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The Fairy Queen's Jewels

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One night, the elves were holding a meeting and talking over the doings of the fairies, who had been having a party in the dell.

"Oh, such jewels as the Queen wears!" said one elf. "I wish I knew where she keeps them; we would steal them and wear them ourselves. I do not see why we should not wear jewels as well as the fairies."

"I am sure we could easily do that," said another wicked little elf, "because the Queen does not wear her jewels in the daytime. I saw her a little while ago and she did not have on one jewel."

"We may as well take the jewels of the fairies, too; then there will be enough for all of us, and we want them for the party the goblins are giving tomorrow night. I guess their eyes will pop more than ever when they see us with jewels on our coats. We better start hunting for them," said another elf. "We may not have such an easy time finding them as we think."

Away scampered all the little elves, scudding under the leaves and blades of grass until they came to the dell where the fairies live, and then they hid and watched.

The fairies and their Queen were resting, and the elves could plainly see that they did not wear their jewels. So when the fairies flew away after the Queen's carriage a little later, the wicked little elves hustled hither and thither, hunting under the leaves and inside the flowers and everywhere they could think the jewels might be hidden, and still they did not find one jewel.

They had to go away without the jewels, for the fairies came back just at dark and that ended the hunt.

"We will not go far," said one elf, "and as soon as it is dark, we will see where they keep them, for they wear them every night."

But the fairies could travel much faster than the elves, and when later they flew out of the dell, the elves were left far behind.

But they caught up to them in a daisy-field, and while they could not get close enough to see just what was going on, they saw the fairies flutter about the flowers and then fly away.

"Run after them, run after them!" said an elf.
"We must not lose sight of them until we find the jewels."

Back they went, following the fairies as fast as they could to the dell, and to their surprise, when they arrived, every fairy had on her jewels and the Queen all her gorgeous collection.

"We will stay and see where they put them. We missed seeing them take them out," said one of the elves. "Now, every fellow keep his eyes open and don't let them fool us again."



Oh, how sleepy those little elves did get watching the fairies! They rubbed their eyes and yawned in their efforts to keep awake.

"Won't they ever get through dancing and take off their jewels?" whispered one elf.

"They never go to bed until sunrise," said another.

"Oh, there they go! Quick! Follow them now!" said another.

Away flew the fairies toward the fields, and this time the elves were quicker in following. They did not reach the fields as soon as the fairies, but they reached there in time to see the Queen taking the pearls and diamonds and all her beautiful jewels off and handing them to her fairies.

And then the elves opened their eyes, for what did those fairies do but drop the Queen's jewels all over the fields, and, taking off their own, they did the same thing with them, and then flew away.

The sun was just poking up his head when the fairies left, and as soon as they were out of sight, into the fields ran the elves to gather up the jewels the fairies had so carelessly, as the elves thought, scattered over the fields.

But not a jewel did they find, hunt as they would. The fields were covered with daisies and buttercups and little blue flowers and all kinds of beautiful blossoms, but not a jewel did the elves find.

Old Sol laughed to himself as he watched them hunt, and by and by, he shot down a hot ray that sent the elves scampering home weary and disappointed with their night's work.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Old Sol. "Those elves are wise, but not wise enough to know that the fairies' jewels are the daisies and buttercups and all the other beautiful field flowers in the daytime, and only when the fairies gather them do they

become the jewels they see them wearing at night."

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