



The Adventures of Poor Mrs. Quack

Thornton W. Burgess

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One day, Peter Rabbit happens upon a surprise visitor to the Smiling Pool. It's Mrs. Quack the Duck, who is dreadfully upset after having narrowly escaped some hunters and their terrible guns. Worst of all, she has lost Mr. Quack, her husband, and doesn't know whether he is alive or dead. Peter, Jerry Muskrat, and the other animals in the Green Forest vow to help Mrs. Quack find a safe place to live and to try and locate Mr. Quack. Sammy Jay and Blacky the Crow, two of the sharpest-eyed animals in the Green Forest, are enlisted to help and soon the search is under way.

As children learn about the misfortunes of Mrs. Quack and the problems faced by migrating ducks, they will develop new respect for wildlife and a deeper understanding of real animals and their struggle to survive. Best of all, the lessons are incorporated into a good story, told with the warmth and charm that have made Thornton W. Burgess stories favorites with children for generations. Completely reset in large, easy-to-read type, the text is enhanced by six full-page illustrations based on Harrison Cady's originals.

The Adventures of Poor Mrs. Quack Details

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Author : Thornton W. Burgess

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From Reader Review The Adventures of Poor Mrs. Quack for online ebook

Nathaniel says

I liked it. I would rate it 4 1/2 - maybe a little closer to 5.

Jonathan Marshall says

The Burgess Books

This is a phrase that brings a smile to my face as often as I hear it. As a young child, I would lose myself for hours in the simple world of the wood and pond inhabited by Little Joe Otter, Buster Bear, Grandfather Frog, and terrorized by Farmer Brown's Boy. I can remember the very shelf, even the exact spot in the little library in Felton, CA where these books were kept. I would return practically every week with a new armload to last me until our next trip to the library. Often I would carry out stories that I read several times before, just so I could once again escape into this imaginary world of furry mischief.

I remember these books well in concept, though the specifics of most of the stories elude me. It was easily fifteen years ago when I began reading them and has been over a decade since I last picked up one of Burgess' stories to read it. That being said, this review is being written as a look back.

These stories are very simple and very fun. Of course, they are children's literature, so that's to be expected, but these stories strike me as especially so. Even still, I can remember some fascinating things I gleaned between the their covers.

For one thing, Burgess did a fantastic job of presenting the ideas of perspective and motivation in simplistic terms. For example, "The Adventures of Danny Field Mouse" would cast Old Man Coyote as a vicious, mean creature wishing to prey on Danny and his friends and family. Yet, pick up instead "The Adventures of Old Man Coyote" and you'll see that when the story is told with him as the protagonist, those pesky field mice are annoying and useful for little more than a snack. After reading both books, you're no more inclined to think of Old Man Coyote as a villain than you are to think of Danny Field Mouse as a pest that should be exterminated. (Note: This is a generic example. I do not recall if Old Man Coyote plays a role in Danny Field Mouse's story or the other way around, but this concept was presented several times. It made an impression on me.)

The only characters consistently presented as antagonists were Farmer Brown and his boy. This would be one of the only things that I chalk up as odd, or maybe just a little "off" in these books. Humans and their influence on nature are presented as a negative influence on nature and animals - always. It's interesting to note though that while humans are seen as a negative, humanity is lauded and held up as virtuous. All of the animals take on not only human personalities but characteristics, traits, and mannerisms. From a frog with a monocle and an otter with a handkerchief tied to a stick, to a busy-body Jay and a reclusive owl who desires only to be left alone, humanity and its traits keep cropping up.

Which would be another thing of value I feel that I saw in the Burgess books. These stories are full of social interaction and personality conflicts, even if they are caricatured more often than not. We see over and over

again a working out of peace, if not harmony, between conflicting personalities. It may not always be easy to point out a scripture to reinforce the lesson implied, but social harmony is presented and more often than not, resolution is through reconciliation, forgiveness, or a similar method that is not only laudable, but distinctly Christian in action if not motivation.

All in all, the world created by Thornton W. Burgess is imaginative, innocent, fun, and educational. My recommendation? Grab a handful from your local library, gather a group of kids as an excuse, and lose yourselves in childhood imaginations as you read aloud the stories that have captivated several generations of young readers with the antics of our furry, albeit elusively human, friends.

(Disclaimers: As I said, it has been over a decade since I actually read one of Burgess' books. As such, there may be a specific example that's a little off in this review or something that I would have noticed as an adult that my childhood memories are missing. Also, all of these books say I read them in 1998. While I'm certain I read several of them that year, I'm sure I read some before and after that date as well.)

Elaine says

My personal favorite.

Shirley says

I figured I probably wouldn't like this one and yep, it was worse than I feared on the anti-hunter/human stance. It is also too vivid for the young age range his books are aimed for. So, should have skipped this one, but it does have a nice ending.

Alison Nickells says

i must have read this book as a child , as I had 'drawn' illustrations on the inside covers , but had forgotten this wonderful tale of resourceful creatures thwarting evil hunters.

Xaka says

This was a Waldorf suggestion, but didn't go over well with my 7-year-old. While a realistic enough story line, it's a depressing tale. Ends well enough, but too somber for a happy-go-lucky child.

Veronica Lindsey says

Cute children's book.

Hillvan says

Probably approx. 900 to 1050L

Sarah D says

My mom used to read this to my sister and I when we were very little. I don't really remember it well and should read it again! I just remember a character called honker the goose...
