



The Fossicker's Way Lesson 6: A Haughty Spirit By Deborah Wassenberg

You Tube Song Suggestions:

- W.I.S.D.O.M. (Carrickfergus Baptist Church)
- Make Me Wise (URFBC Trailblazers)
- Dig Down Deep (Jana Alayra)
- Boom (chapelhill kids)
- Proverbs Song (What's in the Bible)
- Psalms, Proverbs and Parables Too (Hillsong Kids)



Story:

'Hey Opal, remember to use your noodle!' yelled Garnet.

'That joke isn't funny anymore, Garnet,' said Opal, 'so stop saying it!'

Ever since the Fossicker family had pulled into the opal town of Coober Pedy, Garnet had made lots of noodle jokes. Specking, or searching, for opal in mullock heaps is called 'noodling'.

'Stop teasing your sister, Garnet,' said Mrs Fossicker.

'Garnet's right about one thing, though,' said Mr Fossicker. 'Everyone does need to use their noodle.'

'Not you, too Dad!' Opal complained.

'I mean you have to use your brain,' said Mr Fossicker. 'There are over 25,000 mining shafts out here so it can be a dangerous place to walk around if you're not careful.'

'Is that from digging by hand or mining with machines, Dad?' asked Jasper.

'Both, but mostly drilling these days. Shafts can be 10 metres deep. The rock is vacuumed out so the miners can go down and search for a vein or tube of common opal, or 'potch'. It's a good indicator and if they follow it, it will hopefully lead to 'precious' opal.' Mr Fossicker gave Opal a hug. 'Precious opal, that's the best opal you can find.'

'Can we go noodling, now?' begged Opal. 'I want to find some opal.'

'Not yet,' said Mrs Fossicker.

'Why not?'

'Because the temperature is going to climb to 38°C,' she said, 'and that's way too hot to be out in. We'll go noodling this afternoon when it's cooled down a bit.'

'I'll wear my hat and carry a water bottle and everything,' begged Opal. 'The heat won't bother me.'

'You've waited this long,' said Mr Fossicker, 'It's not going to hurt you to wait a few more hours, Opal.'

'I'm ten years old and I know how to look after myself. I'm not a baby like Pearl.'

'Hey,' Pearl objected. 'I'm not a baby!'

'Opal, stop being arrogant,' said Amber. 'You can't always get your own way.'

'It's nothing to do with you, Amber,' said Opal. 'I'm not asking for your help. I don't need anyone's help. I can go by myself.'

'That's enough, Opal,' said Mr Fossicker. 'If you fell down a shaft you could break an arm or a leg or worse.'

'And a shaft could cave-in on top of you,' said Garnet. 'Or if you fell into a deep tunnel you could run out of oxygen. Or if it rained the tunnel could flood. Use your noodle, Opal!' he added.

Embarrassed, Opal's cheeks flashed with colour, while her brothers and sisters laughed.

'Come on,' said Mrs Fossicker, 'I think we're all hungry so let's make lunch.'

The Fossicker's caravan was parked under shade cloth that helped block them from the harshness of the sun. They gathered around their picnic table to make sandwiches. Mrs Fossicker handed around containers of sliced meat, salad and cheese while Mr Fossicker buttered the bread. Pearl was in charge of the tomato sauce and made smiley faces on the buttered bread. Opal sulked all through the meal.

'Everyone treats me like I'm stupid,' she thought to herself. 'Garnet may be older than me but I'm smarter. And that goes for Jasper, too. I'll show them. I'll find opal all by myself, and when I find it, they'll be the ones who look stupid.'

While the family sat reading and snoozing after lunch, Opal slipped away. Beyond the public fossicking area, out amongst the mullock heap hills made by waste rock from the miners drilling, Opal looked for potch. Rock that held glittering, colourful opal. She searched the

ground, picked up rocks and turned them over. She was desperate to find some opal! But the flies would not leave Opal alone. Attracted by her sweat, half a dozen pestered her, landing on her mouth, her nose, and in her eyes. She'd shoo them away but they'd only leave her for a second or two before resettling on her face. It was while she was swatting at the flies that Opal took a step backwards without looking, and fell down a mine shaft.

'Argh!' Opal cried. She landed feet first but with such a thump on the uneven ground, she twisted her right ankle. She plopped down on her bottom in shock, her heart beating wildly. Her elbows were scraped and bleeding from the rocky walls of the mine. She squinted up at the blinding sun in dismay.

'No, no, no,' she said aloud. 'This can't be happening!' But it had happened, and she was trapped, 3 metres down an abandoned mine far from the campground. Something blotted the sun. Opal blinked, trying to help her eyes adjust so she could see who it was.

'Opal?'

'Jasper!'

'Are you alright?' he called down.

'No, I've twisted my ankle.'

'I'll go for help.'

'Hurry!' Opal begged. She was remembering Garnet's list of things that could go wrong when trapped down a mine. Would it cave in? Would she run out of oxygen? Was there any chance of rain?

The sun was blotted out again, this time by Mr Fossicker. 'Opal love? Don't worry, we'll get you out. Here comes a rope.'

Opal covered her head with her arms as Mr Fossicker dropped the rope down. Jasper abseiled down, careful not to land on top of her. 'Can you stand?' he asked.

'I think so,' said Opal. Jasper helped her to her feet. 'But I can't climb the rope.'

'You won't have to,' said Jasper. 'Okay Dad,' he called up. A long narrow ladder was lowered. Jasper guided it down and made sure it was steady. 'I'm going to piggyback you out of here,' he told Opal. 'Climb on my back and hang on tight.'

Opal did as she was told. There was just enough room for the two of them to clear the opening together. Mr Fossicker lifted Opal off Jasper's back as soon as she was near the surface.

'My precious Opal,' he said holding her tight. And he carried her back to camp.

Pearl was fanning Opal with a magazine as she lay on a camp bed with her right ankle iced and elevated on a pillow.

'I'll take over, Pearl,' said Mr Fossicker. 'You go noodling with the others. They're waiting for you. Well, Opal,' he said when Pearl had left, 'that was quite a fall.'

'I can't believe it happened to me,' said Opal. 'It was the flies fault. They wouldn't leave me alone. And those mine shafts should be covered. It's not safe.'

'Opal, your fall wasn't the fault of the flies, or the uncovered mines. Your fall was the result of your own dangerous pride. You thought you knew better than your Mum or me.'

Opal covered her eyes with her arm but Mr Fossicker could see the tears running down and wetting the pillow beneath her head. 'I'm sorry,' she whispered.

'There's a Proverb in the Bible that says pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. That's why it is so important to stay humble. Don't overestimate your own abilities and intelligence. If Jasper hadn't noticed you'd gone who knows how long you could have been out there. He found your water bottle on the ground near the opening of the mine shaft.'

'I was so sure I could do it.'

'Your pride deceived you. You chose your own way and got into trouble.'

'I'm so embarrassed. Everyone is going to make fun of me.'

'Hey, that's your pride again. Everyone is relieved you're okay. But I think you're going to learn a lot about humility while we're here for the next month or so. You know Garnet is not going to stop with the noodling jokes.'

'Oh,' moaned Opal.

'Is your ankle hurting?' asked her Dad.

'No. It's my pride. I'm pretty sure it's broken.'

'You'll survive,' said Mr Fossicker.

Ministry to the Children:

An arrogant attitude can cause you to stumble and fall. People who think that they don't need God, or need to obey Him, are full of pride. It can feel wonderful to be independent but never be independent from God. You need Him. You cannot rely on yourself. Only God can meet all your needs. He sent His Son, Jesus, to save you from sin. 'For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.' (2 Corinthians 5:21) Tell Jesus you are sorry for your sin. Ask Him to forgive you and invite Him into your heart today! (*Altar call*)

Memory Verse: Proverbs 16:18

Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.

Photocopy images of flies (enough for each word and the reference) and cut them out. Use clear contact to stick a fly to a small coloured ball (the type used in ball pits). Write out the words of the Memory Verse and the Bible reference. Give a fly swatter to a child and throw a ball to them. They must try and swat the 'fly' ball over a net (or through a hoop, or into a container). When a fly has been successfully swatted by a child, they receive a word of the Memory Verse to hold. When all the words have been handed out, put the children holding the words in the correct order, and say the verse aloud together. When the children know it, take away a word at a time until they can recite it without help.

Game: Tunnel Ball

Divide the children into teams. Each team forms a line, one behind the other, and stand with legs apart. The front person rolls the ball through their legs, down the tunnel, and the back person collects the ball and runs to the front. Go through the whole team and when the original front person is back to the beginning, they run the ball to a finish line.

Craft 1: Water Marbling Painting (Hydrographic)

For the Kid's Ministry who has a 'crafty' volunteer! Kits are available but it can be done using water and acrylic paint, oil and food colouring, and even shaving cream and liquid watercolour (which is the easiest). Watch the demonstration here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=65e5hKRPEnA>

Craft 2: Marble Painting

You will need:

- Marbles

- Tempera paint, liquid (in opal colours)
- Paper
- Flat box or tray
- Glitter

What to do:

1. Place a piece of paper into a flat box or tray
2. Children drop marbles into various colors of paint, then drop them into the box and roll them across the paper.
3. Add opal coloured glitter and dry with a hair dryer (optional)
4. Use to make cards, wrapping paper, or book covers