



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Ladybug's Lecture

Mary Graham Bonner

"Dear little Ladybugs, gather round," announced the Ladybug, taking her place at the front of the acorn-cup podium. "I am going to give a lecture. It will be a free lecture — and please do not assume that means it will be a poor one. Too many people think nothing good is free. They never stop to think about birds and their concerts — quite free. Wild flowers — quite free. Lakes and rivers and woods — practically all of them free. Oh, but if I go on listing free things I shall never get to the lecture."



She paused while a very small Ladybug hurried up with an acorn filled with water.

"Thank you," she said. "Now then — Mrs. President, Lady Chairman, I greet you." There was no Mrs. President and no Lady Chairman present, but this didn't slow her down at all. She placed one leg solemnly in the direction of her heart.

"What I have to tell you," she continued, "concerns a very great honour paid to our family. As you know, travelling to Europe has been both expensive and rather complicated of late. The Ladybugs' bank is a fine institution — very attentive to its lady members — but I don't believe any of us have nearly enough saved for a transatlantic voyage.

"However. Many, many Ladybugs have been shipped to France — at someone else's expense, mind you, without being asked whether they had money for laundry or meals — simply because the work they would do was considered payment enough for the privilege of travel.

"Yes. Ladybugs have been sent to France to eat the insects that damage crops. Whether they can speak French, I cannot say. But they can work. And they have made the whole Ladybug world proud.

"I therefore suggest we all study a little French — just enough to say good morning and pleased-to-meet-you and goodbye — in case any of us are called up next. And my lecture is not only free. It is entirely true."

The Ladybugs cheered until the acorn-cup shook.

"Gorgeous," said the lecturer.

Stories help us explore cultures, learn moral lessons, connect with nature — or simply have fun. That's why ririro.com offers 3,000+ free stories — fairy tales, fables, bedtime stories, myths and more — for every age, in 13 languages, with free printable PDFs and often audio. Reading should be a right, not a privilege. Share ririro.com and spread the joy of reading.

Instagram: @ririro_reading · Pinterest: pinterest.com/ririrocom