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The Desk and the Ink-Well

Mary Graham Bonner

"I misbehave terribly," said the Ink-Well, "when children don't pay attention to me."

"Yes," said the Desk. "And I'm the one who suffers for it."

"Do you really understand what I mean?"

"Of course," said the Desk. "If a child is filling you from the big ink bottle and looks away at the wrong moment, you spill."

"I don't *spill*," said the Ink-Well, with dignity. "I turn a somersault. Or I trickle. Down the desk."

"Down me," said the Desk. "And is that very considerate?"

"Ha!" said the Ink-Well. "As if you cared. You're made of wood."

"That's true," the Desk admitted. "But even made of wood, I like to be varnished once in a while. It's rather like having one's face washed."



"People wash their faces rather more than once a year," said the Ink-Well.

"I'm made of wood," said the Desk. "Once a year suits me perfectly. And besides — if it were done more often, you'd only trickle on me again, and I'd look a fright."

"Very kind of you," said the Ink-Well, "to say you'd look a fright with my ink on you. I think it adds a great deal, personally."

"It adds ink," said the Desk. "It doesn't add beauty."

The school bell rang. The Desk and the Ink-Well fell silent.

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