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What Happened in a Garden

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One day, a very beautiful butterfly alighted near a rose. "Rose," she said, "I have stopped here that you may admire my beautiful colors. I am sure I am very kind and thoughtful, and I hope you will appreciate it."

The Rose was a beautiful red rose and very proud of her beauty and fragrance. At first, she was so angry she could not reply, but when the Butterfly spread her wings and turned around, saying, "I shall let you see me from all sides, for I know you have never before beheld such glorious colors," the Rose spoke.

"You vain and impudent creature," she said, "how dare you talk to me of beauty—I, who rule the garden because I am more beautiful than any other flowers? Begone! I care not for your colors."

"Oh! you are an ungrateful creature," said the Butterfly, "and, no doubt, jealous of my wonderful beauty. Why, my dear, just look into the pool of water behind you, and you will soon hide yourself in shame. You are all red, while I am blue and yellow and black, and each wing is so dainty there is nothing to compare with it."

"Hush, you vain creature," replied the angry Rose, "one of my petals is softer and more fragrant than both your wings! Who are you that you should dare address me?

"If it were not for the flowers, what would become of you, I should like to know? I am not at all sure you did not steal your colors from the flowers—the yellow from the golden glow, the blue from the violet. I suspect you were black before you took the colors from the flowers."

"Oh! you are jealous of my beauty; that is all," said the Butterfly. "I only ask that you turn to the pool behind you and look. I will go, too, and you will soon see who is the most beautiful, my dear."

The angry Rose turned to look in the pool, and—snap!—she broke from her stem and fell into the water.

Butterfly, seeing the Rose was close to the water, thought she would have as close a view of herself, too, so she flew right on the water, and her pretty wings were wet, and she could not fly. "Oh, save me, Weeping Willow!" cried the Rose. "I will never mind anything that silly Butterfly says again."

So the Willow bent its branches over to the water and caught the Butterfly and Rose in its leaves and swung them safe to the shore.



The Butterfly soon flew away, but she forgot to thank the Willow for saving her, and the Rose was picked up by a little girl and carried into the house.

"Do you wonder that I weep?" asked the Weeping Willow of the Bush nearby. "I cannot help it when I see so much vanity and ingratitude all around me. The Butterfly did not thank me for saving her; the Rose did not give me a parting glance when she found she was safe and to be cared for."

"But surely, you did what was right. You were kind, and that ought to make you glad," said the Bush. "I would not weep. You should be happy!"

"Oh! I weep not for myself; but for those who are foolish and vain," said the Weeping Willow.

"I think that is a very silly thing to do," said the Bush. "You will be weeping the rest of your life if you bother about the vain Rose and that silly Butterfly. Cheer up and be merry!"

"I could not do that," said the Weeping Willow. "I must be true to the family honor and weep; else we would not be weeping willows."

"The Rose was vain, and the Butterfly was silly and vain," said the Bush to itself, "and I think the Weeping Willow is silly, too. It is going to weep all its life just because it belongs to a weeping family.

"I am glad I have no family honors to live up to. What is the use of weeping when there is so much to laugh about in this world?"

Just then, a breeze came along, and the Bush swayed and bobbed about as merry as if it were dancing. It had forgotten all about the Rose and the Butterfly.

But poor, sad Weeping Willow drooped its branches to the water and wept over the vanity and foolishness of others.

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