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Poetry.

"IF A FELLER WUZ US FELLER DAT HIS MOTHER THINKS HE IS"

(While walking down a crowded city street the other day,
I heard a little urchin to a comrade turn and say:)

"Say, Chimmy, lemme tell youse, I'd be as happy as a clam,
If I only wuz de feller wot me mudder thinks I am.
My! she thinks I'm a wunder, an' knows dat her little lad
Would never mix wit nuttin' dat wux ugly, mean or bad.
Oh, lots o' times I sit and tink how nice 'twould be—dese Whitz—
If a feller wuz de feller dat his mudder thinks he is!"

My friend, he yours a life of toil or undulated joy,
You still can take a lesson from a small, unlettered boy.
Don't try to be an earthly saint with eyes fixed on a star—
Just try to be the fellow that your mother thinks you are.

Select Family Reading

THE HALLOWE'EN PUMPKIN

By Arthur Chamberlin

REVA was in the kitchen. Everyone in the house but the cook supposed her to be in the pleasant sitting room, where an open fire was crackling delightfully for a chilly autumn morning; but even a book of fairy tales had lost its charms when Reva sniffed the fragrance of pumpkin pies.

"I should 'most think," she confided to the cook, Mehitabel, "that there wouldn't be any pumpkins left for jacks."

"For what, Miss?" queried Mehitabel, good-naturedly.

"For jacks—jack-o'-lanterns, you know, for to-night—Hallowe'en."

"Oh now, Miss Reva," expostulated Mehitabel, "you don't want to be messing with them things—not but what there's plenty of pumpkins, but that's boys' play."

Reva sighed. Sometimes it seemed to her that boys had the best of it; anyway it was poky to play all by one's self. There was Florimel, to be sure, who could say, "papa" and "mamma," and go to sleep beautifully when you laid her down, but even Florimel couldn't take the place of a sister—and Reva sighed again, having neither sisters nor brothers.

"Do you suppose that they ever really do, Mehitabel?" she asked suddenly, coming out of a brown study.

"Bless the child!" exclaimed Mehitabel. "What is it now? Do what?"

"Turn into—things. Charlotte—as the pumpkins did in 'Cinderella'?"

"Now, Miss Reva!" protested Mehitabel. "What do you want of a chariot? Hasn't your pa got the beautifulest automobile—"

"Oh, I don't want a chariot."—Reva found Mehitabel trying at times. "I was thinking that maybe if a pumpkin could turn into a chariot it might turn into a—baby brother."

"Well, I declare, Miss Reva," snorted Mehitabel. "If your head ain't completely turned reading fairy stories. And your pa and ma just loading you down with dolls and picture-books and new dresses, and everything that you want and more'n you need, and you come fussing around the kitchen when you ought to be in the parlor playing on the piano like a little lady. My! if that ain't Alec Shields coming for the washing—'count of there being so much extry work and your ma's being that considerate—and it ain't picked up for him. Let him in, that's a good girl; Alec's a real nice boy, if he is kind of out at the elbows."

Reva opened the back door gladly, relieved at the change of subject. She beamed upon the shabbily dressed boy who stood there, staring at her in bashful admiration.

"Come right in," she welcomed him graciously. "It's real nippy this morning and the bundle isn't ready."

"And I can't leave the baking to pick up the things neither," interrupted Mehitabel. "You run upstairs, Reva, and tell your ma how 'tis, and the boy's here."

Reva left the kitchen a little reluctantly, but came dancing back in about ten minutes, just behind her mother, who carried a great bundle in her arms.

"Land's sake, Mis' Bralton!" cried the scandalized Mehitabel, "I wu'n't looking for you to do the tugging—I thought Jane—"

"She's out," laughed Mrs. Bralton. "Don't fret, Mehitabel, it won't do me any harm, and I wanted to see Alec myself. Alec, please tell your mother that I like her work very much, only I'd like the ruffles on the skirts a little stiffer. Do you think you can get one of these pies home to her all right? I suppose you've made your jack-o'-lanterns by this time?"

"Oh yes'm! Thank you 'm, no 'm," stammered Alec, flushing at Reva's giggle. He paused a moment, and then went on with a touch of dignity that cut short Reva's merriment: "Mother'll be much obliged for the pie, ma'am; but I haven't any jack-o'-lantern because I haven't a pumpkin."

"Dear me!" replied Mrs. Bralton, with reproving glance at Reva. "I think there's one pumpkin left on the vines—the one that you've insisted on wrapping up in a blanket, Reva, so that it hasn't had enough sunshine to ripen it. You can't take it along with the bundle, but if you like to come for it later—"

"Oh, thank you, ma'am!" cried Alec, but Reva wriggled protestingly.

"Oh, ma—!" she began.

"Hush Reva," commanded her mother, as Alec dragged the bundle sturdily through the door, dumping it into a little truck cart. "Surely, you don't grudge Alec a Hallowe'en jack-o'-lantern!"

Alec's eyes sparkled as he trundled home with the laundry. A pumpkin, beautiful, big—well perhaps not very big but big enough—with a grinning mouth, three-cornered nose and great staring eyes. Perhaps, if he set it up on the Bralton's fence the little girl would see it—the little girl with the blue eyes and the wavy hair—Reva—

"My patience, Alexander Shields! If it's going to take you the whole enduring forenoon to get one laundry I guess I'd better leave you to tend the house and go myself." Mrs. Shields shawled and bonnetted, beckoned impatiently from the doorstep.

Alec hurried up. "Why ma, you ain't going away now right before dinner?"

"Yes I be," Mrs. Shields was plainly disturbed. "You come right in, Alec, and look a here." She pointed to where two chairs pushed together formed a rude crib, wherein lay a baby, sucking its thumb and staring placidly at the ceiling.

"Oh, ma!" breathed Alec, bending over the baby in wondering delight.

"Should think it was 'Oh ma!'" rejoined Mrs. Shields, in a somewhat injured tone. "Passel of trampers went through the town when I was over at the store this morning—I saw 'em—and when I got back there was that little feller on the doorstep—left on my hands as if I hadn't all I could spring to, just to keep you and me half-way decent and fed and clothed and all. I've got a wash to do this afternoon, over to the minister's, and I'm starting for dinner so's to have time to see what's to be done with the poor little critter anyway. I've set out a cold bite for you, Alec, and there's some milk for the baby. You just mind him till I'm back—maybe it'll be kind o' late, and you'll have to get your supper, yourself."

She was gone before Alec could protest. He dragged a chair close to the baby and sat down disconsolately. No pumpkins, no jack-o'-lanterns, no Hallowe'en fun! He glared at the unoffending baby, whose face dimpled into a smile, while he cooed in a friendly fashion, kicking lustily. The appeal was irresistible; Alec grinned, bending over the baby.

"Well, little feller!" he laughed, cautiously poking his stubby forefinger into the largest dimple, "guess we've got to keep Hallowe'en by ourselves.

After dinner however when the baby had gone fast asleep, having been duly fed, the house seemed extremely quiet and lonely. The afternoon dragged along; small parties of boys scurried by the house, hugging pumpkins in their arms; the dry autumn leaves came tap-tapping against the window-panes.

Alec sighed as his glance roved about the room, resting upon the sleeping baby. A stray pumpkin, left unguarded upon the vine on Hallowe'en, was simply a stumbling block and a temptation in the path of a small boy—and Alec was fully aware of the fact.

"It'll be gone if I wait till ma comes home—I know it will," he fretted. "If it wasn't for that baby, I'd look up and go after it. Maybe he wouldn't wake up till I got back—but there. Ma told me to mind him—" Alec pondered a moment over the problem, when his face lighted up as a possible solution dawned and grew. He jumped up, and went to the truckle-cart, dumping the laundry on the floor. "I'll tuck the little feller right into the cart and take him 'long with me," he said to himself. "There'll be plenty of room in the cart. He covered the baby with an old coat, drew the truckle-cart cautiously over the threshold, locking the door, and started again for the Bralton's whistling merrily.

The afternoon shadows were lengthening when he reached the Bralton' gate, and Alec peered eagerly around as he drew the truckle-cart into the pumpkin patch. There was not a sign of any pumpkin's ruddy gold, but over in one corner he caught sight of an old blanket. It was wrapped about something round, something large—Alec drew close with the truckle cart and the sleeping babe; he stooped down, raised the corner of the blanket. A gleam of pale yellow greeted his eyes; he pulled the blanket away and saw the pumpkin itself. Alec's eyes grew round, for it was a huge pumpkin, a little sallow from Reva's injudicious but well-meant blanketing, yet enormous in its swelling bulk.

"I can't put that punkin in the cart along with the little feller," Alec muttered. "Much as ever it would go in all by itself. If I take the baby back and wait for ma it'll be awful late, and more's likely I'll lose the punkin, too."

He gazed irresolutely from the baby to the great house that stood out sharply against the western light. "I dassen't ask them to look after the little feller," he murmured. "Besides, after the lady's given me the punkin 'twouldn't be manners to bother 'em."

Stooping down he fumbled with the blanket, which he suddenly dropped, springing to his feet. "I declare!" he whispered to himself. "If I ain't a good mind to risk it! The little feller'll be safe and warm in the blanket—he's sound asleep—and I won't be gone no time at all!"

The baby and the pillow were quickly wrapped in the blanket's ample folds, the pumpkin was hoisted into the cart, and with one backward glance at the little heap, Alec made off homeward at good speed.

Reva was housed. She came downstairs fresh from her afternoon toilet; but even the big butterfly bow of gros-grain ribbon, blue as her eyes, and perkily erected above her golden hair, had small charms for her. She snuggled into her favorite alcove window in the library, gazing out toward the pumpkin patch.

It was almost dusk; jack-o'-lanterns were beginning to bob around corners; the golden light of a perfect October day was fast becoming a dim, mysterious radiance. Reva drew a long breath—it was Hallowe'en, a night on which anything might happen. She strained her eyes, gazing at the familiar spot where the blanket lay in its little heap.

"Oh!" she cried, jumping suddenly to her feet and peering even more intently. "It—it moved!"

There was no doubt about that. And it could not be the wind, for the wind had died down; not an autumn leaf stirred in the grass. The blanket was moving; it rose and fell in little waves and threatened to roll itself out of sight. Reva stood round-eyed, then she tremblingly unfastened the long library window, and with a little shudder of resolution stepped out on the piazza, tiptoed down the steps and scampered off towards the pumpkin-patch.

"Then they do—they really do—turn into things!" she whispered to herself as she hurried along.

She halted however within a few feet of the blanket, rising promptly into a screech—the indignant protest of a baby abandoned to its own devices.

Reva bent down hastily, unwrapping the blanket. "Oh, you dear. Oh, you cunning," she cried hugging the baby close, whose screech promptly sank to a whimper and turned into a coo. "I do believe you are the baby brother that I wanted ever'n ever so long."

"Re—va!" It was her mother calling to her from the house. Reva trudged towards her the baby in her arms.

"Oh, mother," she gasped, coming up. "The—the pumpkin's turned into a baby—it really has. Just see."

She held out the baby, which Mrs. Bralton took, wonderingly. "What do you mean, Reva?" she questioned. "Come into the house and tell me."

"I saw—I saw the blanket move," quavered Reva with saucer eyes. "Then I went to it and the pumpkin had turned into a baby, just as Cinderella's pumpkin—"

"My dear little daughter," exclaimed her mother reprovingly, "fairy tales are all very well, but surely you don't—"

Someone tapped on the door. "Come in," called Mrs. Bralton, and Jane entered plainly excited.

"If you please, ma'am," she began, "Mrs. Shields and her boy are in the kitchen—and I couldn't quite make out what they want, but it's something about a baby, and will you please see them, ma'am?"

"Show them in at once, please, Jane," replied Mrs. Bralton, glancing from the baby in her arms to Reva, who was fairly dancing with excitement. "Try to stand still, Reva," she added. "I think we are to have an explanation of this little tangle. Good-evening, Mrs. Shields." As Mrs. Shields smiled into the room pulling Alec after her. "Reva found this baby in the blanket that was around the pumpkin; perhaps you can explain."

"Explain, ma'am?" burst out Mrs. Shields. "It's all Alec's doings. I am glad it's no worse. And me leaving him to tend the baby—though it's none of mine and what to do with it I know not. And him a-leaving it to cart home a punkin for a jack-o'-lantern—and my coming home after a hard afternoon's washing and finding the house locked and neither of 'em anywheres about till Alec come trundling up with the pumpkin. It's given me a turn, ma'am; indeed it has."

Alec looked at Reva, whose face fell a little at Mrs. Shields' volubile, if slightly confused, narration.

Mrs. Bralton glanced from the baby to the two children. "May I enquire how the baby came to be with you, Mrs. Shields?" she asked.

"Left on my doorstep this morning, ma'am, while I was out. I saw some trampers going through the town—it must 'a' belonged to one of them."

The baby stirred in Mrs. Bralton's arms, cooing and dimpling; squaring off unsteadily with two small pink fists.

"Were you—thinking of keeping the baby?" inquired Mrs. Bralton slowly.

Mrs. Shields shook her. "I can't ma'am," she replied soberly. "He's a dear little feller, but Alec's as much as I can do for. The baby'll have to find a home somewhere besides our house."

"Oh mother," breathed Reva softly, reaching up to pat the baby's head.

Mrs. Bralton smiled. "Suppose we make a home for him here until we can see what better can be done, Reva. We can at least make the little stranger welcome while he is with us."

"Oh, mother. It would be delightful if we could have him stay."

"We will see, dear. Papa will be home before long. We can at least enjoy him while he is here."

Then Mrs. Bralton called the maid and arranged for the present care of the little stranger. When this was done, Mrs. Bralton turned to Alec, who was still lingering at the door to see how things were likely to come out. "It seems to me, Alec," she said, "as though that jack-o'-lantern would be a nice celebration for the baby; doesn't it seem so to you?"

Reva clapped her hands.

"I could bring it over here," said Alec proudly.

"And we will all celebrate Hallowe'en and the pumpkin and the baby!" cried Reva.

What a Hallowe'en celebration they had there on the porch with the big jack-o'-lantern and Reva's Japanese lanterns to keep it company. At the the close Reva said, "Oh, I am so glad that I saved that pumpkin."

DUNTS FOR SOLDIERS' SWEETHEARTS

Don't expect him to write to you when he is away on duty.

Don't forget he is fighting for you as well as for his country.

Don't worry your friends with your troubles; they have quite as severe ones of their own.

Don't make yourself ill by fretting; there is work for you to do for the country if you look for it.

Don't wear your anxiety on your face. The deepest love comes from the heart, and you should try and express it in serene kindliness and good temper.

Don't shut yourself up in your sorrow, but find someone whom you can help who is in the same distress.

Don't imagine that you are too unimportant to be of use in the crisis; you will find your niche if you try. They also serve who only stand and wait if they occupy the time of waiting in doing something for others.

HOW THE HORSE WON

A few days after the new farmer had purchased a horse from a thrifty Scot he returned in an angry mood.

"You told me the horse had won half a dozen matches against some of the best horses in this country. He can't trot a mile in six minutes to save himself. You lied to me," he denounced.

"I didn't lie. It was in plowing matches he took six prizes," calmly replied Sandy.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Notes from the Free Press of Thursday, November 1st, 1894

John Matthews is about to retire from his flour and feed store.

Mr. N. P. McLean has purchased the property of Mr. John Ahern on Main Street, within a few yards of his birthplace.

An Epworth League has been organized at the Brick Church, above Acton, with these officers: Hon. President—Rev. H. Caldwell; President—Miss Amy Leslie; Vice-Presidents—W. G. Gamble and John Snyder; Secretary—Miss Ella Snyder; Treasurer—Richard Johnson.

Rev. G. H. Cooke writes from Chicago that his health is gradually improving.

The Good Templar Lodge of Ballinafad visited Acton Temperance Union on Friday evening. Rev. T. H. Adams gave a good address, and Master Joe and Miss Emma Adams sang several pieces in a pleasing manner.

Mr. Howard Moore, of Crewsons Corners, left last week for Bracebridge, where he has obtained a position.

The Fred Victor Mission Hall, which has been erected by Mr. Massey, at a cost of $60,000, has been opened and presented to the Toronto Methodist Missionary Society.

Honore Mercier, Ex-Premier of Quebec, died on Sunday.

DIED

UNDERWOOD—In Erin, on October 24th, Baldwin Griffin, aged 65 years.

SHAVROAN—At Fingal, on October 24th, John Stafford, aged 66 years.

ATKINS—In Erin, on October 24th, James Atkins aged 43 years, 6 months.

ATKINS—At Dreyfoot, on October 23rd, John Quincy Adams, aged 42 years, 10 months.

"HALLOWE'EN PRANKS"

"Some merry friendly county folks
Together will convene,
To burn their nuts and pow their stocks,
And hand their Hallowe'en,
Fu' lithe that night." —Burns.

This verse, printed in black on a yellow card cut to represent a pumpkin, served as an invitation to a jolly, old-fashioned Hallowe'en party which the writer attended last Hallowe'en. When the guests arrived we were ushered into what seemed Fairyland—a Fairyland evolved from corn, pumpkins, candles, apples and mirrors. There were mirrors everywhere, all reflecting and multiplying; countless candles burning in candlesticks of every description. Above the top of each doorway were hung festoons of yellow and white corn; the windows were treated in a similar way. Here and there Jack o' Lanterns smiled amid great shocks of corn. In one door there hung a portiere of apples, strung on strings of various lengths. The guests reached for the apples nearest their height. A horseshoe hung in the midst, through which each guest tried to throw three apples, those who succeeded being assured of phenomenal luck.

Ways of discerning the future, old and new, were tried. A tub of water was filled with apples—red, yellow and green—and at these the guests shot with tiny bows and arrows. The young man or maiden who pierced the centre of a red apple was given a promise of health; plenty of money followed the arrow into the yellow, while the best of luck was in store for those who shot the green.

Fortunes were tried by three saucers. One was filled with milk, another with water, and the third contained nothing. We were all blindfolded and told to place our finger in one of the saucers. Milk indicated a wealthly marriage, water a poor one, and the empty saucer told of single blessedness.

Much fun was derived from picture fortune-telling. The hostess produced a large basketful of pictures, cut from silver-timepieces, newspapers and cards. The pictures were arranged face downward. Each guest drew one and went in another room to present it for interpretation. Here, amid dim lights, was a young lady dressed in the guise of a fortune teller. Many of the fortunes were interpreted, we thought, by her knowledge of the guests; but for those who wish to copy this idea, a partial list is given below: Picture of a ship (for a girl) indicated marriage to a sailor; (for a man) marriage to a foreigner. Money signified wealth; a star, fame; small house, love in a cottage; nut, wanting; ring, engagement; rural scene, farmer's life would be your fate; four-leaf clover, great fortune; fence, obstacle to be overcome; hour-glass, wasting opportunities; piano, music should be your work.

Numerous baskets were placed around the fireplace, and these held nuts to burn, corn to pop, apples and marshmallows to toast. The dining table was draped in green crepe paper, and pumpkins of all sizes were piled in the centre of the table. These were scooped out, lined with waxed paper, and filled with good things to eat. The supper included bannock scones and other Scotch dainties, and was eaten to the accompaniment of Scotch airs played on the piano. The only light was the candle. After enjoying the reels and hornpipes, we gathered about the dying embers in the grate fire and listened to ghostly tales related by white-draped figures. The clock striking one surprised and warned us all that unless we hied away to our homes the ghosts would pursue us and make our Hallowe'en real. After joining in singing Auld Lang Syne, we separated, knowing we had spent the best Hallowe'en of our lives.—Marion Dallas.

NECESSARY

The Sunday School teacher was talking to her pupils on patience. She explained her topic carefully, and as an aid to understanding she gave each pupil a card bearing the picture of a boy fishing.

"Even pleasure," she said, "requires the exercise, patience. See the boy fishing; he must sit and wait and wait. He must be patient."

Having treated the subject very fully she began with the simplest, most practical question:

"And now can any boy tell me what we need most when we go fishing?"

The answer was quickly shouted with one voice:

"Bait."

THE SMART STAMP CLERK

Pompous Lady—Must I put this stamp on myself?

Post Office Clerk—Well, you can if you like, but it's usual to put it on the letter.

HALLOWE'EN

Hallowe'en! Hallowe'en!
I'm blest if I know what you mean!
Tho' the average picture
Suggests such a mixture
Of pumpkins, and witches, and lanterns that gleam!

Hallowe'en! Hallowe'en!
Some day I shall know what you mean.
I would ask all about it
But most folks would doubt it,
That anyone could be so green!
—The Globe

CHRISTMAS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

The wassail round, in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked: hard by
Plum porridge stood, and Christmas pie.
Nor failed old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savory goose.
Then came the merry maskers in,
And carols roared with blithesome din.
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note and strong.
Who lists may in the mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery.
White skirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made.
But, oh, what maskers richly dight
Can boast of beauns half so light!
England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale.
A Christmas minded oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.
—Sir Walter Scott.

INVITATIONS

"Cliff, what made you scowl while I was putting that rose in Jem's buttonhole?" Stella Pierce demanded, as she ran down the steps from the porch and joined her brother. "We're not going to be late. They can't begin the play until I'm there, anyway. I'm to put on the make-up for them."

They had walked to the corner together before Cliff answered shortly, "No; I didn't think we'd be late."

"What was it, then? Surely not because I gave him the rose—a boy I've known all my life?"

"No. It wasn't the thing you did. But you took such a time about it, and held your face so close to his, and smiled up to him so. You'd have been mighty surprised, no doubt, if he had put his arms round you and given you a hug?"

Stella's head went up haughtily. "What a thing to say to me, Cliff Pierce! Jem wouldn't dare touch me. The boys all know they can't take liberties with me."

"All the same, your whole manner was an invitation. You needn't get angry, sis. I know you didn't mean anything by it, but girls don't understand how some things seem to boys, and I have noticed that way you have with the fellows before. It's just as if you dared them come on. I tell you, you've got to look out. If one of 'em should take you up some day you'd have yourself to thank."

"I consider your remark insulting," said Stella, in high disdain, and they walked in silence the rest of the way to the hall where the amateur theatricals were to be given.

Once in the midst of the exciting hurry behind the scenes, Stella forgot her grievance, and taking out rouge-pot, and brushes and pencils, began her work.

"Who next?" she asked, presently, as she was completing a pair of beautiful eyebrows for one of the girls.

"Take Mr. Atwater!" cried the busy "leading lady." "We shall want him first of all."

"But I don't need any paint," objected the big, handsome fellow as he dropped into the chair before Stella.

"Of course you do," she retorted, dimpling down at him. "You'd look like a ghost without it behind those footlights."

Then the flurry about them went on, and Stella, recognizing a new dash of spice in her task, tried to seem unconscious while she worked of the black-eyed stare of admiration, which never wavered.

"Well, I'm reconciled to paint," young Atwater remarked, meaningly, as she put on the finishing touches. "My face is yours, to do anything you like with it."

"No, thank you," she answered, regretfully. "Not with all that rouge on it."

"Take some of it off," he challenged, and just then it happened that the leading lady hurried half a dozen performers to the stage, leaving the two by themselves for an instant.

"I—don't know where to begin," Stella flung back, still laughing.

"Begin with my lips," he said, with a quick step forward, and ten seconds later Stella stood alone in the room, ready to stamp the floor in helpless rage.

"I hate him! I hate him!" she said aloud. "Impertinent! Common! How dared he?" She was rubbing the smear of rouge from her own angry face, and as she did so the details of her own part in the scene just past flashed before her. Like a judgment, she heard her brother's words, "Yourself to thank."

"It's true," she owned to herself, turning her crimson face away as three more actors in need of complexion came trooping into the room.

"Oh, I'm ashamed!"

THINGS BEING EQUAL

"Mother," said Tommy, "is it correct to say that you 'water a horse' when he is thirsty?"

"Yes, my dear," said his mother.

"Well, then," said Tommy, picking up a saucer, "I'm going to milk the cat."—Ladies' Home Journal.