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READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

The Pin Brothers

Abbie Phillips Walker

One night, there was a great commotion in the work-basket on the table. The threads left their spools to see what was going on and became so entangled in the quarrel themselves that all the colors were in a perfect snarl the next morning.

It began with the pin boys saying that their sharp little sisters, the needles, were the very brightest and most useful things in the basket, and that they were next in the order of usefulness.

"That is not true," said the scissors. "I am the sharpest thing in this basket, and as for being bright, it would take a hundred of your sister needles to be as bright as one of our family. I am the most useful thing in this basket."

The scissors snapped with a click of anger as he finished speaking and hopped out of the basket, standing on its points on the floor with a look of defiance. This quickly brought the needles up from the cushion on their points to defend themselves.

"How dare you make such a claim?" they asked. "We certainly are the sharpest and brightest articles in the work-basket, and if you come back, we will make you feel the sting of our sharp points."

"Oh-ho, you silly little needles!" laughed the scissors. "Your tiny little points would quickly be dulled when they struck against my bright, sharp steel. If it were not for me, what would you be worth, I should like to know? Don't I cut the cloth and get it ready for you to sew?"

"Well, if you put it that way, Mr. Scissors," snapped the white thread, crawling to the edge of the basket and hanging over the side, "we are the most important thing in this basket, for of what use would your work be or that of the needles if there was no thread? And of all the colors, I am the most important."

"That is not true," snapped the black thread, crawling up beside the white. "I am far more useful and can be seen plainer than you, Sister White Thread."

"If you talk of being seen," said the red silk, "I claim that honor and will give place to no one." And she ran to the sides of the basket to prove it.

In a minute, all the colored threads and silks had crawled up the side of the basket, and for a little while, the quarrel became so mixed up that the needles and pins stopped to listen.

The threads and silks became so entangled in their anger to prove their importance that they could not get apart and hung on the basket in a regular snarl.

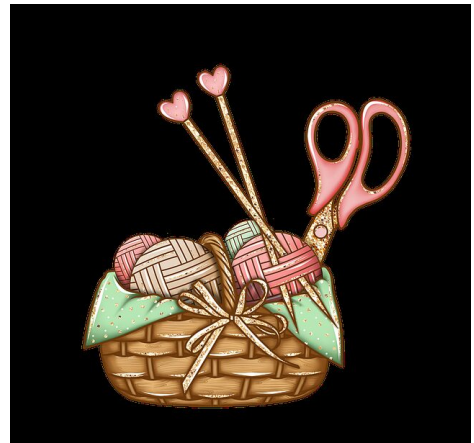
"Now, see where you are!" said the pin brothers. "Our sharp little sisters have been pulling you in and out all their lives, but now you have got mixed so no one can pull you out."

No answer came from the tangled threads and silks, and the little emery ball spoke up in a very fine, clear voice: "I feel, in justice to myself, I should not let anyone in this basket claim the importance that rightfully belongs to me. Who would keep the needle sisters sharp and bright if it were not for me? I think you will all agree that I am the one who makes them keen and gives them polish, and I must say that they do me credit, for sharper needles than the ones in this basket, I have never seen."

Having spoken, the little emery ball rolled over and went to sleep under a ball of cotton.

"Have it your own way, if you feel better," said the scissors. "I am out of it, but I'll stand on my points in spite of you. Without me to cut out the work, the rest of you would become useless, and I am sharper and brighter than a hundred needles and pins."

The pin brothers dared him to come back, and their little sharp sisters pricked the cushions to show what they would do if they could get at him. But Mr. Scissors only laughed and stood firm.



"I will hold my points until I am forced to lie down," he said.

The next morning, when the mistress took her work-basket from the table, she exclaimed, "Oh, that mischievous kitten! She has mixed everything up in this basket. I can never untangle this thread. I'll have to cut it." Then she saw the scissors still standing on his points. "Oh, dear!" she said. "That is a sure sign we are to have visitors."

She picked up the scissors and snipped off the tangled threads and silk, then laid the scissors in the basket, while the pin brothers and their little sharp sisters wished it were nighttime so they could scratch him.

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