

# *ASHLEY DISCOVERS A MUD PUDDLE*

## *FAIRY*

**I**t was raining Cats and Dogs outside. At least that's what my mother used to say. I have never seen this happen, but one never knows, so I always keep a close eye on things when it rains. I wanted to know if the Cats and Dogs bounced when they fell. So far, today, I hadn't seen a single Cat or Dog fall from the Sky, although the next-door Dog, (whose name really was Dog) was rummaging through the garbage for the third time that week. Even though I had seen no hail of animals from the sky, there was no doubt that it was very wet and there were many mud puddles to be seen.

Big Rabbit, Turtle and I were at Ashley's house, having cookies and tea. I had sneaked a carrot and some carrot juice in for Big Rabbit, who doesn't care for cookies. Ashley was outside, playing in the rain, and we were waiting for her to come in. Big Rabbit and Turtle were playing chess; this was taking a very long time, as Turtle does nothing quickly.

Big Rabbit had just gotten a king and was looking very satisfied. He

said "your move," and prepared for a long wait as Turtle thought out his plan of action, when the door slammed and Ashley came rushing in.

"Look what I found!" she exclaimed proudly, and held out a rather squashed looking Fairy. He was tiny and brown skinned and *very* angry.

"What kind is it?" Big Rabbit asked.

"I don't know. I stepped on him. He squeaked and I grabbed him." The Fairy glared at her and she scowled back. "I didn't *mean* to step on you; it was an accident."

"Let me go, right this minute."

"Not yet," Ashley said thoughtfully. "We want to know what kind of Fairy you are and what sorts of things you do."

"It's none of your business."

## BIG RABBIT AND TURTLE PLAYING CHESS



Big Rabbit thought some diplomacy might help matters. "It might help if you understood that we are students of Fairies, their lives and what they eat and do and such."

"I don't care. If I tell you about us, you'll be able to see us and that would be a disaster."

"We already see you." Ashley had him there. He went back to scowling. He had been looking imperious, which he did quite well, for one so small and squashed.

Then he asked, "How do you manage to see us? Most humans can't."

"We learned how to *see* Fairies. It's fun." Ashley said.

Things were clearly at a stalemate. Ashley wasn't about to give up her prize and he was, at the moment, powerless to change his circumstances.

Both he and Ashley sulked for a while and then he said reluctantly, "Do you promise not to tell anyone else?"

"Cross my heart," said Ashley and promptly did so.

"All of you?" He scowled at Big Rabbit, Turtle and me.

So we all crossed our hearts too. Turtle crossed his paws, which seemed to serve the same function. I am not sure where Turtle's heart is, but I was willing to bet it would impossible for him to literally cross it.

## Ashley Discovers A Mudpuddle Fairy

"I'm a Mud Puddle Fairy," he began. "We only come out when it rains or after snow has melted." The little fellow straightened out his shirt and rolled up the sleeves as if setting to work at a difficult job. His black hair stood straight up, despite having been out in the rain.