



CHARACTER BUILDING LESSONS

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MISERABLE MILLIE

About the Book

Millie thought the whole world was unfair. Even though she had a nice house and a loving family, she was always miserable. Whenever things didn't go her way, Millie constantly complained.

Millie became so miserable that she decided to run away so she could do whatever she wanted. She takes a bus to the big city, but instead of having fun, she encounters one disaster after another. Millie is alone and scared, and ends up with no money, no food to eat, and nowhere to sleep. After getting caught stealing candy, the police call her parents. Her parents are overjoyed that she has been found. Millie finally appreciated what she had and became, "the happiest girl in the whole world."



Main Virtues

**Respect/Trustworthiness/
Fairness**

Other Virtues

Appreciation, Cheerfulness, Cleanliness, Cooperation, Forgiveness, Honesty, Justice, Obedience to Parents, Purity, Respect for Law, Self-Discipline, Sportsmanship, Tolerance, and Unity

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Unselfishness

Whenever Papa or Mama gave their children chores to do, Millie constantly complained, “*I* always have to do the most work.”

This made Papa and Mama very sad because it was not true. But Millie did not care. In her mind, whatever she felt was unfair had to be true. And that was all that mattered to Millie.

Millie was selfish. She did not care about others. However she felt, that had to be true. An unselfish person thinks and cares about others.

Truthfulness

Whenever Millie went to bed, she always grumbled, “All my friends can stay up late watching TV, but *I* can’t!”

Millie was not sure this was true, but that was the way she felt.

When people make up stories, they are not telling the truth. If they are not telling the truth, then they are lying.

Stubbornness

Whenever Millie played games with Willie and Betsy, she always wanted to play according to *her* rules. But Willie and Betsy would insist, “We need to play according to the rules of the game.”

If Millie did not get her way, she would quit playing and yell, “You’re stubborn! You always want to play *your* way!”

Millie claimed her brother and sister were stubborn, but she was the one who was stubborn.

Obeying Parents

One day Millie announced, “I’m going to the park to play.”

“It’s dangerous for young girls to go alone to the park,” warned Mama.

“All my friends can go wherever they want,” cried Millie. “Why can’t I? I can’t do anything by myself!”

“You need to trust us,” said Mama.

Millie stomped out of the room mumbling, “It’s not fair! No one ever trusts *me*!”

Millie did not obey her parents. Children often get into lots of trouble because they stubbornly refuse to listen to their loving parents.

Forgiveness

One day while playing in the backyard, Willie accidentally bumped Millie. “Ouch!” screamed Millie. “Why did you hit me?”

“I’m sorry,” stammered Willie. “It was an accident.”

“No, it wasn’t,” insisted Millie. She picked up a stick and began hitting Willie on the head.

Millie was unwilling to forgive her brother even though he said he was sorry and it was an accident.

Punishment for Disobedience

When Mama heard Willie yelling, she rushed to the window and called them both in.

After hearing what had happened, Mama scolded Millie. “Go to time-out right now! Tonight, you’re going to bed early!”

Loving parents will discipline their children when they do wrong. Wise children will obey their parents so they will not have to be disciplined.

Complaining

Millie constantly had something to grumble about. If anything bad happened to her, it was *always* someone else’s fault. In her eyes, she never did anything wrong.

As Millie lay in bed that night, she got so disgusted at how everyone was so mean and unfair to her that she got out of bed and made a list of her complaints:

1. I work harder than anyone around the house.
2. I go to bed earlier than all my friends.
3. No one ever plays by my rules.
4. I can’t eat whatever I want.
5. I can’t watch what I want on TV or the Internet.
6. My friends can go anywhere, but I can’t.
7. Teachers only pick on me.
8. I’m the only one who gets punished.
9. I can never wear clothes I like.
10. No one ever trusts me!

That night, with tears rolling down her cheeks, Millie groaned, “Everyone hates *me*! Papa, Mama, Willie, Betsy, friends, teachers—EVERYONE! I can’t do anything *I* want. It’s so unfair! No one has it as bad as I do. I’m the most miserable girl in the whole world!”

Millie’s constant complaining made her more and more miserable.

Running Away from Home

As she lay in bed crying, suddenly she got an idea. She sat up straight in bed and exclaimed, “I’ll run away from home! Then *I* can do anything *I* want!”

Her heart beat with great excitement as she thought about all the fun things she could do. “I can watch whatever *I* want on TV. I can go to bed anytime. I can dress the way *I* like. I can eat anything *I* want. I can go to any park whenever *I* wish, and no one can stop *me*! I’ll be free at last!”

Millie could hardly sleep thinking about all the fun things she could do. When morning came, she jumped out of bed and sneered saying, “This is the last day of my old life! I hope *I never* see this terrible house again!”

We will discover that all her false dreams will become like vapor.

Stealing

When school ended, Millie raced home. When she saw Mama working in the garden, she quickly went to Mama's purse and stole some money. Then she went to empty her piggy bank. Stealing is always wrong. It is especially sad when parents cannot trust their children.

Eating Properly

"I'm hungry," said Millie. Then with a big grin she said, "Now *I* can eat whatever *I* want!"

She went into a restaurant and said, "I want a large hot fudge sundae with lots of whipped cream."

"You want that for breakfast?" asked the surprised waitress.

"Yes," replied Millie. "That's my favorite breakfast."

An hour later, Millie moaned, "Ohhhh!!!! My stomach hurts!"

For the rest of the day Millie could not eat.

Millie passed an amusement park. "Oh good!" she exclaimed. "I can go on all kinds of rides, and no one can stop *me!*"

But because of her stomachache, Millie did not enjoy any of the rides.

Millie did not care about eating healthy food. She cared only for food that tasted good. She ended up with a stomachache. We need to learn to take care of our bodies.

Obeying Authorities

When it was almost dark, Millie decided to go to the city park to find a place to sleep. "Mama never trusted me to make my own decisions," she mumbled with a sneer, "but now *I* can go anywhere *I* want, and no one can stop me!"

Millie strutted into the park. When she passed a group of boys, one of the boys pointed and shouted, "Look! She's alone."

The boys took off and ran to get Millie. Millie ran as fast as she could screaming, "Help! Help!"

But there was no one to help her. The boys were getting closer and closer.

Millie raced to the top of a hill. Just as the boys were about to catch her, a police officer appeared. The boys quickly scattered into the bushes.

"Please help me," pleaded Millie. "Those boys were chasing me."

"You'd better go home right now," warned the officer. "It's dangerous for kids to be alone in the park. I'll walk you out of the park."

"Thank you so much," said Millie.

Before this Millie hated police. But now she was really glad to see one.

Police officers are our friends. They are there to protect us. Some people do not like police because they are disobeying the law. Those obeying the laws have nothing to fear.

Sexual Temptations

Millie was miserable. All day she walked around the big city hoping to find some money. When she passed some street girls, they wanted her to join them.

“I’m not interested,” stammered Millie. Then she said to herself, “I don’t want to live like that.”

Our media floods our society with immorality. Children need to be aware of these evils. According to the situation and the age of the children, use appropriate discretion when teaching about this subject.

Judging Parents

Millie lay awake for a long time shaking with fear. “I hope nobody finds me,” she sobbed, as tears streamed down her face. “Ohhh!!! How I wish I were safe in my bed. Now I’m all alone and scared. Why was I so foolish to steal money from Mama’s purse and run away from home? Now Papa and Mama will never want me back.”

Millie cried and cried until she fell asleep.

Meanwhile, Papa and Mama were searching everyday for Millie. “Where’s my Millie?” Mama would wail over and over.

“I don’t know,” Papa would sigh with tears, “but we’re going to search for her until we find her.”

Papa, Mama, Willie, and Betsy put signs up all over town offering a reward for anyone finding Millie.

Millie made a big mistake. She thought that because she stole from her parents, her parents would not love her. Children need to be aware that even when their parents punish them for their evil deeds, they still love them. Parents punish children in hopes that their children will not repeat their evil behavior.

Loving Others

The officer took Millie to the police station and called her parents. When Mama heard that Millie had been found, she shouted for joy. Then she exclaimed, “We’re coming right away!”

Millie began to cry and shake all over. “What will Papa and Mama do to me?”

To Millie’s great surprise, when Papa saw her, he ran to her and gave her a giant hug. With tears streaming down his face, Papa said, “We love you, Millie. We’re so glad we found you.”

Then Mama wrapped her arms around her and began kissing her and saying over and over, “We’re so *happy* to see you.”

The police officers just smiled. They were glad they had saved another girl from the streets.

When Millie came home, she gave Mama, Papa, and even Willie and Betsy big hugs. “We’re so glad to have you back,” said Betsy.

When Millie ran away, she said, “Everyone hates *me*! Papa, Mama,

Willie, Betsy, friends, teachers—EVERYONE!” Notice how untrue that was. Millie had a false picture of what was happening. In reality, Papa, Mama, Willie, Betsy, and the police officers all loved Millie.

Apologizing

Then with tears streaming down her face Millie confessed, “I’m so sorry for stealing and for all the bad things I’ve done. Papa, Mama, I was very foolish for not listening and trusting you.

“Living on the streets was terrible and very dangerous. I was alone and scared. I had no money, no food to eat, and nowhere to sleep. I thought that if I could do whatever I wanted, I’d be happy. But I was *miserable*.”

Millie is apologizing for all the bad things she had done. It is often our pride that refuses to say, “I’m sorry.” We need to learn to humble ourselves and apologize for things that we do wrong.

Obedience Brings Happiness

When Millie went to bed that night, Papa and Mama wrapped their arms around her and said, “We love you, Millie. We’re *so* glad to have you back home again.”

As Mama tucked her into her warm, cozy bed, Millie replied, “Thank you, Papa and Mama. I’m *so* glad to be home. Now I’m the happiest girl in the whole world!”

Millie learned the lesson the hard way that obedience to parents brings happiness. But wise are those children who learn that lesson without going through all the troubles that Millie experienced.

Questions

1. What kind of home did Millie live in?

Millie lived in a nice house with Papa, Mama, and her older brother and sister, Willie and Betsy. Millie had lots of toys to play with, plenty of good food to eat, and a cozy bed to sleep in.

2. What did Millie say whenever Papa and Mama gave her chores to do?

Whenever Papa or Mama gave Millie chores to do, she constantly complained, “I always have to do the most work.”

3. How did Millie’s Papa and Mama feel about Millie constantly complaining that she always had the most work to do?

Millie’s constant complaining made Papa and Mama very sad because it was not true.

But Millie did not care. In her mind, whatever she felt was unfair had to be true. And that was all that mattered to Millie. Millie was selfish. She did not care about others. However she felt, that had to be true. An unselfish person thinks and cares about others.

4. What did Millie say whenever she went to bed?

Whenever Millie went to bed, she always grumbled, "All my friends can stay up late watching TV, but I can't!"

Millie was not sure this was true, but that is the way she felt. When people make up stories, they are not telling the truth. If they are not telling the truth, then they are lying.

5. How did Millie want to play games with Willie and Betsy?

Whenever Millie played games with Willie and Betsy, she always wanted to play according to her rules.

6. What did Willie and Betsy insist on?

Willie and Betsy insisted, "We need to play according to the rules of the game."

7. How did Millie react if she did not get her way?

If Millie did not get her way, she would quit playing and yell, "You're stubborn! You always want to play your way!"

Millie claimed her brother and sister were stubborn, but she was the one who was stubborn.

8. What did Millie's mom say when Millie announced, "I'm going to the park to play?"

Mama warned her, "It's dangerous for young girls to go alone to the park."

9. How did Millie react and say when Mama warned her, "It's dangerous for young girls to go alone to the park?"

Millie cried, "All my friends can go wherever they want. Why can't I? I can't do anything by myself!"

10. When Millie complained, "All my friends can go wherever they want. Why can't I? I can't do anything by myself!" what did Mama say?

Mama said to Millie, "You need to trust us."

11. What did Millie do when Mama said, "You need to trust us"?

Millie stomped out of the room mumbling, "It's not fair! No one ever trusts me!"

Millie did not obey her parents. Children often get into lots of trouble because they stubbornly refuse to listen to their loving parents.

12. What did Millie often do in school when the teacher was not looking?

When the teacher was not looking, Millie often talked to the girl in front of her.

13. What would the teacher say when she saw Millie talking to Susie?

The teacher would say, “Millie! Stop talking to Susie.”

14. What did Millie always say to Susie about being corrected by the teacher?

Millie always complained to Susie, “The teacher is so unfair. She only picks on me!”

15. What did Millie say and do when Willie accidentally bumped her and said, “I’m sorry, it was an accident.”

Millie said, “No, it wasn’t.” Then she picked up a stick and began hitting Willie on the head.

Millie was unwilling to forgive her brother even though he said he was sorry and it was an accident. We should be willing to forgive others when they ask for forgiveness.

16. What did Mama say and do to Millie because she hit her brother?

Mama scolded Millie and said, “Go to time-out right now! Tonight, you’re going to bed early!”

Loving parents will discipline their children when they do wrong. Wise children will obey their parents so they will not have to be disciplined.

17. What did Millie want to wear in order to be noticed in the wedding?

Millie wanted to wear a red skirt, orange blouse and socks, blue shoes, green ribbons on her ears, and carry a yellow purse.

18. What did Millie do and say when her mother said, “Millie, your clothes don’t match.”

Millie put her hands on her hips and whined, “Why can’t I wear what I want? Everyone else wears whatever they want!”

19. Millie constantly had something to grumble about. If anything bad happened to her, it was *always* someone else’s fault. In her eyes, she never did anything wrong. As Millie lay in bed that night, she got so disgusted at how everyone was so mean and unfair to her that she got out of bed and made a list of her complaints. Name some of Millie’s ten complaints.

- 1. I work harder than anyone around the house.*
- 2. I go to bed earlier than all my friends.*
- 3. No one ever plays by my rules.*
- 4. I can’t eat whatever I want.*
- 5. I can’t watch what I want on TV or the Internet.*
- 6. My friends can go anywhere, but I can’t.*
- 7. Teachers only pick on me.*
- 8. I’m the only one who gets punished.*
- 9. I can never wear clothes I like.*
- 10. No one ever trusts me!*

20. When Millie went to bed that night, what did she groan about as tears rolled down her cheeks?

That night, with tears rolling down her cheeks, Millie groaned, “Everyone hates me! Papa, Mama, Willie, Betsy, friends, teachers—EVERYONE! I can’t do anything I want. It’s so unfair! No one has it as bad as I do. I’m the most miserable girl in the whole world!”

Millie’s constant complaining made her more and more miserable.

21. What did Millie decide to do about all her problems?

Millie decided to run away from home.

22. Millie became very excited thinking about all the fun things she could do. What did Millie say about all the fun things she could do?

Millie said, “I can watch whatever I want on TV. I can go to bed anytime. I can dress the way I like. I can eat anything I want. I can go to any park whenever I wish, and no one can stop me! I’ll be free at last!”

23. Where did Millie get her money from?

Millie got her money from emptying her piggy bank and stealing money from her mother’s purse.

24. What did Millie do and say when she was a few blocks from her home?

When Millie was a few blocks from her home, she threw her arms into the air and proclaimed, “Free! Free! Free at last! Now I can do whatever I want. This is the happiest day of my life!”

25. What did Millie sing as she went skipping down the road to the bus station?

As Millie went skipping down the road to the bus station, she began singing, “I’m so happy! I’m so happy!”

26. What did Millie say to the waitress when she went to a restaurant for breakfast?

When Millie went to a restaurant for breakfast, she said to the waitress, “I want a large hot fudge sundae with lots of whipped cream.”

27. What happened to Millie an hour later?

An hour later Millie had a stomachache.

Millie did not care about eating healthy food. She cared only for food that tasted good. She ended up with a stomachache. We need to learn to eat properly so we can have a healthy body.

28. Where did Millie say when she decided to go to the city park to find a place to sleep?

When Millie decided to go to the city park to find a place to sleep, she said, “Mama never trusted me to make my own decisions, but now I can go any-

where I want, and no one can stop me!”

29. What did a group of boys do?

A group of boys ran after her. “It’s dangerous for kids to be alone in the park. I’ll walk you out of the park.”

30. A. What did the policeman say to Millie.

The policeman said to Millie, “It’s dangerous for kids to be alone in the park. I’ll walk you out of the park.”

B. Before this Millie hated police. How did Millie now feel?

Now Millie was glad to see a police officer.

C. Why are police like friends?

Police officers are friends because they want to protect us.

Some people do not like police because they are disobeying the law. Those obeying the laws have nothing to fear.

31. Where did Millie finally find a place to sleep?

Millie slept on a park bench.

32. What did Millie eat for breakfast the next day?

Millie ordered orange juice, eggs, toast, and milk—the same food her mother often served for breakfast.

33. Millie had only a few pennies left. As she walked around the city she was miserable. What did Millie hope to find while she walked around?

Millie hoped to find some money.

34. What did Millie say to herself when some street girls wanted her to join them.

When some street girls wanted her to join them, she said to herself, “I don’t want to live like that.”

Our media floods our society with immorality. Children need to be aware of these evils. According to the situation and the age of the children, use appropriate discretion when teaching about this subject.

35. In order to be safe, where did Millie end up sleeping?

Millie slept in a cardboard box behind an old factory.

36. What did Millie say and think about as she lay in the cardboard box about her:

A. home?

Millie with tears streaming down her face said, “Ohhh!!! How I wish I were safe in my bed. Now I’m all alone and scared.”

B. stealing money?

Millie said, "Why was I so foolish to steal money from Mama's purse and run away from home?"

C. father and mother?

Millie said, "Now Papa and Mama will never want me back."

37. What were Papa and Mama doing everyday?

Papa and Mama were searching everyday for Millie.

38. What did Papa say about searching for Millie?

Papa said, "We're going to search for her until we find her."

39. What did Papa, Mama, Willie, and Betsy do to find Millie?

Papa, Mama, Willie, and Betsy put signs up all over town offering a reward for anyone finding Millie.

Millie made a big mistake. She thought that because she stole from her parents, her parents would not love her. Children need to be aware that even when their parents punish them for their evil deeds, they still love them. Parents punish children in hopes that their children will not repeat their evil behavior.

40. The next day there was freezing rain. What did Millie find in the shopping mall to eat?

Millie found a half-eaten sandwich that a sick person had eaten.

41. What happened to Millie as she went to bed that night?

Millie lay in her cardboard box moaning, shivering, and throwing up. It was the most miserable night she had ever had. She cried and cried until she could cry no longer.

42. What did Millie do when she saw some candy and didn't have any money?

When Millie saw some candy and didn't have any money, she stole the candy.

43. What did the police officer do to Millie for stealing the candy?

A police officer took Millie to the police station and called her parents.

44. What did Papa do when he saw Millie?

When Papa saw Millie, he ran to her and gave her a giant hug. With tears streaming down his face, Papa said, "We love you, Millie. We're so glad we found you."

45. What did Mama do when she saw Millie?

When Mama saw Millie she wrapped her arms around her and began kissing her and saying over and over, "We're so happy to see you."

46. What were the police officers glad about?

The police officers were glad they had saved another girl from the streets.

When Millie ran away, she said, “Everyone hates *me!* Papa, Mama, Willie, Betsy, friends, teachers—EVERYONE!” Notice how untrue that was. Millie had a false picture of what was happening. In reality, Papa, Mama, Willie, Betsy, and the police officers all loved Millie.

47. What did Millie say about how she acted when she got home?

With tears streaming down her face Millie confessed, “I’m so sorry for stealing and for all the bad things I’ve done. Papa, Mama, I was very foolish for not listening and trusting you.”

Millie is apologizing of all the bad things she had done.

48. What did Millie say about her experience of living on the streets?

Millie said, “Living on the streets was terrible and very dangerous. I was alone and scared. I had no money, no food to eat, and nowhere to sleep. I thought that if I could do whatever I wanted, I’d be happy. But I was miserable.”

49. What did Mama and Papa do and say when Millie went to bed that night?

When Millie went to bed that night, Papa and Mama wrapped their arms around her and said, “We love you, Millie. We’re so glad to have you back home again.”

50. What did Millie say as Mama tucked her into her warm, cozy bed?

As Mama tucked Millie into her warm, cozy bed, Millie said, “Thank you, Papa and Mama. I’m so glad to be home. Now I’m the happiest girl in the whole world!”

Millie learned the lesson the hard way that obedience to parents brings happiness. But wise are those children who learn that lesson without going through all the troubles that Millie experienced.