

DIAMONDS AND TOADS

This is an adaptation of an old French fable by Charles Perrault.

It is about the wisdom of keeping a watch over what we say.

CAST- Mother, older daughter, younger daughter, and old woman, and a person labeled “Nowhere”.

COSTUMES:

Mother- She needs an apron, at least. Further effects could be glasses, a mop cap, or gray powdered hair.

Older daughter and younger daughter- They need appropriate clothing.

Old woman- She should wear a longer skirt. Powdered hair would be appropriate.

“Nowhere”- He/she may be dressed in regular school clothes. He/she needs a sash prominently displaying the name “Nowhere”.

Narrator

PROPS:

A broom.

Some way to indicate a stream....possibly brown paper with aluminum foil crinkled up on it.

A bucket and a dipper

Rose petals....enough to fill a small basket

“Diamonds”....clear glass stones used in floral arrangements.

Toy toads and snakes

Table with chairs: dishes on table

DIAMONDS AND TOADS

Nar: Once upon a time, there lived a woman with two daughters. For some reason, the woman loved the oldest daughter best. She always gave the older daughter the easiest work to do, the finest clothing, and the best food.

The younger daughter, though, always had the hardest and dirtiest work to do. She only got whatever cold food was left after everyone else was finished. Her mother and her sister were not nice to her, either, as they ordered her around.

(Mother and two daughters are at Stage Left, sitting at table))

Mother: You lazy thing, you need to clean out the cow stall before you eat tonight. You don't deserve this nice warm soup that we are having. **(Hands Younger the broom: Younger goes to Stage Upper left and sweeps.)**

OD: **(whining and pouting))** Mother! I don't want to do the dishes today! The water makes my hands look red.

M: Oh, sweetie, there is no reason for you to make your pretty hands red. Your sister can do them before she eats.

OD: **(complaining)** Mother, I don't like my soup.

M: Why darling, you don't have to eat it. Here is some nice fruit that you can have.

M: I bought you a new dress today. Isn't it pretty?

OD: (complaining and pouting) I don't like the color. Why don't you ever get blue? It's my favorite color.

(Younger daughter returns to table, puts broom in its place)

Y: I'm done, mother, May I please have supper now?

M: Go get your own. I'm not your servant!

Y: Mother, there is no soup left. What else is there to eat?

M: Why, you ungrateful child! Here I provide a place for you to sleep and you complain about the food! There's enough for you if you scrape out the kettle. There's some stale bread over there. (Oldest daughter leaves the stage. Mother resumes seat at the table, while younger daughter eats.)

Nar: As you can tell, the older sister never had anything good to say, but the younger sister, even though she was unloved and mistreated, never complained.

One day, the mother ran out of water. She called to the youngest daughter.

M: Hey, you! Go get me a fresh bucket of water at the spring.

Nar: So off trudged the little girl to the spring. (Younger daughter trudges across the stage to the spring, which is located Stage Right Up) There she knelt to fill her bucket. Suddenly she noticed that there was an old lady also at the spring.

Y: (politely) Good morning, ma'am. Did you come here to get a drink? You must have travelled far. You look thirsty. Here, have some water

from my dipper. (Hands the old woman the dipper) Isn't it a beautiful day?

Nar: The old woman drank thirstily. Then she smiled at the youngest daughter.

OW: Young one, since you are so polite, I am going to give you a gift. You speak beautiful words. From now on, they will be even more beautiful.

Y: Thank you! Good-bye! (She turns and trudges back across the stage to hand the bucket to her mother)
Here you are, mother, fresh water! Thank you for sending me to get water. It is a beautiful day for a walk!

Nar: And then an amazing thing happened. As the younger daughter spoke, from out of nowhere, roses and diamonds dropped from her lips. ("Nowhere" comes out and deposits a pile of rose petals and diamonds in front of her.)
Her mother was amazed.

M: What is this all about?

Y: I don't know, mother. I met a lovely older lady at the spring, and she said my words were beautiful, and that they would be even MORE beautiful. (Younger gathers up the rose petals and diamonds and exits Stage Left Up)

Nar: The mother became greedy then. She decided that if her younger daughter could have such a gift, then her older daughter deserved it such a gift even more. So she called her older daughter to come.

M: Daughter! Come, my lovely daughter! (Older comes in, yawning and grumpy)

OD (whining) What now? I just laid down for my nap. I'm tired.

M: Here, daughter. Go to the spring and get some water.

OD: Why can't sister go? I'm tired. I always have to do all the dirty work.

M: (exasperated) Quit complaining and go get the water! (Gives her a little push) Now behave!

Nar: So off went the older daughter to the spring. When she knelt to get the bucket full, she noticed that a little old woman was standing there.

OD: Well, what are YOU staring at? Go stand somewhere else. You're in my way.

OW: Could I have a drink of water?

OD: What? Am I your servant now? No, this is MY water.

OW: Because your words are so ugly and unkind, from now on, they will be even uglier.

Nar: Not worrying much about what the old woman had said, the older daughter trudged on home with the water.

(Shoving the bucket at her mother)

OD: HERE, here's your filthy old bucket with your water.

Nar: To her surprise, and to her mother's surprise, out of nowhere, (Nowhere come out and drops a pile of toads and snakes in front of

the older daughter) there dropped toads and serpents from the older daughter's mouth!

From that time forward, every word that the younger daughter said was accompanied by roses and diamonds, and every word that the older daughter said was accompanied by toads and serpents.

The End

Class now divides into two parts. If the class is only the ones in the play (five children), then perhaps the elementary could join in to make two choruses.

Choir 1: The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright:

Choir 2: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness. Proverbs 15:2

Choir 2: ...a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words. Ecclesiastes 5:3a

Choir 1: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Psalm 18:14

Choir 2: A fool uttereth all his mind:

Choir 1: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards. Proverbs 29:11

Choir 1: A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Proverbs 25:11

Choir 2: ... how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Matthew 12:34b

Choir 1: A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it! Proverbs 15:23

(Conclusion) Both choirs: Hear: for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth: and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing forward or perverse in them.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride and arrogance, and the evil way, and the forward mouth, do I hate. Proverbs 8:6-8 and 13

Both choirs sing: “Just Two Choices” by Ken Collier: music by Mac Lynch

**Written By
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