The Apple Cart

Donald R. Ling*

*Iowa State College

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Abstract

Felix Crampton’s dark blue eyes sparkled as he shook his head from side to side, ruffling his long white hair...
FELIX CRAMPTON’S dark blue eyes sparkled as he shook his head from side to side, ruffling his long white hair. “You know, ma’am, you’re the first woman I’ve ever seen around this place. You’re a good lookin’ one, too.”

The woman smiled as she ran her hands down the side of her long green dress, over her slender hips. “Ah, I bet you say that to all the girls.”

“No siree, I mean it, kid. You got class. You know, we could go places together.” His eyes lit up even more as he walked closer to her. “Yup, we sure could go places.”

She licked her ruby lips as she placed an arm on his shoulder and said, “How’s about givin’ me one of them apples ya got in that cart there?”

Felix rubbed his hands together and said, “Well, maybe, but first ya gotta listen to a story I’m gonna tell ya. Then I’ll see.” He glanced at her out of the corner of his eye.

“Sure thing, mister. I’m all for a good story. I hope it’s a real good one.” She began to chuckle and winked at the old man.

“Well,” he hesitated for a moment, “it ain’t that kinda story, but it is interesting. Now, pay attention.” Felix Cramp-
ton sat down on an old log under the tree and began to tell his tale.

"It all started many, many years ago when I was just a young kid. I was living in this palace, you know, with long white marble floors and crystal chandeliers, and all that sorta stuff. Well, me and this other guy (he ran the place) we always used to mess around together, sliding down the banisters and playing leap frog on the living room table, and just everything. But then one day things began to change. . ."

. . . "Well, come on Felix, what do you think of the plan?"
"It just ain't fair."
"Well, what's not fair about it?"
"There ain't no reason for it, that's what!"
"Whatta you mean, 'no reason'? I tell you this place just isn't roomy enough anymore, so I'm going to build an addition, that's all."
"Yeh, but whatta ya gonna do with it when ya got it all built?"
"Oh, I don't know, but I'll think of something." . . .

. . . "So there he was, just standing there, telling me that he was gonna build this place and he din't even know what for!" Felix looked at the girl and shook his head.

The girl put her hand on her chin, leaned up against the tree, and said, "Well, I'll be. . ."

"But you ain't heard the whole of it yet!" Felix smiled as moved closer to the girl, looking from side to side as if he were about to tell a secret that he didn't want anyone else to hear. "One day, whilst I was out sunnin' myself, he up and built the place, just like that." Felix snapped his fingers.

"Well, I'll be. . ."

"And then, I was really burned up, since he didn't even tell me he was going ahead with his plans."

"So, whatja do?"

"Don't rush me, honey, I'm gettin' to that part right now. Well, there I was, and there was this place that he built, and I says to him, 'Now, whatja go and do that for? It ain't no good, and you won't ever use it.' And then he says to me.
'Oh, yeh, well just you watch me.' And so I did, and he went to his place and he threw some water on it, and this sorta made some ponds. And then he threw some scaly old fish in the ponds."

"Well, I'll be. . ."

"Then he covered the part that was still dirt; he covered that with snakes and stuff."

"Well, I'll be. . ."

"Hold on, child! That wasn't the end of it yet. Next he heaved the place full of bugs, mosquitoes, and all them kinds. Now, I was gettin' purty upset by then, so I says to him, 'Jist what do you think you're doin'? And, you know what he says to me? He says that he's fixin' a place fer people ta live! Can ya beat that?"

"Well, I'll be. . ."

"Now, me and him got into a big ruckus about the whole deal and I got purty darn mad at him. I told him that that was no place fer people ta live, and I says that I wouldn't let him do it. Then we starts in fightin'. 'Course, he was bigger'n me, and he wins. Then, instead a' bein' nice about the whole deal, he up and kicks me outta the palace and tells me that I can't ever come back. Even ta this day, I gotta push around this applecart ta make enough ta live on."

"Well, I'll be. . ."

"I've asked myself now and again if I done the right thing, fightin' him and all, and that's what I wanted ta ask you. Whatta you think?"

"Sure, you was right. Why nobody in their right mind would live in a place like that. It was just a pure waste."

"I was hopin' you'd say that." Felix gave her a quick kiss on the cheek and then handed her an apple. "You make my mind feel a heap better. Now eat this and remember whatcha said."

As he started pushing the cart down the old gravel road, Felix glanced back and watched the girl eating the apple. As she moved her head from side to side and said, "Well, I'll be damned," a knowing look came into Felix's face and he laughed to himself.