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The Story of a Pumpkin Pie

L. M. Montgomery

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Polly and Patty had come from the city to spend a month with Grandpa and Grandma at Hope Farm. Polly and Patty thought that Hope Farm, with its big orchards, the very nicest place in the world. Of one thing in particular they were quite sure—in no other place in the world were there such pumpkin pies made as those Grandma made.

She made them every Saturday because the minister came to tea every Sunday, after he had driven eight miles to preach his afternoon sermon, and he was very fond of pumpkin pie. Patty and Polly thought it such fun to help Grandma make her pies. They were very good little cooks themselves for ten-year-old twins. Mamma Rogers had seen to that.

Early one Saturday morning word came that Uncle John Rogers down at Clifton had fallen and broken his leg. Grandpa and Grandma got ready in a great flurry and drove straight way to Clifton, leaving Polly and Patty to keep house until they should return at night. Patty and Polly were very sorry about Uncle John, but they were greatly elated over being left to keep house.

“It makes one feel so responsible,” said Patty, who liked to drag in a big word now and then when no grown folks were by to laugh at her.

“But,” said Polly, soberly, “what about the minister’s pumpkin pie?”

What, indeed? But Patty was equal to the problem.

“I shall make the pumpkin pies,” she said.

“Oh!” Polly was almost scared. She was never so daring as Patty. “What if you spoil them?”

“I won’t spoil them. You must help me. I’m sure I can make them all right. I know just how Grandma goes about it.”

So the two little maids put on very bright, clean, new gingham aprons and ran down to the cornfield behind the big fir grove. Polly was always a little frightened to go through that grove, it was so thick and gloomy, but Patty never thought of such a thing. The pumpkins were there, round and yellow as gold, and the twins picked the best and ripest to make their pie.

Patty, having rolled her sleeves high above her dimpled elbows, peeled and diced the pumpkin and put it on to stew. She could not find the granite saucepan Grandma always used but Patty was not to be stuck by a trifle like that. She stewed the pumpkin in a round granite milk-pan and it served the purpose very well.

Meanwhile, Polly had hunted the hay mow for fresh eggs, had fallen through a hole into the calf-pen and nearly frightened the spotted calf to death. But she found the eggs and brought them in triumph to Patty.

Patty made the crust while Polly watched her. Patty clean forgot to put any

baking powder in, but Polly remembered it just in the nick of time. Then they strained the pumpkin and beat it up with eggs and sugar and milk and cornstarch and dusted in the cinnamon and nutmeg and ginger very carefully—for the minister was very particular about the flavoring of his pies. Polly and Patty both tasted the mixture and pronounced it all right and just like Grandma's. Then they popped the pies into the oven and when they came out they were golden brown and looked delicious. So delighted was Patty that she danced around the kitchen three times, waving a holder aloft.

Grandma was very much surprised when she came home and saw the pumpkin pies. Secretly she doubted if the pies could be good enough to put before the minister; but she was careful not to hurt the twins' feelings by saying so, and, anyway, there was nothing else for him this time.

That night Patty had a terrible nightmare and woke Polly up to tell her about it.

"Polly, I dreamed that we put mustard in those pies instead of ginger! Oh, we didn't—did we?"

"No, of course not," answered Polly reassuringly and went right to sleep again.

But Patty couldn't sleep. She was afraid she would dream that terrible dream again.

Next afternoon after preaching the minister came. When he had finished his second helping of pie he said politely:

"Your pumpkin pies are always delicious, Mrs. Rogers, but you have surpassed yourself in this one. It is the most delicious I ever ate."

Grandma's eyes twinkled.

"I'm sorry I can't claim the credit for it," she said. "Patty made it."

Patty blushed scarlet beneath the minister's eye.

"Polly helped me," she said, honestly.

And the minister—he had driven eight miles, you know, and preached a long sermon, and his wife never made pumpkin pies—took a third helping.

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

[The end of *The Story of a Pumpkin Pie* by L. M. (Lucy Maud) Montgomery]