

The Health Fairies' Victory

(A Play for Child Health Day)

By Lois Stewart Osborn



CHARACTERS:

THE CLEANLINESS FAIRY (*with a cake of soap and a broom.*)

THE PLAY FAIRY (*with a skipping rope.*)

THE GOOD FOOD FAIRY (*with a bottle of milk.*)

THE FRESH AIR FAIRY (*with a fan.*)

THE HAPPINESS FAIRY (*with bright dress and banner.*)

TUBERCLE BACILLUS (*one or more, small—ugly dress—covered face.*)

FLIES (*servants to Tubercle Bacillus.*)

A BABY (*a doll or a small child.*)

SCENE: A Room in Tondo.

TIME: The Present.

(*The baby is seen asleep in its bed with the Sleep Fairy, bending over it, waving her wand.*)

SLEEP FAIRY (*sings*):

Sleep my little one,
Sleep my pretty one,
Sleep.

(*Enter Cleanliness Fairy, who goes to the bed.*)

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. What a pretty baby! Where is its mother?

SLEEP FAIRY. She is sick, but she does not want her baby to get sick also. She has asked the good fairies to take care of him. See how I have made him sleep. We fairies know that babies and little children must sleep a long time.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Yes, that is true, and we know many other things, too. I am going to help keep the baby well by keeping him sweet and clean.

SLEEP FAIRY. How can you do that?

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Oh, I'll help his sister to give him a bath every day and to change his little shirt every day. Then I'll tell her to keep all the flies away from the baby's food because the flies bring dirt and sickness on their feet.

SLEEP FAIRY. Oh, those dirty flies! Sometimes they light on the baby's face when he is asleep.

FRESH AIR FAIRY (*enters*). I heard you talking about the baby and I want to help, too. I know how I can help.

SLEEP FAIRY. Good! What will you do, Fresh Air Fairy?

FRESH AIR FAIRY. I shall tell some one to open all of the windows at night. Night air is good air. It will not hurt any

one, because, you see, night is only a big shadow.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Very good, Fresh Air Fairy. Do you know any other way to help us?

FRESH AIR FAIRY. Yes. Did you say the baby's mother is sick?

SLEEP FAIRY. Very sick, but she loves her baby and wants to hold him in her arms and kiss him.

FRESH AIR FAIRY. Oh, she must not do that. If she loves her baby, she must not give him her sickness by kissing him. We must tell her to let the baby sleep all alone. Sleep Fairy, that is your work.

SLEEP FAIRY. Of course. I'll do that.

(*Enters Good Food Fairy carrying a bottle of milk.*)

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. If you are planning to keep the baby well, I must help you.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Yes, indeed, Good Food Fairy, we can not succeed unless you help us.

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Let me look at the baby. (*Goes to bed and talks as she examines the baby.*) He is a nice fat baby, isn't he? What food does he get, I wonder.

SLEEP FAIRY. Perhaps his sister gives him rice and a little bread and coffee.

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Oh! no, I am sure she does not feed him rice and bread. Little babies cannot grow strong and healthy on such food. They must have food that is good for little children. See, I have brought a bottle of fresh milk. This will make him grow strong.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. But are you very sure, Good Food Fairy, that your milk is clean?

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Yes, indeed, I am very careful about that. You see, this is goat's milk that is very fresh. It was boiled one minute. I like this milk best for babies but there are other kinds of milk that are good, also.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. What kinds are good and clean, too?

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Cow's milk is good if the cow that gave it is not sick and if no dirt gets into it when the cow is milked.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Anything else?

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Yes, many kinds of milk that come in bottles and in cans. They are very good, too. The kind that is not sweetened is best.

(*Enters Play Fairy with a skipping-rope.*)

PLAY FAIRY. I am Play Fairy. May I help keep the baby well? You see, I can make children happy if they will follow me.

SLEEP FAIRY. We have heard about that, kind Play Fairy, but the baby is too little now to run and play. Just wait awhile and if we can keep him well, he will soon be ready to let you teach him.

PLAY FAIRY. All right, I'll wait for this baby. I am very busy all the time teaching the school boys and girls to play games. Some of them skip like this (*skips*). Some of them play tag, and the big boys play ball.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. What do the girls like best?

PLAY FAIRY. I think the girls like to dance best. Sometimes they dance on their toes like this (*dances*), and sometimes they wave their arms like fairies.

GOOD FOOD FAIRY. Do you want all of the children to run and play?

PLAY FAIRY. All the children who are not sick. But my friend, the Cheerfulness Fairy, helps me. Here she comes now. (*Enters Cheerfulness Fairy.*)

CHEERFULNESS FAIRY. Did I hear my name? I am always ready to come in if I am called.

SLEEP FAIRY. We always welcome you, Cheerfulness Fairy. When you are around, all the work we do is easier. You seem to help every one. But what is this strange creature? Surely he is not a good fairy. (*Tubercle Bacillus enters. He is small, ugly, and keeps spying around.*)

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THE HEALTH FAIRIES'

(Continued from page 171)

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Aha! I want to get at that baby. He is so pretty and fat that he will be a fine meal for me. I'll call my servants to help. Come on, Flies.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Who are you? Why do you come here?

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Oh. I am a germ. My name is Tubercle Bacillus and I go every where.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. What an ugly name!

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Do you think so? Well, I can't help having an ugly name. It belongs to our family.

PAY FAIRY. Do you have any brothers and sisters?

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Millions of them. You see, we germs are so very small that people can not see us. I'm not really as big as I look. If you were not a fairy, you could not see me now.

FRESH AIR FAIRY. Where do you live?

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Most of my family live in the lungs (*hits his chest*) of sick people. We make them sick. We make them feel tired and make them cough. When they cough, some of us jump out of the sick person's nose and mouth. I came from the mouth of the baby's mother.

FRESH AIR FAIRY. How did you get here?

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Oh, a fly carried me here on his feet. Some of my brothers came on a dirty drinking cup and some on a little boy's fingers.

CHEERFULNESS FAIRY. Go away! We don't want you! We don't want any of your family, Tubercle Bacillus. You shall not touch the baby. We are its friends.

PLAY FAIRY. You are an ene-

my of all children. You shall not come near our baby.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Come, Fairies, let us kill his servants, the flies.

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Oh no, please don't! What shall I do to find a new house? I shall die if I have no servants.

SLEEP FAIRY. Go on and die. We do not care. You want to make the baby sick.

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Never mind. I have more servants. I'll get in the baby's food.

CLEANLINESS FAIRY. Oh, no, you won't. I am watching that.

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Then I'll come in the bad air.

FRESH AIR FAIRY. No, indeed, you shall not. I am watching.

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Then I'll get on the baby's lips when his mother kisses him.

PLAY FAIRY. Ah but his sick mother does not kiss him. We have told her.

TUBERCLE BACILLUS. Then, I am afraid that I and my brothers and sisters cannot get him. Never mind, we can find many other children who are not guarded by fairies. Come away, brothers. Let us catch the little boy who does not wash his hands before he eats. He has no fairies to keep us away. (*Goes out slowly.*)

All fairies join hands and dance around the bed. They cry. He's gone! He's gone! Our baby is saved.

Then they sing softly:

Sleep my little one,
Sleep my pretty one,
Sleep.

(or another lullaby).

(CURTAIN)

THE HAPPY SUN-BIRD

(Continued from page 167)

"Come, let us climb for the eggs!"

The boys started to climb for the eggs. They were clever little boys and good at climbing but when they reached the top of the tree they could not find the happy Sun-Bird there. He had hopped upwards and hidden himself among the thickest cluster of leaves at the topmost branches of the tree. And there he kept on singing and singing.

"Oh, I am so happy. From here, I have indeed a good view of the world!" he kept on thinking to himself.

The school boys were angry because they could not find any nest. They could hear the Sun-Bird singing still but did not know where he was. They were very clever boys, but they could not find the Sun-bird at all. At last they decided to stone him and drive him away from the tree. So they stoned him and tried to drive him from the tree.

But even then, the happy Sun-Bird would not be driven away from the tree. The boys who were trying to be cruel to him got tired and when twilight fell they all ran home.

At last it was night. The stars appeared one by one, and then the moon rose, clear and bright above the hills bordering the town.

"Oh," said the Sun-Bird to himself, "how I wish the Grasshopper and the Gumamela Flower were here now, for the night is so beautiful! Oh, how beautiful the world is!"

red-breasted edge
noticed lawn
grassy unattractive
further on thickest
bordering