

# A DANDY DILEMMA

*A story about the importance of honesty*

Moonbeams frosted the treetops with light, as they danced  
through tree limbs all silvery white.  
The Bog floor was bathed in a dim, misty haze, taking it's glow  
from the moons gentle rays.  
Fireflies flickered like strung Christmas lights, decorating the  
trees with twinkling delights.  
They made not a sound in their neon display, only adding a spark  
to this midnight soiree.

Tree frogs and crickets had long ceased their singing, the sun  
having set with its dark curtain bringing,  
Much needed sleep to the tired, weary eyes of each critter  
family who would soon need to rise.

Snoring and sneezing, sighing and wheezing, sleep cuddled them  
cozy in dreams that were pleasing.  
Except for one critter who sat by her fire, staring into the  
flames as sleep would deny her.  
It seemed she'd been sitting for days on end, not wanting to  
move, just sit and pretend,  
That what happened was just a crazy nightmare, that she'd soon  
wake up from and shed her despair.

Dandy O'Lyon, a wee porkypine, had come from a long line of very  
fine swine.  
A handsome pink lass with large eyes and round nose, she was  
exuberance and charm from her head to her toes.

But, not on this night, when tears wouldn't stop... she'd been labeled a "Snigglet!" a piggety flop.  
"How could this have happened? Where did I go wrong?" wailed a heartbroken Dandy in a heartbroken song.  
It all happened so quickly, so naively at first and before you could blink, things had turned for the worst.

It started when the Mayor decided he'd hire the exuberant Miss Dandy as the local town crier.

She'd stride through the Bog with her large brassy bell, calling out the headlines of the news she'd soon tell.

However...

When there wasn't much news or it seemed to be boring, she'd gussy it up so they'd not be ignoring,  
Her or the news that she told with such flair, often pulling these stories out of thin air.

The attention she craved was her foremost desire, but she twisted the truth making her the town liar.

The critters never paid it a lot of attention, when she charmed them with stories of her own invention,

But...

This day I fear would be Dandy's downfall; she'd crossed that fine line with a tale just too tall!

It seemed the Bog Mayor, a personable chap, had been caught in the midst of a nasty Bog flap.

He'd decided to have an enormous parade that would raise needed funds for the Bog Fire Brigade.

They needed new helmets and black rubber boots, ladders and a hose with a nozzle that shoots,

A voluminous plume high into the air, which could douse any fire, anytime, anywhere.

The parade would be a colossal undertaking, with floats, bands  
and marchers and everyone baking,  
Wonderful treats that they'd sell to support the Bog Firefighters  
whose finances fell short.

Well...

Dandy thought this a marvelous matter and decided the headlines  
should bolster and flatter,  
The Mayor and Brigade so the affair would sell out, so she  
marched to Bog Square and started to shout.

"Headlines! Headlines! Bog Mayor starts a fire, at Bog firehouse  
that would not expire!  
Fire burns for hours causing Mayor to succumb to the flames and  
heat causing pandemonium.  
Courageous firefighters save the Mayor and the day,  
So Mayor decides he'll increase firefighters pay!"

There was after all a smidgen of truth to this outrageous  
headline she broadcast without proof.  
The Mayor did start a fire at the local fire station, but to bar-  
be-cue hot-dogs, hardly a fire conflagration!  
The Mayor a decidedly decent old chap, just ate too many hot  
dogs and decided to nap.  
But his wife upon hearing Dandy's headline, ran straight to the  
station terrified by the swine.

Seeing her husband lying still in the shade, she flung herself on  
him in an effort, to give aid.  
Pinching his nose, she beat on his chest, bending down to give  
air, but the Mayor in distress,

Shot up with a start, crashing into her snout, breaking both of their noses and knocking her out.

The Mayor tried to lift her and bring her back round, but he tripped on her purse, falling back on the ground, Twisting his ankle and shrieking in pain, waking his wife who now thought him insane.

She jumped up to grab him but could barely see, tripping back over him and twisting her knee.

They lay in a tangle trying to figure out why, each was battered and bruised with a swollen black eye.

The firefighters all ran to give aid to the pair, untangling and giving them plenty of air.

Thank goodness their injuries were not too severe, but they'd take time to heal and that was quite clear.

They bandaged and soothed the bruised, mangled pair, taking them home for some rest and repair.

On the way the Mayor asked his still shaking wife, just why she attacked him causing all of this strife.

"Why...Dandy was yelling that you had been burned, so I came to your rescue as soon as I learned."

"But surely," the Mayor cried, "You saw fireman there, did you think they'd ignore me, that they just wouldn't care?!"

"Don't you dare get annoyed over me trying to save my very own husband from a fiery grave.

Dandy said you'd succumbed to the heat and the flames, now I take the brunt of her lies and head games.

You just don't love me or you wouldn't yell," wailed his wife dropping yet another bombshell.

Seething with anger over what was implied, he yelled, "Bring me Miss Dandy, the snigglet that lied!"

Dandy was shocked at the sight of the two, with breaks, bumps and bruises, their eyes black and blue.

"Oh how did this happen, you're both such a mess! Some terrible accident would be my best guess."

"Not even close!" the Mayor growled in a rage, "If you'd only been honest and acted your age,

Then we would be fine and our noses unbroken, but you had to speak what was better unspoken!"

Telling the truth's the job of the crier, but you've made a profession out of being a liar!

I'll tell you the truth, I regret you were hired, so consider yourself real good and fired!"

Dandy's mouth fell open and her eyes filled with tears, as the Mayor's accusations rang in her ears.

Trudging home in the dark, alone with her shame, she realized she had only herself to blame.

Sitting and shaking in front of her fire, Dandy wondered how she'd ever escape this quagmire.

Hartlie out making his evening rounds was startled to hear Dandy's snorty, sob sounds.

He knocked on her door and politely inquired, "May I come in and chat if you're not too tired?"

"Oh Hartlie, I'm done for," Dandy sniffled then wailed, "I'm a totally miserable piglet whose failed!"

She told him about all the mess she was in, how she kept telling lies even knowing that's sin.

"Just one little lie and look what it cost...my name, my friends and my job...they're all lost!"

"You know Dandy...

Lying hurts us all as it cheats and connives and ends up affecting those in our lives.

You meant only to help the Bog Fire Brigade, but the lies caused a calamitous commotion I'm afraid.

But...

If you'll start telling the truth from now on, then the pain from this lying will soon be gone.

Just ask forgiveness from God and the Mayor, then the healing can start and will clear the air.

God's love is so large He'll always forgive if we're sorry then promise a better life to live.

Well...

You've heard how pigs squeal and she did...with delight, deciding to change starting that very night.

All night they were praying, laughing and crying and by sunrise there was absolutely no more denying,

That a brand new Dandy had a brand new heart and was terribly grateful for her brand new start.

By noon Dandy had her plan formulated, but she'd have to work quick needing so much donated.

Making the rounds of each home one by one, she explained how she had to undo what she'd done.

"Could you help me to build a float for the parade, I'm helping raise funds for the Bog Fire Brigade."

Amazed by her fervor they loaded her up, with gourds, vines and baskets of gold buttercups.

A wagon with bells and some sweet, new mown hay; they'd give all they could to help Dandy repay.

The parade was tomorrow and the sun would soon set, but  
darkness wouldn't stop this determined piglet.  
She worked by the silvery stars and moonlight, gathering fireflies  
to help light the cool winter night.

The sun gently rose revealing the day, casting light on the float  
now in stunning array.  
Garlands of brilliant, perfume laden flowers, dripped colorful  
blossoms round twin heron towers.  
Hay cradled a pumpkin filled up to its brim with sparkling creek  
water and five fishes who'd swim,  
Up on their tails, spewing a silvery mountain; a fabulous, festive,  
five faucet, fish fountain.  
Ribbons dripped elegance from each heron wing, as a chorus of  
mockingbirds would chirp and sing.  
There'd not been a float in all of these years, that was such a  
sweet site for sore eyes and sore ears.

The float pulled up to the Mayor's front door, Dandy knocked  
timidly then began to implore,  
"Mr. Mayor...  
I'm so sorry for all the damage I've done, please forgive me and  
see I'm a brand-new someone.  
You were right to have fired me as the local town crier, but I'm  
making amends; I'm no more the town liar.  
We've built this float with seats for you two, to help raise that  
needed fire brigade revenue."

Astounded, the Mayor and his wife climbed aboard, nestling  
comfortably atop a soft cushioned gourd.

The parade jangled merrily down the winding Bog road, with gasps  
and cheers for the float to be slowed.  
All were thrilled and amazed by this dazzling sight, applauding  
and dancing, overcome with delight.  
Reaching deep in a pocket, purse or a bag, they flung coins on the  
float till it started to sag.

The Mayor was all smiles sitting waist high in charge, knowing  
that the fire gear was now within range.  
Overnight God had turned all the misery around, Dandy now a Bog  
hero, a critter renowned.  
They hoisted her up on the float with the Mayor and she rode  
through the Bog streets floating on air.  
A breeze billowed the ribbons as the herons gave salute, to God's  
loving forgiveness, a fitting tribute.  
As they passed Hartlie by, he chuckled with pleasure...for the  
float, for Dandy and God's love beyond measure.

*The end... or could it be...? THE BEGINNING!*

# THE BEGINNING

*Scriptures from the Holy Bible that show us the importance of honesty*

**Proverbs 24:26** An honest answer is like a kiss of friendship.

**Psalm 34:12-14** Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Then keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies!

**2 Timothy 2:15-16** Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive His approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behavior.

**Proverbs 13:3** Those who control their tongue will have a long life, opening your mouth can ruin everything.

**James 1:26** If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless.

**James 3:2** Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whoever would believe in Him should not perish but have life everlasting.

This series was written in an effort to help children understand that nothing can overcome us if we are walking close to Jesus, trusting in His love and obeying His commandments.