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Nim-Nim's Golden Wings

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Once, there was a little fairy named Nim-nim who caused the Queen more trouble and worry than all the other fairies together. Nim-nim had never won her golden wings, and she had been a fairy for a long time.

To win their gold wings, all the little fairies had to do something their Queen deemed worthy of wearing golden wings. Until then, the little fairies could carry a wand and do magic things, but they could not have wings until they earned them.

Night after night, the Queen waited for Nim-nim to win her wings, and each night she gave the same reply. "I cannot find anything to do, my Queen. Although I look everywhere, there seems to be nothing left for me. I am afraid I will never wear gold wings like my sisters."

"But surely there must be good deeds to be done in the world," said the Queen. "I am sure you could find plenty to do if you tried, Nim-nim."

"Oh, but, my Queen, I assure you I look everywhere, and no place can I find anything worth doing," said Nim-nim.

"I will go with you tomorrow night," said the Queen. "I think I know where the trouble lies with you, Nim-nim."

The next night, when the fairies went out on their mission of good deeds, the Queen went with Nim-nim, following close behind. Away over the woods and meadows, they went, and at last Nim-nim turned to her Queen and said, "You see, my Queen, I was right; there is nothing left for me to do that is worthwhile. I shall never win my wings."

"Come with me," said the Queen, leading the way. This time, they turned from the green meadows and trees and hills and went into the city, into the little streets where sorrow and suffering were in plenty.

Then the Queen told Nim-nim to look about, but still Nim-nim kept on; she did not stop to do any kind deeds.

"There is nothing here for me to do," said Nim-nim at last. "My golden wings cannot be won; there is no work for me to do."

"Here in this poor house lives a little crippled boy," said the Queen. "Could you

not find deeds of kindness to do here? Take away his crutches and touch with your wand his crooked legs and straighten them.

"And here lives old Martha, the apple-woman, who has rheumatism in her old bones. Could you not touch your wand to her back and make the pain go away?

"And here is the little flower-girl, whose flowers wither before she can sell them. Could you not touch the faded blossoms with your magic wand and cause them to send out their perfume and put life into their petals?"

Nim-nim listened to her Queen, and then she said, "But, my Queen, surely golden wings cannot be won by working in such poor and humble places as these. I must do big deeds and save a king's daughter or do some royal deed, I am sure, before I can earn such beautiful golden wings like my sisters wear."

"Do not think these will be deeds of low degree," said the Queen. "The brightest wings are won by the humblest deeds, as you call them. Nim-nim, you have looked only in the palace for your work. Golden wings are not easily won, as you say, but if you are willing to do the work you find here, you will soon have a pair of wings that will outshine all others. Let me see if you are worthy to wear them."

Off went the Queen, leaving Nim-nim alone with the work she did not care to do. "What glory can there be in helping these poor creatures?" she thought. "But I must have my wings, so I will try to do what the Queen wishes."

It took more than one night for Nim-nim to do all the work she found in the street of sorrow and suffering, but soon she became so happy in doing good and seeing the happiness she could give that she quite forgot about the golden wings for which she had been working.

One night, the Queen called Nim-nim. "You have won the golden wings," she told her, touching her with her wand, and the little dell where they stood grew bright as with sunlight.



"Oh, what is it that shines so brightly?" asked Nim-nim.

"Your golden wings, my dear," said the Queen with a smile. "Your kind deeds have polished them until they are as bright as the sun."

Nim-nim thanked the Queen and flew away to her work with the thought that she would never let her wings grow dim by neglecting the deeds of kindness that she could do, no matter where she found them.

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