

Dino Tales:

Manners Manor

It was dinnertime, and with his fork and spoon Tristan had built a small hill out of his mashed potatoes. He took two peas and held them at the top of the hill. "On your marks, get set ... go!" he said, then rolled the peas down the mashed potato hill, to see which would reach the bottom first.

"Tristan, this is my last warning," his mother said. "It's not good manners to play with your food."

Tristan had been at the table for quite some time, playing with his food. Everyone else had finished and left the table. Around Tristan's plate were pieces of food that had fallen or been knocked off, and his hands were messy and sticky.

Grandpa Jake walked in. "My, my! Tristan, it's almost your bedtime, and who would've thought you'd still be here eating?"





"I'm having a hard time with my dinner, Grandpa," Tristan said. "Eating takes so long."

"Well, you'll find it takes a lot longer to eat when you're playing with your food. If you have good manners and don't play with your food, then eating doesn't take that long. Did you ever hear of Manners Manor, Tristan?"

"No," answered Tristan.

"That might be just the perfect story for now," Grandpa Jake said thoughtfully. "But you'll need to eat up before I can tell you the story."

Tristan sat up straight and removed his elbows from the table, scooped up some mashed potatoes and peas and took a large bite.

"Excellent!" exclaimed Grandpa Jake. "If you take bites like that, you'll be done in no time. Let's see now ... Manners Manor."



Bumble had a difficult time sitting still at mealtimes and eating nicely. No matter how often her mother insisted that she sit still and eat properly, Bumble seemed to forget, and instead she wiggled about in her chair, leaning on her elbows, and chewing with her mouth open.



She'd get up from the table without being excused, and when there was food she didn't really like, she would take a very long time to eat it.

At almost every meal, Bumble left a big mess on the table, her clothes, and the floor. Her mother would remind her of the importance of having good manners. Bumble would apologize, but by the next meal, she had forgotten what her mother had said.

One evening before dinner, Bumble's mother announced that she had something special for her and handed her an envelope.

Bumble opened it and pulled out a beautifully written invitation:

Dear Lady Bumble,

It would be our greatest pleasure to invite you to Manners Manor for this year's banquet. It will be held two weeks from today, starting at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We look forward to seeing you.

*Sincerely,
Lord and Lady Manners*





"Who are Lord and Lady Manners, Mom?" Bumble asked.

"They're friends of ours," Bumble's mother said, "whom you'll meet at the banquet. It's a special occasion, and those who attend must have only the best table manners."

"Then maybe I shouldn't go," Bumble said with a sigh. "I don't have very good manners."

"This is a wonderful chance to learn! You have two weeks before the banquet to work on your manners."

Bumble brightened up, and together they made a list of manners that Bumble could improve.

Bumble was so eager to be a good example of being polite and having good table manners that she made an extra effort at every meal. Soon Bumble began to enjoy her mealtimes more. By the time of the banquet, Bumble was ready.

"Good evening, Lady Bumble," the butler said as he greeted her at the door of the manor. "It's a pleasure to have you here tonight."



"It's nice to be here," Bumble replied.

Bumble looked around the room and noticed that many of her friends were there too. She saw Dixie and Suds across the room and was about to call out to them when she remembered. *Oops, I shouldn't call out like that! Mother told me that it's not polite to shout in company like this.*

Bumble walked over to her friends. Each one explained about the invitation and how they had worked on their manners. "Do you know who Lord and Lady Manners are?" Milton asked.

"My mother said they're friends," Bumble replied.

No one else seemed to know anything else about Lord and Lady Manners, but they were excited about meeting them.

Suddenly, there was a brief chime of a bell, and the butler announced that dinner would begin. They entered the dining room and saw a long table, well laden with food. Each place at the table was set with special care, with a different plate, napkin, and silverware set. There was a name card by each plate.





Bumble saw her name card and was about to sit down, but then she noticed that the plate, napkin, and silverware at Dixie's place were in her favorite color.

"I want to sit where you're sitting!" Bumble demanded.

"But this is my seat," Dixie replied. "My name card is here."

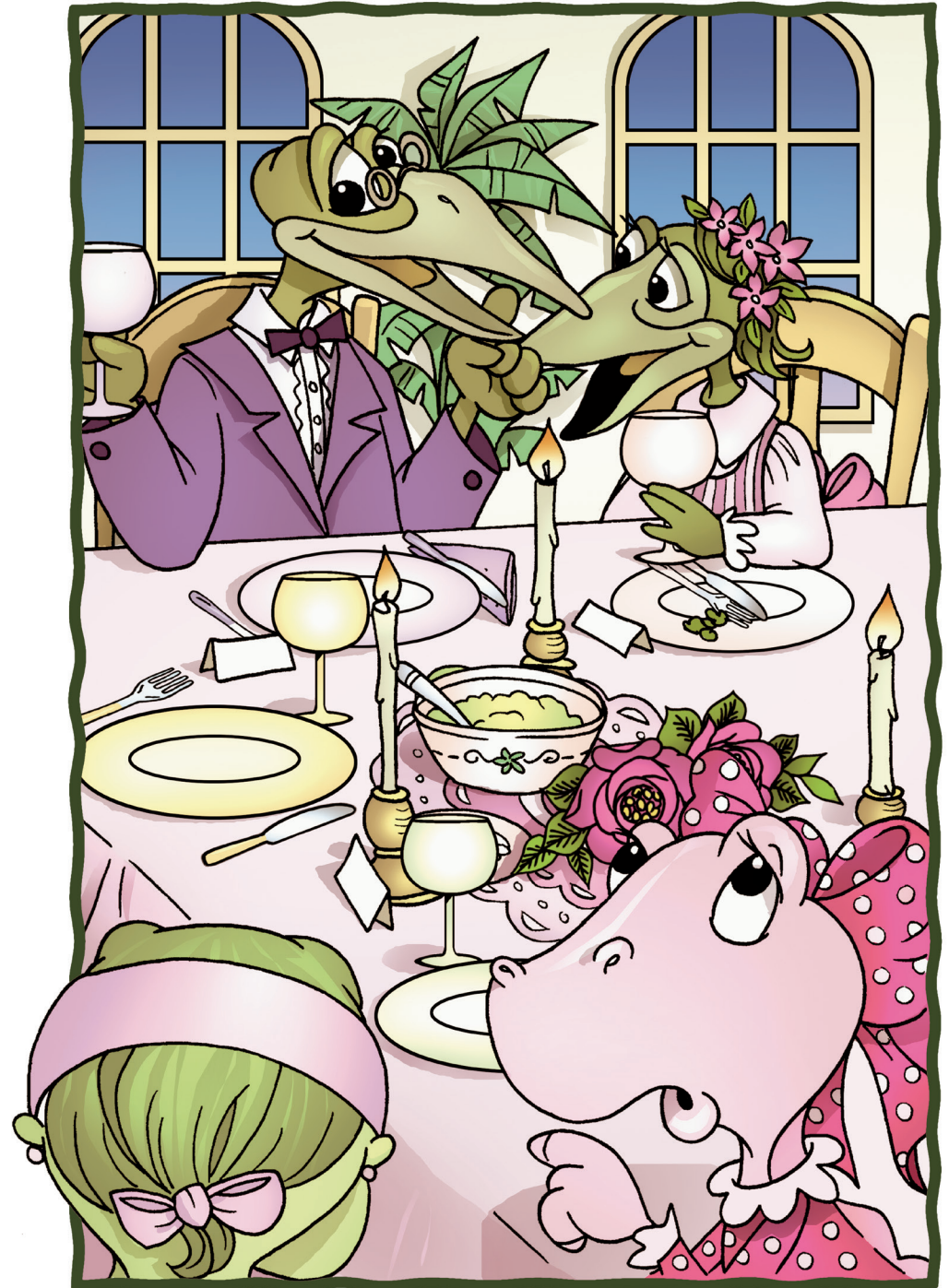
Bumble grabbed Dixie's name card and switched it with hers.

"Don't be mean. This is where I'm meant to sit, and that's where you're meant to sit."

But Bumble wanted to sit in Dixie's place. Just as Dixie was about to sit down in her chair, Bumble pulled the chair out from under her. Dixie hit the floor with a thump. "Ouch!" she cried. The whole room went silent, and everyone turned to look at Bumble.

Oh dear! Everyone is looking at me, Bumble thought. She felt bad.

"Dixie, I'm sorry," she said, apologizing. "We're here because we've learned to be polite, courteous, and well-mannered. What I did wasn't good manners at all."



"That's okay," Dixie said. "I forgive you."

Just then Lord and Lady Manners entered the room and took their place at the head of the table.

"Welcome, dear friends!" Lord Manners announced. "We're so happy that you could join us. This special dinner is in recognition of your efforts to have good manners."

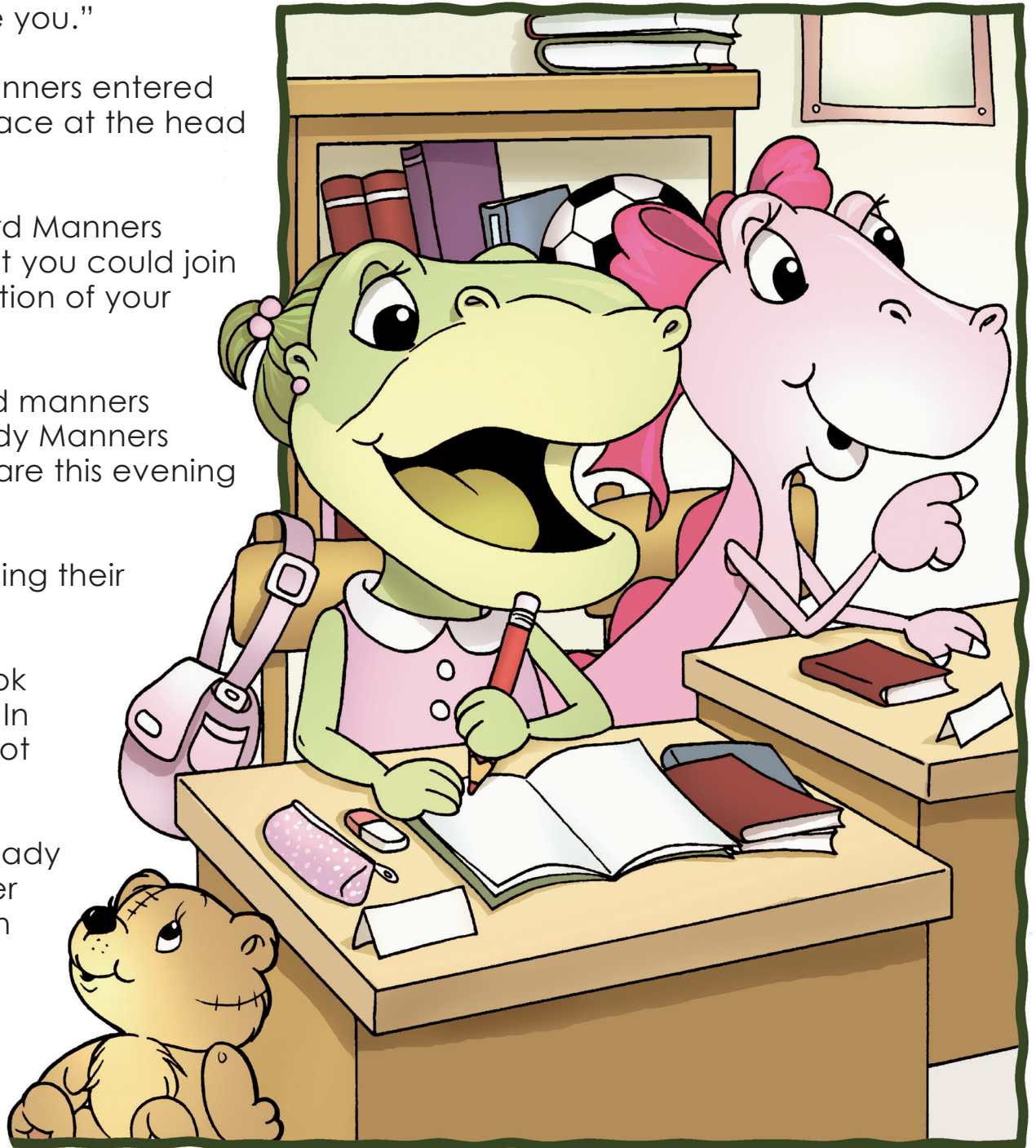
"Courtesy, being polite, and good manners are important habits to learn," Lady Manners added. "And we are happy to share this evening with you."

The meal began with everyone using their very best manners ever.

"Don't Lord and Lady Manners look familiar?" Wesley asked Bumble. "In fact, I think Lord Manners looks a lot like Mr. Nuggin."

Bumble looked over at Lord and Lady Manners. Lord Manners caught her eye and winked. It was Mr. Nuggin and his wife.

The next morning at school, Mr. Nuggin entered the classroom whistling his favorite song.





"Good morning, Lord Manners," the students chorused happily.

"Aha, I see you've found out!" Mr. Nuggin replied with a chuckle. "Did you all enjoy yourselves last night?"

"Yes, we did!" the students answered.

"Are you really a lord, Mr. Nuggin?" Bumble asked.

"Well, not really," said Mr. Nuggin. "But because I knew how hard each of you has been working on learning better manners, I wanted to do something special for you. So, with the help of your parents, my wife and I planned last night's banquet."

"It was a wonderful idea, Mr. Nuggin!" Dixie exclaimed. "Thank you so much!"



"That was a lot of fun," Tristan said, as the story ended. "Maybe we can have a pretend Manners Manor like they did and invite all my friends."

"That's a wonderful idea!" Grandpa Jake said.

Moral: When you have good manners, it makes others happy, because it shows them love and respect.

