

Grandma Tull's Stories  
by  
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## Chapter 1

Long ago, in ancient times, when the earth was new, God assigned to the Sun, Wind, Water, Moon, and to Mother Earth duties to help in the every day running of the earth. To the Sun, he gave the job of providing light and heat so living things could grow. To the Wind, he gave the job of cooling the earth and helping Water to give rain. To the Moon, he gave the job of delivering light at night and controlling the tides. To Mother Nature he gave the job of caring for all the living things on the earth: the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the animals on land, and all manners of green living things.

Mother Nature was kept extremely busy tending to the need of the plants and animals. To aid her, she asked for help from the fairies.

Of all of God's creatures, the fairies were extremely special. They had tiny, golden bodies with large eyes the color of the blue of the sky. Arising from their bodies were wide, golden, gossamer wings of a light, delicate, silky-fine texture. They constantly secreted a golden-colored mist to prevent their wings from drying out. This film not only coated their bodies and wings, but it also caught the moonlight or sunlight as they flew, giving the fairies the appearance of glowing and shimmering. They were truly beautiful, and when they took wing, all the animals of the land stopped to admire them.

This golden mist dried to form a fine, glittery-gold powder that, as the fairies winged across the land, floated out into the breeze behind them to drift down to the earth coating all things below with a golden sprinkle. This, the animals call fairy dust. It was said by all that being dusted with fairy dust brought happiness, luck and good fortune.

The fairies were as beautiful in disposition as in looks, for they were both kind and generous. It was this, perhaps, that was passed on in the fairy dust. Whatever the reason, they were loved by all creatures of the land with one exception. They were hated by the trolls, but the trolls despised everything and everyone.

Mother Earth assigned to the fairies the duty of flying throughout all the land to spread fairy dust and good cheer. In this way, the fairies would help bring harmony and balance to all of God's living creatures. This charge the fairies accepted with pleasure, immediately rising in a sparkling, golden cloud to begin. Each day they winged over the land sprinkling their magic fairy dust, bringing joy and beauty to all. The animals rejoice to see them coming, lifting their faces to receive the sparkling dusting, while the plants spread their leaves. Soon a golden glow covered the land. It was a time of happiness, peace and harmony.

Now to the North, high up in the black mountains, was the land of the trolls. Hiding deep within their great caves, they shunned the company of the other animals, preferring to sulk and whine in solitude. They hated everything beautiful or gay. They hated the lush green of growing plants, ridding their craggy hills of anything green or brightly colored, surrounding themselves, instead, with the dull shades of the brown earth, the black of their dark cave and the gray rocks of the mountain. All living plants were forbidden on their hillsides and mountaintops, so for food they ate roots dug from the earth.

There was only one thing the trolls liked and that was complaining. Thus, as they squatted upon their hill, they complained about eating roots every day, about the brightness of the shining sun, about the way the green, growing plants and bright, colorful flowers keep creeping up their hill, and they griped about constantly having to remove them. They grumbled because the other animals played and had fun. They whined that the sound of laughter, the noise of their joyfulness, hurt their ears, but most of all, they complained about the fairies.

As the golden glow of fairy dust slowly covered the land, the trolls began complaining louder and longer. The Troll King, the largest, meanest, smartest and most feared of the trolls, listening to their complaints, knew that soon he would have to do something about the fairies. Watching down the mountainside, as day after day the golden dusting inched steadily closer to Troll Mountain, he knew that there was only one way to stop the fairies.

Calling a meeting of all the trolls, the Troll King stood before the assembly.

"The fairies," he hissed, "want to cover our mountain in golden fairy dust." He paced in anger, his twisted body moving swiftly as his glowing red eyes held them. "We do not like fairy dust. We despise being happy." He glared at the gathered troll with such loathing they drew back in fear. "If the fairies start up our mountain with their fairy dust, we will declare war on all fairies. Troll Mountain will never be covered with fairy dust." He stopped pacing, and stared at the trolls who, mesmerized, followed his every movement. His slanted, red eyes gleamed with malice.

"We will kill the fairies," he spat.

At his words, a great roar arose from the trolls. "Death to the fairies! Death to the fairies!" Their chant rumbled around the cave as they plotted, making plans to get rid of the fairies.

The Fairy King and Queen had a son, Prince Yonur, whom they loved dearly. The Prince loved Anea, a delicate and beautiful fairy with an especially sweet nature. A marriage festival was planned; a wondrous time of merrymaking and song that all the fairies in the land would attend. The animals brought gifts to the young couple while the plants bloomed with their prettiest colors to fill the vale of the fairies with a splendid array of hues and greenery for the wedding. The day dawned brightly as the sun shone at its most radiant. The wind blew softly, playing a gentle tune in the trees, while the bubbling, tinkling water in the small streams harmonized with music of their own. Even Mother Nature took time out of her busy day to bless the young couple with a rainbow across the sky.

Watching the preparations, the troll leader scratched his beard and nodded his head. Today was the day. Today all the fairies would be gathered together full and relaxed from feasting and games. Today the fairies would perish; the joy they spread stricken from the land.

He called the trolls together for war. Grasping their crude weapons, they crept down the mountain keeping to the shadows and dark places. Never before had the trolls descended from their grim mountains, and it was with fear and hatred that they stole down into the land of brightness and colors.

With the wedding over and the feasting done, Prince Yonur and Princess Anea kissed their parents and, with cheery waves and good wishes, flew off to spend their first night along together. The Fairy King and Queen sighed with pleasure and a little sadness to see their offspring grown at last. They snuggled together, tired and content, as they watched the fairy children at play. As the sun slid towards the horizon in a blaze of glorious colors, the fairy mothers called to their young, gathering them together for the last farewells, the last hugs and kisses before taking wing to their separate homes. Then, as the sun disappeared from the sky and the fingers of dust filled the fairy vale, the trolls attacked.

It was a massacre: the gentle, loving fairies knew nothing of war. They were destroyed, one and all, and the trolls left triumphantly knowing that the fairies were wiped from the land. Still, even in their victory, they were unhappy, complaining about the long trek back up the mountain to the safety of their caves.

The animals came to bring Prince Yonur and Princess Anea the horrible news. As the Prince and Princess flew through the fairy vale, the truth of the slaughter of their families was almost more than they could bare. Princess Anea covered her face and trembled as golden tears welled from her eyes. Prince Yonur could only hold her and stare with shocked eyes at the destruction of their loved ones. Nothing in their peaceful, joyous lives had prepared them for this violence and hatred.

Lifting his eyes to the dark mountains, Prince Yonur realized his

family would never be safe as long as trolls lived in the mountains, for the trolls would never cease hating. He called to him the animals of the land and asked who among them would go with him to fight the trolls. From them he chose those best suited: The crocodile for his might; the hawk for his keen eyes, sharp talons, and beak; the mouse for her stealth and secretness; the wolf and the cat for their ability to hunt.

Holding Anea close, he kissed her with love. "I'll come back to you," he promised. "You know that nothing could keep me from your side."

She did not beg him to stay as she wished to do, instead watched him go with dread in her heart, fearful that she would never see him again. It was only after he was gone did she realize they were the last of the fairies. If he died, she would be truly alone, and with her passing, the fairies would be no more. The animals came to comfort her, to bring her food and to keep her company as she waited.

He didn't come back. None of the animals came back, and with the passage of time, she started to lose hope. She began flying across the land each day anxiously asking the plants and animals if they had seen the Fairy Prince.

"Will you look for him?" She begged of each animal she met. "Please help me find him. I know he is alive."

Oh how she wished to fly to the black mountains to search for her beloved husband. Each night, she cried silent tears of such bitterness and pain they were no longer golden but fell to the ground as crystal drops that froze to hardness. Each night, she resolved to fly to the mountains to face the trolls and find Prince Yonur. However, every morning, when she woke, the memories of the horror that befell her family held her back.

So great was her sorrow, her once golden secretions turned white with her sadness. No longer did she spread golden fairy dust as she flew, bringing happiness to the land and to the animals; instead her fairy dust coated the land with a blanket of sadness: the animals were melancholy, the sun shone weakly, the plants shriveled, and the wind

howled furiously. Thus, it was that her tears became the first ice while her fairy dust, no longer golden but white with her sorrow, became the first snow. The first winter came to the land.

One day a big, brown woolly-worm found its way through the bitter cold and snow to Anea's doorstep. He was there when she left in the morning, and he was still there when she came home that night. Cold and dispirited from the long day of unsuccessful searching, she frowned at it, but was too tired and unhappy to run it away. Where had it come from? Never before had she seen such a creature in the valley. Before she closed her door for the night, she set out a bowl of milk for the worm.

Later though, when the cold wind howled, she worried about the funny creature and checked on it. Yes, it was still there, huddled on her doorstep, tightly curled into a ball, shivering violently as the fierce wind blew his woolly fur into snarls. Despite her unhappiness, Anea's kind heart could not allow her to let the poor worm suffer in the cold. She brought it in, fed it and dried it before the warm fire before combing out the tangled fur. Then, exhausted from the long day, she fell asleep and was unaware when the brown worm curled around her shivering body, wrapping her in warm, silky, brown fur.

When Anea awoke, snuggled in the embrace of the brown worm, she found that her lonely torment had lifted slightly. It was the first night she slept well, the first night she did not cry. Feeding the brown worm part of her breakfast, she left to continue her search for the Prince. However, as she lifted off into the sky, she noticed that the worm curled on her front stoop as if he planned to wait for her return. He was still there waiting patiently for her when she returned home that night, and even as she sighed, telling him he would have to find a home of his own, she was glad to see him as she dreaded the long night alone.

Time passed, and the brown worm stayed. They spent long nights together before the fire while she told him the story of the fairies, of how the trolls had come down to kill her family, and of how Prince Yonur had taken the animals up into the mountains to fight the Troll



King. Crystal tears flowed from her eyes when she told him that the prince had never returned. The worm, unable to talk, wrapped her in his warm, silky hold, holding her close to comfort her until her tears dried.

One day, as she flew across the land searching for her beloved, a bluebird came to her. "Come quickly," cried the small bird. "There is news of Prince Yonur."

The bluebird led Anea to a very small, very sick mouse, one of those chosen to go with Prince Yonur's army when he went forth to fight the trolls. She told the story of a great fight between the trolls and the animals. Although the animals fought bravely, the trolls had been furious fighters. The small mouse shook her head sadly. They had lost the battle.

"And Prince Yonur?" Anea asked fearfully.

"Taken by the trolls," said the mouse, a tear slipping down her cheek. "I was the only one left alive. The trolls did not see me, for I am very small. They took him deep into the mountains, deep into a huge, dark cave. They tied him tightly with twine, binding his wings so that he could not fly. The leader troll, a large, monstrous troll, built a huge fire and boiled a foul smelling brew."

The small mouse shuddered at the horror of the memory. "The trolls danced around the fire. Laughing and chanting, they taunted the prince saying he would never again be golden and beautiful. They jeered at him, flapping their arms as they ridiculed him with a parody of flight, tormenting him with threats that he would never again have wings to fly, that he would never again be able to spread the joy and happiness of his magic fairy dust. And the Prince: He was so brave, so golden and shining in that dark, horrible place. I tried to help, to chew the ropes free, but his bonds were too thick; it all happened so quickly."

"The Troll King took a cup. Dipping it into the poisonous brew, he carried it to where the bound Prince lay and bade him drink of it."

"'Drink,' he commanded. 'Drink so that you will be ugly and brown and fly no more. Forevermore, you must crawl on your belly

like the worm.' Laughing, a booming laugh of such magnitude it rolled and echoed around the large cave, he forced the prince to drink, and although the prince tried to resist, turning his face away and clamping tight his jaw, he was unable to resist the big troll. He drank the brew."

The mouse paused and looked away from Anea's stricken face. "I'm sorry. They changed him into a big, brown worm so that he would be ugly, so he could no longer fly to spread happiness."

The mouse was surprised to see Anea's delighted smile.

"Oh, thank you!" She cried. "Thank you so much!" Leaning down, she kissed the mouse on the cheek before rising, in a golden flash, to fly home as quickly as possible.

The brown worm was Prince Yonur, her very own beloved husband who had kept his promise to return to her. Unable to talk, he had given her his love in the only way he could, by wrapping her in his warm, loving embrace.

As she flew home, her excited happiness once again created golden secretions that drifted down to touch the land below. It had been a long time since the animals and plants of the earth had felt the brush of fairy dust. The sun shone brightly, the wind blew with more gentleness, the plants spread wide their leaves. The animals exclaimed with excitement, lifting their faces to receive the golden dusting. As the land and the creatures of the land rejoiced at the touch of fairy dust, slowly the ice and snow began to melt from the frozen earth.

Yet word went ahead of Anea of what the mouse had seen, and when it reached the brown worm, he sadly slipped away. He could not bear the thought of Anea's rejection of him. How could she love him as he was now; how could she want a brown and ugly worm? Thus, when Princess Anea reached home filled with excited happiness upon learning the worm was, in truth, her own husband, she found to her sorrow that the brown worm was gone.

"He is not here!" She cried sadly. She waited for him to return. Time passed slowly: lonely days and long, long nights.

“Why, oh why, did he leave?” She wondered. “He must not have wanted me to see him as a worm. Oh, I must find him. I must tell him that I love him still.”

She searched the land, asking help from all of the animals. “Have you seen a brown worm? Please let me know if you do,” she begged. Some had seen the worm traveling south toward the great forest. Yet when she reached where he was last seen, he had already gone on.

Late one evening she entered the great forest where an owl reported he had seen a brown woolly-worm only the night before, crawling deeper into the huge trees.

“I wouldn’t go in there,” he said, shaking his head. “Dangerous things lurk in the forest.”

Anea was determined never again to allow fear to keep her from her beloved Prince Yonur. Conquering her dread, she pushed deeper and deeper into the dark forest. Strange sounds and ominous rustlings came from all sides. Bats passed her in the dark, while, in the underbrush, she could hear the growling of the large creatures that roamed the night. She shivered with fright but kept to the trail the owl had pointed out until, finally, she came to a small clearing, and there, curled into a tight ball, was the brown worm.

Fearful that he was no longer alive, she quickly flew to his side. Gently she raised his head, tears coming to her eyes as she stroked his fur, no longer silky but matted and snarled. The exhausted worm, freezing from the cold and sick with exposure, slowly lifted his head to meet the loving blue eyes of his wife. Her golden tears dripped down to soak into his fur.

“Oh, you silly thing; why did you run away? Did you think I would not love you? How could you think I would not want you, even as a worm? I have always loved you; I will love you forever.” She wrapped her arms around his body, hugging him close, while he, using the last of his energy, curled around her.

Anea refused to leave his side and didn’t have the strength to carry him. The animals came and, finding them there, build a shelter for them. The bees came and brought honey while the squirrels fetched

nuts and berries. The birds built a snug home of twigs and sticks around them to keep them warm while, finally, the spiders spun a web around it all so they would be warm, protected and hidden.

Spring came slowly back to the land, the touch of golden fairy dust having started the change. Time passed, and still the small bundle holding the fairies did not move. The animals came to check on them often; finally, they sadly carried the bundle holding the fairies back to the vale of the fairies.

"The fairies are no more," they said. "The earth will be a sadder place without the joy and beauty of the fairies."

Then one day, the small cocoon protecting the fairies began to move and shake. The news passed swiftly, and all of the animals gathered around to wait with anticipation and fear. Would they both be alive?

As they watched, the small bundle slowly cracked open. The animals gasped in wonder as out flew two beautiful, silken creatures of spun gold. They had tiny bodies and great, golden, gossamer wings shimmering in the sunlight. Blinking big, brown eyes at the excited faces surrounding them, they spread their shining wings and, with a golden flash, took to the sky. The animal sighed with amazement, and a great cheer rang through the fairy vale.

It was true that the fairies were no more, but somehow love and the magic of fairy dust had transformed a brown worm and a golden fairy into two beautiful butterflies.

"So," said Grandma Tull, "The next time you see a butterfly, remember the fairies and their love which overcame hatred and evil."

A love that lasted beyond death and down through time.