

## GERRY AND DERRY

KEYWORD: Service.

Two little baby seeds lay side by side on the ground in a little garden away up among the hills. One little seed had such a funny crinkled skin. Her name was Gerry; she was a nasturtium seed. The other seed was like a little round ball; she was a sweet pea seed and was named Derry.

The two little seeds looked up and wondered what the blue sky above their heads might be. They listened to the birds singing their songs in the big maple tree, then they felt so sleepy that they just snuggled down close to each other on the bosom of Mother Earth and fell fast asleep. They did not have anything at all to cover themselves with, but they did not mind that for the days were warm, and anyway they were too little to think of such things. But by and by the nights grew colder and colder, and the poor little baby seeds, Gerry and Derry, began to shiver and shake. Mother Earth felt so sorry for them that she asked the maple tree if he would please give them a few of his leaves to make a blanket to cover them.

The maple tree looked down, saw the two little baby seeds shivering in their sleep, and said: "Why, certainly I will." He gave himself as big a shake as he could, but none of his leaves fell. You see they were fastened on very tight. "I'll call the wind to help me," he said. So the maple tree called to the wind, who came flying fast. Then the maple tree asked the wind to please blow as hard as he could to throw down his leaves on Gerry and Derry.

The wind looked down, and seeing the two little baby seeds shivering in their sleep he said he would be glad to do what he could to help. So the wind blew and blew till his

cheeks were puffed out ever so big, but he could not make the leaves fall down for a cover.

"I'll tell you what I will do," said the wind "I'll go and ask Jack Frost to come and help us." So away he flew to the North Pole, where he found Jack Frost busy cutting out snowflakes. "Come with me," said he. "There are two tiny baby seeds that must have a blanket to cover them or they will surely die of the cold."

When Jack Frost heard that, he told the wind to hurry as fast as he could and show him where the babies were. So away they flew to the little garden up in the mountains where the two little baby seeds lay shivering in their sleep. When Jack Frost saw them lying there so small and helpless, he touched the maple leaves with his fingers to loosen them from the tree. When the maple leaves felt his loving touch, some of them turned a rosy red and others a beautiful golden yellow. The maple tree looked very handsome in those lovely colors. But the best of it was that he was willing to to give his leaves to keep little Gerry and Derry warm.

The wind played among the branches and blew the leaves down upon the ground, where they looked like a handsome carpet. They fell softly over the two little baby seeds until they were all covered up snug and warm. There they slept all through the cold winter days, while outside their blanket the rain and snow fell. Such a long, long sleep they had! Then by and by when the springtime came and the birds began to sing again, the baby seeds stirred a little in their sleep. They smiled, too, for they were dreaming of lovely things the fairies were whispering in their ears.

One morning Gerry was awakened by a voice calling, "Wake up, Gerry, wake up!" She rubbed her eyes; then she peeped up through the leaves and saw the Sun smiling at her. She popped up her head and began to stretch.

Then the sun called to Derry, "Wake up, little sweet-

ness." When Derry heard the Sun calling and felt his nice warm kisses upon her face, why, she began singing.

Gerry and Derry knew all about breathing exercises, and how do you think they did them? How do *you* breathe? With your lungs! But who knows where Gerry and Derry had their lungs? It is really very curious, but their lungs were in their leaves; and so they breathed with their leaves, as all plants do. That is one reason why plants do not grow well in dusty places. The dust chokes them so that they cannot breathe properly, and then they get weak and sickly, just as people do who neglect to breathe plenty of pure air.

Gerry and Derry grew up into thrifty plants, and both had beautiful flowers. Gerry's were a bright red, while Derry's were pink and white and had a very sweet perfume. As each little blossom faded, there grew in its place a wee baby seed. Such a lot of little seeds on each plant there were, and each little baby seed must have plenty of food to eat. Poor Gerry began to look wilted and pale nursing so many babies and having no time to take care of herself. Derry too was just as tired as she could be. She carried her babies in cute little basket pods, and when the pods got hard and dry they popped open, and out tumbled baby seeds.

At last, side by side, Gerry and Derry grew old and feeble. They had both lived their lives as beautifully as they could, giving pleasure with their flowers to all who came their way. They had taken the best of care of their little baby seeds too. But now they were so weak that they could hardly cling to the fence up which they had climbed so joyously when they were young and strong. And then they heard a soft voice speaking to them. It was Mother Earth calling them home: "You have served faithfully and well, my children. Come home now and rest." Gladly Gerry and Derry sank down, side by side, into Mother Earth's lap, and she sang them to sleep with a soft lullaby.