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The Best Dream

Mary Graham Bonner

Three groups of children were making plans for their games.

"Let's pretend we're very rich!" said the first two. "Motorcars and aeroplanes. People to give orders to. No tidying rooms, no running errands."

"We want to be famous," said the next three. "Everyone in the world will swarm around us the way bees swarm around flowers. They'll say how fine and brave and noble we are, and put up monuments in our honour."

The last three children shook their heads. "We just want a few animals. Two dogs and a little pony. Animals are more fun than anything."

Now, the Dream-King sat on his throne of woven silver threads, with fairies and gnomes and brownies flying about his head. That night, he sent each group exactly the dream they had asked for.

The rich children dreamed of butlers in magnificent liveries who would not answer questions, and enormous motorcars driven by stiff, silent chauffeurs. Their clothes were so wonderful they couldn't get the tiniest bit dirty. They owned everything and felt as though they owned nothing at all. It was the most miserable dream imaginable.



The famous children dreamed of crowds pressing so tightly around them they couldn't move, let alone play. They watched a stone monument go up in a park with their own names carved on it. But the monument was far too large to play with.

The children with the dogs and the pony had the most glorious dream of all. The animals were warm and grateful and full of love.

When all three groups woke at once, they agreed without even discussing it: animals and games are wonderful, and riches and fame are very, very dull.

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