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The Coral Families

Mary Graham Bonner

"Why aren't we called coral insects anymore, Mother?" asked the young coral polyp.

"Because," said the mother, "you are a kind of animal, not an insect. It would be as incorrect to call you one as to call me one."

"I still think I'd rather be called an insect than a polyp," said the young one. "A polyp doesn't sound like very much."

"It is exactly what you are," said the mother, "which is something. But perhaps that's enough philosophy for now. The important thing is our homes. Think of the homes we have! Some are red coral, some are pink — but all are beautiful. We have an island named after us. *Coral Island*. And I pity anyone who has to live in something as dull as wood or brick."

"Or a hole in the ground," added the young polyp.



"Precisely. And a home on the water is always finer than an inland one."

"I suppose," said the young polyp thoughtfully, "that depends on how one looks at it."

"I look at it from the standpoint of a polyp," said the mother, with great dignity.

"Of course. And there's one other thing to be proud of — we have a shoemaker in the family."

"A what?"

"A relation called the coral shoemaker. A small creature, but a relation."

"We don't wear shoes," said the mother.

"True. But it sounds very distinguished. 'Cousin Coral Shoemaker.' You have to admit it has a businesslike ring."

The mother polyp considered this. It was true — there was such a creature, and

it was indeed a cousin.

She had to admit the family had a great deal going for it.

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