THE BROWNIE STORY

Brownies have always been known for being honest, fair, and helpful. Have you heard about Brownies? Do you know how Girl Scout Brownies were named? Here is one version of the story.

Mary and Tommy lived with their father and grandmother. Their father worked very hard all day and their grandmother was too old to do the housework.

Their father tried his best to keep the house clean. Mary and Tommy didn't help him very much. They just played all day long.

"Children are hard to care for," said Father.

"Children are a blessing!" said Grandmother.

"Not my children," said Father. "They do not help me a bit."

Just then, Mary and Tommy ran in, their shoes covered with mud.

"Wipe your feet outside!" said Father.

"What makes Father so angry, Granny?” asked Tommy and Mary.

"He is tired and you two do not help him. What this house needs is a brownie or two."

"What is a brownie, Granny?"

"A very helpful little person. She came in before the family was up and did all sorts of chores. The brownie always ran off before anyone could see her, but they could hear her laughing and playing about the house sometimes."

"How nice! Did they pay her, Granny?"

"No, brownies always help for love. But, the family left her some treats at night like cookies, fruit, and juice. She liked that."

Oh, Granny, where are the brownies now?"

"Only the Wise Old Owl knows, my dear."

"Who is the Wise Old Owl, Granny?"

"I don't know exactly, my dear."

"Oh, I wish she hadn't gone away!" said Mary and Tommy together. "May we put out some juice and cookies for her? Maybe she will come back if we do."

"Well," said Grandmother, "she's welcome if she chooses to come. There's plenty of work for her to do here."

That night, Mary could hardly sleep. She kept thinking about the brownie.

"There's an owl living in the old shed by the pond," she thought. "If it is the Wise Old Owl, she can tell me where to find a brownie. When the moon rises, I'll go look for the Wise Old Owl."

The moon rose and Mary hurried to the pond in the woods.

Everything was so still that Mary could hear her heart beating. Then suddenly, "Hoo! Hoo!" said a voice behind her.

"It's an owl!" said Mary. "Maybe it's the one I'm looking for."

The owl flew by her onto a beam that ran under the roof of the shed and said, "Come up! Come up!"

The owl could talk! Then it must be the Wise Old Owl! Mary climbed up the beam, and said, "Please, where can I find a brownie to come and live with us?"

"That's it, is it?" said the owl. "Well, I know of two brownies that live in your house."

"In our house!" said Mary. "Then why don't they help us?"

"Perhaps they don't know what has to be done," said the owl.

"Just tell me where to find those brownies," said Mary, "and I'll show them what needs to be done. There is plenty to do at our house!"

"Well, Mary, I can tell you how to find one of the brownies. Go to the pond in the woods when the moon is shining and turn yourself around three times while you say this charm:

"Twist me, turn me, and show me the elf

I looked in the water and saw\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_."

Then look into the pond to see the brownie. When you see the brownie, you will think of a word that ends the magic rhyme."

Mary reached the edge of the pond in no time. She slowly turned herself around three times while she said the rhyme:

"Twist me, turn me, and show me the elf

I looked in the water and saw\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_"

She stopped, looked into the pond, and saw only her own face.

"How silly," said Mary? "There's no word to rhyme with elf, anyway. Belf! Helf! Jelf! Melf! I saw nothing but myself! Myself? That rhymes with elf! How strange! Something must be wrong! I'll go back and ask the Wise Old Owl about it."

Mary went back to the shed and told the Wise Old Owl she saw nothing but herself.

"And what did you expect to see?” asked the owl.

"A brownie," said Mary.

"And what are brownies like?" asked the owl.

"Granny says brownies are very helpful little persons. I saw no one but myself when I looked in the pond and I'm not a brownie."

"All children can be brownies," said the owl. "Couldn't you help out around the house and pick up your own things?"

"I don't think I would like it," Mary said.

"Would you rather be someone who makes work instead of doing it?" asked the owl.

"Oh, no!" cried Mary, "I don't want to be like that. I'll tell Tommy and we'll both try to be brownies."

"That's the way to talk!" said the owl. "Come on, I'll take you home."

Before Mary knew it, she was in her bed. When daylight came, she woke up Tommy and told him what had happened. Together they crept downstairs and did every bit of work they could find to do before their father woke up. Then they went happily back to bed.

When Father came downstairs, he looked around and rubbed his eyes. The table was set, the floor was clean, and the room was as bright and shiny as a new penny.

At first, father could not say a word. Then he ran to the foot of the stairs, shouting, “Mother Tommy! Mary! Our brownie has come back!"

One morning, Father woke up very early and heard laughter coming from the kitchen. "It must be the brownie," he thought. He went downstairs, opened the kitchen door, and saw Mary and Tommy dancing around the room.

"What's this?" he asked.

"It's the brownies! We are the brownies!" sang Tommy and Mary.

"But who did all the work? Where are the real brownies?"

"Here!" said Mary and Tommy as they ran into their father's arms.

When Granny came downstairs, Father told her how he had found the brownies.

"What do you think of it all, Mother?” asked Father.

"Children are a blessing," said Grandmother. "I told you so."