

## The Secret Fairy



Once upon a time there was a fairy. Her name was Sparkle Rainbow. She lived in a tree at the bottom of the garden. When she was just a little fairy her mother had told her, "Be very careful never to let a person see you. People like to catch fairies and put them in jars or cages, and they never let them go."

The fairy always did what her mother said, and so she was very careful. Whenever she saw a person coming she hid in the safest, darkest place she could find.

In the house there were two little girls, Alice and Mary. Alice was the big sister and Mary was the little sister. Alice and Mary loved fairies. They had fairy dress ups and books about fairies and they were always drawing pictures of fairies. They talked about fairies all the time.



One day Alice and Mary went out into the garden to play. Alice said "What if there was a fairy living in this garden?"

"That would be so cool," said Mary. "What if there was a fairy living in this tree?"

"Come on, let's look," said Alice. "Help me up."

Mary helped to push Alice up the tree, and Alice tried to look into the little dark hole between two branches. She put her face as close as she could and stared into the darkness and tried to catch a glimpse of a fairy.

Sparkle Rainbow was hiding in the darkest part of the little hole, crouching down behind a leaf. She was being very careful not to make any noise, and she was lying on top of her wand so no one could see it glowing and sparkling.

"I can't see anything," said Alice. "There's no fairy in this tree."



Alice climbed down and went into the house to watch Grease. Mary stayed in the garden for a little while. She was pretending she was a fairy, waving her arms and running around as if she were flying. She was saying "Alakazam, Alakazoo, I'm a fairy and so are you," when suddenly she fell over and hurt her knee.

"Owww," cried Mary. She looked at her knee and there was blood. "Wahhh!" cried Mary. She was so upset she couldn't even get up. Tears ran down her face.

Sparkle Rainbow was very sorry for Mary. "I should try to help that little girl," she said to herself. She started to come out of the little hole in the tree, when she remembered what her mother had said. "I mustn't let a person see me," she said to herself, and stopped inside the tree.

"Wahhh!" cried Mary. "Oh, I have to help her," said Sparkle Rainbow. "I'll just be careful to hide."

She crept out of the tree and slowly, carefully tiptoed over to where Mary was sitting on the grass. She hid behind a flower and said "Alakazam, Alakazee, fix the sore on Mary's knee." Then she sprinkled a little fairy dust over Mary's knee.

Suddenly Mary's knee stopped hurting. She was so surprised she forgot to cry. She looked at her knee and all the blood was gone.

"That was just like magic," said Mary. "It was just like a fairy made a magic spell to fix my knee! But there aren't any fairies in this garden."

Sparkle Rainbow thought that was very funny and she laughed. It sounded like tiny silver bells tinkling. Quickly she jumped behind a flower.

"What was that?" asked Mary, looking around quickly. "It sounded like a fairy laughing. But it can't be. There are no fairies around here."

Sparkle Rainbow laughed again. "That was a fairy laughing!" said Mary. She looked around again, and this time she thought she saw something sparkle behind a flower. It could have been a drop of dew in the sunlight, but it could have been the tip of a fairy wand.

"I know you're there," said Mary. She didn't really know. She just said she did. Mary was still playing a game by herself, and she thought the fairy was just in her imagination.

"I know you're there, little fairy. I can see you," said Mary. She couldn't really, but she saw no harm in pretending.

Sparkle Rainbow didn't know Mary was pretending. She thought she might as well come out.

"All right," she said, stepping out from behind the flower. "Here I am."



Mary was so surprised that she fell over backwards, but she didn't hurt herself. "I'm all right," she said, picking herself up. "Are you really a fairy?"

"What do I look like, a duck?" asked Sparkle Rainbow. Mary didn't know what to say to that. "I'm Mary," she said. "Thank you for fixing my knee."

"No worries," said Sparkle Rainbow. "I'm Sparkle Rainbow. Mary, I have to ask for a favour in return. Please don't tell anyone about me. If people find out about me, they might catch me and put me in a jar or a cage and never let me go. So let's make it our little secret."

"All right," said Mary. She liked secrets, especially the part where you whispered them in someone's ear.

"And don't whisper the secret in anybody's ear," said Sparkle Rainbow. "This is a real secret. You're not allowed to tell it to anybody. If you tell someone, it isn't a secret any more."

"OK," said Mary. Just then her mother called out that it was time for her bath. "I have to go," said Mary. "Bye, bye, Sparkle Rainbow."



When Mary and Alice were in the bath, Alice started to talk about fairies again.

"Fairies are so beautiful and magical, aren't they, Mary?"

Mary just nodded.

"I wish we had a fairy in our garden, don't you?"

Mary just nodded.

"But there are no fairies in our garden, are there?"

Mary didn't even nod at that. Alice looked at Mary and frowned. "Mary, why aren't you saying anything?"

"Because I can't," said Mary.

"Why not?" asked Alice.

"Because I can't say yes and I can't say no."

"Why can't you say no?" asked Alice. "Yes or no, are there any fairies in our garden?"

"I can't say no," said Mary.

"Then why can't you say yes?" asked Alice.

"I'm not allowed to," said Mary.

"Why not?" said Alice.

"It's a secret," said Mary.

"What's a secret," said Alice.

"I can't tell you," said Mary.

"Can you whisper it in my ear?" said Alice.

"No," said Mary. "Because then it wouldn't be a secret."

"Who says?"

"I can't say who," said Mary. "That's the secret."

Alice looked at Mary carefully. "Do you have a secret friend?"

Mary just looked at Alice without saying anything. Alice sighed and washed her face.

"Well, why can't you tell anyone about your friend?"

"Because they might catch her and put her in a jar or a cage and never let her go," said Mary.

"Your friend must be very small," said Alice.

Mary nodded. "She hides behind flowers."

"I think your friend is a fairy," said Alice. "I think you saw a fairy in the garden."

Mary was amazed. How did Alice guess her secret? She was glad, really, because it's very hard to keep a secret and she was tired of trying. She told Alice all about Sparkle Rainbow, and she made Alice promise to keep it a secret. Alice was excited to hear about the fairy in the garden, but she thought it was a game Mary was playing and the fairy was just in her imagination.



After their bath, Alice and Mary put their pyjamas and their slippers on and went outside. Mary called out softly, "Sparkle Rainbow! Sparkle Rainbow! I didn't tell our secret, but Alice guessed. She promises not to tell any one. Can you come and say hello to her?"

Sparkle Rainbow was in her tree. "How many more people are going to find out about me?" she sighed. "Oh well, I might as well say hello."

Sparkle Rainbow popped out of the tree and fluttered down in front of Alice. "All right. Here I am," she said.

Alice was so surprised she fell over backwards, but she didn't hurt herself. "I'm all right," she said, picking herself up.

"Hi Alice. I'm Sparkle Rainbow," said Sparkle Rainbow, reaching out a tiny hand. "Give me five." There was only room to give her one, so Alice just touched Sparkle Rainbow's hand with her little finger. Then Alice and Mary and Sparkle Rainbow played in the garden until it was time for dinner.

After that Alice and Mary played with Sparkle Rainbow every day. They never told anybody else the secret about Sparkle Rainbow. Sometimes when they were playing in the garden, their mother heard two little girl laughs, and a sound like tiny silver bells. She wondered what that sound was, but she never found out.

