

The Four Friends

By SIXTO M. RODRIGUEZ *

LONG ago a Dragon-Fly, a Mud-Dauber, a Snail, and a Shrimp lived together in a little house. They were happy and contented.

Each one of them had a certain work to do. The Mud-Dauber patched up the tiny holes in the roof and the walls of the house. With her little scoops of mud she was very clever at filling the cracks and holes in the house.

The Snail flattened and smoothed the mud which the Mud-Dauber placed, so the roof and the walls always looked smooth as if nothing has been put there to mar the beauty of the house.

The Dragon-Fly flew about all day long—from morning to night—to hunt for food. She was the one who provided food for the four of them.

The Shrimp kept the yard and the house clean. With her fan-like tail she swept and swept, so the yard and the house were never dirty or untidy.

Such was the wonderful friendship of these four creatures that they were often mentioned as the models of good comradeship. They served as examples to the other creatures of the neighborhood, who likewise became friendly with each other and industrious.

But alas! happiness cannot last forever.



Each had work to do.

One bright morning the four friends decided to go to the river for a little outing.

But the Dragon-Fly said that before she could go she must have her hair shampooed. The Dragon-Fly never neglected

her hair. She requested her friend, the Mud-Dauber, to shampoo her hair. The Mud-Dauber did so, but I am sorry to say she shampooed too vigorously, and—snap!—off went the Dragon-Fly's head.

The Mud-Dauber was frightened. Her friend, the Dragon-Fly, lay decapitated and lifeless on the ground.

(Please turn to page 118.)

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THE FOUR FRIENDS

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The poor Mud-Dauber jumped about so much that—crack!—her waist broke in two, and she died instantly.

The Snail had seen the two tragedies. She began to weep and wail. "Poor Draggie and Muddie are dead," she wept. She wailed so loudly that she actually loosened her body from the shell—rip! rip!—and in a little while she, too, died.

Only the last of the four friends, the Shrimp, remained. That morning she had busied herself with cleaning the yard before they should go on their outing. While she was at work, her attention was attracted by the loud wailing of the Snail. Soon she learned that her two friends, the Dragon-Fly and the Mud-Dauber, were no more. And then, before her very eyes, her friend, the Snail, came to an unhappy end, so that she was the only one left. "Poor Draggie and

Muddie and Snailie are all dead, dead," she wept. "Oh, what shall I do?"

She, too, began jumping and lamenting. Hither and thither she jumped, neither seeing nor caring where she went. Suddenly she landed in a pot of boiling hot water which the Dragon-Fly had prepared that morning to cook their rice. Into the water she went—sizz! sizz!—and instantly poor Shrimpie was scalded to death—a dreadful fate which caused the end of the last of the four friends.

The news of the terrible happenings spread and all the neighborhood mourned for Draggie and Muddie and Snailie and Shrimpie. They buried them in the yard of the little house where the four had lived so happily.

To this day the folk of that community tell of the unhappy fate which overtook the Dragon-Fly, the Mud-Dauber, the Snail, and the Shrimp. They always end their sad story by repeating this ancient saying: "Happiness and sadness are the two extremes of life. They come one after another. You are happy today, but tomorrow you may be sad or—dead."

MAKING OUR TOWN BEAUTIFUL

(Continued from page 116)

Announcer: Our principal will now award the prize.

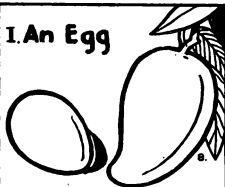
Mr. Cruz: This school is proud to have a pupil like Mario Jovito. The ideas in his composition are good, and he has explained them well. We are all proud of Mario. Pupils, you have heard his composition. Now we must begin a campaign to get these things done in our town, and so make our town beautiful. Next Monday I shall call you all to the auditorium and announce our plans. And now to Mario Jovito, the winner of this contest, I award this splendid book, *Rizal: Man and Martyr* by Laubach. I congratulate you, Mario. *(Gives Mario the book and shakes hands with him. There is much applause. Mario bows his thanks to Mr. Cruz and to the Assembly.)*

Announcer: Now we shall stand and sing our national anthem, after which we shall return to our rooms. *(The song is sung. Then all pupils pass to their rooms. Curtain.)*

GUESS MY NAME

(Answers from page 111)

I. An Egg



II. A Mango

CHOOSING THE WORD

(Answers from page 111)

1. is 2. go 3. is 4. her 5. met
6. play 7. going 8. was 9. has
10. play 11. take 12. killed
13. for 14. bring 15. were

CROSS-WORD PUZZLE

(Answers from page 111)

	1	2	3	4
1	K	I	N	G
2	I	R	O	N
3	N	O	R	A
4	G	N	A	T