

FUSSY SNICKET

A story about anger and self-control

Light shimmered from icicles that frosted the roof; sparkling pendants offering frostbitten proof, that winter had come in one fierce arctic blast, reminding the critters no season would last.

An overnight snow had covered the ground, draping shrubbery in a marshmallowey mound.

Once brown leafless trees now wrapped in pure white, each snowflake holding on to another real tight.

A delightful scene so fresh, clean and pure that even the birds weren't terribly sure they'd want to track over this idyllic scene, disturbing the beauty of this snow so pristine.

But...

The slam of a screen door so brash and rude, broke the air, scattered birds and shattered the mood.

"Just look at all this disgusting mess!" snapped Miss Fussy Snicket all swaddled in stress.

"Can't they make snow fly up instead of fall down...I'm sick of the mess!" she snarled with a frown.

Grabbing a corn broom, she swept good and hard, trying to rid every inch of snow out of her yard.

It frazzled her nerves when things weren't in place and would always show up in her voice and her face.

Some little birds flew to the spot where she'd swept, looking for food in the snow where she'd stepped.
But she sliced through the air, her broom now a sword, "***Get out of my yard and my life!!!*** she roared.

Stomping back to her cottage so tidy and clean, she felt justified in behaving so mean.

"I didn't invite you birds or this snow, so you both need to leave, git outta here...go!"

Fussy had spent her adult life alone, which was fine with the critters who thought her a crone.

Her huffing and puffing, her speaking her mind, even though no one asked, even though so unkind, was simply more than most critters could take, so they stayed far away for their sanity's sake.

She walked up the path and through the front door, tiptoeing across her sparkling clean floor.

Fussy required nothing less than perfection, her life must be tidy in every direction.

That's how she liked her time and her space...a place for everything and everything in its' place.

And if any dared differ with her will or her way...they'd be an immediate price to pay.

No one knew where her prickly temper came from but they knew she'd explode like a nuclear bomb.

She pulled up a chair to sit by the fire, but a knock at the door again provoked ire.

"If you're selling stuff, you're wasting your time, cuz I'm not buying and you're not gittin a dime!"

"Oh no Miss Snicket, I've nothing to sell, but I've something to give and something to tell."

"Well...if you're absolute certain that there's no charge...shove it under the door if it's not too large!"

Miss Snicket...

What I have to give won't go under a door and it isn't for sale at any Bog store.

Wont you just let me have a brief word with you?" "No...not now or ever!!!" screamed the snickety shrew.

How could she not want what he had to give? Why, living without it was no way to live!

But...one doesn't want water when there is no thirst and you can't fix a dam before it has burst.

Scratching his head, Hartlie ambled away, saddened by the choices she'd made that day.

But he was far too busy to be sad for long and he'd much rather dwell on what's right than what's wrong.

Meanwhile, at Miss Snicket's immaculate house, a storm started brewing, involving a mouse.

It seems that the cottage she thought she owned, wasn't hers at all but had merely been loaned.

Her father had given it to her so she thought, never realizing in fact it had never been bought.

It had been in the Snicket family for years, with no mention of the fact it had been in arrears.

Now here was a young upstart of a mouse, who was brazenly stating that **he** owned **her** house.

Well this was more than Miss Snicket could take; she exploded with anger and started to shake.

"How dare you come into my very own house, declaring it's yours you preposterous mouse!"

"Well ma'am...

I'm sorry that you're so very upset, but your bad attitude leaves me no regret...

I was going to let you live here for free, until such time you and I could agree, on a date and a place for you to move out, but it seems you wont talk, and prefer to just shout.

With that in mind, I'll ask you to leave now...I'm sure you can find a new home somehow.

Well...

Fussy's eyes bulged out and flashed with fire, her nose twisted sideways and began to perspire.

"Come here you rotten little rodent!!!" she screamed, but he scampered away fearing that he'd get creamed.

The chase was on and the furniture flew, Fuss hurling insults and dishes too.

"This will be one day you'll never forget!! I'll make you wish that we'd never met!!!"

Round and round that cottage they flew, the mouse trying to out race that hopping mad shrew.

"Take this!" Fussy cried, swinging her broom, knocking the mouse clear across the front room.

Then...

They jumped over tables and flew under chairs, raced up the banisters then tumbled down stairs.

Skidding across the shining, waxed floor, she then whacked the poor mouse clean out the front door.

He flew through the air landing in the front yard; Fussy grabbed hold the door, slamming it so hard that every pane in the cottage shattered, but she was so angry that nothing else mattered.

She stood in the ruins of her once tidy life, shrieking how a mere mouse had caused all this strife.

Seething...she stomped off to make a report, ***"I'll have him arrested and then see him in court!"***

She marched up the hill and then across town; flabbergasted her life had been turned upside down.

She reached the police station and yelled for the chief, accusing the mouse of being a thief.

"He's trying to steal my own home from me, so throw him in jail and don't let him free!!!"

"Miss Snicket...

I first need to talk with you then this thief and I'd certainly appreciate you making it brief."

"Are you telling me you don't have the time, to hear my complaint and help solve this crime!

You don't need to talk with that rascally mouse, just take it from me...he's a genuine louse!"

"Miss Snicket...

If you don't stop all this screaming and yelling, It'll be the Bog judge that you'll be telling!"

"That's fine by me cuz I'm not budging...just get that old judge and let him start judging!"

Well, the chief grabbed a hold of Fussy's small arm; set her inside the jail where she'd do no harm.

"Now you can scream to your hearts content, while I get to the bottom of this whole argument!"

"You can't put me in jail where I don't belong; I'm completely innocent, I've done nothing wrong!"

"Ma'am...it's against the law to disturb the peace, so you'll be sitting in jail until you cease!"

He locked the cell door, then left her alone, her wailing sounding like some tortured trombone.

The ear splitting sounds caught Hartlie's attention, of a demented critter now held in detention.

He ran to the jail; peered inside to see, a disheveled, hysterical angry Fussy.

"Miss Snicket...

What in the world are you doing here? I'm sure this is not what it seems to appear!"

"Hartlie...I'll tell you the truth, I've done nothing wrong, they don't understand...I'm just a little headstrong.

I've been this same way since I was a kid, when I get good and mad, I just flip my lid.

I only get mad when I don't get my way...or get what I want...or...or have my own say.

Oh me...

It looks like I'm angry most of the time, but I never believed it would end up a crime!"

I can't help the way God put me together...I just live my life at the end of my tether.

"Miss Snicket...

What you said about God simply isn't true, but a temper like yours is a major clue.

Someone, somehow, somewhere, someway, hurt or spoiled you and it's led to this day.

*When we stay so angry it sinks deep in our heart; makes our
bodies sick, tears out soul apart.
Then all of a sudden it seems O.K. to say what we want so we can
get our own way.
Or maybe we're quiet, sulk or pout; there's more than one way
that our anger comes out.
Anger's like an anchor that holds you fast, it wont let go; keeps
you stuck in the past.
You've allowed your anger to shake you around , like a little rag
doll that some dog just found.
Let's get to the bottom of why your so mad, then that will make
room in your heart for some glad.
Are you willing to forgive those who caused pain in your past, so
that you can get over your anger at last?"*

Fussy looked up as it started to rain; it came through the bars
but she didn't complain.
It mixed with her tears, feeling cool, sweet and clean, washing
over those years she'd been angry and mean.

"Hartlie...

*There's much to think on and I'm terribly tired, could we talk
again soon when my jail times expired?"*

*"Of course Miss Snicket, this matter will keep, we'll take up
where we left off...you just get some sleep."*

She lay on the hard cot listening to the rain, recalling and
forgiving those who'd caused her pain.

At sun up the police chief came in with some food, preparing
himself for her sour attitude.

"Miss Snicket...

*You'll need to eat now as we're leaving soon, you're to appear in
court sometime around noon.*

*The Bog circuit judge is one tough old bird, so you'd best be behaving, not saying a word.
If he sees you throwing a hissy fit, I'm warning you now, he won't like it one bit."*

Oh chief...

*I had no idea how others saw me, and what an ill-tempered grouch I've allowed myself to be.
Can we go and talk to that judge right away? I've a life to start living and a debt to repay."*

Well...

*The chief was stunned but he walked her to court, stood before the judge and give his report.
The judge leaned over, then looked down his nose... "Miss Snicket, you have something to say I suppose!?"*

*"Yes your honor, I'm really ashamed, I've behaved rather badly... and I'm to be blamed.
But... Hartlie has really helped me to see, that I simply can't change anyone but me.
So I have, and hope I can start brand new, by paying that mouse the money he's due.
I'll even give him a room upstairs and throw in a bed, couch, table and chairs.*

"Miss Snicket...

*I need to make sure you've not lost your mind; it's unlike you to be so considerate and kind!
But...If you mean what you say, I'll let you off this time, as you've never before had a problem with crime."
"Oh, thank you your honor, you'll not be sorry, I'll make you proud, you don't have to worry."*

The first place Fussy determined to go was to Hartlies', in order to let him know that she'd listened to what he'd said that night and no longer wanted to fuss and fight.

Fussy left that old courthouse and walked down the street, so friendly and courteous to all those she'd meet. She walked with her head up and a smile on her face; there was joy in her heart and a new life to embrace.

On the way she noticed the world through new eyes...greener trees, redder roses, whiter clouds, bluer skies.

"How could I have missed all this beauty?" she mused, "Guess you can't see for looking when you have a short fuse..."

She walked alongside the meandering creek; grateful she'd found that sweet peace we all seek.

Singing a song from years long past...*"I'm free thank God, yes I'm free at last."*

The end...or could it be
THE BEGINNING

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Scriptures from the Holy Bible that help us with anger.

Proverb 15:18 a gentle answer turns away anger but a harsh word stirs it up.

James 1:19-20 my dear friends, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteousness that God desires.

Ephesians 4:26-27 do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold.

Psalms 133:1 how good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity.

Proverbs 13:3 he who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

Proverbs 22:24-25 do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.

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

This series was written in an effort to help children understand that no problem can overcome us if we are walking close to Jesus, trusting in His love and obeying His commandments.