

## LITTLE STORIES FOR LITTLE PEOPLE

## THE VALENTINE THAT DISAPPEARED

ADAPTED BY PANCITA FLORES

DELFIN had always lived in the Mountain Province. In February his mother took him to the lowlands to visit his aunt and cousins who lived very near the ocean. "What shall we do for Valentine Day?" Delfin had asked his cousins, and Jesusa and Adelaida had suggested that they see who could make the very best valentine. They decided that the valentines could be pretty, funny, big, or little.

"I am going to make the funniest one," said Adelaida.

"I will try to make the prettiest one," decided Jesusa.

Delfin claimed that he would rather try to make the biggest one. "Mine will be the very biggest valentine you ever saw," he said. "It will be so big and so different that the one I make it for will have to come with me in order to see it."

Jesusa and Adelaida gathered together the material they would need to make their valentines. Jesusa had paper-lace doilies and tiny red hearts. She had a little paper cupid with a bow and arrow in his hand. Adelaida was going to use heavy red paper and some funny pictures she had cut from magazines.

"Where is your material, Delfin?" asked Jesusa. "You may use part of mine if you do not have your own."

"Thank you," said Delfin, "but I am going to make mine later. There is plenty of time."

That afternoon when the children ran down to play on the ocean beach, Delfin hunted until he found a sharp stick. Then he began to draw a huge heart in

the smooth, white sand. Jesusa began to laugh.

"Why, Delfin," she said, "you can't make your valentine that way. It will be all—"

"I know what I'm doing," interrupted Delfin. "I said I would make the biggest valentine and I'm going to do it. Just see how big it will be."

He drew a heart in the sand



*Mother thought that it was very nice.*

as tall as his mother.

"There! It is as tall as mother," he said. "And now I am going to write something on it. I will use the stick instead of a pencil. It is just like drawing on the blackboard at school."

Then Delfin took the stick and wrote inside the big heart, "Be My Valentine."

"Mother will be surprised when she sees this," he said proudly. "You won't

tell her, will you?"

"No, we won't tell her, Delfin," promised Adelaida, "but we have been trying to tell you something. That valentine won't be——"

"You just wait until morning," Delfin said, "and see how surprised she is." He would not listen to his cousin but ran back to the house.

After breakfast the next morning Jesusa and Adelaida gave their mother the valentines they had made. Then Delfin asked them all to come down to the beach.

When they arrived at the beach, Delfin looked around him. He could not find his huge valentine! The sand was all smooth and white.

"It's gone!" he told them. "Someone has spoiled it. It was as big as you are, Mother. Oh, I wish I knew who did it."

"We tried to tell you yesterday that it wouldn't stay here," laughed Adelaida, "but you wouldn't listen. You live up in the Mountain Province, and are not used to the ocean, so of course you didn't know."

"Didn't know what?" inquired Delfin.

"About the tides," Mother explained. "You see, twice every day the water comes 'way up, over all the beach. I suppose that it washed your valentine away. If you wish to make another one, I will come and look at it before the tide comes in."

Delfin drew another valentine, and Mother thought that it was very nice. Then Mother and the children set on a log far up the beach and watched the tide come rolling in.

"I have learned something today," said Delfin. "Yesterday I said the beach

was something like a blackboard. I think that the tide cleans this blackboard just like an eraser. When we go home I will tell my teacher about the valentine I made on the ocean's blackboard, and how the tide erased it."

#### ANSWER THESE

1. Where did Delfin live?
2. Did he know about the tides?
3. Whom did he go to visit?
4. Where did his cousins live?
5. What kinds of valentines were they going to make?
6. Where did Delfin make his valentine?
7. Why was it gone when he tried to show it to his mother?
8. Why did Delfin call the sand a blackboard, and the tide an eraser?
9. Did you like this story? Why?
10. Can you tell it to Mother?
11. Do you know the history of Valentine Day? (See the encyclopedia.)
12. Why do persons send valentines to each other?
13. What is the date of Valentine Day? Why?
14. Did you ever make any valentines?
15. Did you ever have a "valentine box" at school?
16. Would you like to have a "valentine box"? (Perhaps your teacher would have one if you would ask her.)
17. Did you ever attend a "valentine party"?
18. Did you ever give a "valentine party"?
19. What amusements are suitable for a "valentine party"?
20. Would you like to write to *The What-Are-You-Doing? Club* and tell about a "valentine party" which you have attended or given?