



# THE KIND DEEDS MESSENGER

THE LATHAM  
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STORY SERVICE  
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## ADVENTURES OF BROTHER BUZZ THE ELF BUMBLE BEE

### BROTHER BUZZ MEETS A TOAD

By DOLORES WILKENS KENT



THERE WAS A BIG TOAD SMILING AT THEM.

**B**ROTHER BUZZ had enjoyed his evening with Starbright, the fairy of the night, and Mr. Flittermouse, the bat, so greatly that he often thought about them as he buzzed around during the warm spring days, sipping nectar from the lovely flowers, and resting in the cool shade of the green trees.

He wondered what adventure he might have if he should go out again some fine night, so a few days later he decided that he would take a long afternoon nap, and search for Starbright when evening came.

This time Brother Buzz was so sleepy that he didn't wake up until late in the evening. As he flew out of his little den he found a deep pitchy blackness. The moon hadn't yet come up and Brother Buzz wondered what he was going to do; for bees are like humans, their eyes are not made for seeing in the dark like Mr. Flittermouse and Mr. Owl.

Brother Buzz perched upon a tall shrub that loomed up in front of him and sat considering. Suddenly he felt a swift rush of air and heard a tiny familiar squeak.

"Buzz, buzz, oh, Mr. Flittermouse!" he called. Something swooped down in front of him, and there hovered Mr. Flittermouse.

"Is that you, Brother Buzz?" he squeaked. "Well, I am glad to see you. Are you out adventuring again?"

"Yes, I am. Could you find Starbright for me?" asked Brother Buzz.

"Surely, stay there and I will get her," said Mr. Flittermouse. He was off like a flash. Brother Buzz sat very quietly, for he really could not see an inch beyond the end of his own little nose. The deep, still darkness of the night pressed about him like soft velvet, muffling every sound. The sweetness of clover and wild grasses was wafted by a tiny wandering breeze from the nearby meadows, and again he heard the music of the frogs and crickets, the countless little noises of the creatures of the night.

A tiny bright light approached him and descended rapidly, stopping beside him on the shrub. It was Starbright, the fairy of the night, her black dress again a blaze of silver and crystal spangles, the starry crown upon her head illuminating the darkness about them with its diamond-like rays.

She was as beautiful as ever and smiled sweetly as she greeted him. "This is such a pleasure, Brother Buzz; I wondered when you would come for another adventure."

"I've thought very often of the fine one we had last time, Starbright," answered Brother Buzz, "and today I slept nearly all afternoon, so that I am ready for more fun. What shall we do?"

"Ahem! Let's consider," and Starbright drew her pretty brows together in deep thought. "Ah, I have it. Come with me to the front terrace; we'll sit on the lawn and watch the moon rise, and see if something very interesting comes our way."

"I'd be very glad to, but how shall I see? I have daylight eyes, you know," laughed Brother Buzz.

"This will show you the way," said Starbright, holding up a dainty little wand. She touched the tip and a brilliant light flared forth.

"Follow me, watch my wand and you cannot go astray." She flew off slowly, followed by Brother Buzz, who faithfully kept his eyes on the lighted wand, the glittering ornaments of Starbright's dress and her crown which also shone, so that it was easy to keep with her as she flitted through the air.

Away they went across the big garden until Brother Buzz saw Starbright flying lower and lower, finally settling upon a tall rose-bush.

"We will rest here," she said, "and watch the moon rise.

"I will enjoy that, as I have never seen a moon-rise before," agreed Brother Buzz.

"Do you hear the singing of the toads, frogs and hylas and the chirping of the crickets?" asked Starbright.

"Oh, is that the singing I hear?" Brother Buzz nodded in approval. "Tell me, what is that very high, shrill sound?"

"Those are the hylas," answered Starbright. "They are tiny tree toads. It would be hard to see them at night, but they sing in a higher key than any of the others." Starbright was growing very fond of her roll of teacher and spoke with importance.

"What do hylas do?" asked Brother Buzz.

"They catch and eat the bugs and insects on the trees that would otherwise kill them, just as some of the birds do during the day, especially the wood-pecker. Hylas are very pretty, too; they change color at times," said Starbright.

"What a lot of interesting information you know," said Brother Buzz admiringly.

Starbright smiled with pleasure at the compliment, but replied modestly, "Oh, no, not more than all the other fairies. Ah," she added, "look, the moon is coming up!"

Brother Buzz looked and, looking, forgot all about the toads and hylas, for a moon rise is one of the most beautiful pictures that nature is forever painting. A tiny rim of silver was brightening the eastern sky, no bigger than the edge of a dollar. As Brother Buzz and Starbright gazed in silence, this rim grew and grew, rising higher and higher until at last the big, round, lovely moon, God's lantern of the night, shone resplendent in the heavens, shedding its long, silvery beams over the land and piercing the darkness with its mellow rays. The black shadows went scurrying into corners to hide, and how the crickets and frogs tuned up under the glory of the moon! The concert rose into full pitch as from each little creature a song of gladness and praise to its Creator poured forth.

Brother Buzz turned impulsively to Starbright to find her soft eyes full of tears, though a smile quivered on her rosy mouth.

"Isn't it marvelous?" she asked in a hushed whisper.

Brother Buzz nodded silently. Just then a particularly sweet, short song rose above all the other music. "Listen," said he eagerly, "what is that?"

"That is a toad. They have the finest voice of all, but only sing their very short song during the spring of the

year. One must be in the fountain right beside us. They get in the water, all but their heads, and then their throats swell and swell and then the lovely song bursts forth."

"Why, I always thought the toad ugly," Brother Buzz said in surprise. "He is so rough and dark, with those funny legs that he hops about on."

"That's because you have not watched them closely. They are wonderful and very valuable little fellows. Let us" . . . Starbright was interrupted by a loud "croak! croak!" from a deep, bass voice just below them, so loud and unexpected that they both fairly jumped.

"Here's one now," whispered Starbright, and she called—

"Oh, Mr. Hopper, Mr. Hopper, is that you?"

"Croak, croak, surely, who else could it be?" continued the deep voice. "Come down, Starbright. Isn't this a fine night?"

Starbright and Brother Buzz flew down to the ground and there was a big toad smiling at them. And what a smile! It seemed to go all around his head, his mouth was so large. His brilliant eyes twinkled merrily.

"This is Brother Buzz, who is very anxious to meet you, and he admires your singing immensely." Starbright gave a funny little look at Brother Buzz as she spoke, and he could see that it pleased Mr. Hopper very much to have his voice praised.

Brother Buzz took off his little hat in a gallant bow. "Yes, indeed, you do sing beautifully," said he.

Mr. Hopper swelled with pleasure as he greeted Brother Buzz cordially. "So glad you appreciate my voice," he croaked, "but what on earth is a bumblebee doing out at night?"

"Oh, I am a very different kind of bumblebee, from far off lands," said Brother Buzz quickly, to stave off further questions.

"He is out adventuring," added Starbright.

"Oh, I see, I see," said Mr. Hopper. "Well, what can I do for you, sir?"

"Tell me all about yourself, will you, please?" asked Brother Buzz.

"Perhaps I can do that best by telling you what happened to me this evening," said Mr. Hopper, clearing his throat with a great big croak.

"Do, do!" cried Brother Buzz, eagerly. Starbright and he sat down side by side on the edge of the lawn, while Mr. Hopper squatted in front of them on the garden walk.

"I was hopping along just before dusk toward the rose bed where there are so many bugs I have to catch before they destroy the pretty flowers," began Mr. Hopper, "when I heard human voices and footsteps, and along came a little girl about eight years old and a boy a few years older. There wasn't a place to dig myself in, as the ground was wet and hard, and I had no time to hop away. The girl nearly stepped on me. However, the boy saw me, and pulled her back, saying, 'Don't step on that toad!' She screamed loudly, 'Oh, oh, the ugly thing! kill it, kill it!'"

"I was scared to death, but the boy said 'Kill it! I should say not! Why, do you know that a toad is a wonderful creature? My teacher says that one toad is worth its weight in gold to farmers and gardeners. She brought one to our school to show us and explain what they do. You see, they eat up all the bugs and insects that would otherwise ruin the crops, plants and flowers. Like bats

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# KINDNESS TO ANIMALS

By RUDOLPH I. COFFEE, PH.D.



RUDOLPH I. COFFEE, PH. D.

I AM MOST grateful to the Latham Foundation for this kind invitation to speak for the promotion of humane education. The Latham Foundation, which has its central office in Oakland, is doing a great humanitarian work. Through its initiative we are dedicating this address to "Kindness to Animals Week," and well we may. If ever American citizens realized their obligation to dumb animals, and particularly to dogs, they certainly do so now. The civilized world stands aghast at the kidnaping of the Lindbergh baby. The removal of a dog from its accustomed place that fateful night permitted this terrible crime. Had that little dog been in the nursery as guardian, where it was supposed to be, our nation might have been spared this disgraceful kidnaping. One dog stood between inhuman criminals and happy parents.

As busy individuals, we do not think sufficiently of the dumb animals. To bring this lesson home more definitely to you, may I tell a delightful legend which is found in ancient Jewish literature. The story is about Moses, a shepherd in the land of Midian for the high priest Jethro. One afternoon Moses was about to return from the hills to the home of Jethro with his innocent lambs. On counting them, he discovered that one animal was missing. His conscience smote him. Moses could not return home without that missing lamb. He searched here and there under the pitiless glare of a tropical sun. Finally Moses discovered the little lamb alongside a brook, its leg broken and tantalizingly striving, but without success, to drink of the refreshing water. Moses tenderly lifted the little lamb in his arms and, kneeling alongside the stream, permitted the injured animal to quench its thirst. Then firmly binding the injured limb with soft linen, Moses carried the lamb all the way home and placed it carefully in a soft bed for the night.

And the legend concludes that when the angels in Heaven saw how gently Moses had cared for one tiny animal, they cried out before God in a great chorus, "That man who is so solicitous for the helpless animals, he is the one man who should be entrusted with the task

of releasing the Children of Israel from Egypt." The world refers to Moses as its Emancipator. I think of him as the forerunner of the Latham Foundation, one of the pioneers in the Kindness to Animals movement.

I have a little Boston terrier at home. I would not be unkind to him for the world. There is a palship between us, and I feel infinitely richer in soul. If I am drawn to this small animal, how much more should I be drawn to human beings and urged to spread happiness in the world. Thus does the tiny dog soul broaden my own character and soul.

How true are these beautiful words:

"Sometimes when life has gone wrong with you,  
And the world seems a dreary place,  
Has your dog ever silently crept to your feet,  
His yearning eyes turned to your face?  
Has he made you feel that he understands,  
And all that he asks of you  
Is to share your lot, be it good or ill,  
With a chance to be loyal and true?  
Are you branded a failure?—he does not know;  
A sinner?—he does not care;  
You're master to him—that's all that counts—  
A word, and his day is fair.  
Your birth and your station are nothing to him,  
A palace and hut are the same;  
And his love is yours in honor and peace,  
And it's yours through disaster and shame;  
Though others forget you and pass you by,  
He is ever your faithful friend—  
Ready to give you the best that is his—  
Unselfishly—unto the end."

Let us all thank the Latham Foundation for furthering Kindness to Animals Week.

## WITH MOTHER GOOSE IN SAFETY LAND

"With Mother Goose in Safety Land" is the title of a new book published by the Harr Wagner Publishing Co., San Francisco, which introduces the familiar characters of Little Bo Peep, Jack and Jill, the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, Humpty Dumpty, Tom the Piper's Son, and many others dear to every child's heart. Written in charming verse and beautifully illustrated, this book entertainingly conveys on every page the need of vigilance which will impress the child against the dangers of traffic and actually protect him from the kind of accidents which are all too common in our life of today. The authors are Leora Doan Emig and William J. Emig. The latter was director of safety work for eight years in the schools of the city of San Jose. The book is lovingly dedicated "To small boys and girls everywhere whose little feet must cross busy streets and highways going to and from school" and published "with the hope that it might save a child's life." It will make a very desirable Christmas gift and will prove unusually valuable in both home and school libraries.

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and birds, they preserve our principal foods.'

"Just the same," insisted the girl, 'I think toads are awfully ugly, and my nurse says that you get warts on your hands if you touch them.'

"Nothing of the sort; that is an old tale of ignorant people, and there isn't a word of truth in it. As to being ugly, have you ever looked closely at a toad?' She didn't want to, but he made her stoop down and look at me, as near as possible. 'Look at his eyes,' said the boy, 'and see if you can call him ugly again.'

"The girl gave a cry of surprise. 'Why, they are lovely!' she gasped.

"There is an old saying that toads have jewels in their heads; it really means their eyes,' said the boy. 'And they sing, too,' he continued, 'a beautiful little song, far more beautiful than that of any bird, but very short.'

"Oh, will you make this one sing, now?" asked the child, eagerly.

"The boy laughed. 'Why, they do not do it just when you want them to, but if you will get up very early tomorrow morning I will take you to the Lily Pond where many will be singing. I can also show you the toad's cousins, the hylas, the frogs and their cunning little baby tadpoles.'

"The little girl had been still closely regarding me and I could not help opening my mouth a bit in a sigh of relief. She suddenly cried, 'Why, he hasn't any teeth!'

"The boy—oh, he had such a nice kind face—replied:

"No, but the toad has a tongue, very long and thin, which is attached to the front of the mouth instead of the back of the throat like our tongue. It is sticky at the end, and when he thrusts it out and catches a bug or fly, it cannot fall off, and he draws his tongue back into his throat and swallows it. There are also little prickles in the upper jaw and the roof of his mouth which help him to eat.

"I'll get up early,' answered the girl. 'I am so glad you told me all this. Poor, nice toady, I am sorry that I was so mean!' and she actually patted me!"

"Well, well!" declared Starbright, "the world must be gradually waking up when children like this boy are among us. I hope that we can meet him some time."

"I should say so!" cried Brother Buzz eagerly. "I must meet him, for he could teach me a great deal."

Mr. Hopper smiled expansively. "He lives in this house now; he has been away at school, I heard him tell the girl as they went off. They said that they would come to the Lily Pond in the morning. Suppose we all meet there?"

"I will," answered Brother Buzz decidedly, "but, just where is it?"

"I will have my sister 'Sunray,' a fairy of the day, take you to the Lily Pond, so, be sure to be ready very early, for she is up at dawn," said Starbright.

Bidding goodnight to Mr. Hopper, they flew away, and Starbright left Brother Buzz at his den, cautioning him to be ready for Sunray in the morning.

As Brother Buzz went to sleep he wondered how this new fairy would look; he knew he couldn't like her as well as Starbright, but she might be nice, at that. With all this happy anticipation, Brother Buzz fell asleep, the sweet little song of the helpful toad, Mr. Hopper, echoing like a soft refrain in his ears.

## OUR BEST KIND DEEDS THIS MONTH

Everybody will remember the beautiful poem, "Little Woodland God," published in a recent issue of THE MESSENGER and its author, Julia Van der Veer, a young girl of high school age. In a letter which has just come to us she reports: "I heard that an old rancher had loaded his mare and colt into a truck and taken them to the zoo to sell for lion feed. I had seen the colt and knew it to be a beautiful little creature; the mare had been a fine animal, but was worn out from years of foaling and semi-starvation. I offered the old man five dollars if he would hurry and get them back for me, and he got to the zoo just in time to save the colt. They had just slaughtered its mother. That colt is the dearest little fellow. He arrived here yesterday. Today is the first time a kindly hand has touched him, but already he is learning to be less afraid. This business of caring for animals has its rewards along with the never-ending sorrow."

Our good friend and ally, Mother Hubbard, Editor of the Children's Page of the San Francisco News, has an enormous circle of junior friends. Each week brings the enrollment of new members in the LAH (Lend a Hand) band of workers. They win their title to membership by the performance of some kind and useful deed, which they report, not boastfully, but in the spirit of wishing to be helpful. They then receive their beautiful blue and gold badges, which are furnished by the Latham Foundation and awarded by the San Francisco News. We were very much impressed recently by the fine deed of Luana O'Keefe of San Francisco, who writes to Mother Hubbard as follows:

"One day I was walking down the street when I saw two little children with a rope around a kitten's neck, and they were pulling the kitten after them. I took the kitten from them, took off the rope and explained to them how it hurt the kitten. They were little and did not understand until I asked them how they would feel if someone tied a rope around their necks and dragged them in the street." Luana O'Keefe is fourteen years old and attends the Balboa High in San Francisco. She shows that the lessons learned in humaneness when in the grades will be remembered all through life and like sunshine add brightness whenever the chance comes to relieve suffering and uphold standards of considerate conduct. This is what is meant by being a "good citizen," and citizens of that kind never become criminals because they are always carrying in their souls the desire to be helpful to other people and to animals.



How can I teach your children gentleness,  
And mercy to the weak, and reverence  
For Life, which in its weakness or excess,  
Is still a gleam of God's omnipotence?

—LONGFELLOW.