

The Story of the Dragonfly

Down below the surface of a quiet pond lived a little colony of water bugs. They were a happy colony, living far away from the sun. For many months they were very busy, scurrying over the soft mud on the bottom of the pond. They did notice that every once in awhile one of their colony seemed to lose interest in going about with its friends. Clinging to the stem of a pond lily, it gradually moved out of sight and was seen no more.

"Look!" said one of the water bugs to another.

"One of our colony is climbing up the lily stalk. Where do you suppose she is going?"

Up, up, up it went slowly. Even as they watched, the water bug disappeared from sight. Its friends waited and waited but she didn't return.

"That's funny!" said one water bug to another.

"Wasn't she happy here?" asked a second water bug.

"Where do you suppose she went?" wondered a third.

No one had an answer. They were greatly puzzled. Finally one of the water bugs, a leader in the colony, gathered its friends together.

"I have an idea. The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk must promise to come back and tell us where he or she went and why."

"We promise," they said solemnly.

One Spring day, not long after, the very water bug who had suggested the plan found herself climbing up the lily stalk. Up, up, up she went. Before she knew what was happening, she had broken through the surface of the water, and fallen onto the broad, green lily pad above.

When she awoke, she looked about with surprise. She couldn't believe what she saw. A startling change had come to her old body. Her movement revealed four silver wings and a long tail. Even as she struggled, she felt an impulse to move her wings. The warmth of the sun soon dried the moisture from the new body. She moved her wings again and suddenly found herself up above the water. She had become a Dragonfly!

Swooping and dipping in great curves, she flew through the air. She felt exhilarated in the new atmosphere. By and by, the new dragonfly lighted happily on a lily pad to rest. Then it was that she chanced to look below to the bottom of the pond. Why, she was right above her old friend, the water bugs! There they were, scurrying about, just as she had been doing some time before. Then the dragonfly remembered the promise:

"The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk will come back and tell where he or she went and why."

Without thinking, the dragonfly darted down. Suddenly she hit the surface of the water and bounced away. Now that she was a dragonfly, she could no longer go into the water.

"I can't return!" She said in dismay. "At least I tried, but I can't keep my promise. Even if I could go back, not one of the water bugs would know me in my new body. I guess I'll just have to wait until they become dragonflies too. Then they'll understand what happened to me, and where I went."

And the dragonfly winged off happily into its wonderful new world of sun and air.

