

The Blackbird Days

traduzione de: I giorni della merla
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1

Once upon a time, blackbirds were as white as snow.

One day, winter arrived, touching them with an icy wind.

Little Merlot said to his sister Merlina:

“Sis, we’ll die without ever seeing the flowers of spring or the children playing again.

And we’ll never feel the sun warming our feathers, making us sing!”

Merlina replied:

“Don’t worry, Grandma always said: *For every problem, there’s a solution, but you’ll only find it if you search for it.*”

2

Night came: the rooftops and streets were white.

Even their thoughts turned white, imagining nothing but the freezing cold.

Merlina said:

“For everything, there’s an opposite. So, if there’s cold that freezes, there must be something that warms.

Grandma Merli always said that!”

Chattering from the cold, they began to fly, searching for a bit of warmth.

Between one snowflake and another, between one star and the next, they saw smoke rising from chimneys.

3

Merlot said:

“It must be cold smoke! Heat is either red or a soft rosy color!”

Merlina whispered:

“If you do nothing, nothing will be solved. That’s what...”

Merlot interrupted:

“Yes, yes, I know! That’s what Grandma always said! Fine, let’s go have a look.”

Their feathers were frozen, but they launched themselves into the sky.

From above, the world looked like whipped cream, smelling faintly of vanilla.

The two blackbirds opened their beaks in amazement.

4

Suddenly, Merlot began coughing—a snowflake had gone straight down his throat.

In front of them was a great cloud of smoke.

Trembling, Merlot exclaimed:

“I’m not going in there! I’m scared!”

Merlina reassured him:

“Grandma said: *If you share your fear, your courage doubles. I’ll go first... you follow me!*”

Merlina dipped one wing into the cloud and felt a comforting warmth.

Then, together, they dove into the smoke, warming themselves just a little.

5

Following the smoke, they arrived above the roof of a house.

“Brr, it’s so cold! Let’s go down the chimney,” said Merlot.

“Wait, little brother! It might be dangerous. It looks so dark down there,” Merlina observed.

Merlot insisted:

“Grandma always said: *If you want to discover something, you have to make your fear disappear.*”

Slowly, he went in, followed by his sister.

Inside, they smelled chocolate and cinnamon and felt a wonderful warmth.

As they warmed up, Merlina whispered:

“So, you did listen to Grandma after all.”

A day passed. Merlot poked his beak outside, but it was still freezing cold.

They stayed there, listening to the stories the mother and father told the children.

The second day, Merlina poked her beak outside, but it was still freezing cold.

They stayed, listening to the children singing happily.

6

On the third day, it wasn’t so cold anymore, and a ray of sunshine warmed them.

So... off they flew into the sky!

Between the pink clouds and the yellow sun, they discovered... they had turned black!

The chimney smoke had changed the color of their feathers.

7

They flew straight to Grandma Merlì and... what a surprise! She had turned completely black too!

Merlot asked:

“Grandma, have you been inside a chimney too?”

She replied:

“Of course! Grandmas’ advice is for all blackbirds... and for all children too!”

From that day on, blackbirds have been black, smelling of chocolate and cinnamon, chirping songs, and telling countless stories to their little ones before bedtime.

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