

By Bob Gustafson

The Tiny Folk

(A real story of real children for very young children)

"Me-ow, me-ow, help, help!" Velvet called in his own kitten language. He was Janice's little black kitten who had gone to meet her coming from school. But just as he neared the Page gateway, Frisky and his little dog friend, Tommy, had come out. They had seen him, and of course, had chased him. He had raced for the telephone pole, climbed up part way and there he was.

Poor Velvet. His tail was as big as your arm, and his big yellow eyes were now black with fright. He shivered and shook, but dug in his claws still harder. The dogs would surely bite him if he fell down.

"Bow-wow, bow-wow." Frisky barked in little short barks, his brown eyes sparkling with dog fun. Tommy sat beside him, his little white and brown body, so short and fat, trembling with eagerness. He just loved to play chase, and what better thing to chase than a little black kitten?

Just then Laurie and Susan came running out to the gate. They had heard the noise, and came to see what the trouble was.

"Here, Frisky, you bad, bad dog," Laurie scolded. "Come here and leave the kitten alone. You go home, Tommy. You are a bad dog too."

Frisky looked surprised. He didn't know he was being naughty, he was just having fun. But Laurie sounded cross. He turned away and walked slowly toward Laurie with his tail hanging down. Just then Mrs. Page came out with a newspaper in her hand. Tommy scooted off down the road for home.

"Come here, Frisky," called Mrs. Page. "You have been very, very naughty. You must not chase that little kitten. Bad dog." And she took the newspaper, and spoke Frisky good and hard.

Poor Frisky felt so ashamed of himself! He knew he deserved the spanking but he didn't like to have Laurie cross at him too. The



By Thornton W. Burgess

THE OBSTINATE ONE

They lose who easily give in. The obstinate more often win. —Old Mother Nature.

Prickly Porky the Porcupine had made himself very much at home in the very tree in which Hooty the Owl and Mrs. Hooty had their nest. He was an unpleasant neigh-

bor because he was a fretful one. They knew that so long as they didn't touch him they had nothing to fear from him. He wouldn't try to catch one of them even if he could. He isn't a meat eater. He is what is called a vegetarian.

In winter virtually all his food is inner bark of several kinds of trees and the green leaves and twigs of the evergreen trees, such as cedar, hemlock and pine. He has a special liking for hemlock. In summer he eats a variety of green things. Among other things he likes water-hily pads, and often wades in to get them.

Hooty and Mrs. Hooty did their best to try to drive him away. They hissed and snapped their bills and threatened to strike him with their great curved claws, but they were very, very careful not to touch him. Prickly Porky knew they wouldn't, so he paid no attention to them. He just went on about his business as if they were not there. His business was chiefly eating.

All Hooty and Mrs. Hooty could do was to hope that Prickly Porky would move on when he could eat no more. But Prickly Porky had no idea of moving on, not for a while anyway. This was a good tree. He could stay in it as long as he wanted to. He made up his mind that he would stay until he wanted a change.

So it was that the Hootys had a fretful neighbor whether they wanted one or not, and there was nothing they could do about it. Prickly Porky acted as if there was no one else around. Not everybody could do that, but Prickly Porky is so independent that he can do about as he pleases.

"I wish he would stop being so fretful," said Mrs. Hooty. "If he would just keep still, I wouldn't mind so much having him for a neighbor. But he talks to himself



too much. He whines and frets." "Do you know what I think?" asked Hooty. "What do you think?" asked Mrs. Hooty. "I think," replied Hooty, "that the more he whines and frets, the better time Prickly Porky is having. Some folks are like that. I have been told. The worse time they think they are having, the better time they really are having. Prickly Porky doesn't have anybody to talk to but himself. I suppose he likes to hear the sound of his own voice."

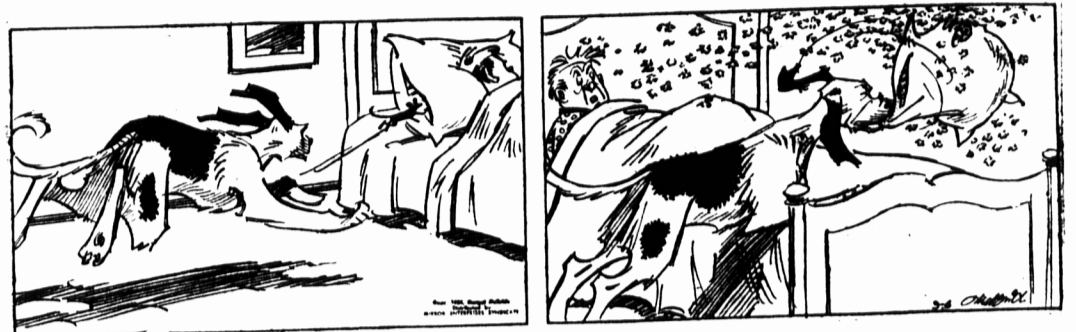
Now Mrs. Hooty wouldn't have minded Prickly Porky's talking to himself, but for one thing. That one thing was the fear that he might be overheard by some one passing in the neighborhood, some one she would have reason to fear might make trouble for her. Supposing Yowler the Bobcat should overhear Prickly Porky and come over to that tree to see what he was complaining about. He would be almost sure to discover her nest and guess that there were eggs or young birds in it. Mr. Hooty didn't like her fretful neighbor one bit.

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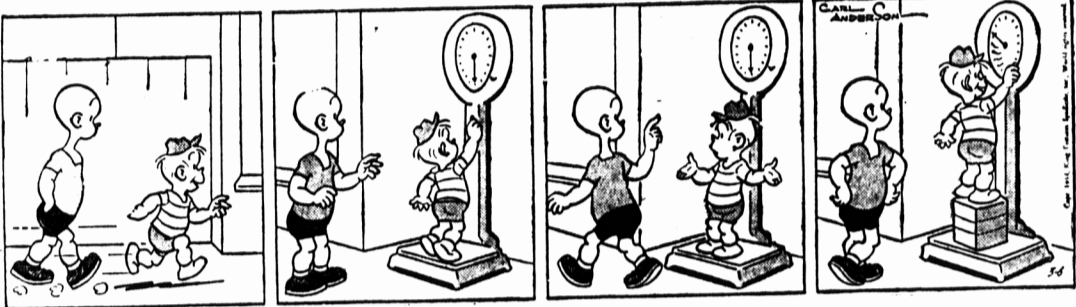


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