

Family Disagreements

“Young lady,” began Mr. Quimby. Young lady again! Now Beezus was really going to catch it. “You are getting altogether too big for your britches lately. Just be careful how you talk around this house.”

Still Beezus did not say she was sorry. She did not burst into tears. She simply stalked off to her room.

Ramona was the one who burst into tears. She didn't mind when she and Beezus quarreled. She even enjoyed a good fight now and then to clear the air, but she could not bear it when anyone else in the family quarreled, and those awful things Beezus said – were they true?

“Don't cry, Ramona.” Mrs. Quimby put her arm around her younger daughter. “We'll get another pumpkin.”

“B-but it won't be as big,” sobbed Ramona, who wasn't crying about the pumpkin at all. She was crying about important things like her father being cross so much now that he wasn't working and his lungs turning black and Beezus being so disagreeable when before she had always been so polite (to grown-ups) and anxious to do the right thing.

“Come on, let's all go to bed and things will look brighter in the morning,” said Mrs. Quimby.

“In a few minutes.” Mr. Quimby picked up a package of cigarettes he had left on the kitchen table, shook one out, lit it, and sat down, still looking angry.

Were his lungs turning black this very minute? Ramona wondered. How would anybody know, when his lungs were inside him? She let her mother guide her to her room and tuck her in bed.