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The Goblins, The Fairies, And The Moon

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The fairies had been bothered for a long time by the mischievous little goblins who jumped up from behind the rocks and frightened them when they were at play.

Sometimes the goblins would stand on their heads and kick their little pointed feet about while they made a funny little cry, and when the little fairies saw them, they thought some terrible animal had come to carry them off.

Another time they would hide under the leaves and in the bushes, and when the fairies were playing, they would poke out their funny little faces, twisting them about in a way that frightened the fairies so they would run away.

At last, the Queen appealed to Mr. Moon Man and asked him to help them get rid of the troublesome little fellows. "If you can frighten those bad little men," said the Queen, "I wish you would, but I expect they are too bold to be frightened by anything."

"I'll think it over," said Mr. Moon Man with a wise smile. "I am sure something can be done to get them out of your way."

One night not long after this, the Queen heard Mr. Moon Man calling her. "I will frighten the goblins tonight," he said, "and I can promise you they will not bother you again, on moonlight nights, anyway."

"Oh, good Mr. Moon Man, that is all we will ask, for it is only on moonlight nights we ever play," replied the Queen.

"Come with your fairies tonight at the end of the dell where there are few bushes or rocks, and when I am shining over the trees, you let your fairies begin their sports," Mr. Moon Man told the Queen.

When the fairies heard what the Moon Man had promised, they could hardly wait for the time to come, and long before the moon could be seen, the fairies were waiting in the dell.

By and by, Mr. Moon Man's bright smile could be seen behind the trees, and all the little fairies ran out into the open space and began to play. They danced and they sang and they flittered hither and thither, but not a goblin came in sight. They had almost despaired of having the fun of seeing their tormentors punished when at the far end of the dell, they saw the little pointed caps of the goblins pop up from behind the rocks.



"Here they come," said the Queen. "Now stand together and watch, and do not try to run or say a word to them. Mr. Moon Man promised to help us, and I know that he will keep his word."

Running like a streak of lightning, the goblins came nearer. They had joined hands and were trying to make the fairies run away, fearing they would be tumbled over by the running goblins.

Just before they reached the fairies, Mr. Moon Man raised his head over the treetops behind the goblins, and suddenly there appeared right in front of them a row of dancing creatures much larger than themselves.

The goblins stopped running, and so did the big dark men in front of them. "They are after us," said one goblin. "Run, brothers, run for your life!"

Each little goblin let go of the hand he held, and turning, they took to their heels and fled, never looking behind them or stopping until they reached their rock home, where they tumbled over one another to get safely inside before the big dark men caught them.

The fairies were never bothered again when they played in the dell on a moonlight night, but they often wondered how Mr. Moon Man frightened away the goblins. One night he told them, "It was easy, my dears," he said. "All I did was to lift my head behind them and make their shadows appear in front of them. Then when I saw they were frightened enough to run, I hid behind a cloud so they would not see me. They had never seen their shadows just that way before, and I shall be careful they do not again, so you are safe, my children, from the goblins. Run along and play."

"Oh, thank you, dear Mr. Moon Man," said the little fairies. "We will never forget your kindness, and any time you want our help, we will be ready to give it." And off they ran to play in the dell until the Sun Man showed his face, which warned them it was time they went to bed.

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