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The Disgraced Sugar-Bowl

Abbie Phillips Walker

There was a great commotion in the pantry. The sugar-bowl had lost its cover and stood on the shelf with a crestfallen look.

"The nerve," said the teapot, "of standing there all day without your cover! We can't associate with you unless you find it."

"But how can I be blamed for something I didn't do?" moaned the sugar-bowl. "I had it on when I went to sleep last night. I'm sure someone stole it. Oh dear, I can feel flies buzzing inside my head. What am I to do?"

The teapot raised its nose even higher, while the cream-pitcher looked pityingly at the sugar-bowl, having never worn a cover itself and never being part of the covered set, though it always lived nearby.

"After a while, you'll get used to being uncovered," timidly suggested the cream-pitcher, moving closer to the sugar-bowl. "The maid will shoo away the flies when she places you on the table."

The teapot and other covered dishes moved away as a group, and the sugar-bowl, seeing the creamer's friendly disposition, tried to appear taller and condescendingly engaged in conversation with it.

"Yes," the sugar-bowl said, "I suppose I can adapt to being without my cover. But after wearing one all my life, it's hard to be deprived of it now. I can't imagine how I'll bear it. However, I must say, now that I notice you, you look well cared for and just as white as any of us."

"Of course I do," laughed the creamer. "I'm washed and polished every day, unlike you, who probably receive such treatment once a week."

The sugar-bowl admitted to being washed and polished once a week. "I've never considered that before," it said.

"The teapot always holds its nose high in the air," remarked the cream-pitcher. "And many times, it's left on the shelf overnight without being washed and polished. All you covered dishes are haughty because of your covers, but you've never noticed that we, without covers, are always smooth and shining. Meanwhile, you often go a whole day, sometimes longer, without being cleaned." The sugar-bowl moved closer to where the teapot and the other covered dishes stood.



"I really hope you find your cover," said the teapot. "You seem out of place with us. I saw you talking to the cream-pitcher. I guess you feel more comfortable with the uncovered dishes now."

The sugar-bowl didn't catch the hint and replied, "Yes, the cream-pitcher is quite polished and smooth. I never realized before that the uncovered dishes receive better care than we do. The creamer is washed and polished every day, sometimes even three times. All the uncovered dishes are treated the same way. If I'm washed and polished once a week, I consider myself lucky."

"I'm washed and polished daily," the teapot said meekly.

"Almost always," added the butter-dish, "if the maid doesn't forget about me."

"I know better than that," said the sugar-bowl, "and so does the cream-pitcher. It just told me that the teapot is often left overnight, and I'm aware that you go for days without cleaning. The uncovered dishes should consider themselves superior, not us with our high-headedness due to our covers."

The teapot lowered its nose slightly upon learning that the cream-pitcher was washed and polished, at times even three times a day. The other covered dishes appeared surprised and, for the first time, noticed that the uncovered dishes were even more polished than they were.

"Well, perhaps we could be a bit more neighborly," said the teapot, which happened to be filled with yesterday's tea.

At that moment, the maid entered the pantry. When she saw the sugar-bowl without its cover, she exclaimed, "For goodness' sake, where's that cover?" She brushed away the flies that were inside the bowl, then left the room. In a minute, she returned with the cover, placed it on the sugar-bowl, and took the teapot

with her.

When she brought it back, the cream-pitcher was chatting with the sugar-bowl. "I'm so glad you have your cover back," said the creamer. "You didn't look natural without it." She nodded to the teapot, which nodded back. Soon, all the covered and uncovered dishes were engaged in friendly conversation.

Later, the sugar-bowl remarked to the teapot, "Every cloud has a silver lining. If I hadn't lost my cover, we would have never known the uncovered dishes. Now, we'll be one big family, as it should be."

"Yes," agreed the teapot. "That's true. I had no idea they were so polished."

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