

Happy Song

Louisa was seven years old and she was in Year 3. She was a happy girl and she had many friends because she was always nice and kind. Louisa loved going to school and she had fun talking and playing with her friends in the schoolyard.

One sunny morning Louisa woke up not feeling well. Her head felt hot and her body hurt. She was running a temperature. Mummy came into her room and said, "I think you've got the flu, dear. You'll have to stay home today."

The doctor came and he agreed. Louisa was so sad, she was going to miss school and her friends. She stayed in bed feeling miserable, with tissues and medicine all around.

As Louisa lay there, feeling sorry for herself, something magical happened. She heard the most beautiful singing outside her window. It was a sweet, melodious voice that made her happy at once. Louisa was curious so she sat up in bed and looked out of the window.

There, in the orange tree in the garden, was a robin. Its orange breast was bright in the sunlight and it was singing and singing. Louisa smiled. The robin's song was so lovely that she forgot her flu and her school and her friends.

Next day, and the day after that, the robin returned to sing for Louisa. Each time, its song took her to a world of fantasy where everything was happy and painted in bright colours, especially orange and red. Louisa was not sad any more because she had her feathered friend to keep her company. Every day she waited for the song and the pretty orange feathers outside her window. Sometimes the robin even sang at night!

But one day the weather changed. It got cold and windy. Louisa was much better now, but when she saw the dark sky she thought of her friend the robin.

Something was wrong that day: the robin was not singing! Louisa looked out of the window. The robin was not in the tree. But on the ground under the tree she saw something small and orange.

"Oh no!" she cried, "Is that my friend the robin?"

She rushed down to the garden, her heart beating fast. There, on the ground, she found a little orange ball of feathers shivering in the cold. It was her friend the robin, but he looked thin and weak, with no energy to sing. Louisa was very sad.

"How can I help you?" she said.

Then she had an idea. She ran to the kitchen and found some biscuits. She crumbled them and placed the crumbs on the ground near the robin. Then she tiptoed away so she won't scare the bird.

Louisa watched from the kitchen window. The robin hopped over to the food and began to peck and peck at the biscuit crumbs. Soon all the crumbs were gone!

"Of course, silly me!" said Louisa, "I was so happy hearing the robin's song that I forgot to think about how the robin was feeling!"

Louisa realised that the robin was hungry, because in winter robins don't find many insects to eat.

"I'm going to help my friend all winter," said Louisa. So every day she began to leave biscuit crumbs on the ground for her robin friend. The bird got stronger and began singing and whistling again.

Louisa too was well again and she could go back to school. But every morning, before leaving home, she always

remembered to leave food for her friend. Louisa learned an important lesson that winter: that even a little kindness could make a big difference in someone's life.

When she returned to school, Louisa told all her friends about the robin who kept her happy, and how she nearly lost him in the cold.

"I know," said Shawn, one of her friends, "Let's make a bird table at school, so all our school birds will find food in winter"

Everyone clapped their hands and cheered.

"Well done Louisa, great idea Shawn!" said Ms Claudia. "Let's make it right away!"

They got the things to make a bird table. When it was ready they set it up in the soil just outside their classroom window. Every day they took turns to put biscuit crumbs on the bird table.

And can you guess what bird visited the bird table first? That's right, it was a robin!

All the children were happy to help the birds in their schoolyard, but the happiest was Louisa. She now had a robin friend at home and a robin friend at school!

At Christmas the children decorated their classroom. It was lovely, but they all agreed that the prettiest decoration was the orange breast of the robin who came to the bird table outside their window. It looked like he was saying:

"Thank you for keeping my tummy full this winter. This song is for you!"



L-Għanja li Tferraħ

Louisa kellha seba' snin u kienet fit-tielet sena. Kienet tifla mimlija ferħ u enerġija. Kellha ħafna ħbieb għax kienet qalbha tajba. Louisa kienet tħobb tmur l-iskola, titkellem u tilgħab ma' sħabha fil-bitħa tal-iskola.

Darba waħda, f'għurnata xemxija tax-xitwa, Louisa qamet filgħodu u ħassitha ma tiflaħx. Moħħha kien sħun u ġisimha beda juġġħaha. Kellha d-deni.

Il-Mamà tagħha daħlet fil-kamra u qaltilha, "Naħseb għandek l-influenza Louisa. Se jkollok tibqa' d-dar illum."

Ġabilha t-tabib u hekk kien. Louisa ddispiċieha għax kienet tħobbha wisq l-iskola u ma xtaqtx tkun bogħod minn sħabha. Baqgħet fis-sodda tħossha mdejqa u bil-geddum, imdawra bit-tissues u bil-medicini.

Waqt li kienet mitluqa fuq is-sodda, ġrat xi ħaġa maġika. Minn barra t-tieqa semgħet għanja l-ġmiel tagħha: melodija ħelwa li gegħlitha tħossha aħjar minnufih. Louisa qabditha l-kurżità, qamet bilqiegħda u ttawlet mit-tieqa. Fis-sigra tal-laring li kellha fil-ġnien rat pitirross ckejken jgħanni. Sidru orangjo kien qed jiddi fix-xemx. Louisa tbiismet. Dik l-għanja ħelwa nessietha l-mard, l-iskola u l-ħbieb.

L-għada l-pitirross reġa' ġie u anke l-għurnata ta' wara. Lil Louisa din l-għanja kienet toħodha f'dinja tal-fantażija fejn kien hemm il-ferħ u kollox kien ikkulurit speċjalment b'lewn orangjo u aħmar. Louisa ma baqgħetx tħossha mdejqa; dan il-ħabib ġdid miksi rix kien qed iżommilha kumpanija. Kuljum kienet tkun ħerqana li tarah u tisma' l-għana tiegħu. Kultant anke bil-lejl kien ikantalha!

Imma darba waħda t-temp inbidel. L-arja kesħet u qam ir-riħ. Louisa kien kważi għaddielha imma meta rat is-sema griż bdiet taħseb fil-ħabib tagħha l-pitirross.

Dakinhar xi ħaġa ma kinitx bħas-soltu. Il-pitirross ma kienx qed jgħanni. Ħarset mit-tieqa u ma ratux fis-sigra. Imma fl-art maġenb iz-zokk lemħet xi ħaġa żgħira orangjo.

"X'waħda din!" qalet it-tifla. "Tgħid dak il-ħabib tiegħi?"

B'qalbha tħabbat nizlet tigri fil-ġnien. Hemmhekk fl-art rat ballun rix kiesaħ u jterter. Kien il-ħabib tagħha l-pitirross, imma kien jidher irqiq u bla saħħa. Louisa ħasset qalbha tinqasam.

"X'nista' nagħmel biex ngħinek?" qalet.

Dak il-ħin ġietha idea. Ġriet sal-kċina u sabet ftit gallettini. Farrkithom u poġġiethom mal-art ħdejn l-għasfur. Bil-mod il-mod imxiet lura biex ma tbeżżgħux.

Minn wara t-tieqa tal-kċina qagħdet tosserva l-pitirross. Dan wara ftit qam mill-art, għamel erba' qabziet żgħar lejn il-gallettini u beda jnaqqar il-frak. Fi ftit ħin kien leflef kollox!

"Kemmm jien bla ras," qalet Louisa, "Tant kont aljenata nisma' l-kant sabiħ tal-pitirross li lanqas għaddieli minn moħħi x'kien qed iħoss hu, miskin!"

Louisa ndunat li l-pitirross kien bil-ġuħ għax fil-kesħa tax-xitwa ma tantx seta' jsib insetti x'jiekol.

"Issa żgur inkompli ngħinu tul ix-xitwa kollha," qalet Louisa. Għalhekk kuljum bdiet tħalli l-frak tal-gallettini mal-art għall-ħabib tagħha. Dan beda jħossu aħjar u reġa' beda jgħanni, jsaffar u jtektek. Louisa wkoll kienet fieqet u reġgħet bdiet tmur l-iskola, imma qabel toħroġ, kienet kuljum tiftakar toħroġ ftit ikel għall-pitirross.

Louisa tgħallmet lezzjoni importanti dik ix-xitwa: kultant anke l-icken ħsieb jista' jagħmel differenza kbira fil-ħajja ta' xi hadd.

Malli waslet l-iskola Louisa qalet lil sħabha dwar il-pitirross li żammha kuntenta, u qaltilhom ukoll li għal ftit ma kinitx se titilfu għal dejjem.

"Naf x'nagħmlu," qal Shawn, wieħed mill-ħbieb ta' Louisa, "Imissna nagħmlu bird table biex anke l-għasafar ta' madwar l-iskola jkollhom x'jiekol fix-xitwa!" Kulhadd qabel u beda jċapċap bl-eċitament.

"Prosit Luisa, idea tajba Shawn!" qalet Ms Claudia, "Ejja nagħmluha issa stess."

Ġabu l-affarijiet biex jarmaw bird table, u meta lestewha waħħluha barra fil-ħamrija, ħdejn it-tieqa tal-klassi. Kuljum xi hadd minnhom kien joħroġ il-frak tal-gallettini u jpoġġihom fuqha.

U x'taħsbu kien l-ewwel għasfur li nizel fuq il-bird table tat-tfal? Sewwa ħsibtu: kien pitirross!

It-tfal tgħidx kemm kienu kuntenti li kienu qed jgħinu lill-għasafar ta' madwar l-iskola. Imma l-aktar kuntenta kienet Louisa għax issa kellha pitirross ħabib id-dar u pitirross ħabib l-iskola!

Għall-Milied it-tfal żejnu l-klassi imma l-aktar għal qalbhom kien l-għasfur b'sidru orangjo li kuljum kien jigi jiekol barra t-tieqa tagħhom. Kienu jistħajluh qed jgħidilhom:

"Grazzi talli mlejtni żaqqi dix-xitwa. Din l-għanja għalikom!"

