

See You in Spring

A Thistledown Lane story · Series 2 · Episode 6



In the night, very quietly, something had happened on Thistledown Lane. It had snowed. Soft, white snow, on the wall, and on the hedge, and on every single gatepost.

“Snow! Real snow! Bramble, look!” said Lilly.

“It’s up to my tummy!” said Moss.



“I love snow. It’s my favourite kind of weather.
Bramble, do you want to...” said Sorrel.

“Yes. I’d love to. I’d love to... to...” said Bramble.

But Bramble never finished, because right in the middle of her sentence, she gave the biggest yawn anyone had ever seen.



“Bramble, are you falling asleep? Standing up?” asked Lilly.

“No. Maybe. A bit. I’ve been so sleepy all week,” said Bramble.

Just then, Mam came up the lane, with
her shawl on, and a very gentle smile.

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“I thought so. It’s time, love. It’s time for the long sleep,” said Mam.



“Already? But I haven’t made my nest,” said Bramble.

“Then you’d better make it today. A good one. Under the hedge, with lots and lots of leaves,” said Mam.

“We’ll help. Remember when I didn’t have anywhere to sleep, and you all helped me build my den?” asked Sorrel.



“We’ll build Bramble’s nest, just like that!” said Moss.

“The best nest ever. The cosiest, leafiest nest in the whole world,” said Lilly.

“Will you really? All of you?” asked Bramble.



“All of us. That’s what friends are for,” said Sorrel.

So they all went along the lane to the big old hedge, where the roots made a little dry hollow underneath, out of the snow.



“Here. This is the place. It’s dry, and it’s quiet, and Mam’s going to be just along the hedge,” said Bramble.

“But the hollow’s a bit small. And the ground’s ever so hard,” said Moss.

And then, from down the lane, came a very familiar voice.



“Dig, dig, diggity!” said Barnaby.

“Barnaby!” said Lilly.

“I heard somebody needed some digging. Badgers are very good at digging. Stand back!” said Barnaby.

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And Barnaby dug, and dug, until the hollow under the hedge was big, and deep, and just the right size for one round little hedgehog.

Then everybody fetched leaves. Brown leaves, and gold leaves, and big dry crunchy ones. And then somebody else came along the lane.



“One little hop… and another little hop!” said Pip.

“Pip! You came out in the snow!” said Bramble.

“It’s only a bit scary. And I brought leaves. One little hop at a time,” said Pip.



“Wibble, wobble… ta-da!” said Hazel.

And there was Hazel, standing very steady in the snow, with a great big mouthful of dry bracken.

“Bracken’s the warmest. I should know.
I sleep in it every night,” said Hazel.

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And last of all, with a great twittering, down came Old Wren's cousins, each one carrying the tiniest bit of soft moss.

"Squeeze in, squeeze up! For Bramble!" said the cousins.

And they put it all in. The leaves, and the bracken, and the moss, piled up and tucked in, until it was the cosiest nest there had ever been.

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“Well. That is a very fine nest. Mine’s just along there. I can hear you if you snore,” said Mam.

“Don’t you sleep together?” asked Lilly.

“Hedgehogs each have a nest of their own. But I’ll be right next door, all winter long,” said Mam.

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Moss looked at the snow. And he looked at the nest. And he looked at Bramble, and he had a worried little question.

“Bramble... will you be cold? All winter? In the snow?” asked Moss.

“No, Moss. That’s what all the leaves are for. They keep the cold out, like a great big blanket. And when a hedgehog sleeps, everything goes slow. Slow breathing. A slow, slow heartbeat. Snug as anything, until it gets warm again,” said Mam.

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“And if I wake up for a little bit?” asked Bramble.

“Then you turn over, and pull a leaf over your nose, and go back to sleep,” said Mam.

“Then I won’t worry. Much,” said Moss.

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And then it was time to say goodnight.

“Goodnight, Bramble. I’ll keep thinking about you. Every day. Even when I’m forgetting everything else,” said Lilly.

“Goodnight, Bramble. Thank you for my den. Now we’re even,” said Sorrel.



“Goodnight, everybody. Thank you for my nest,” said Bramble.

And Bramble climbed into her nest, and turned round
and round, the way hedgehogs do, and curled up into
a little round ball, with just her nose peeping out.

“Old Wren… will you look after everybody while I’m asleep?” asked Bramble.



“Of course I will. I’m a stayer. I’ll keep watch all winter long. And I’ll tell you everything that happened when you wake up,” said Old Wren.

“And Skye will come back. And everybody will still be here,” said Bramble.

“Everybody will still be here. We promise,” said Moss.



“Then… see you in spring,” said Bramble.

And everybody said it together, very softly,
so as not to wake her. See you in spring.



“Saying goodbye isn’t forever. Your friends keep you in their hearts, even when you’re far away. Or asleep. Goodnight. See you in spring,” said Bramble.

And so, as the snow came down on Thistledown Lane, one little hedgehog slept, snug and warm, under the hedge. And all her friends were waiting for the spring.

Thistledown Lane

The lesson: **Saying goodbye isn't forever. Friends keep you in their hearts while you're away.**

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