

# THE PATIENCE OF PETUNIA

The importance of patience.

They say that opposites attract and I'm certain that they do,  
and this is just one story about a certain two.  
One with lots of patience and one with none to spare, one loved  
peace and quiet, the other loved warfare.  
How these two became good friends was puzzling to all, even to  
their looks as one was short the other tall.

Grimly was explosive to say very the least, he was a very doomy,  
gloomy, pessimistic beast.  
His looks reflected much of what was happening in his heart, his  
face forever frowning, forcing critters to depart.  
He never had a pleasant, kind or gentle word to say, preferring to  
make fun of those who loved to laugh and play.

Petunia on the other hand was full of life and smiles, and critters  
thought so much of her they'd walk for several miles  
just to spend some time and laugh with her, forgetting all  
their woes, she made them feel as though they'd be best  
friends and never foes.

She loved her fellow critters and saw in them the very best,  
unlike Grimly who never saw much good, thinking most were  
just a pest.

Petunia was the only real, true friend that Grimly had,  
but he just treated her like the all others which was sad.  
Many critters shook their heads, asking why she stuck around,  
*"I suppose because he needs me, he's so lost and I'm so  
found."*

Why...

*What would he do if I just left and never did come back..."*

*"Well, we wouldn't blame you if you did for taking all his flack."*

*"Oh... It's not so bad," Petunia sighed "I've learned to tune it out, but I must admit it does get hard when he decides to pout.*

*He goes for days and will not talk when he gets mad at me,  
but I just keep on praying that one day he'll get set free.*

*Besides... I'm not perfect either, we all need guidance and correction, it's simply easier to see another's faults and imperfection.*

Well...

*we stay away then we don't have to put up with his moods, they just lead to wounded feelings and fuel further feuds."*

*"I understand completely," she sighed, "it's even difficult for me, sometimes I think the sky might fall if the two of us agree."*

Now Grimly and Petunia lived next door to one another, she was like his sister and he was like her brother.

Each morning she would smile and wave hoping he would smile right back, but though he waved, he never smiled, afraid his face might crack.

Petunia tried for years to help him see the need for change, to find the good in others, which he thought very strange.

*"All my family's like this!" he would snarl and get defensive "it's not my fault that everyone's annoyingly offensive!"*

Well...

One day he invited her along to the Chicken Coop Café, as the special on that day was his most favorite entrée.

She was ever so glad to go along as she really enjoyed their food, and hoped that he'd behave himself and not say something rude.

But the very minute they sat down, Grimly started up, aggravated poor Petunia had started to hiccup.

It didn't happen often, but oh my when it did, she couldn't eat or drink a thing, making Grimly flip his lid.

***"Now we'll have to wait to eat... and I'm starving half to death, you can stop those stupid hiccups if you'll just hold your breath."***

*"I'll try it Grimly,"* Petunia cringed, *"but it doesn't usually work,"*

***"Well do it anyway,"*** he snapped, ***"things like this drive me berserk!!!"***

So she...

Pinched her nose and held her breath but still the hiccups came, she pulled her ear, she crossed her eyes but the results were just the same.

The waitress brought her water and she tried to take a sip, but the hiccups wouldn't let her get the glass up to her lip.

*"Why don't you order Grimly (hic) and don't worry about me, I'll just sit here for a little while, (hic) they'll get better, wait and see." (hic)*

Grimly was simply starving, so with menu now in hand, he called the waitress over and gave her this command.

*"I want some soup and salad, I want butter and a roll, I want that veggie stew with carrots and make it a great big bowl."*

He gave no please or thank you, he gave no pleasant smile, there was only ***"Ya better make it quick, I've been waiting a long while!"***

The waitress frowned at his orders and at his ill mannered ways, she'd been warned 'the customers always right because they're the one that pays.'

So...

She tried to smile and soften things by trying to be funny, *"Hey, I bet you'll get much sweeter if you eat a little honey."*

Grimly glared at the waitress, not in the least amused, then she became really nervous, upset and rather confused.

She ran to place his order, but to her utter dismay, the stew was sold out, now what would she say to Grimly that grumpy gourmet.

Shaking she went back to give Grimly the news, asking if he'd like a free fritter, perhaps if she gave him something to eat he'd become a more pleasant critter.

*"I don't want a free fritter what I want is that stew, and I'm sick and tired of waiting, **so rustle some up and make it real quick cuz it's on of my last nerve you're grating!"***

*"Sir I am really sorry, but the fact is we're simply sold out, so how would you like me to get you some of our famous homemade bog kraut?"*

**"Kraut!?"** he scowled, **"I can't stand the stuff!"** then he started stamping his feet, *"Wh..wh..well sir... then how about a piping hot, fresh baked, juicy beet?"*

Grimacing he snarled...

***"Did you ever hear a chicken sneeze? Did you ever see a dog without fleas?***

***Did you ever think that the sun might freeze? Well the answers no, if you pretty please."***

He stood up, then bent down an inch from her nose and that's when the poor waitress froze, but... when tears started trickling down both her cheeks, well that's when Petunia arose.

*"Grimly!...*

*I've heard quite enough now you just need to stop, you're scaring her out of her wits, I'm not sitting here one mean, minute more, nor putting up with your impatient fits!"*

*"What do you mean, you can't just walk out and leave me here all alone!"*

*"Well that's exactly what I'm planning to do if you don't soften your tone!"*

*"You've got to be kidding, this wasn't my fault I just wanted my food right away, I'll just order something else instead, so sit down, I want you to stay."*

Petunia cocked her head to one side and looked straight into his eyes, then what came out of her sweet little mouth was a shock and total surprise.

*"Grimly..*

*Did you ever see a dragon fly? Did you ever think wet could be dry? Did you ever think that low was high? Well a big fat no is my reply!"*

For the first time Grimly was lost for words, as she'd never done this before, he watched as she quietly folded her napkin, then made for the café door.

All of a sudden his stomach decided it didn't want any food, so he tucked his tail between his legs and went sullenly home to brood.

He pulled down the shades in his large, gloomy home, then sat down to figure out why, his entire life had gone sideways, while trying hard not to cry.

He sat there for days all by himself, alone with his wounded pride, hoping she felt as bad as he did for tossing their friendship aside.

*"How could Petunia have done this to me when she knows she's my only friend, now what will I do with the rest of my life, without her it feels like the end."*

It had now been ten days since the café affair when he heard a knock at the door, it was little kid critters out raising some funds for the homeless, the sick and the poor.

They knew of his mean reputation, how he ranted, raved and pouted, so they stood well back from his massive oak door, shivered and shook and then shouted.

*"Hi Mr. Grimly would you like to help out, we're helping raise funds for the needy,"* but...they should have known better as Grimly had always been self-centered, impatient and greedy.

***"You've got to be kidding, I'm not made of money, I'll not give you one thin dime, so you'd better get off of my porch right now and stop wasting a gentleman's time!!!"***

Now **off** of my porch and **out** of my life, I've no patience for things of this sort, and for goodness sake don't give me that look," he said slamming the door with a snort.

Sadly the critters stepped off Grimly's porch and waddled slowly away, except for dear Teenie, who'd been lame all his life and had put so much hope in this day.

You see...

The Bog critters had all decided, that they'd do whatever they could, to raise needed funds that would fix Teenie's legs and allow him a normal childhood.

Back inside...

Grimly walked over and plopped down in his chair, alone once again and so blue, wondering how in the world things had gotten like this and why friends in his life were so few.

But a knock on the door hoisted Grimly back up, his patience nowhere in sight, he'd get rid of those critters once and for all or there'd be one enormous fight.

Snatching a broom he wrenched open the door, swinging with all his might, it smacked poor Teenie broadside, forcing him on a fearful flight.

Grimly looked on in sheer horror, as Teenie flew threw the air, he hit the fence in Petunia's yard, but all he could do was just stare.

Petunia came running when she heard Teenie's wail, bending down to give comfort and aid, she shook as she craddled him to her; he looked so frail and so frayed.

"Teenie," she pleaded, "are you alright, Teenie wake up, talk to me'...but Teenie lay limp not making a sound nor hearing her fretful plea.

Panic grabbed her throat when she looked at his legs; they lay twisted and grotesquely bent, it was all so unfair as his legs had already caused him so much torment.

Frantic, they rushed him to Dr. Brandnew, who raced in to operate, "I'll let you know what I find," said the doctor, "be praying it's not too late."

The minutes ticked by then the hours, what could have been taking so long; Grimly frantically paced the hospital hall, knowing Teenie was not very strong.

Petunia stood up and told Grimly "I'm going to Hartlie for prayer, I'll bring him back to the hospital, he'll help us get through this nightmare."

When the two arrived back at the hospital, there still hadn't been any word, of Teenie or his condition or the injuries that had occurred.

Hartlie asked Grimly what happened, Grimly shook his head in despair, "I...I never meant any harm," he whispered, "I only wanted to give them a scare.

"Things just get on my nerves" he grieved, "I get impatient and so aggravated," "I've been trying to explain that's self-centered," said Petunia, getting now somewhat irritated.

"That cannot be right is it Hartlie? That's not how I want to be," "Well, I'm afraid there's some truth in what she says, so sadly I must agree.

*Impatience is thinking of just what we want and how we want things to be, and when things don't go as we want, we get cranky and all crotchety.*

*We fuss when things don't go as they should or when others get in our way, but it takes a toll on ourselves and others; I'm afraid there's price to pay.*

*Sometimes we lose a friendship, sometimes we lose a wife, sometimes we lose the respect of others, impatience can ruin your life.*

*Without patience we have no peace and without peace we have no joy, then everyone and everything in life seems to offend or simply annoy.*

*Have you found yourself getting lonely? Have your friends simply had enough?" "It's true," said Petunia, "I know I've stayed away, as Grimly can make life pretty tough."*

*"Hartlie" whispered Grimly...*

*"I feel lower than an old wagon rut, I'm scared, I feel different and strange." "Well Grimly, perhaps it's taken this mishap, for you to see the need for change."*

*"Hartlie, if God will let little Teenie live, I promise from now on I'll be, smiling not frowning, blessing not fussing, helping others like me get set free."*

*About that time Dr. Brandnew walked out, an enormous smile lighting his face, "Well, he's all fixed up, including his legs, but he'll need an expensive brace."*

*"No problem, no problem," Grimly jumped up and down, "I'll take care of any expense!" "Well, that's to your credit," said Hartlie, "and will help overcome this offence."*

Overjoyed that Teenie would now be fine, Grimly danced up the hall and then down, an enormous grin planted all over his face, he now looked and behaved like a clown.

No one had ever seen Grimly like this, laughing and playing the fool, why he had everyone laughing hysterically, thinking him to be really quite cool.

Grimly enjoyed this new feeling so much, he announced he'd be changing his name, "from now on you can just call me Grinly, cuz I've learned and I'll not be the same!"

He ran to Petunia picking her up and tossing her into the air, then up went the doctor, next went Hartlie...a wonderfully wacky affair.

Then...all of a sudden everything stopped as Grinly become very still, "Thanks for all your patience Petunia, I know I've been one huge pill.

*You put up with me when no one else would, my only friend all these years, you've been so kind and so patient, can you forgive me?"... he asked through his tears.*

Through it all...

Hartlie, Petunia and Grinly, never left Teenie's side, and when the ordeal was all over, Petunia became Grinly's bride.

Hartlie directed their wedding and Teenie was Grinly's best man, his brand new legs and Grinly's brand new heart gave them all a brand new plan.

From that day on you could see the new three, dressed up in full clown costume, there was...Petunia a bride, Teenie a tot, and Grinly a clown bridegroom.

They would juggle and tumble, wiggle and stumble all ending up in a pile, Grinly would patiently wait til their efforts, turned frowns to a fabulous smile.

They'd visit the sick and the shut-ins, bringing them love, light and cheer, it got to where critters started laughing, as soon as the three would appear.

Patience he learned paid a handsome reward; good things come to those who wait, Grinly was grateful God had patience with him as he'd learned his lesson so late.

*"You know Lord...*

*It took me such a long time to learn patience, but it's better late than never!*

*So...from now on I'll have patience with everyone, and like you Lord I'll have it forever!"*

The end....or could it be, THE BEGINNING?

# The Beginning

Scriptures from the Holy Bible that help us understand the importance of having patience.

**Colossians 1:11** We also pray that you will be strengthened with all His glorious power so you will have all the endurance and **patience** you need.

**Colossians 3:12** Since God chose you to be the holy people He loves, you **MUST** clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and **patience**.

**Titus 2:2** Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be trustworthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and **patience**.

**James 1:2-8** Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance (**patience**) has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance (**patience**) is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

**2 Corinthians 6:6** We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our **patience**, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and our sincere love.

**Romans 15:5** May God, who gives this **patience** and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone that believes in Him would not perish but have eternal life.

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