



# Learn English Through Stories

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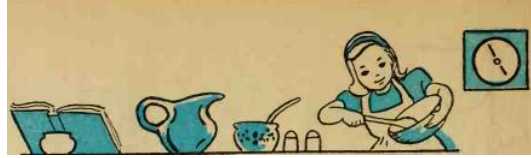
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## **Contents**

**365 Bedtime Stories:  
January 25 to 31.**

## January 25: Books and Cooks



Betty was always reading. She looked up dreamily when Mother called, “I’m going to Mrs. Apricot's now.”

‘Yes' Mom' Betty said. The What-a-Jolly Street mothers were meeting at Mrs. Apricot's all afternoon and evening today, helping to finish a quilt for the church fair.

Betty read on. The twins and Kathy played outside. Nobody bothered her until the phone rang. It was Daddy. “Tell Mother I’m bringing Mr. Ellison home for supper,” he said.

“All right, Daddy,” Betty answered. She hung up the receiver — and then she remembered! Why, Mother wasn't here!

Betty forgot about her book. She ran to the kitchen. There was fruit in the refrigerator, and lettuce, and left-over meat loaf. There was chocolate cake in the pantry. But how would Mother combine them for a company supper? If only her books could help her now! Suddenly Betty's eyes brightened.



Meat loaf

When Daddy arrived with his friend, he found the table nicely set: a bowl of potato salad in the centre with slices of meat loaf placed around it, sandwiches on a tray, tea steaming in the teapot, and fruit and cake waiting on the serving table.

“Why, Betty!” said Daddy.”

“I just remembered Mother wasn't home!”

“How did you manage this?”

“Well, it's all from my books,” Betty explained happily. “Laura and Lucy made potato salad in *Twins on the Farm*, and Joseph brewed tea with the Indians in *Redskins on the Trail*, Pedro made sandwiches to take with him in *Pedro's Perils*—”

Daddy laughed aloud. “Betty,” he said, “did you know there was one book that told it all?”

“What book?” Betty asked, wide-eyed.

“The cookbook!” chuckled Daddy.

## January 26: The Sniffle Song

Ruth Barrett stood at her window, looking out at What - a - Jolly Street and blowing her nose. Across the street, Timmy played with little Kathy Watson. Mary Lou and Peter went past on their way to school. Down the hill pattered little old Mrs. Apricot, bound for Mr. Gay's store.

"Everybody's doing something but me," Ruth sighed. "All I do is blow my nose. I wonder if I could make a poem about sniffles?"

Ruth loved writing rhymes. She blew her nose again and sat down at the table, feeling better and better.

Slowly her pencil scratched away. Sometimes she stopped to chew it, sometimes to cross out a line. Sometimes she stopped to tear up a whole page, and sometimes she just stopped to blow

her nose.

When she had finished, the long afternoon was gone, for her brother David was home from school.

"David, David!" Ruth cried. "I wrote a Sniffle Song! Listen!"

My nose is red; my eyes are, too;  
My tongue feels like a worn-out shoe.  
My voice is hoarse; my tonsils tickle,  
And sneezes keep my nose a-prickle.  
I wish that I had worn galoshes;  
I'll wear them now till May rain splotches.  
Then maybe I need never stay  
Inside on such a lovely day!"

## January 27: Fun for Butch



Butch, the Smiths' collie, ran down What-a-Jolly Street, barking loudly. He was very happy, for Paul and David were coming behind him, bound for a hike, and Butch loved hikes.

"Hurry!" he barked at the boys. "Why don't you run as I do? Why don't you bark and wag your tails? Oh, I forgot—you poor creatures don't have tails!"

Butch bounced happily through the snowdrifts behind Mrs. Apricot's house, as he led the boys up the little wooded hill. The snow was very deep. Paul and David floundered through it, laughing and tumbling and rolling each other about. Butch came bounding back to join in their wrestling.

"Ruff! Ruff!" he shouted, planting his big paws on Paul's chest, and licking his face. "Isn't this fun?"

"Hey! Get off me!" Paul whooped. "Uff-oof, cut out that licking!" He gave a big heave, and rolled out from under Butch's big paws. But then he went right on rolling! Over and over, bumpily, bounce, all the way down the hill!

"Ruff! Ruff!" boomed Butch, almost falling over himself with joy as he chased the rolling figure. "This is more fun than chasing a jack rabbit! Look at him go!"

Paul landed oomph! against a tree, and sat up dizzily. Butch leaped around him.

"C'mon, Paul!" he barked at the top of his voice. "Let's do it again! Isn't this fun? Oh, if you only had a tail to wag!"

Poor Paul, picking himself up and tenderly feeling his bumps and bruises, didn't look as though he'd wag his tail right then, even if he had one!

## January 28: A Taffy Tale



Taffy = Sticky sweet

Ted, Doris, and Amy were making taffy. Doris stirred, and Ted read the directions from the cookbook. Amy's job was to butter a pan; so far she had only buttered her hands and face.

“Cook until it forms a soft ball when dropped in cold water,” read Ted. “Amy, you get a cupful of water.”

Amy trotted over with a cup. The handle slipped in her buttery hands, water sloshed over the stove with a hiss, Doris forgot to stir, and the taffy boiled up and up.

“Look out!” yelled Ted. Both he and Doris grabbed for the spoon and stirred wildly. Little Amy, watching them, absentmindedly drank the rest of the water.

“Maybe I’d better stir,” said Ted when the taffy was under control. “You drop some in the cold water, Doris.”

“What water?” asked Doris, looking in the cup.

She ran for more and dropped a little taffy in.

“Is it a ball?” Doris asked doubtfully.

“It's a soft ball,” admitted Ted.

“It's good,” said Amy, eating it.

They took the taffy off the stove and poured it onto the pan. When it was cool enough to handle, they each took a lump and pulled . . . and pulled . . . and pulled ....

“I thought,” Doris said, “it was supposed to get stiff.”

“It is,” puzzled Ted. “How're you doing'. Amy?”

Amy was sitting in the corner, eating taffy off her fingers and hands and arms.

“Good,” she said.

“Good and sticky,” said Ted. “Maybe it was too soft a ball.”

Doris looked at Amy. She said, “Well, if the taffy won't pull — who cares?” She wound some around a spoon and licked it.

“Mmmmm! Guess we're pretty good cooks, after all.”

## January 29: Clever Rusty



David said, "I heard of a horse that can count by stamping his foot."

Ruth cried, "I bet our pony Rusty could, too!"

"Maybe we could teach him," David suggested.

Rusty was glad to be let out of his shed. He pranced around the yard, snorting and puffing, his breath turning into white steam in the cold air.

"He's like a locomotive!" David laughed. "Look at his smoke!"

"Let's be passengers!" shouted Ruth, trotting after Rusty. "Look, I'm on the Pullman! I'm getting dressed in one of those little berths!" She pretended to pull on stockings.

"I'm having breakfast in the diner!" shouted David, close behind her. He scooped up air and chewed it noisily.

Both he and Ruth were giggling so hard they didn't notice Rusty suddenly stop until Ruth stumbled into him and fell flat! David fell over her.

"What happened?" David cried. "There goes Rusty into his shed!"

"He was hungry!" cried Ruth, seeing Rusty nose his feed bucket.

Sure enough, just then they heard the five-o'clock whistle from the mill downtown! They always fed Rusty at five.

"Rusty doesn't need counting lessons," David said, and grinned. "He can tell time already!"



## January 30: Susan's Busy Day



"Susan," asked Mrs. Carter one afternoon, "could you stay with Polly while Timmy and I go to the store?"

"Oh, yes!" Susan said, feeling very grown up.

"You won't have any trouble," Mrs. Carter said. "Polly's still napping."

Susan settled down to read. The canary sang in the window; Timmy's puppy curled at her feet.

"It's easy to take care of a baby," Susan thought proudly.

Then suddenly, "Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!" Past the window went Butch, the collie, chasing one of the Nolen cats.

"Yeeeeow!" screamed the cat, making for a tree.

"Yap! Yap! Yap!" yelped Timmy's puppy, charging at the window as though he could go right through it.

The glass bounced him back, and wham! He struck the canary's cage and tipped it over! Water and seeds spilled over the rug! The canary squeaked wildly.

"Ki-yi-yi!" yelped the puppy in fright.

"Waaaaaaa!" wailed Polly upstairs.

Poor Susan! She rushed to pick up the canary's stand, to bring Polly downstairs, to carpet-sweep the rug, to get Polly her ball, to coax the scared puppy from under the couch, to bring back the ball when Polly threw it, to get the canary fresh water!

She had just dropped into a chair when Mrs. Carter returned. Mrs. Carter looked around the neat room where the canary sang, Polly juggled her ball, and the white puppy snoozed.

"I knew you wouldn't have any trouble," she said with a smile.

"Yes Mom," said Susan weakly, and wobbled home wearily.

## January 31: More Hustle Bustle

Hustle-Bustle's cage was in the kitchen, near the back door. One day a truck driver knocked at the door, which was open a little. Mrs. Brown was upstairs settling little Mike for his nap. The driver had a load of coal for the Browns, and he wanted the basement window opened.

Hustle-Bustle was dozing, but the rap woke him. Hustle-Bustle loved raps; they meant company and lots of talking.

"Come in! Come in!" he called, just as Mrs. Brown always did.

The truck driver called, "I'd better not, ma'am; I'm pretty dirty. I have some coal —"

Hustle-Bustle gabbled happily, "Well, well, gab-poo-polly - fuddy-fop! Hello! Hello! Goopity-gum-bop-fiddily-fay!"

"I was saying, ma'am," the truck driver interrupted patiently, "I must have your basement window unlocked, so—"

"Well, well, well!" Hustle-Bustle exclaimed in tremendous surprise. "Good-by now! Good-by!"

"But ma'am—" The driver rapped loudly on the door.

"Come in! Come in!" Hustle-Bustle invited sociably.

"Ma'am," the driver pleaded. "If you'll just open..."

"Well, good-by," said Hustle-Bustle. "Good-by!"

"Ma'am," cried the driver as Mrs. Brown came downstairs.

"Do you want something?" she asked the man politely.

The poor trucker said hoarsely, "Ma'am, I just want your basement window opened. That's all."

Hustle-Bustle yelled heartily, "Well, come in! Come in!"

The trucker asked in surprise, "Wasn't that you, ma'am?"

"No," laughed Mrs. Brown, "that's our parrot."

The truck driver shook his head. "A parrot!" he muttered. "Imagine a big guy like me getting fooled by a bird!"