

Moss's Hazelnut

A Thistledown Lane story · Series 1 · Episode 1



Down at the bottom of Thistledown Lane, where the old stone wall goes on forever and the leaves pile up in the corners, lives a small hedgehog called Bramble.



This is her house, tucked right into the wall. And this morning, something in the kitchen smells very good indeed.

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“Morning, Mam! What are we making?” asked Bramble.

“Hazelnut buns for tea, my love,” said Mam.

“Ooh, hazelnut buns, my favourite!”



“Then run along and let me get on,” said Mam. “Off you go into the sunshine.”

“I’ll be down the lane, Mam!”

“Mind the puddles!”

So Bramble pulled her green scarf tight, and out she went.



The lane was bright and crunchy with leaves. Scritch-scratch, scritch-scratch went Bramble's feet.

She hadn't gone far when she heard a very small, very sad sound.

"Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear."

"Moss?" said Bramble. "Whatever's the matter?"



“My hazelnut, Bramble. My best one. I put it down right here, and now it’s gone!”

“Gone?”

“Gone! I looked under the leaves. I looked on top of the leaves. I even looked inside the leaves.”

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“Then we’ll find it together,” said Bramble. “Two noses are better than one.”

“Do you think so?”

“I know so. Come on.”

They searched all along the wall. They looked under every leaf, and behind every stone. But there was no hazelnut anywhere.



“It’s no good,” said Moss. “It’s gone forever.”

“Nothing’s gone forever. Look, up there!”

Perched on a branch above the lane, feathers
all fluffed up against the breeze, sat Old Wren.



“Old Wren! You see everything from
up there. Have you seen a hazelnut?”

“A hazelnut, you say? Hmm, hmm-hmm.”

“I’ve seen leaves. Lots and lots of leaves, blown
all along the lane, all the way to the big field.”

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“But we’re looking for a hazelnut,” said Moss, “not leaves.”

“Are you, now? Then follow the leaves, little mouse.
Follow the leaves, and see where they take you.”

“Follow the leaves. Thank you, Old Wren!”

So that is exactly what they did.



The leaves led them out of the lane and into the big green field, where the grass grew taller than Moss's ears.

"It's very big, Bramble."

"Then we'd better start looking. You take that side, I'll take this."

They looked in the long grass. They looked under the dandelion clocks. Moss lifted a whole tuft with both paws, and found nothing at all.



“Not in the field,” sighed Moss. “Oh dear.”

“Don’t droop your ears yet. Look where the leaves are going.”

“Towards the trees?”

“Let’s check in the woods!”

And off they went, across the field, towards the trees.



The woods were quiet and golden, and the light came down through the leaves in long soft stripes.

“Ooh, it’s a bit dark in here!” said Moss.

“Only a bit. Stay close.”

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They stepped over roots, and round the red toadstools,
and all the time Bramble kept her eyes on the leaves.

“Moss, look. This one’s the wrong way up.”

“The wrong way up?”

“All the others are brown side up. This one’s pale side up. Somebody’s turned it over.”

“Somebody carrying something?”

“Somebody carrying something round.”



One upside-down leaf. Then another. And another.
All in a line, leading straight out of the woods.
“They’re going towards the hedge!” said Moss.
“Then so are we.”

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Along the hedge they went, past the drifting leaves,
past the puddle that looked like a little piece of sky.

“Bramble, what if it’s rolled into the stream and it’s gone for good?”

“Then we keep looking. That’s what friends do.”



All the way to the big mossy stone at the very end of the hedge. And there, right at the bottom...

“The very last upside-down leaf!”

Moss lifted it up, very, very carefully.

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“My hazelnut! Oh, my hazelnut!”

“See?” said Bramble. “Together.”

“Together. Thank you, Bramble.”

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They ran all the way back up the lane, and there on his branch, exactly where they had left him, sat Old Wren.

“Told you. I see everything.”

“You did, Old Wren! You did!”

“Now, off home with you both. I can smell buns from here.”



Home they went, Moss holding his hazelnut up like a trophy, as the afternoon turned to gold.

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“Just in time!” said Mam. “Who’s hungry?”

“Me! Oh, wait. I don’t want to eat MY hazelnut, Mam.”

“Of course not, my love. Yours is for keeping. These are for sharing.”

“One for you, one for me, and one for Old Wren,” said Bramble.



And they ate hazelnut buns until the sky went pink.
“If you ever lose something, ask a friend, and look together.”
And that’s how things get found, down on Thistledown Lane.

Thistledown Lane

The lesson: If you ever lose something, ask a friend, and look together.

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