

The Stone, the Fish and the Daisy



Cathy was a very strange child, her parents thought. Some of the things she said were very odd indeed. Everybody seemed to agree.

For instance, there was one day when she said to her father: "Dad, I remember when I was a rock."

"Yes dear, yes dear," said her father while he was unpacking the shopping in the kitchen, and thinking, "Here she goes again." "It was very nice," she said. "I was sort of asleep, all dark and cosy and warm in the earth. Then a big machine came and pushed the earth up, and then I was a stone on top of the soil."

"What happened next?" said Toby, her little brother, who liked stories very much.

"When I was a stone," Cathy told him, "I got warmed up by the sun in the daytime as its bright light shone on me. I felt so happy. Then one day a boy came and picked me up and put me in his pocket, so I could go to his home and be one of his treasures. After that I felt really, really happy because he talked to me and polished me till I was all shiny."

On another day, Cathy's mother was sitting at her desk with lots to do. "I remember when I was a Daisy," said Cathy. "I was sitting in a field and the wind was blowing softly on me. It was so nice, Mum. I wish you had been there."

"Yes, yes," said Cathy's mother, who was very, very busy.

"I was smiling at the sun with my pretty face and I knew that the sun loved me," said Cathy, who was playing on the floor with Toby and his trains.

"I want to be a Daisy too," said Toby, but his Mother looked down and said: "Don't be silly Toby, boys can't be flowers."

Cathy looked at Toby and winked. Then she whispered in his ear, "You were there too, right beside me."

One day at school, Cathy said to her teacher: "I remember when I was a fish."

"Oh dear," said her teacher, "you certainly have a vivid imagination."

"It was real," Cathy said, "I was so happy in the great big sea and I could go anywhere I liked. The water was so cool and slippery and beautiful. But I was afraid a huge fish would eat me, or a human would catch me and eat me too."

"Well, did they?" said the teacher absently as she began to blow the whistle for class time. "Yes," said Cathy in a matter of fact voice, "Someone caught me. It was alright though because I was ready for another adventure in a new body."

But teacher wasn't listening, so Cathy told Toby about it when she got home from school. She told him that after that, it was time for her to be a human, a person. "This is the biggest adventure of all," she said. "I was then a little baby, and now I'm growing up and I'm glad you are my little brother."

"Me too," said Toby, and they both grinned at each other, knowing that they understood each other's precious little secrets.

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