

A short story by Ann Pasmore

A Fairy Story

It was when they came to classes in my briefcase that I realized the size of my problem. At first the fairies had been content to stay in the flower beds where I had found them. Centuries of literature, of mythology, and folk tales of fairies had made it easy for me to accept them there. I talked to them this past summer while I mowed the lawn or weeded the vegetables and found them to be entertaining little creatures. It was a different story when they invaded the house after that heavy frost in September. There were no literary precedents for fairies in the dishwasher, or under the clothes dryer, and it certainly seemed most illogical to find several living behind the computer. It was rather confusing. But all this was nothing compared to finding them in my briefcase at my 8:30 class on Shakespeare.

What could they possibly know about *Richard III* or *Henry IV* although they could possibly help with *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. They had obviously never heard of Aristotle's suggestion that "probable impossibility is to be preferred to a thing improbable but yet possible". I discussed all this with my fairy friends and told them that it was impossible for them to exist and would they please stop coming to classes with me. They merely pointed out that Aristotle would have placed the emphasis on the words "probable" and "improbable" and that within the world of "art" all things are probable, in fact they were demonstrating the thesis, they were probable impossibilities that obviously existed. It was time to write my next essay (2 a.m.) so I gave up the unequal struggle, but the next day I tried to introduce my friends to the fairies.

One friend was a practising philosophic materialist. Recently he reminded me that it is impossible for fairies to exist, suggested that I had been overdoing it this summer, and recommended a good psychiatrist that he knew, "burn-out" was in the conversation somewhere too. He refused to have anything to do with me or my fairies. Other friends did still visit me at the house but although they literally tripped over the fairies they claimed that they had slipped on their wet sneakers, and stated that the fairies were figments of my imagination, a wish fulfillment because I was lonely.

I found it all rather confusing as classes continued, especially when my fairy friends seemed to withdraw as winter moved slowly into spring, and I was more and more engrossed in essays and exams. They began to write little notes to me and I missed the family contact of their company. I even began to doubt that I had actually seen them and talked to them. Finally the little notes came to an end and I decided that they had moved out, perhaps never existed. "Burn-out" came to mind again.

Yesterday I bumped into my friend, the practising philosophic materialist, for someone who had rejected me for months he seemed very pleased to see me. We hurried off to the S&B to talk. He said that he needed my help, that for the past week his house had been invaded by fairies, they were everywhere - in his computer, behind his microwave. He enjoyed their company and talked to them a great deal about all kinds of things. He had discovered that they were



surprisingly well informed. His problem was with his friends. They all seemed to think that he was insane.

The end

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