

No April Fool

By Mary L. Bushong

¹ Kendra sat on the end of Gran's bed in the guest room. She watched as her grandmother carefully took items from her suitcase and put them away. The beautiful silver-backed brush was laid on top of the dresser. Dresses were hung in the closet while shoes were placed in a short, neat row on the floor.



² The girl liked to hear her Gran speak. Her Scottish accent was fun to listen to, and Gran loved to talk. Kendra almost forgot to listen to her words as she enjoyed the musical lilt of her voice. Then she realized that the older lady had asked her a question.

³ "I'm sorry, Gran, could you repeat the question? I was enjoying the sound of your voice," she said.

⁴ "That's nice to know," said Gran. "Do you ken that in Scotland, we aren't allowed to use an accent when we speak until we are in school? Until then, we have to speak like American children."

⁵ Kendra's eyes grew round. "Really?" she asked.

⁶ Gran smiled. "No, of course not! April fool!"

⁷ Kendra laughed over half-believing such a silly story. "Do you know why they call April first, April Fool's Day?" she asked.

⁸ Gran nodded, and then she pointed to the calendar hanging on the wall near the door. "Tell me what that is," she said.

⁹ Kendra shrugged her shoulders. "It's just a calendar."

¹⁰ "When do we celebrate New Year's Day?" asked Gran.

¹¹ "It's always on January first," said Kendra.

¹² "Not always," said Gran. "New Year's used to be celebrated in the spring, on March 25. It was celebrated for 8 days, and April first was New Year's Day."

¹³ "What does the calendar have to do with it?" asked Kendra.

14 "The new calendar was adopted in 1582. News traveled very slowly in those days, and it was hard to let everyone know that it had changed. Some people didn't believe it and refused to change to the new calendar. When they celebrated New Year's on April first, they were called..."

15 "April fools!" the two said together, laughing.

16 "That's when the joke playing started too. I guess they figured that if people were going to act like fools, they would treat them like fools."

17 "So, that's why we play tricks on people on April first?" asked Kendra.

18 Gran nodded. "In Scotland, we play tricks for two days. The second day is called Taily Day. Have you ever heard of someone wearing a sign on their back that says 'kick me'? That came from Scotland."

19 Kendra laughed out loud.

20 "Do you think you could help me make up some good tricks to play on my friends?" asked Kendra.

21 "I'm sure we can come up with some real winners," said Gran with a wink.

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| <p>1. What item did Gran lay on top of the dresser?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Her jewel case.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B A silver comb.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C A silver-backed brush.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Her false teeth.</p> | <p>2. Why did Kendra like to listen to her Gran?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A She liked the words Gran used.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B She liked the sound of Gran's voice.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C She liked the stories Gran told.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D She liked the lilt in Gran's voice.</p> |
| <p>3. When Gran used the word "ken" she meant:</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Know</p> | <p>4. Gran played an April Fool's joke on Kendra.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> |

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| <p><input type="radio"/> B Think <input type="radio"/> C Understand <input type="radio"/> D Want</p> | <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p> |
| <p>5. Why did people formerly celebrate the New Year in the spring? <input type="radio"/> A People like to celebrate more in the spring. <input type="radio"/> B Spring had nicer weather. <input type="radio"/> C It was a new growing season. <input type="radio"/> D Everything is new again in the spring.</p> | <p>6. People did not laugh at those who refused to adopt the new calendar. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True</p> |

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7. Why do you think a new calendar (the one we use now) was adopted in 1582?

8. What day do they celebrate in Scotland right after April Fool's Day?

- A Practical Joke Day
- B Kick Me Day
- C Taily Day
- D Daft Day

No April Fool - Answer Key

Answers:

- 1** C A silver-backed brush.
- 2** D She liked the lilt in Gran's voice.
- 3** A Know
- 4** B True
- 5** D Everything is new again in the spring.
- 6** A False
- 7** Various
- 8** C Taily Day