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How There Came to Be a Katy-Did

Patten Beard

Long, long ago, so long ago that the story has had time to grow into a garden legend, two green grasshoppers went out one fine day to play with a cricket. They played tag. At last they decided to play hide-and-seek.

The goal was a blade of grass, and they counted out to see who would be "it." It fell to the little cricket, whose name was Katy-did. She was to hide her eyes behind the blade of grass and count to one hundred by tens, while the two grasshoppers went off to hide.

So Katy hid her face where she couldn't see, and began:

"Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety, one hundred! Coming!"

There were plenty of good hiding places in the garden, but one green grasshopper had been slow to pick his. He hadn't hidden yet when the little cricket turned around and caught him.

"You didn't count to a hundred!" he cried. "I didn't have time to hide! You should have hollered, 'Coming!' It's not fair! I'm not going to play anymore. You didn't count to a hundred!"

Then the other grasshopper came out of his hiding place.

"She did count to a hundred," he said. "Katy did!"

"She didn't!"

"She did!"

"She didn't!"

"Katy did, did, did!"

"Katy didn't, didn't, didn't!"

"Did, did, did!"

"Didn't, didn't, didn't!"



"Katy did!"

"Katy didn't!"

"She did!"

"She didn't!"

"Katy did!"

"Katy didn't!"

And to this very, very day you can still hear the argument going on in the garden. The game of tag has never been finished. Ever since then, the grasshoppers who started the quarrel have been called *katydids*, and the whole garden is full of the dispute. Hundreds of little voices keep it up, though nothing is ever decided. On and on it goes, *Katy did, Katy didn't, did, did, did, didn't, didn't, she did, she didn't*, because nobody has ever settled an argument by contradicting the other side.

By now, everyone has forgotten what the quarrel was about.

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