

The Fairy Glen

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, two little Brownies, Susan and Jody, were camping at Camp Selhowtka with their Brownie Pack. Brown Owl asked them to gather some little twigs to get the campfire ready for the evening.

It was a hot and lazy day and the girls felt sleepy as they strolled along the roadway. Suddenly a flash of light from the bushes attracted Susan. She called Jody and they looked a little closer. High above the, hanging from a branch in the trees they saw a huge raindrop. Inside was a tiny fairy, fast asleep.

Jody grabbed the raindrop and as she did so the wee fairy awoke and began to cry, "Oh, dear! Now we'll have to leave! The others will be so sad! I promised I would not fall asleep this time and now I've ruined everything! Boo Hoo!"

Susan and Jody looked at each other in surprise and then Susan spoke to the fairy. "I'm sorry. We didn't mean to upset you. Who are you and whatever is the matter?"

"My name is Twinkle," said the fairy. "You shouldn't be here. I was supposed to stand guard over the fairy glen to be sure that no mortals would find us. But I was so tired that I fell asleep and now we will have to find a new home. Please let me go so I can warn the others."

"Don't cry, little fairy," said Jody. "We won't tell anyone. But before we let you go you must show us your fairy glen."

"Oh, no, please let me go! Queen Mab will be so angry with me. I dare not let you see the glen. All the creatures within will be so frightened. Queen Mab protects them from the outside world."

"We will be very quiet and we won't frighten anything," said Susan. "If you want to be free you will have to lead us to your Queen."

"Oh dear. What will I do?" cried the fairy. "I suppose I will have to take you with me."

The fairy flitted along a narrow path through the trees and Susan and Jody followed along, their eyes as big as saucers. It was a beautiful land that they had never seen before. The ground was covered with a thick soft covering of mosses and among the trees they saw all manner of little creatures hiding. The fairy warned the girls to be very quiet so they wouldn't frighten them away.

At last they arrived at an opening in the trees where they saw a toadstool surrounded by a ring of fairies. One fairy, dressed in a sparkling gown of white wore a golden crown on her head. Twinkle ran to her and bowed at her feet sobbing. "I am so sorry, Queen Mab," she cried. "I have let you all down. I fell asleep and these mortals found me in a flash of sunlight. Now we will have to find another fairy glen."

Susan spoke up. "Twinkle, we told you we wouldn't tell. And anyway, we aren't mortals. We're Brownies. We always keep our promises. We didn't hurt you. We only wanted to see your glen. We will go away and keep our promise if that is what you wish, but your fairy glen is so beautiful and has so much to teach us that we would like to share it with the rest of our Brownies. Please let us show it to them."

Queen Mab gathered her fairies around her. They whispered together for a long time frowning and gesturing. Finally Queen Mab stepped forward and spoke, "You have entered a land that is very special and very private to the fairies. We do not allow mortals to see us and you will probably never see us

again. However, if you will obey our conditions and make us a promise we will let you walk the path through our fairy glen."

Oh, yes, we promise," said Susan and Jody, hardly able to control themselves. "Just tell us your conditions and we will respect them".

"Well," said Queen Mab, "we have promised our protection to all the creatures that you may see in the fairy glen. You must not leave the path and go too near to them and certainly never, ever touch them. They are very nervous and would surely leave our glen if they were frightened.

"Also, as you say, our glen is very beautiful and that is because no one ever picks any of the plants that grow here. We believe in leaving them so we can enjoy their beauty everyday and so they will come back again another year. Do you really think you can look, and not touch?

"You may have noticed also that it is very quiet in the fairy glen. We love to hear the sounds of the creek and the birds singing. If you listen carefully you may hear the worms in the ground under foot or hear a blade of grass pushing through the dirt. You must talk in whispers so we can go on enjoying our glen or we will have to leave and find a quieter place.

Then Queen Mab turned slowly away. "Oh, really, I know it is hopeless! You can never agree! Brownies are such noisy people. We shall have to pack up and move again. We did so want to settle here for awhile!"

"We can do it! We can!" said Jody, "Please let us try! I know our Brownies will love the fairy glen so much that they will do as you ask.

"We will stay on the path.

"We will not touch any of the creatures.

"We will not pick anything.

"And we will try to be quiet. But that will be the hardest of all because it is so exciting! Please may we go back and tell Brown Owl and all the others?"

"Well, I suppose we can give it a try," said Queen Mab doubtfully. But remember, if you do not abide by our rules, the fairy glen will disappear."

All of a sudden the girls heard voices calling, "Susan! Jody! Where have you been all this time?"

It was Brown Owl's voice. The girls found themselves lying on the mossy ground under a big tree. There was no one to be seen.

They jumped up and started to run toward the Long House. But just before she left, Susan looked up in the tree above her head and there winking at her was a giant raindrop. She was sure, Oh, so sure, that she saw Twinkle the little fairy smiling down on her.

Now maybe if you look carefully in the trees nearby, you will see that giant raindrop too. And if you do, you will find the fairy glen. Please remember to do what Queen Mab asks. And maybe, just maybe, if you're really quiet, you'll catch Twinkle sleeping on the job again.