



Summer Stories

By Enid Blyton

What a Funny
Thing To Do



Janet was pleased because Auntie Laura had given her some Shirley poppy seeds to plant in her garden. 'Wait for a fine day, just after rain,' said Auntie Laura. 'Then shake them gently out of the envelope into a sunny patch of ground, cover them up with fine soil, and wait for them to grow.'



Janet shook them in the packet. They made a nice dry, rustly noise. 'They are seeds I took from my own Shirley poppies for you last summer,' said Auntie Laura. 'They were such fine ones, and made so much seed. I have some for myself, some for you some for your cousin John. He is going to plant his too. I have given him some in an envelope, just like yours. You will have to see whose comes up first.'



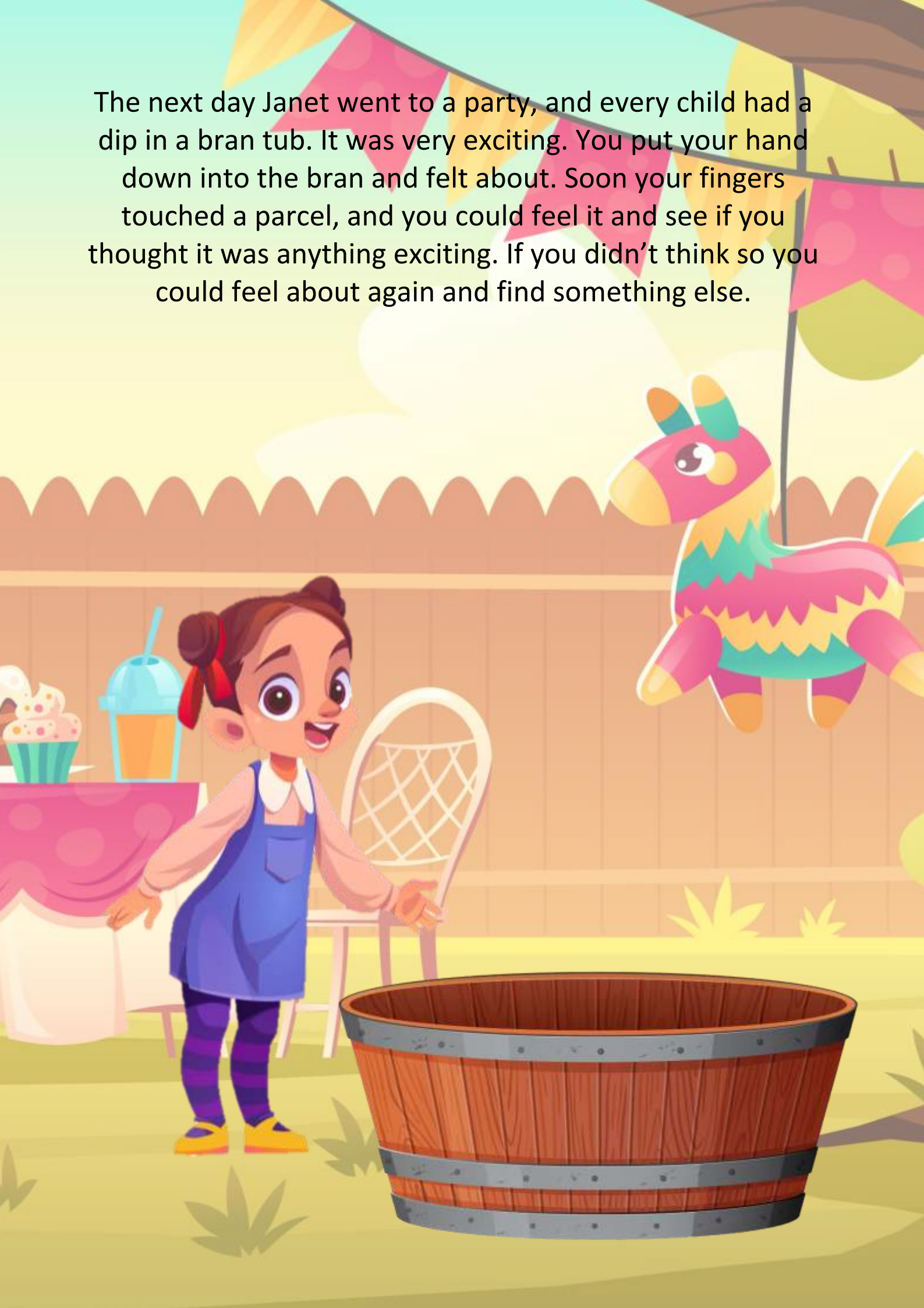
Janet hoped hers would. John lived next door, so she would easily be able to see if hers came up first. 'Don't plant them just yet,' said Auntie Laura. 'It's a bit too early. And do keep your seeds carefully, Janet – don't lose them. You can be so careless, you know.'



Janet knew. People were always telling her how careless she was. She lost things. She broke things. She made silly mistakes. But she really would be careful with her poppy seeds. She went to put them in the drawer of her dressing table, where her handkerchiefs, stockings and brooches were. They would be quite safe there.



The next day Janet went to a party, and every child had a dip in a bran tub. It was very exciting. You put your hand down into the bran and felt about. Soon your fingers touched a parcel, and you could feel it and see if you thought it was anything exciting. If you didn't think so you could feel about again and find something else.



Janet felt about and found a thin little parcel that felt quite exciting. So she pulled it out of the tub and undid the paper.

Oh! It's a necklace!' she said in delight. 'Isn't it pretty? It's made of tiny beads of all colours! I shall love wearing it.'

She put it on, and it looked very pretty on her silk party frock. Janet felt very grand.



But, as usual, she was careless, and as she danced round
plying musical chairs, she her hand in the new little
necklace and snapped it.

In a second the little coloured beads ran all over the place.
Some went down Janet's neck, some fell on the carpet,
some dropped on to a chair.



‘Oh, my lovely necklace that I got out of the bran tub,’ said Janet, almost in tears.

‘Don’t cry,’ said a grown-up. ‘We’ll soon find the beads for you, then you can thread them together again when you get home. That will be a nice thing to do. Look, here are some, and there are some more.’



All the children helped to find the little glass beads.

‘What shall we do with them?’ they said, holding them in their hands. ‘Where shall we put them?’

‘I’ll find an envelope,’ said the grown-up, and went to a desk. She came back with a white envelope, and everyone put the beads on it. it was licked up and stuck. Janet took it and put it into her pocket.



‘Thank you,’ she said. ‘I’ll thread them when I have time at home, and make a lovely necklace again.’

When she got home, she told her mother all about the broken necklace and wanted to thread it before she went to bed. But Mother wouldn’t let her.

‘Oh, no,’ she said, ‘it’s very late, dear. You can thread the beads tomorrow. Put them into your drawer and you will keep them safe there.’



So, Janet went up to bed and popped the envelope of beads into her dressing table drawer. Now, where were two envelopes there – one with poppy seeds in and one with glass beads.

Janet forgot about the beads, and there they stayed, hidden in their envelope. Then there came a fine sunny day after a day of showers, and the gardener began to plant his seeds in the garden.



‘Haven’t you any seeds to plant?’ he said to Janet. ‘You ought to plant them today if you have. It’s just right.’

‘Oh, yes; I’ve got some Shirley poppy seeds that my Auntie Laura gave me,’ said Janet remembering. ‘I’ll go and get them.’

As she was running indoors, her cousin John popped his head over the wall. ‘Janet, Janet!’ he called. ‘I am planting my seeds today that Auntie Laura gave me. Are you planting yours?’

‘Yes,’ said Janet. ‘Oh, good, we’ll plant them the same day, so they ought to come up the same day. We’ll watch and see.’



She ran upstairs in a hurry and opened her dressing table drawer. She took out the first envelop she saw – but it wasn't the one with the seeds in. It was the one with the beads in.

Janet rushed downstairs and into the garden. She went to her own little patch. It had one rose tree in, one lupin plant just coming up, one plant of primrose all out, and at one side was a little bare patch where Kanet meant to plant her poppy seeds.



She raked it over a little to make it fine, for she knew that seeds must be planted in a very fine soil. Then she scraped back some of the earth and made a place ready to shake the seeds on to.

She slit open the envelope, bent over the patch of moist warm earth and began to shake the contents of the envelope on to the ground. She was rather surprised to see that the seeds were all colours. 'Oh,' she said, 'I suppose they're all colour because Shirley poppies are all colours too. What dear little seeds! I do like them. I hope they grow well.'



Janet planted all the beads out of the envelope, and she really thought they were seeds. She covered them up with fine soil, and then called to John over the wall. 'I've planted my poppy seeds. They were so pretty, all colours of the rainbow.'

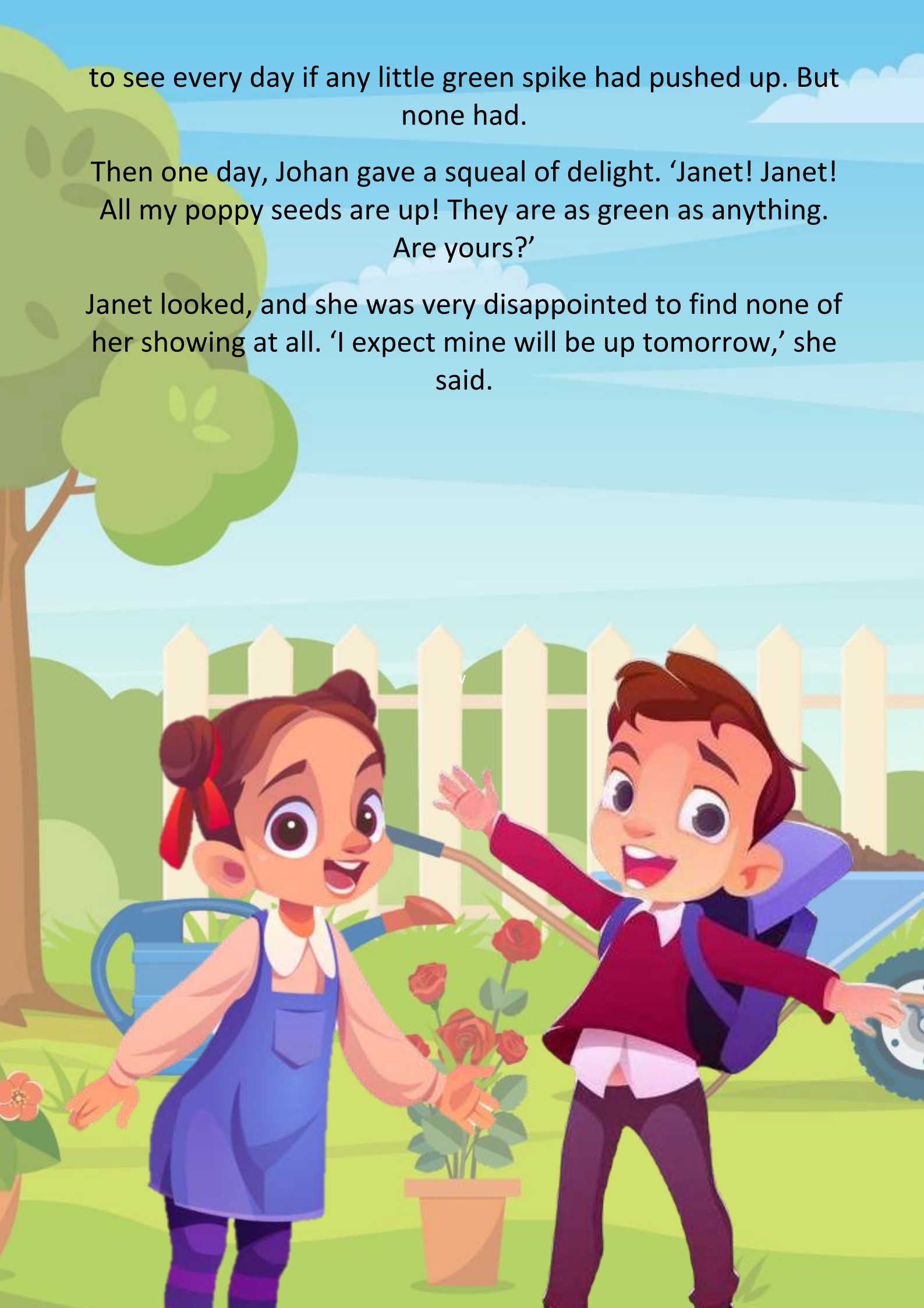
John was surprised. 'Mine weren't,' he said. 'Mine were all little black things.'



to see every day if any little green spike had pushed up. But none had.

Then one day, Johan gave a squeal of delight. 'Janet! Janet! All my poppy seeds are up! They are as green as anything. Are yours?'

Janet looked, and she was very disappointed to find none of her showing at all. 'I expect mine will be up tomorrow,' she said.



But they weren't. They weren't showing the next ay either, or the next. Janet couldn't bear to keep hearing John shout out how well his were growing, so tall and sturdy and green. Why didn't hers grow? She had planted them the same day as John's!

She told Auntie Laura, and Auntie was puzzled. 'It's funny,' she said. 'They were just the same seeds.'



Janet looked as if she was going to cry. 'Now, don't be upset,' said her mother. 'Find something to do while Auntie and I have a talk. What about that necklace of beads you broke at Hilda's party? You have never threaded them, have you? Wouldn't it be a good idea to thread them now, then you can show Auntie how pretty they are.'

'Oh, yes,' said Janet, cheering up. 'I quite forgot all about the beads. They are in my dressing table drawer. I'll get them.'



She ran up to her room, scabbled about in her drawer for the envelope, found it and ran downstairs again. She slit open the envelope to show her aunt the beads. But how strange – there were no beads inside – only funny little black things, like seeds!

‘Where have the beads gone?’ said Janet in surprise. ‘Oh, Mummy, look what my beads have turned into! They’ve gone horrid – they’re not bead anymore. I can’t thread them.’



Mummy and Auntie Laura looked. Then Auntie laughed.
'Silly child! These are seeds – they look like poppy seeds too.
Are you sure you planted poppy seeds? These look exactly
like the ones I gave you – and this looks like the envelope
too.'



Janet stared at it. Oh, dear – oh, dear – could she possibly have been silly enough to plant beads instead of seeds? No, she really couldn't!

Then she remembered what bright colours the seeds that she had planted had been – yes, they must have been beads instead. She had planted beads! She went very red.

'Why have you gone red?' said Mummy. 'Have you done something silly? You always go red then!'

Janet rushed out to the garden without a word. She ran to her little plot. She began to scrape up the earth in which she had planted the beads – and sure enough, they were, dirty, it is true, but still beads!



Janet began to cry. She had buried her nice glass beads in the dirt, and she still hadn't planted her poppy seeds, so John's would be out long before hers! What a silly she was!

John looked over the wall and saw Janet crying. 'What's the matter?' he said. 'Are you trying to water your garden with your tears, silly?'

'Oh, John – I've panted beads instead of seeds,' wept Janet. 'So, of course, they didn't grow, and now I am al behind with my seeds!'



‘I’ll help you to plant them,’ said John kindly, ‘and we’ll try and find the beads and wash them. How silly are you, Janet! You are always doing something like this!’

Well, they found all the beads they could, washed them and threaded them. There were not enough for a necklace, so it had to be a bracelet, and it looked quite pretty.

Then they planted the poppy seeds and covered them up. ‘They’ll soon grow,’ said John. ‘I’ll give you the first poppy out of my garden, if you like – I’ve got a bud already.’



‘Thank you, John,’ said Janet, and went indoors. How Mummy and Auntie Laura laughed when they heard how she had planted beads instead of seeds!

‘Little silly!’ said Auntie. ‘Did you think that if you planted beads they would grow up into necklaces? Well, well, well! You really must try and think harder another time.’

Perhaps Janet will. Her poppies aren’t up yet, but she does hope they soon will be.





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