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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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Old Granny Fox: After The Storm (11/29)

The joys and the sunshine that make us glad;
The worries and troubles that makes us sad
Must come to an end; so why complain
Of too little sun or too much rain?

—Old Granny Fox.

The thing to do is to make the most of the sunshine while it lasts, and when it rains to look forward to the coming of the sun again, knowing that conic it surely will. A dreadful storm was keeping the little people of the Green Forest, the Green Meadows, and the Old Orchard prisoners in their own homes or in such places of shelter as they had been able to find.

But it couldn't last forever, and they knew it. Knowing this was all that kept some of them alive.

You see, they were starving. Yes, Sir, they were starving. You and I would be very hungry, very hungry indeed, if we had to go without food for two whole days, but if we were snug and warm it wouldn't do us any real harm. With the little wild friends, especially the little feathered folks, it is a very different matter. You see, they are naturally so active that they have to fill their stomachs very often in order to supply their little bodies with heat and energy. So when their food supply is wholly cut off, they starve or else freeze to death in

a very short time. A great many little lives are ended this way in every long, hard winter storm.

It was late in the afternoon of the second day when rough Brother North Wind decided that he had shown his strength and fierceness long enough, and rumbling and grumbling retired from the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, blowing the snow clouds away with him. For just a little while before it was time for him to go to bed behind the Purple Hills, jolly, round, red Mr. Sun smiled down on the white land, and never was his smile more welcome. Out from their shelters hurried all the little prisoners, for they must make the most of the



short time before the coming of the cold night.

Little Tommy Tit the Chickadee was so weak that he could hardly fly, and he shook with chills. He made straight for the apple-tree where Farmer Brown's boy always keeps a piece of suet tied to a branch for Tommy and his friends.

Drummer the Woodpecker was there before him. Now it is one of the laws of politeness among the feathered folk that when one is eating from a piece of suet a newcomer shall await his turn.

"Dee, dee, dee!" said Tommy Tit faintly but cheerfully, for he couldn't be other than cheery if he tried. "Dee, dee, dee! That looks good to me."

"It is good," mumbled Drummer, pecking away at the suet greedily. "Come on, Tommy Tit. Don't wait for me, for I won't be through for a long time. I'm nearly starved, and I guess you must be."

"I am," confessed Tommy, as he flew over beside Drummer. "Thank you ever so much for not making me wait."

"Don't mention it," replied Drummer, with his mouth full.

"This is no time for politeness. Here comes Yank Yank the Nuthatch. I guess there is room for him too."

Yank Yank was promptly invited to join them and did so after apologizing for seeming so greedy.

"If I couldn't get my stomach full before night, I certainly should freeze to death before morning," said he. "What a blessing it is to have all this good food waiting for us. If I had to hunt for my usual food on the trees, I certainly should have to give up and die. It took all my strength to get over here. My, I feel like a new bird already! Here comes Sammy Jay. I wonder if he will try to drive us away as he usually does."

Sammy did nothing of the kind. He was very meek and most polite. "Can you make room for a starving fellow to get a bite?" he asked. "I wouldn't ask it but that I couldn't last another night without food."

"Dee, dee, dee! Always room for one more," replied Tommy Tit, crowding over to give Sammy room. "Wasn't that a dreadful storm?"

"Worst I ever knew," mumbled Sammy. "I wonder if I ever will be warm again."

Until their stomachs were full, not another word was said. Meanwhile Chatterer the Red Squirrel had discovered that the storm was over. As he floundered through the snow to another apple-tree he saw Tommy Tit and his friends, and in his heart he rejoiced that they had found food waiting for them. His own troubles were at an end, for in the tree he was headed for was a store of corn.