

THE RHUBARB REBELLION

A story about the dangers of pride and how it leads to rebellion

A hot summer breeze sifted bushes and trees, lifting dust from the trails, causing critters to sneeze.

It caused the worst sniffing and sneezing in years, as allergic eyes streamed with hot, itchy tears.

The critters all looked like they wore a disguise, what with red swollen noses and red runny eyes.

Most covered their noses with a colorful hanky, which aggravated the younger ones, making them cranky.

Dr. Brandnew ordered the hankies in place, insisting there must be a mask on each face.

Gently he'd caution...

"You just can't keep breathing in all of this dust, as your nose will clog up and your pipes will rust."

Now there hadn't been rain in the Bog for some weeks, and much of the water had dried in the creeks.

Adding to the misery was a plague of black flies that swarmed like gray clouds against clear Bog blue skies.

A Bog without water is a pitiful sight, but add nasty flies and it equals a blight.

The doctor's sweet nurse was making quite sure, every critter's bandanna was tied and secure.

So they changed her name which used to be Anna and lovingly called her Hannah Bandanna.

Most of the critters kept bandannas in place, so the dust and the flies would stay off of their face.

But, there was a rooster with a curlicue tail, bragging *"I don't need a mask as I don't inhale"*

"That's heifer feathers!" dear Hannah snapped, as he tossed his hanky, crowed and flapped.

"Well...I'm not covering this gorgeous beak, it'll make me look like total freak."

"Now listen here Rowdy..."

Everyone's wearing them for their protection, from the dust and flies that can cause flu infection.

You've never wanted to do as you're told, but you'd better learn how before you're too old!"

"Phooey," said Rowdy, *"I'll not listen to you, I'm doing just exactly what I want to do!"*

With that, he stomped off down the dry, dusty trail, flicking at flies with his curlicue tail.

Annoyed...

Hannah headed back to the little Bog clinic, shaking her head at this rebellious cynic.

She found Dr. Brandnew preparing a tonic, for some sickly critters who's symptoms seemed chronic.

The tonic was the nastiest tasting medicine found; made from a complex rhubarb compound.

It puckered up lips and rolled back eyes, it twisted snouts sideways and turned teeth edgewise.

But it got to work and did the trick, killing the virus and curing the sick.

Without that tonic you'd come down with a flu that left hair
lime green and skin bright blue.
The clinic dispensed tonic a spoonful each day, in hopes of
keeping this flu bug at bay.
Most critters were grateful for the foul tasting stuff, but Rowdy
claimed he was *"too healthy and tough."*
*"I'm young and gorgeous and that's how I'll stay, I'll not swallow
that rubbish, just take it away."*

By now...

Rhubarb was in such high demand, that critters grew patches on
each inch of land.
There was so much rhubarb as it was grown everywhere, so there
was plenty for tonic, plus rhubarb to spare.

So...

They made rhubarb pie and rhubarb tea, rhubarb cake, all very
healthy.
Then there was rhubarb lotion and rhubarb shampoo, it was in
everything and on every menu.

Meanwhile...

Rowdy was up to his usual tricks, pushing his parents to the edge
with antics.
At school he was always in some sort of mess, giving his teacher
headaches from the stress.
Some kids thought it funny that he wouldn't mind, but others
thought him foolish and very unkind.
He rebelled at home, he rebelled at school, in fact Rowdy
rebelled against every rule.

Well...

One morning while he was walking to school, he yelled out to some kids who thought him Mr. Cool.

"Come here you guys... now listen up everyone, I'm skipping school and having some fun.

We'll have a great time, just come follow me! I'll be you're pack leader," he boasted proudly.

Off he strutted with his buddies in tow, hollering *"Hey...I know exactly where we need to go!*

Are you sick of hankies and tonic?" he cried, *"are you sick of rhubarb that's been boiled, baked and fried?*

Well, let's find that rhubarb and start tearing it up, or the next thing they'll make will be rhubarb ketchup!"

So...

Off came the hankies and up went the cheers as they followed their leader without any fears.

They'd each now decided they'd become a hellion, and this was the start of the Rhubarb Rebellion.

They formed a gang and went out each day, to pull up rhubarb and haul it away.

They tiptoed through gardens and snuck into yards, they were never caught as they posted guards.

The Bog critters were now placed on high alert, as these rhubarbarians left nothing but dirt.

But...

Without the rhubarb they'd be no tonic, which meant that the flu could go super sonic!

They'd need to protect what little was left, plus catch those responsible for this rhubarb theft.

Meanwhile...

Hartlie had gone to the clinic to see about what should be done to catch the guilty party.

Somewhere in the Bog lay a huge, rotting mound of rhubarb that had been yanked from the ground.

So...

If they found that enormous rhubarb mound, it shouldn't be long before rhubarbarians were found.

All were agreed, so the search was on, all determined to find where their rhubarb had gone.

Each evening a new group of critters went out, searching every inch for the least little sprout.

But as the sun would rise to a brand new day, they'd look at each other in utter dismay, as time was running out and they still hadn't found, those rhubarbarians or the rhubarb mound.

"Hartlie," sighed the doctor "We're all just worn out, what we need 's a critter with a stupendous snout.

One that can smell food for over a mile," "Well... I know just the right one!" Hartlie said with a smile.

"Her name is Dimples and she's ever so sweet, she'll sniff out that mound; pigs love a good treat.

I'll stop by her place after I leave here, I know she'll help out as she's really a dear.

By the way...

Have you noticed the flies aren't nearly as bad... don't know why their leaving but I sure am glad."

"Oh," gasped Hannah..

"I'll bet those flies found that rhubarb mound, because I've barely seen any flying around!!"

"She's right." Hartlie mused, *"now we need a plan, and that great big bird with the huge wingspan."*

"What kind of bird?" asked the doctor confused, *"Why, the Knockneed Flystomper!"* said Hartlie enthused.

"There's a flock of them living just two bogs away, I can be there and back in just over a day."

Suddenly life seemed a whole lot lighter and with help and a plan their future was brighter.

On Monday morning they gathered together, with Dimples and three Flystomping birds of a feather.

The Knockneed Flystompers were eager to get going, and Dimples snout was already showing, just which direction they should be headed, as she sniffed the wind and her trotters treaded, slow but sure down a well worn trail, her pink snout quivering like her curly pigtail.

They twisted and turned, climbed and crawled, deep into the woods where huge tree roots lay sprawled.

A sparkling stream offered a cooling drink, as they soaked sore tootsies and took time to think.

Dimples inhaled...

"Mmmm...I'm sure it's not that much farther away, as there's a strong rhubarb scent with just a hint of decay."

They walked on for just a few minutes more, then stopped at a sound they all knew for sure.

It was more than a buzz, more than a hum, it was the sound of a gazillion fly wings in rhythm.

A few steps more and the trees gave way and there stood the mound they'd searched for all day.

It was stinky and slimy and covered in flies, but oh what a feast for all their sore eyes.

The birds and Dimples had waited all day for this pig and bird all you can eat buffet.

The Knockneed Flystompers flew to the top, gulping beakfuls of flies at a pace non-stop.

They used their wings as huge flyswatters, hopping up and down like bird teeter totters.

Dimples climbed up to the top of the mound, planning to eat her way down to the ground.

With no manners in sight, there was slipping and slurping, with no manners in sight, there was gulping and burping.

Dimples was having a fabulous time, covered in stinky, rhubarby slime.

But, all of a sudden she let out a scream, half scaring to death the rest of the team.

"What's wrong?" Hartlie hollered, **"what did you see?"** **"I don't know!"** shrieked Dimples **"but it's really creepy!"**

It scared her so badly, she could no longer eat, her pink trotters beating a hasty retreat.

"Ewwwww Hartlie...

I saw creepy crawly things down in that mound, and they made the most awful, gurgling sound."

Hartlie fought his way up through the thick, stinky gook, in order to get a much closer look.

On reaching the place where Dimples had been, he saw down in the hole a spine-chilling scene.

Strange, mucky creatures all covered in slime, slithering in vain trying to make the climb.

He yelled for the Flystompers to hover in place, and dangle their legs so the creatures could lace, their arms round the feet of the really big birds, who then lifted out what looked like slimey lizards.

Dr. Brandnew shook his head, *"Where do we begin?!...I can't do a thing with the mess their in.*

Let's go back to the stream and wash them all up, I can't see a thing through that thick goeey muck."

They rinsed off the creatures, not believing their eyes, as what they saw was a shock and surprise!

There stood Rowdy with his motley crew, their hair bright green and their skin sky blue.

Shaking, Rowdy whispered...

"I was starting to think we would never be found, and that we'd end up dying in that putrid mound."

"What were you thinking," Dr. Brandnew fumed "why you and the whole Bog could have been doomed."

You're obviously all sick with that awful flu, and it's all because you just had to argue.

You refused to listen, refused to obey, now I'm afraid there's a mighty high price that you'll pay.

"Rowdy" Hartlie cautioned...

You did only what you wanted to do, without any thought of what could happen to you.

You endangered others by your foolish behavior, which hurts and angers our Lord and Savior.

Rebellion is disobedience and selfish pride, and that is something God will never abide.

You know God threw some angels right out of Heaven, because they also started a foolish rebellion"

Rowdy looked down now completely ashamed, no longer the proud rooster he'd once proclaimed.

"Listen," said Hartlie...

"We'll take you home and get you well... and hope you've learned that you mustn't rebel.

We'll wash off the smell, get you over the flu... but you're stuck with green hair and skin sky blue."

The rest of that summer Rowdy and friends, were setting out rhubarb and making amends.

They'd learned a tough lesson that long hot summer, that blue skin and green hair are a total bummer.

Now they'd live with the consequence of becoming a hellion, a high price indeed for a rhubarb rebellion.

THE END, or could it be...THE BEGINNING.

THE BEGINNING

Scriptures from the Holy Bible that help us understand the dangers of pride and rebellion.

1 Peter 5:5 In the same way, you younger men must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, serve each other in humility.

Proverbs 8:13 All who fear the Lord will hate evil. Therefore, I hate pride and arrogance, corruption and perverse speech.

Proverbs 16:5 The Lord detests the proud, they will surely be punished.

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of wrongs.

Ephesians 4:2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each others faults because of your love.

Phillipians 2:3 Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever would believe in Him would have life everlasting.

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.