



Under the Piano

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Lucy was a good little girl, and before we start this story, it's only fair to tell you that she didn't mean to do it. We promise. See the thing is, it was Tuesday, which usually isn't so different from Wednesday or Monday, except that this particular

Tuesday was Hat Day. Early in the morning, Lucy's mom would put on her green and purple hat with the pink ribbons and Lucy's dad would put on his blue and yellow hat with the orange feathers.

Together in their big, bright, beautiful hats they would go to the garden party on the other side of town. All the other grown-ups would be there

too, and they would all drink their grown-up tea and say their grown-up things in their grown-up hats.

Lucy, because she was such a good little girl, was left alone in the house while her parents were away. This never bothered Lucy because her imagination was like a circus tent, very, very big and very, very bright.

Lucy started to get bored, so she decid-

ed to be a pirate in search of her long lost buried treasure. She looked in the closets and under the stairs and behind the refrigerator until she found the treasure right where she forgot she left it, on the kitchen counter.

And then Lucy was bored. So she became an astronaut flying around space, but as little astronauts know, unless the space aliens are flying around too, which of course they weren't because aliens sleep in late on Tuesdays, flying around space all alone can get pretty boring.

Lucy got bored, so instead she was a spy. Unfortunately, the only person in the house to spy on was her dog, Oreo, who had fallen asleep on the couch. And spying on a sleeping dog was like moving peas around on your plate when you don't want to eat them — boring.

So Lucy went outside, found her soccer ball and wasn't bored anymore because she was about to score the winning goal when a wind came out of nowhere, pushed the ball two seconds to the left and made Lucy miss the goal and break the window.

Lucy knew this was a bad thing, so quick as a blink, she ran inside to hide where all good little girls know is the best place to hide — under the piano.

Now if Lucy had run and slid under the piano the way she did on any other Tuesday, nothing would have happened, and there would be no story. But this Tuesday was Hat Day and when Lucy slid, instead of bumping against the wall and shadow behind the piano, she slid right through the wall and tumbled into Honey Dew (Population - 1).

Honey Dew was where Flyleaf the Piskie lived. A Piskie is different from a Pixie in a lot of ways, some not important enough to mention. The main difference was that there was only one Piskie, and his name was Flyleaf. He was a naughty

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Her story was loosely based on a personal experience. However, any similarity between persons, real or imagined, is purely coincidental.

little creature, and he knew all about Lucy. You see, Flyleaf is the reason good little boys and girls get bored and play games until something breaks. When he heard that window break, and felt Lucy run to hide under the piano, he jumped at the chance to steal her away.

Lucy looked around and then looked down and gave a start when she saw Flyleaf peering up at her with his bright pink eyes and smiling at her through his stretched grey lips.

"Why are you here?" he squeaked at her and did a twirly little dance.

Lucy really didn't know, and she sat trying to remember how she had gotten so far away from home. Flyleaf saw the confusion creep up and settle about her like an itchy blanket, and he was delighted. He knew that if Lucy couldn't remember that she had broken the window and ran to hide because of it, she would never be able to go back home and would turn into a naughty little Piskie just like Flyleaf (but with a different name of course).

Lucy, growing tired of trying so hard to remember what she had forgotten, lay down and fell asleep. And Lucy had a dream.

In her dream Hat Day was every day and instead of leaving her alone at the house, her mom and dad presented her with her very own yellow and pink hat with light blue flowers and she was allowed to go to the garden party too! When she woke up she started to look around for her hat, but seeing Flyleaf reminded her of what had happened.

"Why are you here?" he squeaked once again.

Lucy, thinking of a big, bright, beautiful hat, said, "I broke the window, it was my fault."

Flyleaf let out a tiny cry, stopped twirling and dropped to the ground like he had been hit on the head with a very heavy frying pan. Lucy had done the one thing that could get her back home. Instead of try-

ing to hide from something she had done wrong, she admitted it.

Just as she had dropped into Honey Dew (Population — 1) by sliding under the piano, she suddenly found herself back home. She was so relieved she almost didn't hear her mom and dad walking up the driveway. As soon as they came in the door, they started to ask Lucy if she was OK and wanted to know what had happened to the window.

Lucy looked at those big, bright, beautiful hats.

"I broke the window," she said, "It was my fault."

I'd like to tell you that Lucy's mom and dad were so impressed with her honesty that they swept her into their arms and said it's OK, but that's not the way it ended. They were proud of her for being honest, but were still mad she broke the window, so they made her go to her room.

When Lucy was allowed to come out again, she ran to the kitchen and smiled the biggest, most grown-up smile she had ever smiled before. It was Tuesday and it was still Hat Day and Lucy knew she had grown-up just a little.



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