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The Islands Of Flowers

Elsie Spicer Eells

Paradise is, of course, ruled by loving law. All places good to live in are governed by laws.

Long, long ago there was a little angel who broke one of the rules of Paradise. Of course she had to be punished. Punishment always follows broken laws. She was banished from her heavenly home. Never again could she join in the chorus of celestial music. Never again could she look up into the face of the great King.

Now it happened that this little angel loved the flowers of Paradise especially. For the last time she walked through the heavenly gardens.

"Oh, my exquisite ones, I cannot bear to leave you!" she sobbed to her favorite blossoms. "It breaks my heart!"

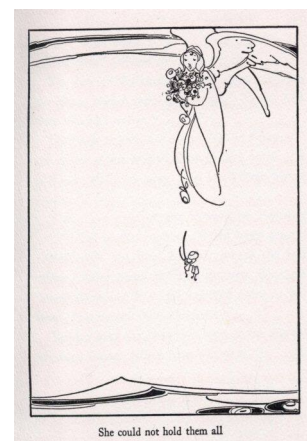
The flowers lifted their fair faces to hers in loving sympathy. They breathed out their sweetest perfume at her gentle touch. They stretched out their hands to catch her trailing garments as she passed them.

"My best beloveds! You are asking me to take you with me!" cried the little angel.

She filled her arms with the lovely blossoms of Paradise. Now the angel was a very little angel and the flowers she gathered made a very large armful indeed. She could not bear to leave any of her favorites behind. Slowly and sorrowfully she left the heavenly gardens. Slowly and sorrowfully she passed outside the celestial gate.

When she had left the gates of Paradise far behind the lovely blossoms in her grasp were all that remained of Heaven to her. They filled her arms so full that she could not hold them all. Some of them fell. Down, down to earth they floated. They came to rest on the smiling blue waters of the broad Atlantic.

"Oh, what shall I do! I have lost my exquisite ones!" sobbed the little angel.



The flowers of Paradise smiled up at her from the place where they had fallen.

Never had they looked lovelier.

"My best beloveds are beautiful and happy!" she cried as she smiled through her tears. "I still have all I can carry! I'll leave them where they are!"

There are nine of the flowers of Paradise which the angel dropped. They have always remained in the blue Atlantic where she left them. After many years Portuguese mariners found them and Portugal claimed them as her own. She named them the Azores.

To this very day, however, one of the islands is called Flores, which means flowers.

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