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Little Yellow-Wing

Emilie Poulsson

"The brook, the brook! Let's go to the brook!" cried Willie and his cousins, George and Eddy, as they looked out of the window after a storm and saw the overflowed banks of a small stream.

Thick shoes and a cloak were brought for Lizzie, and she walked by her father's side while the boys ran shouting and jumping before them.

They found the brook changed by the rain. A few days before, they had built a dam across it, which made a pretty waterfall; but now it was all swept away, and the brook was no longer a narrow stream but had spread out wide and ran furiously over the stones.

While the boys were running after chips of wood which they threw into the water for boats, the father, who stood with Lizzie under a tree, saw something move near his feet and picked up a poor, half-drowned bird. Lizzie called her brother and cousins, and they all looked at the bird and said, "Poor fellow! Poor fellow!" They begged to take him to the house, for he shook with cold and seemed to be dying. He was laid in Lizzie's hand; she gently covered him and carried him home to her mother. The little creature was dried and warmed, and his feathers, which did not hide his body when wet, spread out and covered him with a thick plumage.

"Is it really the same bird?" asked Lizzie. "Oh, I am so glad daddy found him!"

"See," said Eddy, "the bright yellow on his brown wings! Let's name him Yellow-Wing."

Crumbs of bread were offered to him, but he would not eat and cried, "Peep, peep," long after he was laid in a warm basket.

"The next morning, Yellow-Wing looked quite lively and no longer cried, "Peep, peep," but cheerfully sang, "Chirp, chirp." "He is a yellow bird," said George, "and when he is older, he will be as pretty as a canary."

Willie looked at his mother, and his eyes seemed to say, "May I keep him?"

She answered: "No, my son, it would be cruel to take him from the green trees and fields. How pleasant the life of a bird must be. Living in a leafy tree!"

"I know," said Willie, "that I should not like to be shut up in a cage; but what shall

we do with him?"

"He cannot fly, poor fellow," said Lizzie. "We must keep him until he can fly."

Eddy said there was a nest in the barn and said that Yellow-Wing might be squeezed in among those young ones.

"But," said George, "the nest in the barn belongs to a swallow, who will not like to have a yellow bird among her little ones."

At last, it was agreed to take him back to the brook and try to find the nest from which he fell. The children soon started on their errand of love and kindness, more happy in taking a poor bird to his father and mother than if they had been allowed to keep him in a cage. They carried him to the tree under which he was found and stood him on a fence near it. Yellow-Wing cried, "Peep, peep," and "Peep, peep" was heard from the tree.

"Come up, come up," they seemed to say.

But he could not fly up, and Willie said, "The old birds will not come down while we are so near." So the children went to a pile of stones and sat there quite still.

"See, see his mother!" whispered Lizzie, as a larger bird flew from the tree and sat close to Yellow-Wing. Soon the old bird flew off a little, and the young one spread his wings and followed her; a little further went the mother bird, and Yellow-Wing flew after her; and by flying a short distance at a time, he soon learned to fly well enough to reach a low branch of a tree, then a higher one, and at last both birds were hidden among the leaves. And Lizzie said, "He is so glad to get back into the warm nest!"



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