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Cautionary Verses and Ruthless Rhymes

Charlie Ottley

With Illustrations by Oliver Preston

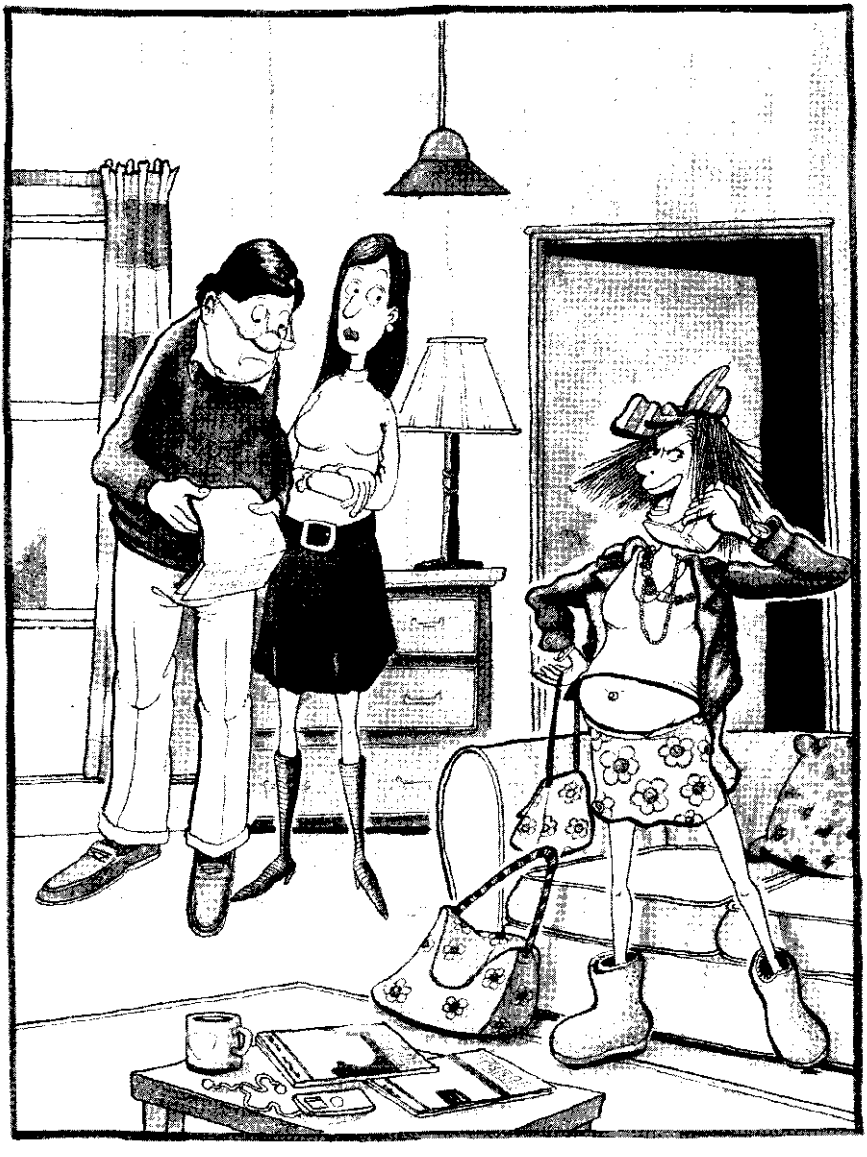
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Extract

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The Tragic Tale of Sally Platt

who liked to chat

Poor Sally was a lovely child,
Complexion fair and temper mild.
She was, it comes as no surprise,
The apple of her parents' eyes
Who gave her with a grateful sigh
Those things that only love can buy
Like Barbie and a matching Ken,
A hamster with revolving den,
A CD player made by Sony,
Two Furbies and My Little Pony.

In fact when there was cash to spare
Sweet Sally had the lion's share.

Their angel pops, their shining pearl
Became a most demanding girl
Who couldn't bear to be alone
So Santa brought a mobile phone.
Her mum and dad, on meagre means,
Were rapidly reduced to beans,
In part because they didn't know
About the new 'pay as you go'
But chose instead to foot the tab
For little lambykins to blab.

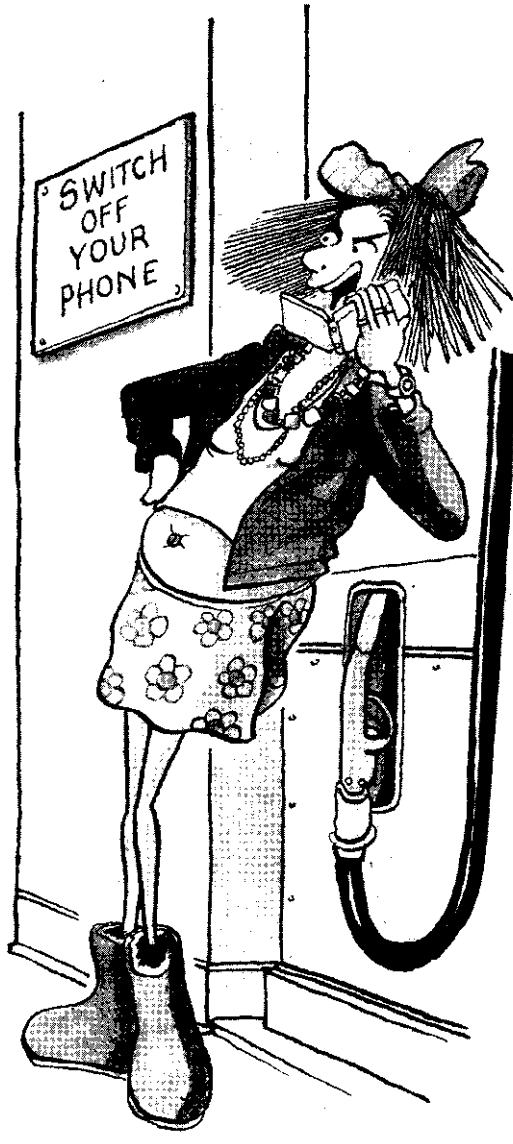


One day her dad received a bill
Which on digestion made him ill.
He double-checked the monstrous tally
And looked severely down at Sally.
Yet did his precious cherub balk?
No sir, she said, 'It's good to talk!'

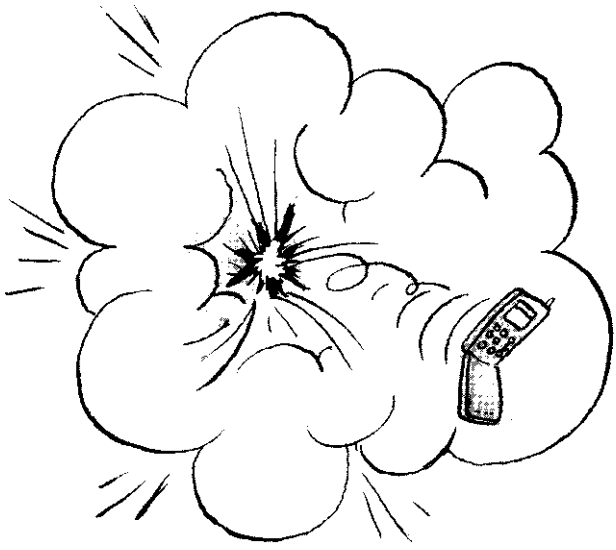
It happened that, a few weeks later,
Young Miss Platt stormed out on mater.
Rudely slamming shut the door,
She walked down to the garage for
Some gum and, it can't be denied,
The better line she got outside.

Then calling up her sidekick, Pat,
The whining and ungrateful brat
Offloaded on her trusty mate
A bellyful of angst and hate
Directed at her mum, and said,
'I wish the silly cow was dead!'




SWITCH
OFF
YOUR
PHONE

On finishing her conversation
Sally reached the filling station.
Ignoring, though she should have known,
A sign that read 'Switch off your phone'.
She paid no notice – what a chump!
Just as she passed the petrol pump
Her mobile rang, produced a spark
Which very quickly found its mark.
Yes, with a deep and throaty cough
The phone was finally turned off,



As girl and forecourt, cars and all
Exploded in a blazing ball
Reducing half the street to rubble.
The fire brigade had major trouble.

As for Sally – well it's said
They never did retrieve her head!
No moral need be mentioned here,
The message of our tale is clear,
Except to add that at the wake,
While mum took round the tea and cake,
She stifled once upon a while
The faintest traces of a smile.