

THE DISCONTENTED SPARK

KEYWORD: Courage.

Deep, very deep in the Earth there are rich coal beds or mines. You knew that, didn't you? You didn't really? Well, now you do, and some day we will learn all about these coal beds, but not today for our story is about something quite different.

Some one who has very sharp ears one day overheard a conversation, and it was a very, very interesting one. The gnomes who work with the coal were talking with the sunbeams. You see, they understood each other perfectly. This is what the Wisest Gnome said:

"Deep down in the Earth is a discontented spark of light, always saying, 'Do let me out! I'm tired of being imprisoned. I want to be let out. I'm so cramped in this black, black coal. Do let me out, please! please! I don't belong here, for I'm a spark of light. Why should I be shut up in the dark? Oh, do let me out! How much longer do I have to stay here?'"

The sunbeams danced and played about where the Wisest Gnome was sitting. "Do stop dancing for a few minutes, Merry Sunbeam," said the Wisest Gnome to one of the sprightliest of them. "The Spark must be some relation of yours. Let us see if we can think of some way to help this poor little shut-in. How do you suppose a spark of light ever got inside a coal bed anyway? But since it is there, maybe we can get it out."

Merry Sunbeam, always so bright, said: "Wisest Gnome, don't you know that we are all sparks of light from the great Sun Spirit, just manifesting in different shapes and forms and ways? Some of the sparks, like the sunbeams, shine by

day, while the moonbeams and star-beams shine by night. Some are hidden away out of sight altogether, in the hearts of mortals, and in the flowers, some even hide in stones and rocks, and yes, even in the black, black coal. But they all belong to the great Sun Spirit. Always, without fail, when the right time comes, the sparks are all released from their hiding places.

“Now, Wisest Gnome, please hurry down,” said Merry Sunbeam, “and comfort the discontented Spark. Just tell it to be a a little patient. It will be hidden away for only a little time — maybe a hundred years or so, but that’s not very long. Some day the coal will be discovered by human beings and brought up to the light of day, right up out of the earth altogether. Then some crisp cold day the coal will find itself in a wonderful fire, all red and glowing, and out of it will come the Spark. It will fly straight up to the Sun and be gathered back again with the sunbeams, and it will shine and shine and shine. Then it will dance with the sunbeams on the trees and flowers and be merry and bright.

The Wisest Gnome thought Merry Sunbeam’s plan was very fine, and he agreed to do as she had suggested.

Again Merry Sunbeam spoke, whispering very low: “So please, Wisest Gnome, do tell the Spark not to be discontented any more, but to have courage. Some day it will be released from the black, black coal and be a beautiful spark of light. And do tell it never to forget that even though it is hidden deep down in the earth, it is still a spark of light from the great Sun Spirit, the giver of light and life.”
