

# The Pineapple Apron

Lucy Maud Montgomery  
1908

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# The Pineapple Apron

L. M. Montgomery.

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All the girls in our class that winter were crazy over lace patterns. The fifth-class girls were making patchwork quilts and the third class were collecting postage stamps; but we went in for crocheting lace, and our greatest ambition was to get a pattern nobody else had. We felt so triumphant when we succeeded, and so vexed and mortified when some other girl came out with it, too; only we never showed that we were vexed; we just said we were tired of that pattern, it was getting so common, and we never did any more of it.

We took our lace to school and worked at recesses. Josie Pate was actually caught crocheting under her desk in school hours once; but she never did it again, for the teacher made her copy out the pattern and give it to every other girl in the class.

Peggy Reid was my chum, and we always lent our patterns to each other at first; but one day Peggy came to school with an elegant new spotted muslin apron on, trimmed with the sweetest edging in a brand-new design. She said her aunt out West had sent it to her, and all the girls were in raptures over it. I thought it real mean in Peggy never to have shown it to me, and she must have had it quite a while to have crocheted such a long piece of lace; for the apron was frilled and the lace sewn on the frill, and Peggy hasn't much spare time, for there are six children in her family younger than she is, and she is only twelve.

I didn't say anything, however, for I thought that perhaps Peggy would offer to show me the pattern when we walked home from school that night. But she never so much as mentioned it, and so, of course, I didn't, either; and Peggy told Julia Simmonds the next day that I was real jealous of her new apron, because I'd never said a word about it. Julia told me, of course—Julia is the worst tell-tale in school—and I felt that Peggy had acted mean right through. I was pretty cool and dignified to her after that, I can tell you; but I didn't stop speaking to her, of course, for I wouldn't have shown for anything that I cared whether she gave me the pattern or not. Meanwhile, all the other girls seemed to be constantly discovering new patterns, but I hadn't a bit of luck that way.

Then a really brilliant idea struck me—all at once, one day in geography class, when I was trying to bound Brazil. It was, "Why not invent a pattern of your very own?" I was so excited I could hardly wait until school was out, and then I raced home and shut myself up in the garret.

I can't tell you what a time I had inventing that pattern. It took me three weeks. I got right down foot of my class, and lost marks in everything, because I was thinking of it all the time. Mother said it wasn't safe to send me on an errand, because I was sure to make a muddle of it; and some nights I actually couldn't sleep. But in the end I succeeded. It was a pineapple design, but not a bit like any of the other pineapple patterns the girls had, and it was really

sweetly pretty. None of the other girls had ever thought of such a thing.

I decided I wouldn't tell them at first that I had invented it; it would be fun to see them trying to get it, and hunting old magazines through, and writing away to all their friends for it—and I knowing all the time that there was no other copy of it in the world.

I crocheted enough of it to trim an apron, and then one day I wore the apron to school. The girls were wild over the lace, and said it was the prettiest pineapple pattern they had ever seen; but Peggy never so much as referred to it.

Of course, nobody could get the pattern, and soon it got around that there was some mystery about it. Peggy told Julia that some one would soon get hold of it, and when Julia told me, I said it wouldn't be Peggy Reid, anyhow. Julia told Peggy that, and Peggy said she could find out that pattern in a fortnight, if it was worth finding out, but it wasn't. I walked home from school with Maggie Brown that night.

The next day was washing day, and mother washed my pineapple apron and hung it out on the line. It was a lovely moonlight night when we went to bed, clear as day; but before morning it was quite a snowstorm. When I went out to bring the clothes in after breakfast my pineapple apron was gone. Mother said it must have blown away, and I looked everywhere, but couldn't find it.

Peggy wasn't in school all the next week. She was sick with a cold, but I didn't know that, or, of course, I would have gone over to see her. I thought she just had to stay home to help her mother. She often had to.

But one morning, when I went to school, there was Peggy in the midst of a group of girls, all laughing and talking. As soon as I went in Josie Pate called out:

“You said nobody would ever get your pineapple pattern, Alice, but Peggy has.”

Then they all stood back, and there was Peggy, looking so triumphant, and wearing an apron trimmed with my pineapple pattern lace.

O, I can tell you I just flared up. It was really too much.

“Peggy Reid, you took my apron off the line, and that is how you got the pattern,” I cried. “You couldn't have got it any other way, because I invented that pattern myself!”

Of course, I didn't mean that Peggy stole the apron. I meant she'd just borrowed it without asking to get the pattern, and a pretty mean thing I thought it. Peggy turned red, and then she turned white.

“I guess I'm not a thief, Alice Morley,” she snapped out. “I don't know where your old apron is, and I don't care. You're just mad because I've got the pattern, when you said I couldn't, and I don't believe you made it out of your

own head.”

Miss Westcott came in then, and we couldn't say anything more. But from that out I was done with Peggy. It was dreadfully lonesome, and none of the other girls was really half so nice as Peggy; but I thought she had behaved dreadfully, and I vowed I'd never forgive her. I always walked home with Maggie Brown, and I never spoke to or looked at Peggy.

Things went on like this until the middle of the winter. The pineapple lace fuss all seemed far away by that time, and I began to wish I hadn't got so mad over it. After all, perhaps Peggy only meant it as a joke on me for boasting that nobody could ever get that pattern; and although she certainly had been horrid, I had been—a little—horrid, too. But the mischief was done, and how it could be undone I couldn't see, for I was bound I wouldn't be the first to try to make up, and Peggy just went by me with her head in the air. The very sight of a crochet hook made me sick.

One day mother got a letter from Miss Newell, and everybody in our house went straightway into a red-hot state of excitement. Miss Newell is an old school friend of mother's, and she is a famous writer. Her books are splendid, and Peggy and I just revelled in them. Peggy always thought it wonderful that I should have a mother who was Miss Newell's friend, and I had always promised that if Miss Newell ever came to visit mother I'd have Peggy over to meet her.

And now Miss Newell was really coming. She wrote that she would be passing through Bingham Tuesday, and would drive out to Westford between trains to have tea with mother, for the sake of Auld Lang Syne. This was Monday already, so Miss Newell would be here the next day. I was too excited to eat or study, or do a single thing, except plead with mother to let me put my front hair up in curlers that night. Mother doesn't approve of it as a frequent occurrence, but I felt that I simply could not face Miss Newell with straight hair, for all her heroines have curly hair.

Then I thought of Peggy and my old promise to her. I was in a regular fix. Of course, Peggy had acted meanly, but a promise is a promise, and mother had brought us up to keep one whenever we made it. Besides, you couldn't read one of Miss Newell's books without discovering what opinion she would have of a girl who would break a promise. I didn't know what to do, but I felt I must decide that night. It would never do to leave it till the next morning, for that wouldn't give Peggy a chance to curl her hair. Finally, just at dusk, I marched over to Peggy's through the fir grove. Peggy saw me coming, and she met me at the door, but she didn't speak.

“Miss Newell is coming to our place to-morrow afternoon,” I said just as stiffly and politely as anything you ever heard, “and I have come to ask you over because I promised long ago that I would.”

Peggy caught me by the arm and pulled me right into the hall.

“O, Alice, do forgive me,” she said. “It’s lovely of you to ask me over to meet Miss Newell. And honestly, Alice, I didn’t take your apron, but—”

“I never supposed you stole it,” I broke in. “I thought you’d just borrowed it to tease me. But since you say you didn’t, of course it is all right, and—”

“But it isn’t all right,” interrupted Peggy, looking miserable. “I—I have something to confess. I was bound to show you I could get that pattern, and that night your apron was out I slipped over into your yard and examined the lace until I was sure I could do it. But I never took the apron off the line, and it was there when I left. It—it wasn’t ladylike,” said Peggy, beginning to cry, “and please don’t tell Miss Newell I did it. But you provoked me so, telling Julia I couldn’t get it, and I thought you were real mean not to lend me the pattern.”

“But you didn’t lend me the pattern of that lace your aunt sent you,” I said, reproachfully.

Peggy opened her eyes wide.

“But she didn’t send me the pattern,” she said. “She sent me lace and apron and all, and I couldn’t make out how the pattern went, either. I thought you knew that; all the other girls did. I thought you were jealous of my present, because you never said a word about it.”

Peggy and I just sat down with our arms around each other and explained everything out. O, it was so jolly to be friends with Peggy once more. She came over and staid all night with me, and we both put our hair in curlers.

Miss Newell came next day, and we had a real nice time. But I think both Peggy and I were just the least little bit disappointed, although we would never admit it even to each other. Miss Newell was very nice, but she didn’t talk a bit cleverly, and she was short and stout and quite gray. Of course, that wasn’t to be wondered at, really, when you come to think that she was as old as mother. But I had never thought of Miss Newell being gray, and it was a great shock to me.

About the pineapple apron? O, yes; a big thaw came in March, and I found it under the lilac bush. It wasn’t hurt a bit, but I couldn’t bear the sight of it so I put it in the missionary box. I think Peggy put hers in, too, for I never saw her wear it again, and the missionary’s wife wrote to mother, saying that she gave the two pineapple aprons as prizes in the native school. So I suppose they did some good in the world after all.

## TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

[The end of *The Pineapple Apron* by L. M. (Lucy Maud) Montgomery]