoughtful. "I don't think he is happy," he said.

"Well, then——" said Patsy.

"Well, then——" said Pat.

They both looked at him hard. The old man looked back.

"I think," he said, "that I must see what I can do about converting the Ogre. And perhaps you two can help."

"But I shouldn't have thought," said Patsy, "that the Ogre would have let his gardener start converting him, let alone his—well—his trespassers."

"I don't think he would," said the old man. "But you see, I am the Ogre."

" Oh dear," said Patsy.

" Oh dear," said Pat.

" How awful," said both.

" We'd never have——" went on Patsy.

" Never——" said Pat firmly.

" Now look here," said the Ogre. " I shouldn't try to explain, because it nearly always makes things worse. Suppose you come and have tea with me. There's a story I should like to tell you. Also I'm pretty sure there are some strawberries ripe, and I know there's some cream about."

" Ooh ! " said Patsy.

" Ooh ! " said Pat—which wasn't really the right thing to say.

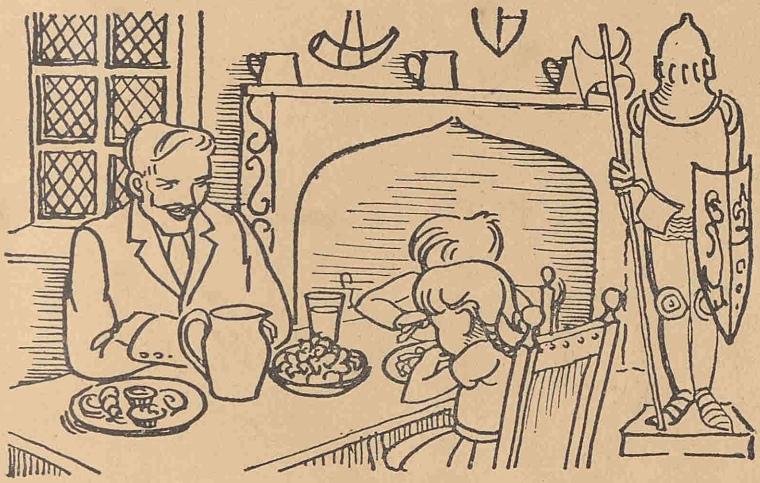
The Ogre stood up and held out his hands. Pat took one, and Patsy the other.

" It's all wrong, though," said Pat. " You ought to be eating us, not giving us strawberries."

" On the contrary," laughed the Ogre, " it's quite, quite right. All the best Ogres fatten children before they eat them ! "

3

Never in their lives had the twins seen such a bowl of strawberries as stood on the Ogre's tea-table. Never had they imagined that there could be such strawberries at this time of the



year. Never had they seen such a jug of cream on the table, not even at Farmer Giles'.

They could not talk much at first, they were so busy eating. At last Pat stopped in the middle of his fourth helping, and looked up at the Ogre. He laid his spoon down firmly.

"I've just remembered," he said, "that Mother says it isn't good manners to have more than two helpings at the very most when you go out to tea." He looked at the Ogre, who said :

"I think this is quite different. Quite, quite different. You see, you didn't come out to tea. You came out to trespass. That's difference Number One. Then, Mother wasn't talking about going out to tea with an Ogre. With Ogres you always eat as much as you can, to get

it in before the Ogre eats you ! It's always done like that with all the best Ogres ! Have another helping."

Pat looked at the strawberries, and then he looked round the table. " It's rather a pity," he said.

" How do you mean ? " asked the Ogre.

" I've eaten so many strawberries I'm sure I shan't be able to eat many cakes. And they are *lovely* cakes."

" Oh, Pat ! " said Patsy, with round, shocked eyes.

" Never mind," said the understanding Ogre. " You needn't eat many cakes, you know. You could just eat a few instead ! "

In the end it worked out that Pat ate quite a lot, and Patsy did not do so badly.

" Now," said the Ogre seriously, " I am going to tell you the story of those notice-boards which you object to so much ! "

The twins turned towards him and listened hard.

" Once upon a time," said the Ogre, " a long, long time ago, I was a young man. I inherited this beautiful wood and park, and I thought I would share it with anyone who liked to come in. There wasn't a single trespass notice, and when I found children playing, I never turned them out.

" Soon it got to be known that I didn't mind



people coming in, and more and more came. And then—well, they left litter after their picnics. They plucked the flowers and threw them down to die. They tore the branches off the trees. You would not have known the place.

" But I was very patient. I put up wire baskets for the litter, and little notice-boards with the rules that were to be kept in the park and wood. But even then they went on leaving litter, and spoiling the flowers and trees. Not all of them, of course, but so many that they quite spoiled the place, and I loved it, you know."

He stopped speaking, and looked away over the heads of the children. Then he suddenly turned to Patsy. " Do you like your best frock ? " he asked.

" Oh yes," said Patsy, " yes, I do. It's white muslin, with little frills and a blue sash and——"

" Never mind," said the Ogre, " would you like to lend it to a little girl who hadn't one ? Say, for a party ? "

Patsy looked very grave. " I don't think I *should* like to," she said honestly. " I'd try to like to, but I don't think I should be very good at it."

" But suppose you did lend it," said the Ogre, " and suppose the little girl came back with it all over—well, all over strawberry juice." He looked at Patsy's cotton frock. " What would you feel ? "

" I'd never, never lend it again ! " said Patsy fiercely. " Never ! "

" There you are," said the Ogre. " That's just what I felt. I was very, very angry. And I put fences and walls all round the estates, and I put notices all round too. Perhaps I put too many, but you see I had been very patient, and I could not bear to see the place spoiled. Do you understand ? "

" Oh yes," said Patsy.

" Oh yes," said Pat.

" And now what about converting me ? " asked the Ogre with a twinkle in his eyes.

Patsy and Pat suddenly showed a great interest in the toes of their shoes. Their faces were very red. At last Pat looked straight at the Ogre. " The trouble with us," he said, " was that we didn't understand. We don't think it's you who

needs converting. We think it is all those people who made such a mess of everything."

Patsy nodded her head. "Only," she said, "I don't see how they're ever to be converted if they stay outside."

"Have you any ideas?" asked the Ogre.

Suddenly Pat jumped up. "Hurrah!" he said. "I know. You open the grounds whenever we're here on holiday. Then we'll be stewards of the estate, and we'll wear special rosettes."

"Oh yes, please. Could we?" asked Patsy.

"Don't interrupt," said Pat. Then he went on. "We'll have rosettes. I think nice, big, red ones would be good, and we'll patrol the park. If we see anybody making any litter we'll tell them all about how wicked it is, and then, if they don't stop, we'll turn them out."

The Ogre began to laugh at this. Pat stood up angrily, and pulled up his coat-sleeve to show the Ogre his arm.

"I'm pretty good at fighting," he said.

"Well, you shouldn't be," said the Ogre.

"There!" said Patsy joyfully.

"Anyway," said Pat defiantly, "it will be quite good for turning people out. Oh, do let us try."

"Very well," said the Ogre. "We'll start at once, and you and Patsy can convert the public."

"We could be a Society for Converting," said

Patsy hopefully. (Patsy always wanted to be a society for doing something.)

"Very well," said the Ogre. "You can be a Society for Converting the Public from Throwing Litter. I might have letters meaning that put in the middle of the rosette."

"Oh, splendid!" said Pat.

"And then," said the Ogre, "every day at tea-time you can come and report to me on how you get on with the converting, and we might have strawberries and cream."

"Oo-ooh!" said Patsy.

"Oo!" said Pat.

Which wasn't at all what they should have said, and their mother would have been very shocked. But the Ogre seemed to like it. He held out a hand to each of the twins.

"Well, it's a bargain! I'll throw the grounds open to-morrow."

4

Patsy and Pat went home full of excitement, so full that they both talked together to Farmer Giles until they were sent to bed. Even then they could not go to sleep. Their heads were too full of plans for the next day.

In the morning they were up long before breakfast-time, and Mrs. Giles had to give them

some food very early. Then they dashed off and interrupted the poor Ogre in the middle of his breakfast, so that they could talk about it all over again.

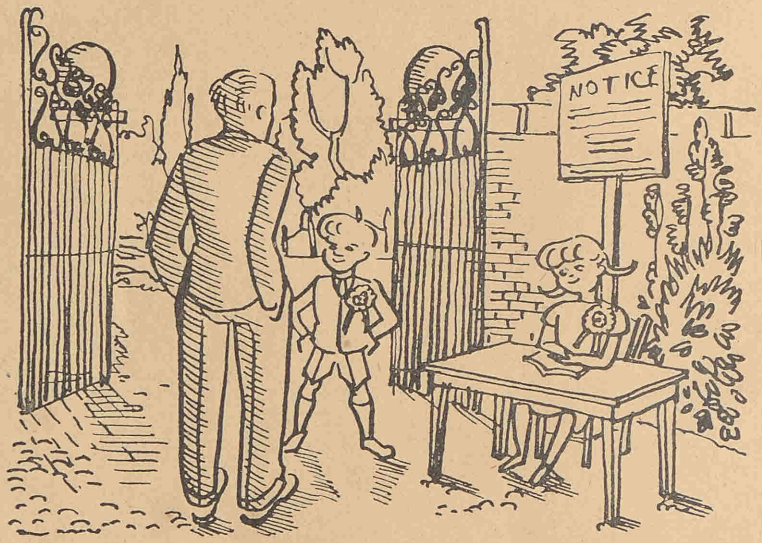
The grounds looked very different, for all the trespass notices had been taken down. But only one gate into the great park was to be opened. There, a large notice-board was standing. It said that people were free to use the grounds and stay there all day if they liked, but they must give their names to the stewards. Anyone who left any litter or did any damage was not to be allowed in again.

Patsy had put on her best summer frock. Pat had put on his brown linen suit. They both had red rosettes so big that, as the Ogre pointed out, it was very hard to see the stewards at all. But the twins had refused to have them even one-eighth of an inch smaller.

Patsy had a table and a chair just inside the gate. On the table was a brand new exercise book and a wonderful fountain-pen that had been given to Patsy by the Ogre.

Neither twin had wanted to do the writing, but at last Patsy had been unselfish and said she would do it. The pen had been a reward from the Ogre—which of course made Pat turn unselfish just a bit too late !

The idea was that the gates should be opened



at ten. Patsy should write down the names of people who came in. Pat should explain anything anyone wanted to know about the arrangement, and act as guide if necessary. He rather liked that. The whole business was a little spoiled, however, because the twins wandered round the garden before ten and even went into the greenhouse and picked strawberries. Pat ended up with a very juicy mouth, and Patsy with a smear across her nose. The Ogre did not mention it.

The juice was still there when the first visitor came. He was a tall, thin man. He gave his name and address and listened gravely to all that Patsy had to say.

" I will leave no litter," he promised solemnly. " I take it, too," he added, with a glance at Patsy's nose, " I take it that I must not pick the strawberries ? "

" Oh no," said Pat solemnly. " Oh dear me, no ! " " What an idea ! " said Patsy in her severest voice.

The tall, thin man appeared to blow his nose hard, but his face was quite serious. " I understand," he said.

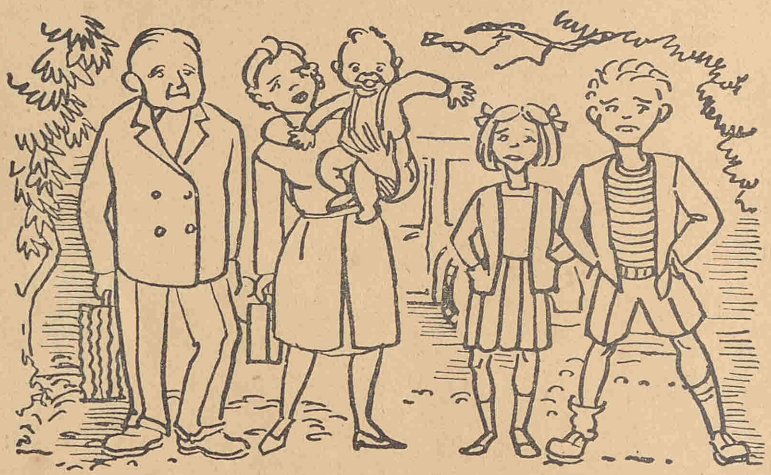
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For a long time everything went well. The people who came were very polite and well-behaved, but the twins were not exactly happy. They liked a little excitement, and they had to be so well-behaved when they were stewards that they were not sure that the feeling of importance was worth it.

Pat yawned widely. (He didn't even remember to put his hand over his mouth !) "Oh dear," he said. " Of course I'm trying hard to want everyone to behave nicely, but all the same I can't help wishing there was just somebody who wouldn't."

" I know," said Patsy. " I feel like that myself. I wish I didn't."

" We don't seem to have very good sort of feelings, do we ? " asked Pat.



" No," said Patsy, " we don't. And I think it's very hard, because we do try ! "

Just at that moment up drove a brand-new, bright-red car, and out tumbled a quarrelsome-looking family with several rather rude children. They began by refusing to give their names. If the estate was open to the public, well, it was open to the public and that was that. And they'd never given their names before, and they weren't going to now, and who were Patsy and Pat, anyway ?

Pat drew himself up till he was fully half an inch taller. " We are the stewards ! " he announced with great dignity, in spite of his dirty face.

" Stewards ! You ! Ya ! Ya ! " yelled the children.

Just at that moment a stern voice said, " Is something wrong, stewards ? "

Pat turned and explained to the Ogre. There certainly was something about that Ogre. He knew how to be dignified at the right moment. The quarrelsome family became more polite. " Oh, we didn't mean anything. Only just a joke. Quite see the point of giving our names," they said.

" Dishonest things ! " growled Pat to Patsy.

" I'm glad it was only a joke," said the Ogre in a quiet voice. " My stewards are in complete charge ! "

Pat drew himself up a little higher still. The family walked meekly into the grounds with the Ogre's eye upon them.

" You want some trouble ? " asked the Ogre turning to Pat and Patsy.

" Oh no, of course not," said Pat, sorrowfully. " I wouldn't think of wanting trouble."

But when the Ogre had moved away he glared after the quarrelsome family. " I'd like to fight them all ! " he said fiercely.

Patsy thought for a moment. " I don't think the Ogre would like it," she said doubtfully.

" Anyway," said Pat, " I'm sure they'll make a litter. I'm going in after them to stop them."

" Silly ! " said Patsy, " they've not had time

to make a litter yet. Wait till they've had their lunch. I saw they were carrying it with them."

"All right," said Pat. But I don't think he would have waited if the Ogre had not arrived at that moment with a most marvellous picnic lunch, all packed up in a hamper. He and the twins sat down in the shade of a tree where they could watch the gate. They had a grand feast.

Suddenly Pat remembered the quarrelsome family. "What am I to do?" he asked the Ogre.

"I am leaving it entirely to you," said the Ogre.

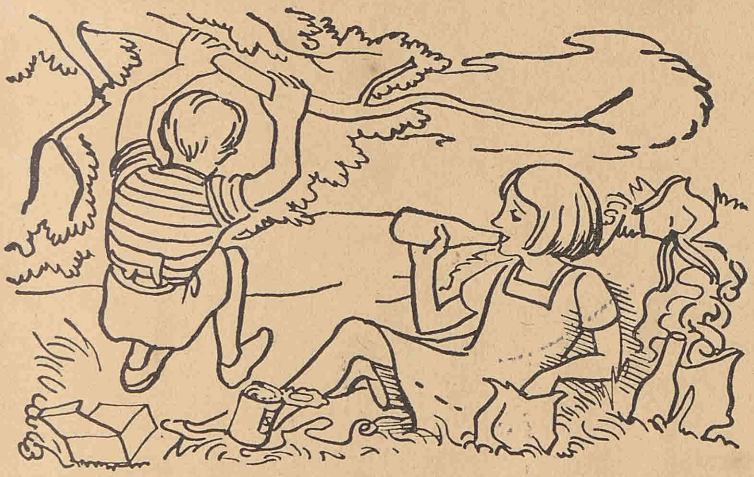
"Oh dear," said Pat.

"Well, I thought you wanted me to," said the Ogre.

"Oh, I do, really," said Pat, "only they're a very big family. Never mind. I'll go and fight them all now."

He strode off angrily into the park.

He had good reason to be angry, too. The family had made a most horrible mess. There were paper bags and empty tins, and pieces of string, and ginger-beer bottles and orange peel scattered for yards around. Apart from all that many flowers had been picked and just thrown on to the ground, and several branches had been broken off a young tree.

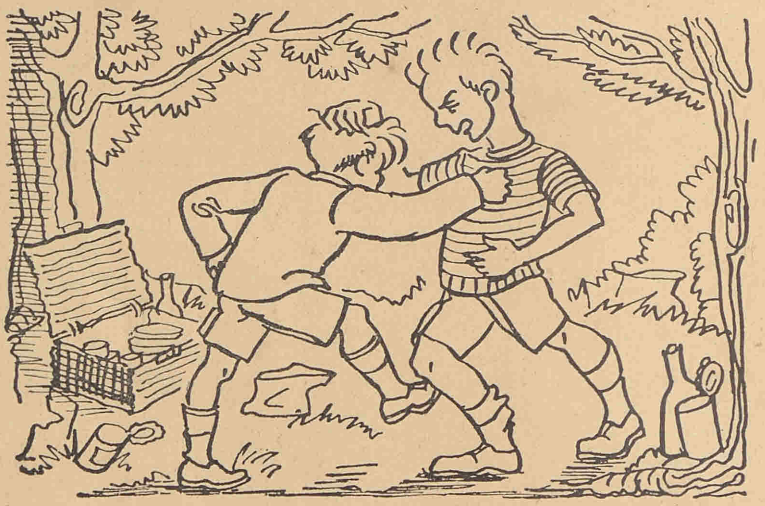


" Oh ! " gasped Pat with horror. " You must just clear all that litter up, and go right out of the grounds and never come back ! "

" We shan't ! " said the boy in the party.

Pat was too blind with rage to argue any longer. Like a small fury he just went for the boy, who was twice his size. He did not fight in the correct way. He hammered away with his fists, and kicked as hard as he could at the same time. He was far too cross to know what he was doing.

There is no doubt that he would have got much the worst of it had not the faithful Patsy come along. She crept up behind, seized the big boy round the ankles, and tripped him carefully into some bramble bushes.



While the boy was picking himself up she grabbed Pat's hand, and they ran as hard as they could. Half-way to the gate Pat stopped, bruised and panting.

"I say," he said, "we're running away. We mustn't run away."

"Yes, we must," said Patsy, "because I've got a perfectly splendid idea. We'll go and make a litter in their jolly old car!"

In spite of an eye that was quickly swelling a grin spread over Pat's very dirty face.

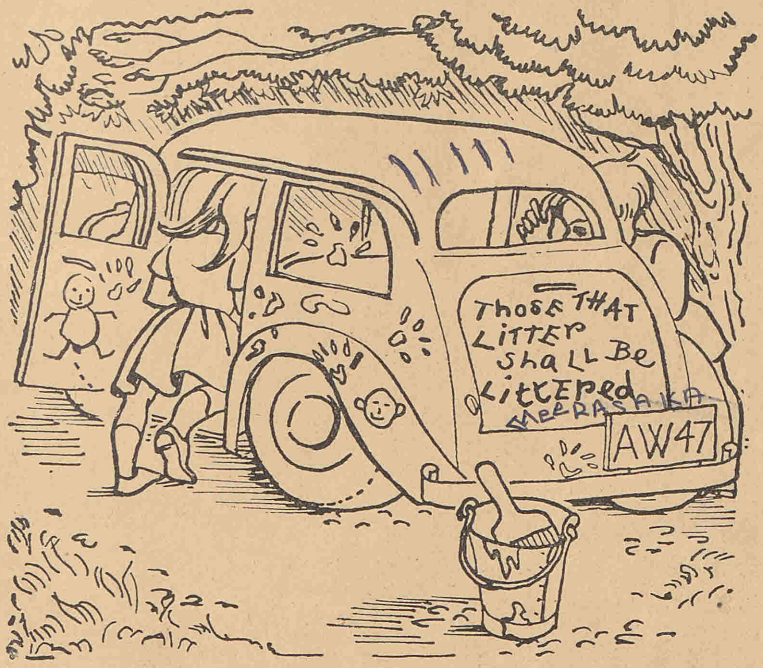
"We'll make a litter in it," he said solemnly, "and we'll do it well!"

Patsy and Pat went to the car. The picnic party thought that Pat had run away because he

was afraid, so they lay back happily among their litter and took an after-dinner nap.

Meanwhile, Patsy and Pat drew up, panting, before the big red car.

They worked hard for an hour. They got all the bits and crumbs that had been left from their own lunch, and sprinkled them all over the beautiful cushions. They decorated the bonnet with orange peel. They fetched a bucket of water and made some especially sticky mud, which they plastered in daubs all over the outside. They



fixed an empty sardine tin on the radiator. And finally, Pat dug up a large piece of white chalk and chalked laboriously : " THOSE THAT LITTER SHALL BE LITTERED."

Then they stood back to look at what they had done. Pat was warming to the job. He took out a penknife and looked at the one broken blade it contained. " I think," he said, " I might do a few scratches. I might even draw a face."

" I see," said a voice from behind which made them jump, " that you are returning evil for evil ! "

Patsy and Pat turned round, very red in the face.

" I didn't think of it that way," said Patsy.

" No," said Pat. " We were only spoiling the car as they spoiled the grounds."

" Mummy said that we should return good for evil," said Patsy.

" Yes," said Pat sorrowfully, " it's perfectly true, she did."

" Only, you see," explained Patsy, " it was the evil they did to you we were trying to put right ! "

The Ogre smiled. " You loyal infants ! " he said. " All the same, confess now, you did enjoy it."

" Well . . ." said Pat.

" Well . . ." said Patsy.

" Well, we did ! " blurted out Pat.

" Yes," said Patsy solemnly.

" Well, cheer up," said the Ogre. " It may be the only way to make them see the point. Oh, I say, here they come ! Stand back and see what happens."

Patsy and Pat stood back, one on each side of the Ogre. The family arrived. They stood still ! They stared ! And they stared some more ! And then a lot more ! They were too astonished to speak or to move. Their faces were bright red with fury !

Then, very unexpectedly, there was a loud laugh. Everyone jumped and looked round. The father of the family had his hands on his hips and was roaring with laughter. The boy who had fought Pat was clutching at his coat-tails. " Pa, I say, Pa, aren't you going to fight 'em ? "

But Pa laughed on. When he recovered he came over to Pat and held out a large, red hand. Pat offered a small and very dirty one in exchange.

" Shake," said the man. " You've got me fairly beat ! "

But Pat only stared with his mouth wide open.

" Look," said the man, " we'll jolly well go and clear up our litter, and then we'll come back and clean our car." And off they set back into the park.

" I know," said Patsy, when they had gone.



" What ? " said Pat.

" We'll go and clean up the car."

" Good ! " said the Ogre. And they all set to work. So when the family came back the car was as bright and shining and red as it was in the beginning. Then the Ogre invited them to tea, and everyone parted the best of friends.

" All through our making a mess in that car," said Pat afterwards.

" Not quite all," said the Ogre seriously.

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