

So that morning after breakfast, no, not after breakfast, Frank and Fred couldn't eat any breakfast--they went out of the house, down the steps, across the lawn to the street.

There they sat down on the sidewalk, too weak to go any further. They sat there a long time and then without a word, by mutual consent, they arose and walked up the street to the next house, where again they collapsed, heads bowed over knees in an attitude of utter dejection. After fifteen minutes of rest they were able to continue another slight distance. For hours this process was repeated at intervals.

Early that morning, Grandma, according to custom, had visited the lower garden to pick the freshly opened flowers, and gather the vegetables and fruits needed for the day. What was her horror to find in the spot where her most cherished melon had nestled in its vine only a mass of rinds and seeds. "Who could have stolen my prize?" she cried.

Grandma turned back to the house with a heavy heart but a thoughtful expression on her face. Looking out the window, grandma had seen the two little boys progressing down the block and expected them momentarily at her front door. At noon they had reached the gate, but sat down upon the walk again, guilty consciences making a last rebellious stand.

Grandma came to the gate and opened it. "Good morning, boys. Aren't you in school today?"

Two heads shook a denial. "It's nearly noon," continued grandma. "Won't you come in and have something to eat? I have a beautiful big melon saved for the fair, but there's another one ripe enough to pick." That was the last straw. The young culprits howled together: "We can't eat anything! We ate your Fair Melon last night and (in a burst of contrition) we wish we hadn't!"

Did a sympathetic little smile pass over Grandma's face? If so, the boys didn't see it. Their heads were again buried between their knees. She laid a hand lightly on each guilty shoulder. "I'm afraid," she said quietly, "we often in our lives do things we wish we hadn't--but whatever you do remember this--Grandma will always love you. Come in now, and we'll forget the melon. Next year you can help me raise another for the fair." Grandma turned and the boys followed her into the house, already sniffing the satisfying odor of baking bread and fresh cookies.

My memory is a little vague on the subject, but I think Grandma's watermelon won a county prize at the fair the following year.