

Bramble's Grumpy Day

A Thistledown Lane story · Series 1 · Episode 5



Some mornings on Thistledown Lane begin with sunshine. This one began with a grumble.

“Good morning, my love. Porridge?” said Mam.

“I don’t want porridge,” said Bramble.



“Toast, then?”

“I don’t want toast. I don’t want anything,” said Bramble.

“Ah. One of those mornings,” said Mam.

“It’s not ONE of anything. It’s just a morning.”

And she stomped out of the round door, and didn’t close it behind her.



Out on the lane, the wind was blowing the big golden leaves off the trees, and Moss and Lilly were catching them.

“Bramble! We’re catching leaves! Every one you catch is a wish!” said Lilly.

“I’ve caught four. That’s four wishes,” said Moss.

“That’s silly. Leaves aren’t wishes. Leaves are just leaves,” said Bramble.

“Oh.”

“You could catch one anyway. Just for fun.”

“I don’t want fun.”



And Moss, very quietly, let his four leaves go.

“Hmm. Somebody got out of the wrong side of the nest,” said Old Wren.

“I did NOT. And I don’t live in a nest,” said Bramble.

And that was the moment the lane went very quiet.



Bramble marched off across the big green field on her own.

She kicked a tuft of grass. It didn't help. She kicked another one. That didn't help either.

"Everything's wrong today. Everything," said Bramble.



Then the grass rustled, and a small orange face popped up beside her.

“Hello, Bramble,” said Sorrel.

“Go away, Sorrel. I’m being grumpy,” said Bramble.

“All right. Can I be grumpy next to you?”

“...You’re not grumpy.”

“No. But I can sit very still. I’m good at sitting still. I did it for two whole nights under a root.”



So he sat down beside her in the long grass, and didn't say anything at all. And somehow that helped a little bit.

"Sorrel. Was I horrid to Moss?" said Bramble.

"A bit. He let his wishes go," said Sorrel.

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“I didn’t mean to be horrid. I just felt all scratchy inside. Like a jumper that’s on backwards.”

“When I was stuck under the root, I felt scratchy too. I growled at a beetle,” said Sorrel.

“You growled at a beetle?” said Bramble.

“Only a small growl. I said sorry to him after.”

And for the first time all day, Bramble very nearly smiled.

“Your Mam would know what the scratchy feeling is. Mams know.”



So the two of them walked back across the field
together, the hedgehog and the fox, side by side.

“Well. Look who’s back. And look who’s brought a friend,” said Mam.

“Mam. What’s it called when you feel all scratchy
and cross and you don’t know why?” said Bramble.

“It’s called a grumpy day, my love. Everybody has them. Even me.”



“Even you?”

“Even me. The trick is, you can’t always stop a grumpy feeling. But you can stop it being unkind for you.”

And Mam straightened Bramble’s scarf, which had been crooked all day.

“There. That’s one thing put right. Now, I think there might be another,” said Mam.



“Moss. And Lilly.”

“I’ll come with you. In case you need somebody to sit still,” said Sorrel.

Moss and Lilly were sitting on the wall, not catching leaves any more.

“Moss. Lilly. I’m sorry I was grumpy at you,” said Bramble.

“And I’m sorry I said leaves weren’t wishes.”

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“That’s all right. Everybody has a grumpy day. I had one on Tuesday.”

“I’ve had about forty,” said Lilly.

“And I’ve had one every morning since I was an egg,” said Old Wren.

And everybody laughed, even Bramble. Especially Bramble.

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“Here. I saved one leaf. You can have it. That’s a wish.”

“What should I wish for?” said Bramble.

“You could wish for tomorrow to be a sunny one,” said Sorrel.

So Bramble held the golden leaf up high, and let the wind take it.



“Everybody has a grumpy day. That’s all right. But if your grumpy day is unkind to somebody, say sorry. It’s the quickest way back to a good one.”

And the next morning, on Thistledown Lane, the sun came up as bright as a bun.

Thistledown Lane

The lesson: **Everybody has a grumpy day. That's all right. But if your grumpy day is unkind to somebody, say sorry.**

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