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Edith and the Bees

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One beautiful morning in June, a sweet little girl thought she could go out in the garden and pick some flowers for one of her playmates, who was sick and obliged to stay in the house this fragrant summer morning. "Tommy will have the most beautiful flowers in the garden," thought Edith, as she took her little basket and pruning scissors and ran out into the garden. She looked like a lovely fairy or a sunbeam, flitting about the rosebushes. I think she was the most exquisite rose in all the garden herself. Her heart was full of thoughts of Tommy while she worked away busily. "'I wish I knew something that would please Tommy more than anything else,' she said to herself. 'I would love to make him happy!'" and she sat down on the edge of a beautiful fountain to think.

While she sat there thinking, two dear little birds began to take their bath in the lovely, sparkling water that rippled and danced in the sunshine. They would plunge into the water and come out dripping, perch on the side of the fountain for a moment, and plunge in again. Then they would shake the bright drops from their feathers and fly away singing sweeter than ever. Edith thought the little birds enjoyed their bath as much as her baby brother did his.

When they had flown away to a distant tree, Edith noticed a beautiful pink rosebud, more beautiful than any she had yet seen. "Oh, how lovely you are!" she cried and running to the bush where it was, she bent down the branch, so she could look at it more closely, when out of the heart of the rose came a small insect and stung her pretty cheek. The little girl began to cry loudly and ran to her father, who was working in another part of the yard. "My little girl!" he said, "a bee has stung you." He drew out the sting and bathed her swollen cheek in cool water, at the same time telling her many interesting things about the wonderful little bees.

"Do not cry any more, my child," said her father, "and I will take you to see a kind gentleman who keeps many hives of bees."

"Oh, thank you!" cried Edith, brushing away the tears. "I will run and get ready now."

The beemaster, as everybody called the old man who kept the bees, was very glad to show his little pets and to tell Edith all he knew about them. He led her to a hive made wholly of glass so that she could watch the bees at their work.

"There are three kinds of bees in every hive," said the gentleman. "That large bee in the middle is the queen bee. She is the most important bee in the hive. She has a sting but seldom makes use of it. Those busy little bees are the worker bees. It was probably a worker that stung you this morning" said the beemaster.



Edith thought she did not like the worker bee as well as the others, but when she heard what industrious little workers they are, and how they take all the care of the young bees, build the cells of wax, and bring in the honey, she felt much more affection for them.

"What do the bees do in winter when there are no flowers to gather honey?" inquired Edith.

"They sleep during the long, cold winter days and awaken when the warm spring returns," replied her kind instructor.

"Now," said Edith's father, "we better go, or you will not get to see Tommy today."

Then the little girl thanked her new friend for telling her so much about his interesting pets and promised to come and see him as often as she could.

"I am almost glad that the naughty little bee stung me this morning, because now I will have something interesting to tell Tommy" she said to her dad as they walked home.

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