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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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The Gossiping Spring Flowers

The spring flowers peeped out from their soft bud coverings to see if it was truly springtime. Encouraged by the warm rays of old Mr. Sun Man, they ventured further, looking around in curiosity.

The singing pines noticed them and softly whispered, "Go back, my pretty spring flowers, go back. Winter has not yet departed."

The tall pine always knows when Winter retreats to his cold Northland. The long, cold moans he sends out all winter turn into a gentle song of spring. Although he sings throughout the winter, it is a high, clear note he emits over the bare woods. So, when he spotted the delicate spring flowers, he cautioned them.

However, the flowers felt so warm and comfortable that they simply laughed at the tall pine's warning. They retorted, "What do you know of spring? You are still clad in your old winter clothes. You must be envious of our lovely new attire and wish to keep us hidden for as long as possible. The sun is shining brightly and warmly, and tomorrow we shall be out, adorned in our pink, lavender, and white dresses."

"Better go back to sleep, my tender friends," warned the tall pine, his voice growing louder as he sang a song of caution. But the little flowers only laughed.

The following day, old Mr. Sun Man once again shone warm and bright, and out came the flowers in all their beautiful, colorful gowns.



"Just look at the pines," remarked one flower. "They are still wearing their winter clothes and appear quite shabby compared to us in our new attire."

"Yes, and look at the pussy-willows," added another.

"They are all donning their fur coats. Poor things, I

suppose they have no new frocks to show."

"I fail to comprehend how they can present themselves while being so unfashionable. Even the shrubs without colored gowns are adorning fresh green dresses," chimed in another flower.

"I do not see how we can associate with those pussy-willows this year," stated a large flowering bush. "They are truly out of touch with fashion."

"Better go back, better go back and keep warm a little longer," sang the tall pine, with his brothers joining in the warning.

"We shall not go back," declared a prickly little bush nearby. "You and the pussy-willows are trying to keep us out of sight because we are so pretty. I think my yellow is lovelier than ever this year. If you and the

pussies had pretty gowns, you would be singing a different tune, old winter pines."

The poor little pussy-willows clung to their fur coats, tightly wrapping themselves, as the spring flowers gossiped about them. Yet, they neither showed nor hinted that they heard any of the cruel remarks.

Gradually, the singing pines grew softer, and even the pussy-willows began to believe that spring was near.

The flowers grew bolder in the warm sun, and some of them fully blossomed, displaying their finery.

Then, as the sun slowly descended behind the hills, the voice of the singing pines grew clearer and sharper.

"Look out! Look out! Winter is still here!" they sang.

The little spring flowers shivered and trembled in the cold, but it was too late to retreat into their buds. Old Winter seized them and nipped each delicate flower.

When the sun rose the following morning, the flowers lay still on the ground, their once-pretty clothes spoiled and ruined.

"Oh, the beautiful, soft pussy-willows!" exclaimed the children who wandered through the woods. "They kept their fur coats and remained safe. We won't have any spring flowers this year. The cold north wind took them."

As the spring days arrived, the singing pines sang softly and gently. Only a few spring flowers emerged in their vibrant spring attire. They were the ones who refrained from mocking the pussy-willows and the tall pines in their winter garb.

They remained hidden in their buds, patiently waiting for the singing pines to signal the arrival of spring.

Once they bloomed, they avoided gossiping about the pussy-willows in their fur coats. These flowers realized that the pussies were wiser since they endured the winter days. Even if they wore their fur coats all summer, they were so soft and gray that one couldn't help but admire them.