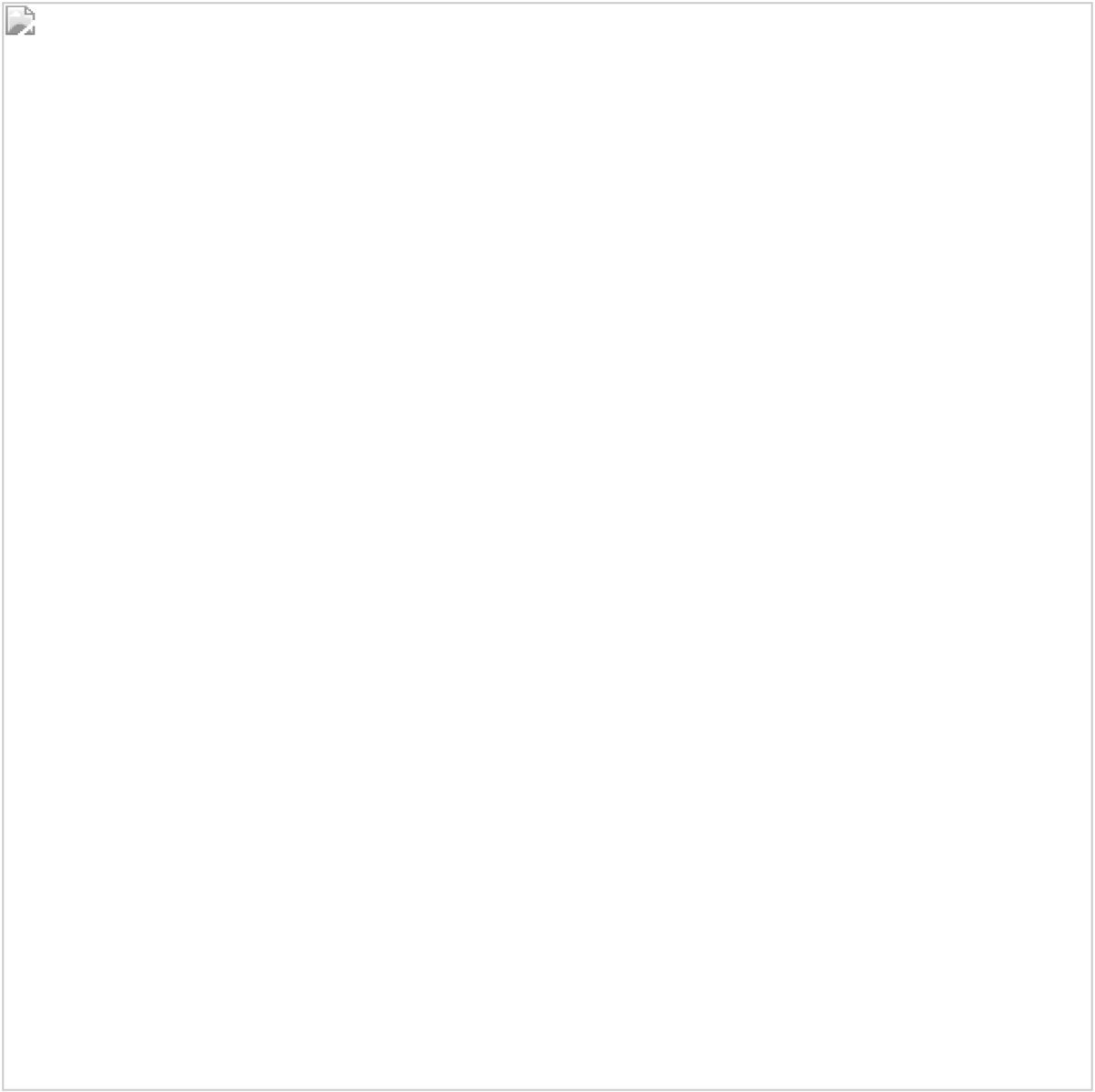
COLORING THE CLASSICS

The Selfish Giant

A Garden, a Wall, and a Little Child



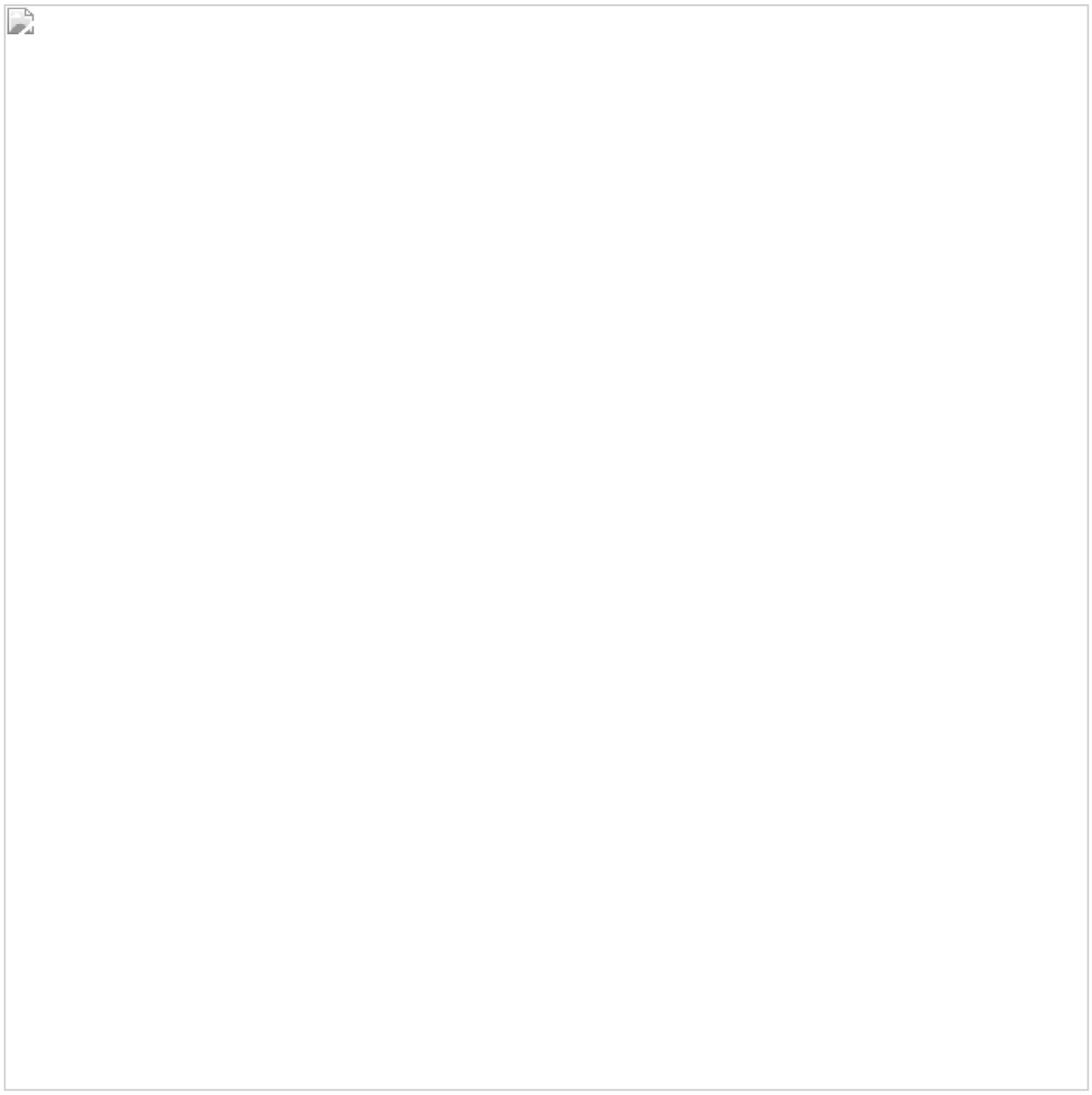
By Oscar Wilde

TALK ABOUT IT

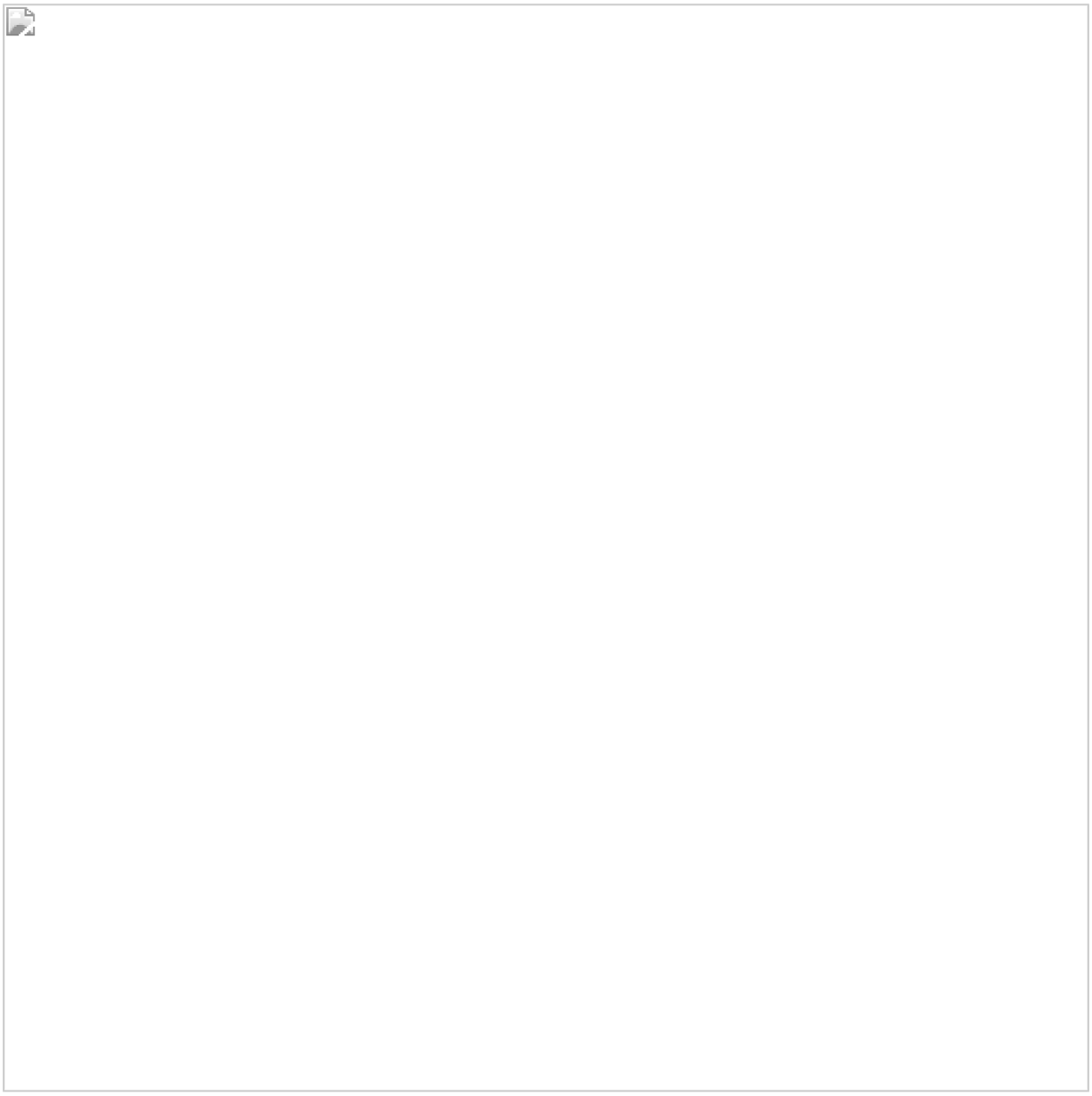
What is a place you love to play? What makes it a good place?

This book belongs to _____

The Selfish Giant · another picture



The Giant's Garden



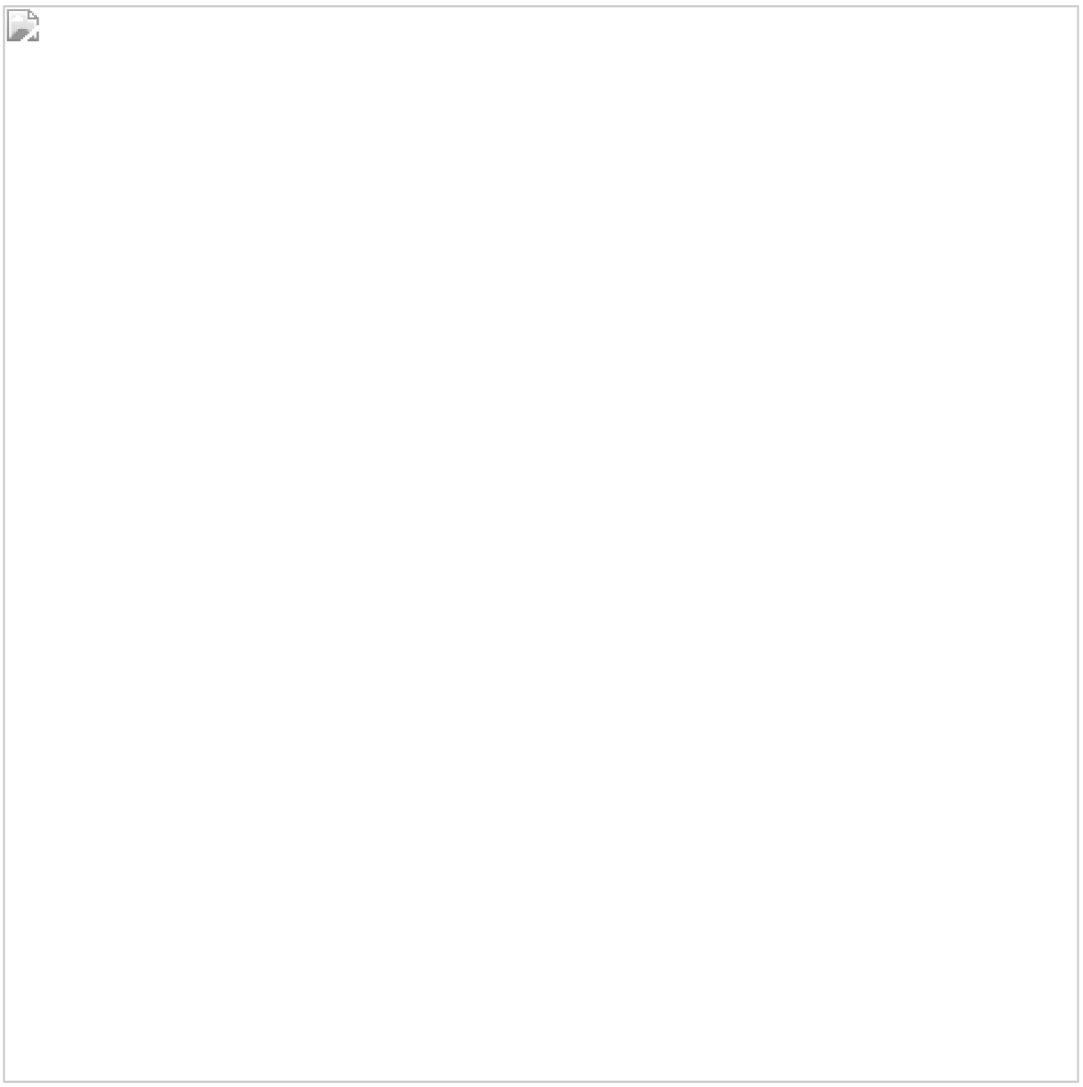
Every afternoon, when school was over, the children went to play in the Giant's garden.

It was a large, lovely garden with soft green grass. Beautiful flowers stood in it like stars, and there were twelve peach-trees that broke out into pink and pearl blossoms in the spring. The birds sat in the trees and sang so sweetly that the children stopped their games to listen.

"How happy we are here!" they cried to each other.

TALK ABOUT IT

What would you do first in a garden like that?



Think about it

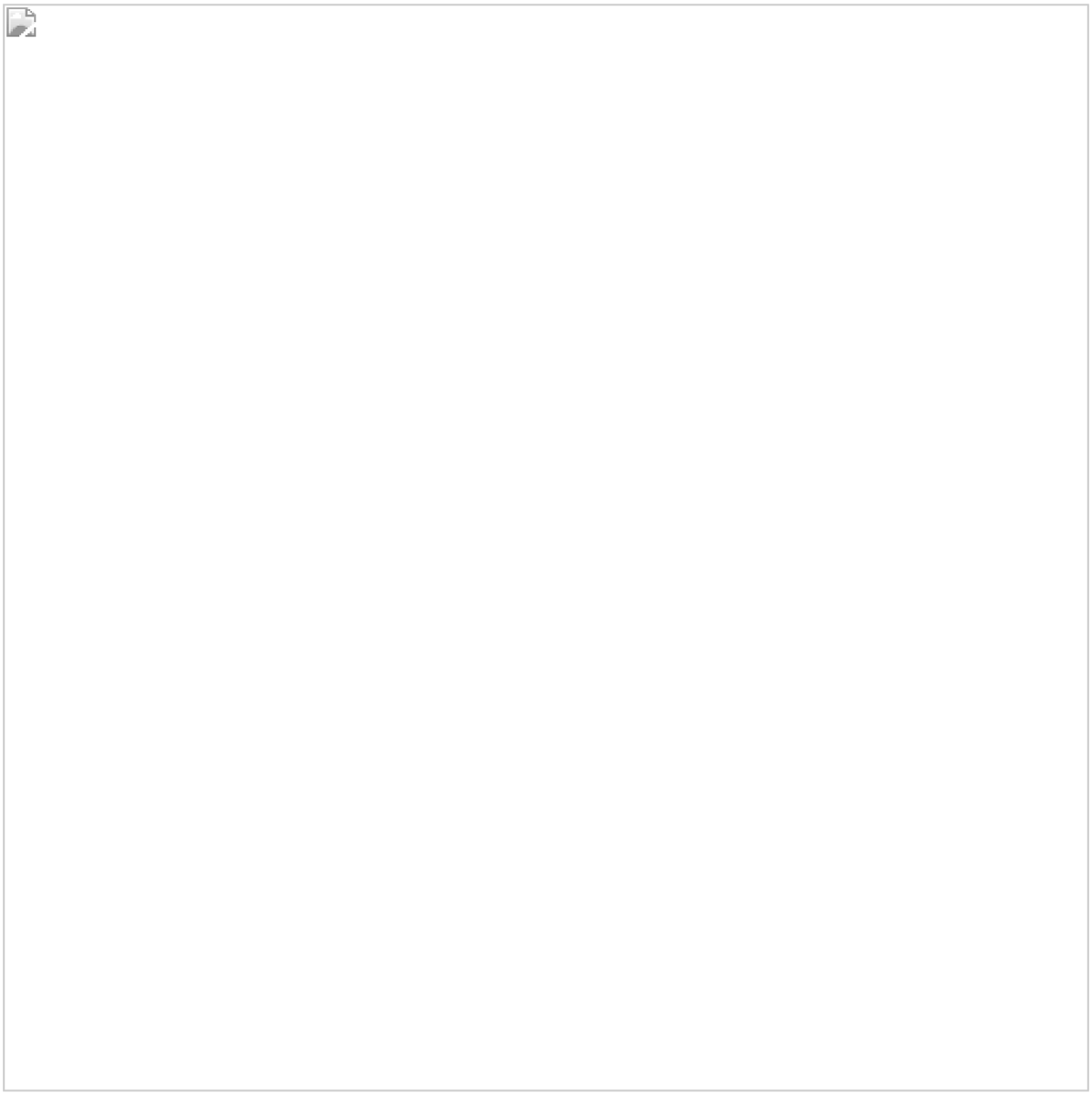
1. When did the children go to the garden?

- ○ Every afternoon, after school
- ○ Only at night
- ○ Only in winter

2. What did the birds do that made the children stop their games?

- ○ They sang very sweetly
- ○ They flew away
- ○ They splashed in a pond

The Giant Comes Home



One day the Giant came back. He had been away for seven years, visiting his friend the Cornish ogre. When he got home, he saw the children playing in his garden.

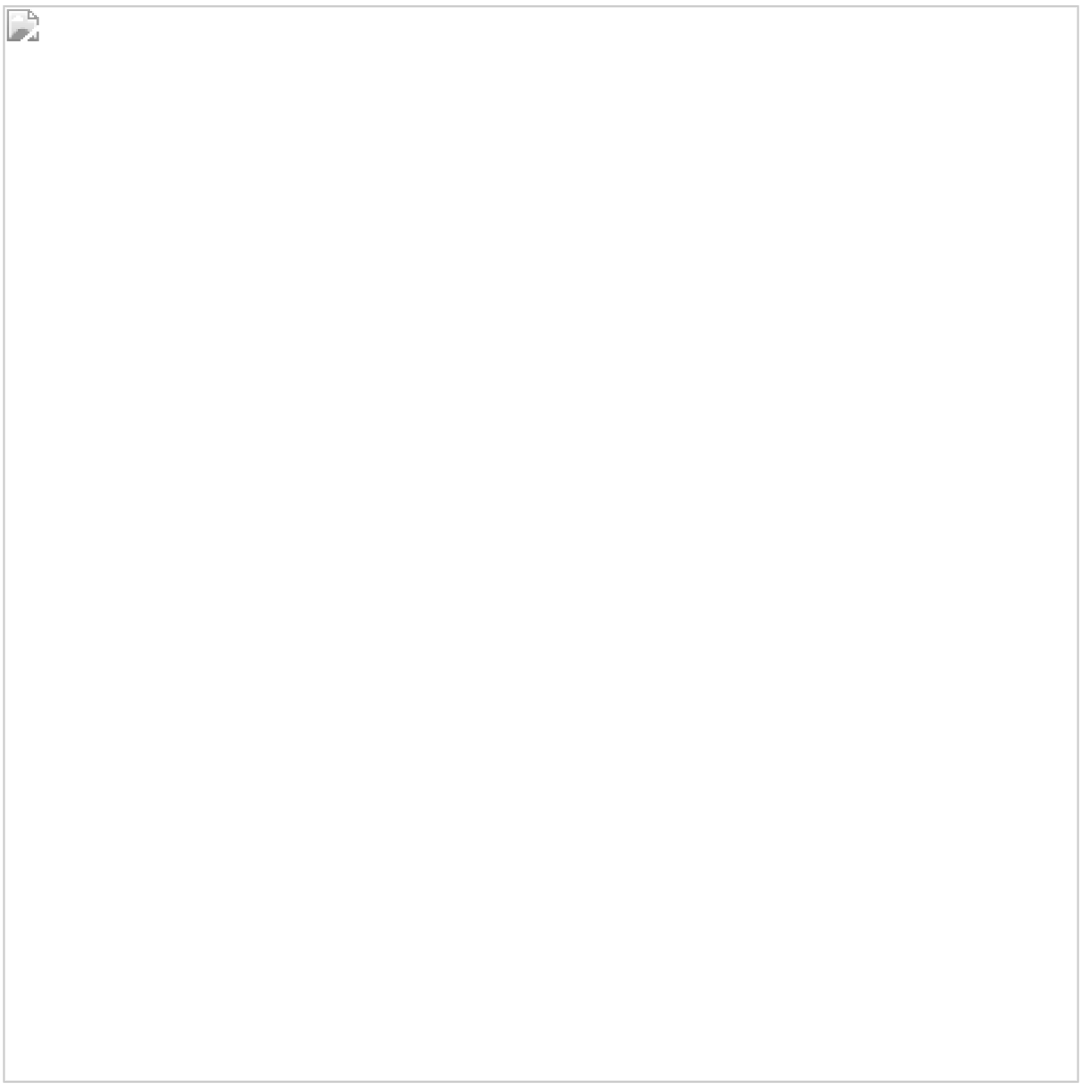
“What are you doing here?” he cried in a very gruff voice, and the children ran away.

“My own garden is my own garden,” said the Giant; “any one can understand that, and I will allow nobody to play in it but myself.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the Giant wanted the garden all to himself? What would you have said to him?

The Giant Comes Home · another picture



Think about it

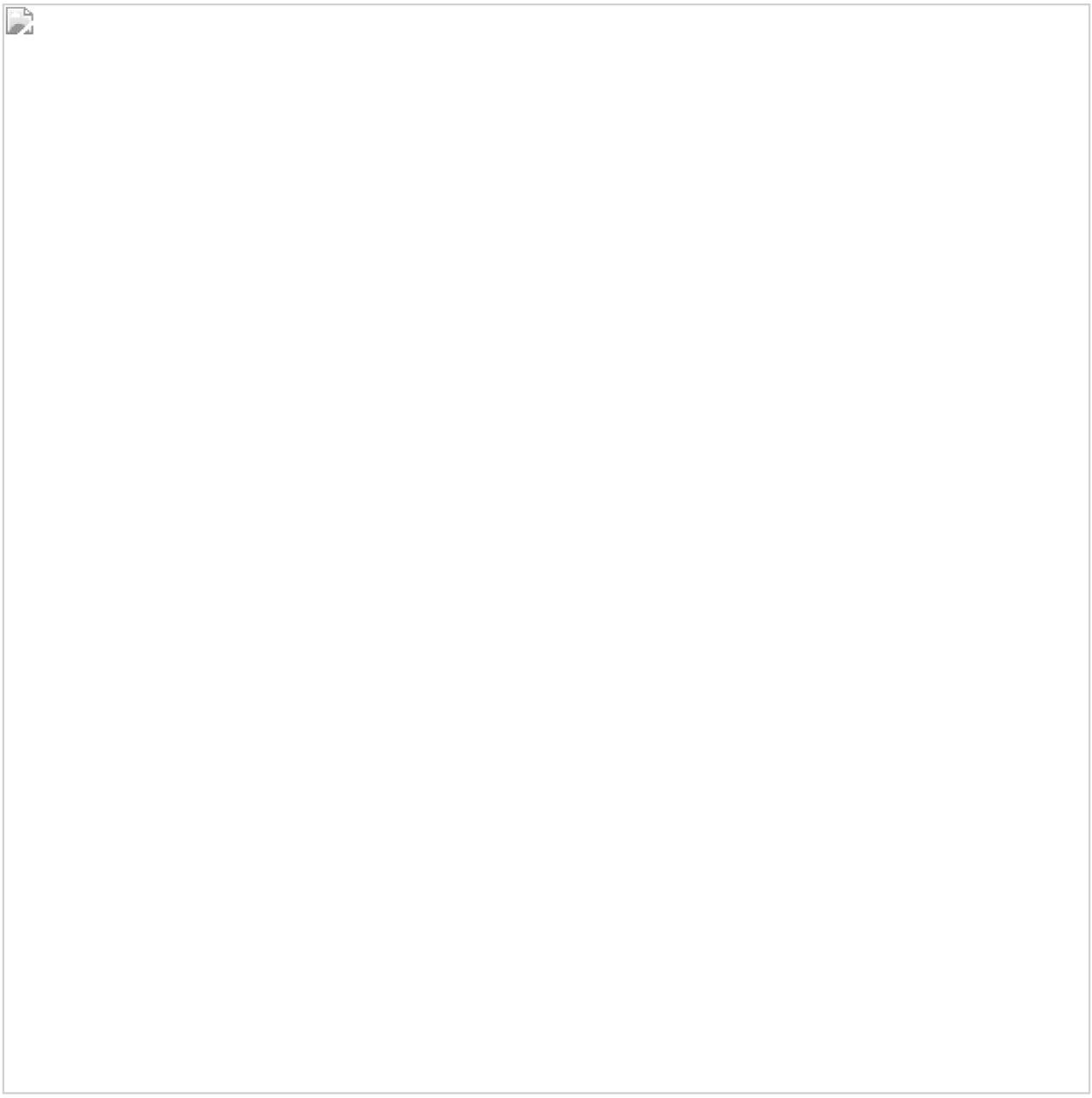
1. Where had the Giant been?

- ○ Visiting his friend the Cornish ogre
- ○ At school
- ○ Sailing on the sea

2. What did the children do when the Giant shouted?

- ○ They ran away
- ○ They shouted back
- ○ They hid in the castle

The High Wall



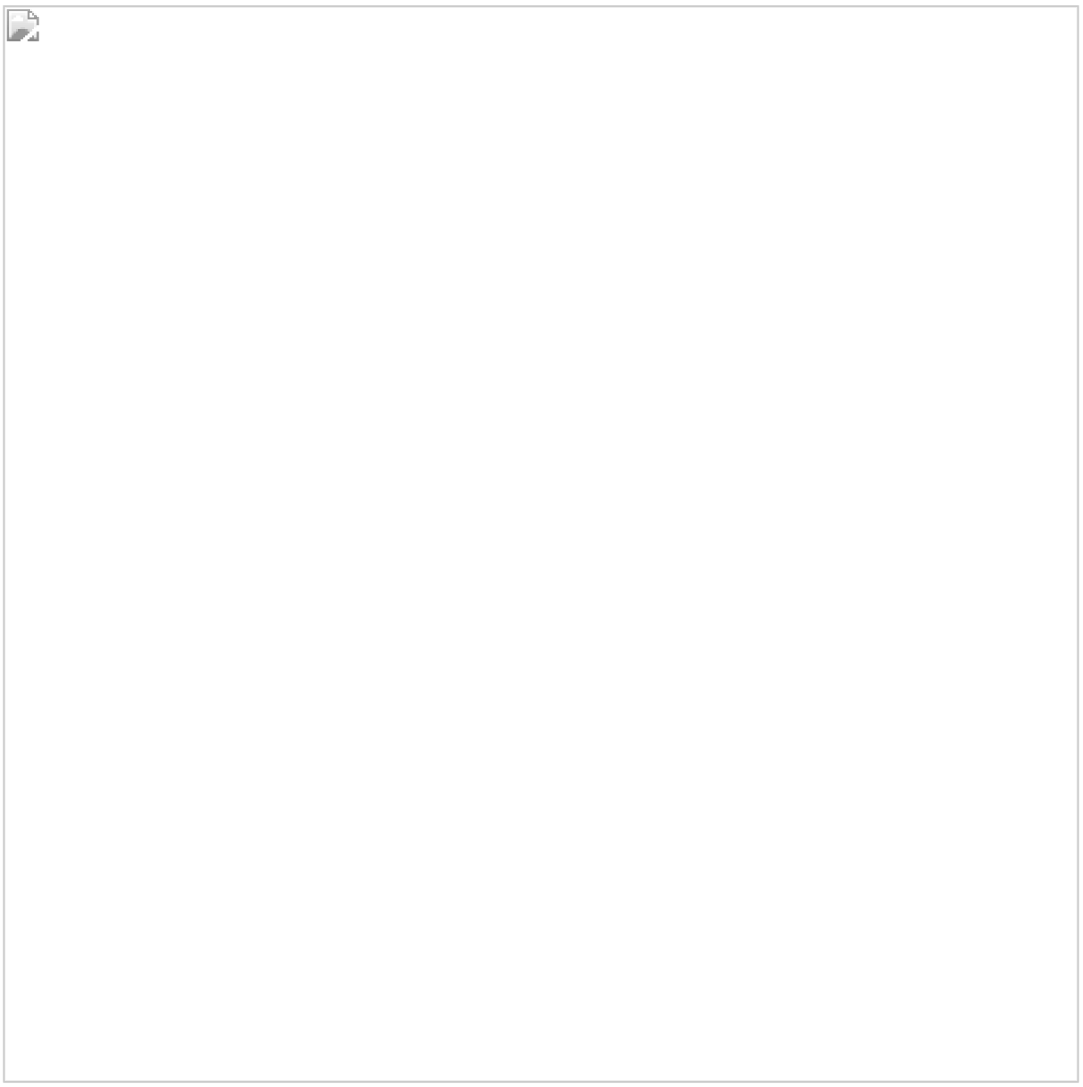
So the Giant built a high wall all round the garden, and he put up a notice-board that told everyone to keep out. He was a very selfish Giant.

The poor children now had nowhere to play. They tried the road, but it was dusty and full of hard stones, and they did not like it. When their lessons were over they wandered round the high wall and talked about the beautiful garden inside.

"How happy we were there," they said to each other.

TALK ABOUT IT

Where do you like to play when you cannot be in your favorite place?



Think about it

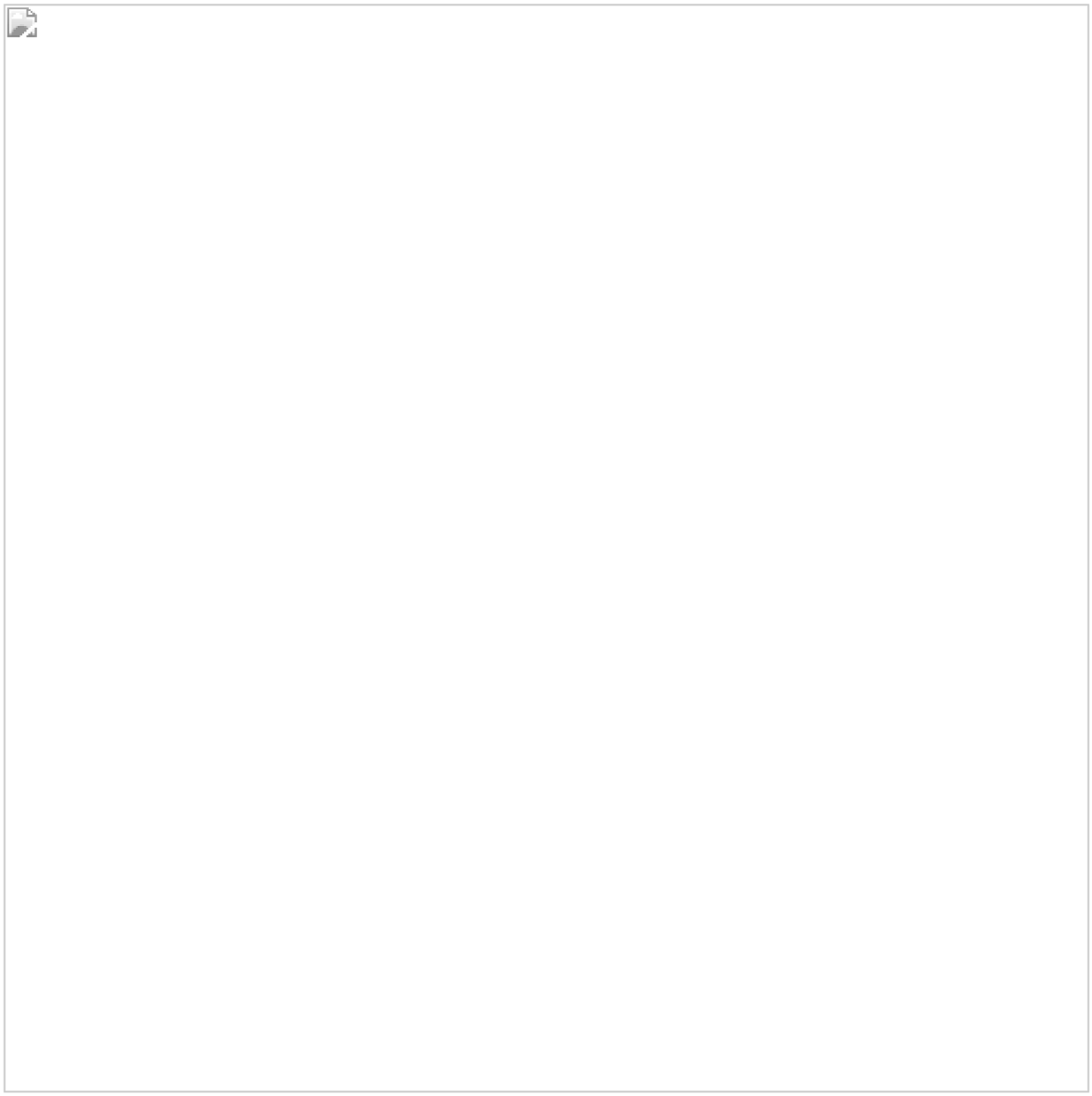
1. What did the Giant build?

- ○ A high wall
- ○ A boat
- ○ A swing

2. Why did the children not like the road?

- ○ It was dusty and full of hard stones
- ○ It was too far
- ○ It was full of dogs

Winter All Year



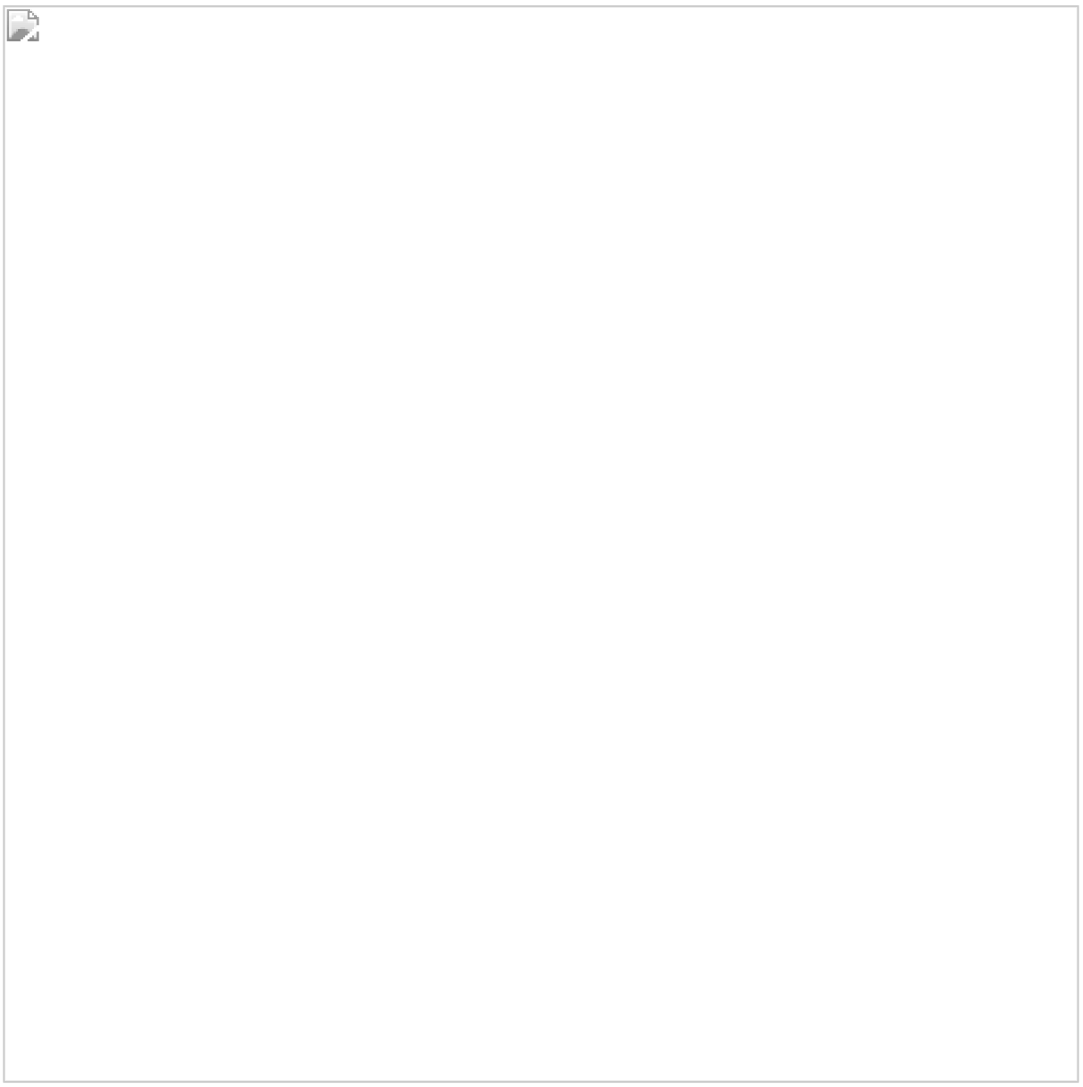
Then the Spring came, and all over the country there were little blossoms and little birds. But in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing there, as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom.

Only the Snow and the Frost were pleased. “Spring has forgotten this garden,” they cried, “so we will live here all the year round.” They invited the North Wind and the Hail to stay too.

The Giant looked out at his cold white garden. “I cannot understand why the Spring is so late in coming,” he said.

TALK ABOUT IT

Why do you think the Giant could not understand why Spring was late?



Think about it

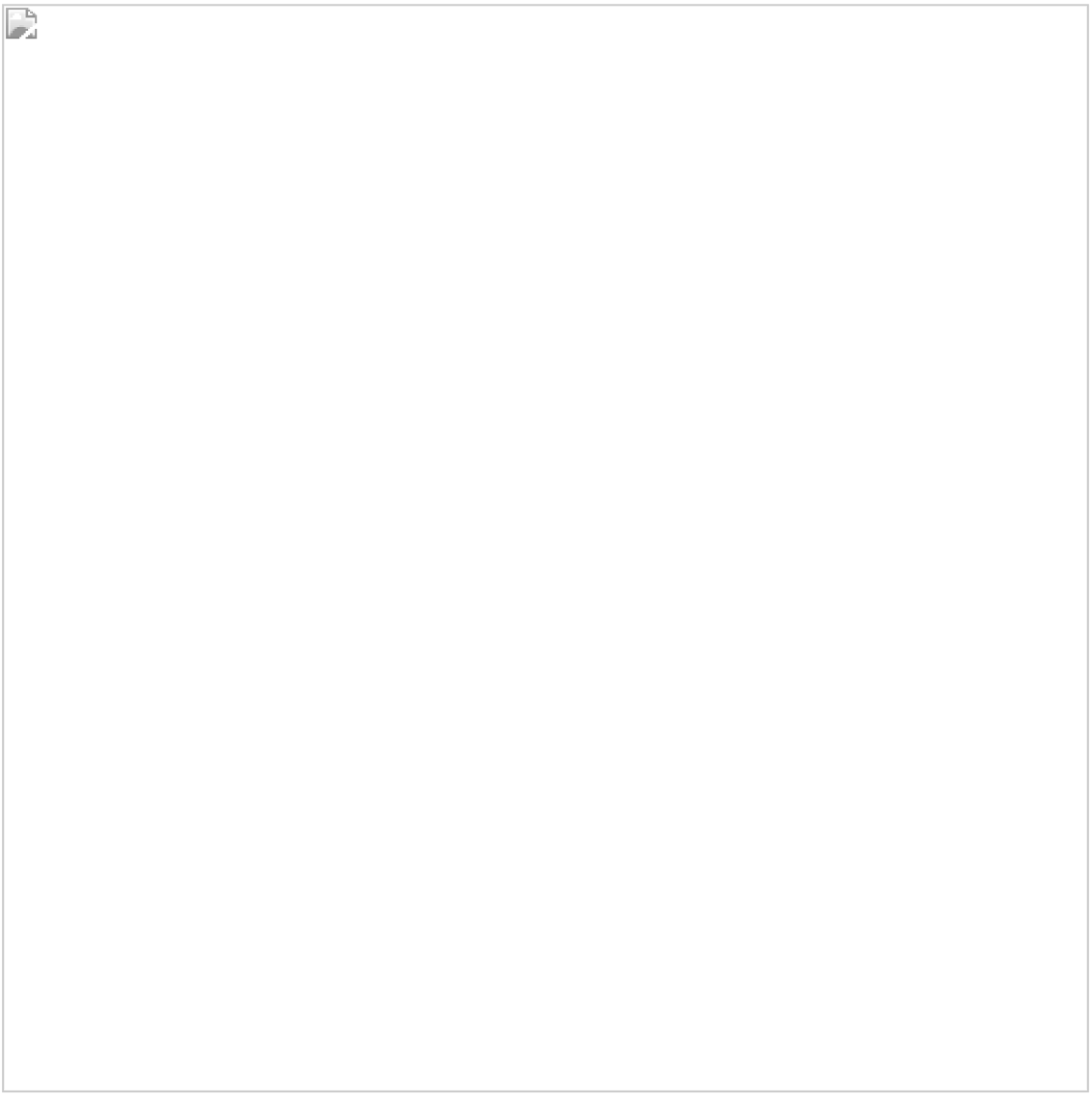
1. Who was pleased that the garden stayed cold?

- ○ The Snow and the Frost
- ○ The birds
- ○ The children

2. Why did the birds not sing in the garden?

- ○ There were no children
- ○ They were hungry
- ○ They did not know how

A Little Linnet Sings



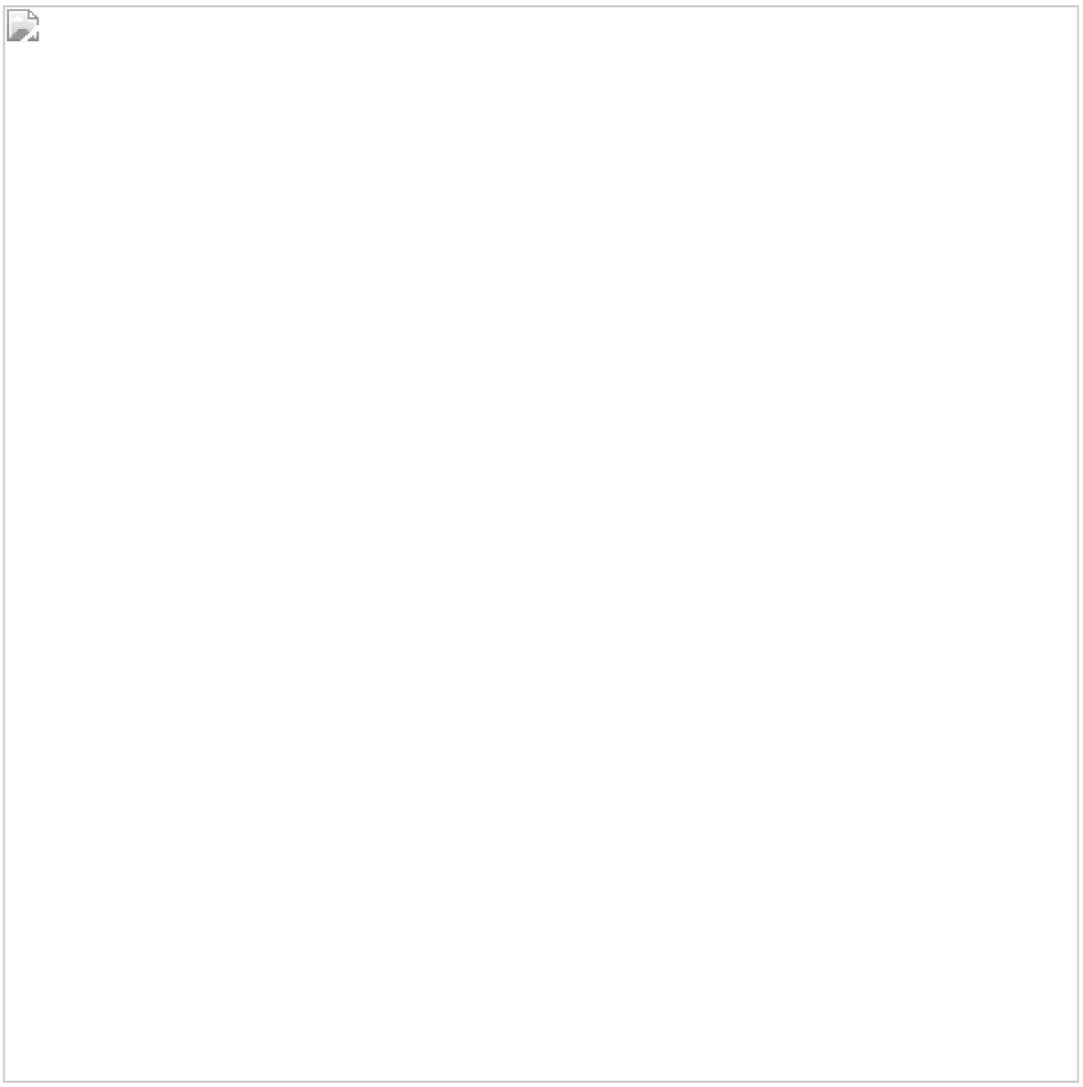
The Spring never came to that garden, nor the Summer. It was always Winter there.

One morning the Giant lay awake and heard some lovely music. He thought it must be the King's musicians passing by. It was really only a little linnet, but it was so long since he had heard a bird in his garden that it seemed the most beautiful music in the world.

Then the Hail stopped dancing, the North Wind ceased roaring, and a sweet perfume came through the window. "I believe the Spring has come at last," said the Giant, and he jumped out of bed and looked out.

TALK ABOUT IT

What is a small sound that makes you happy when you hear it?



Think about it

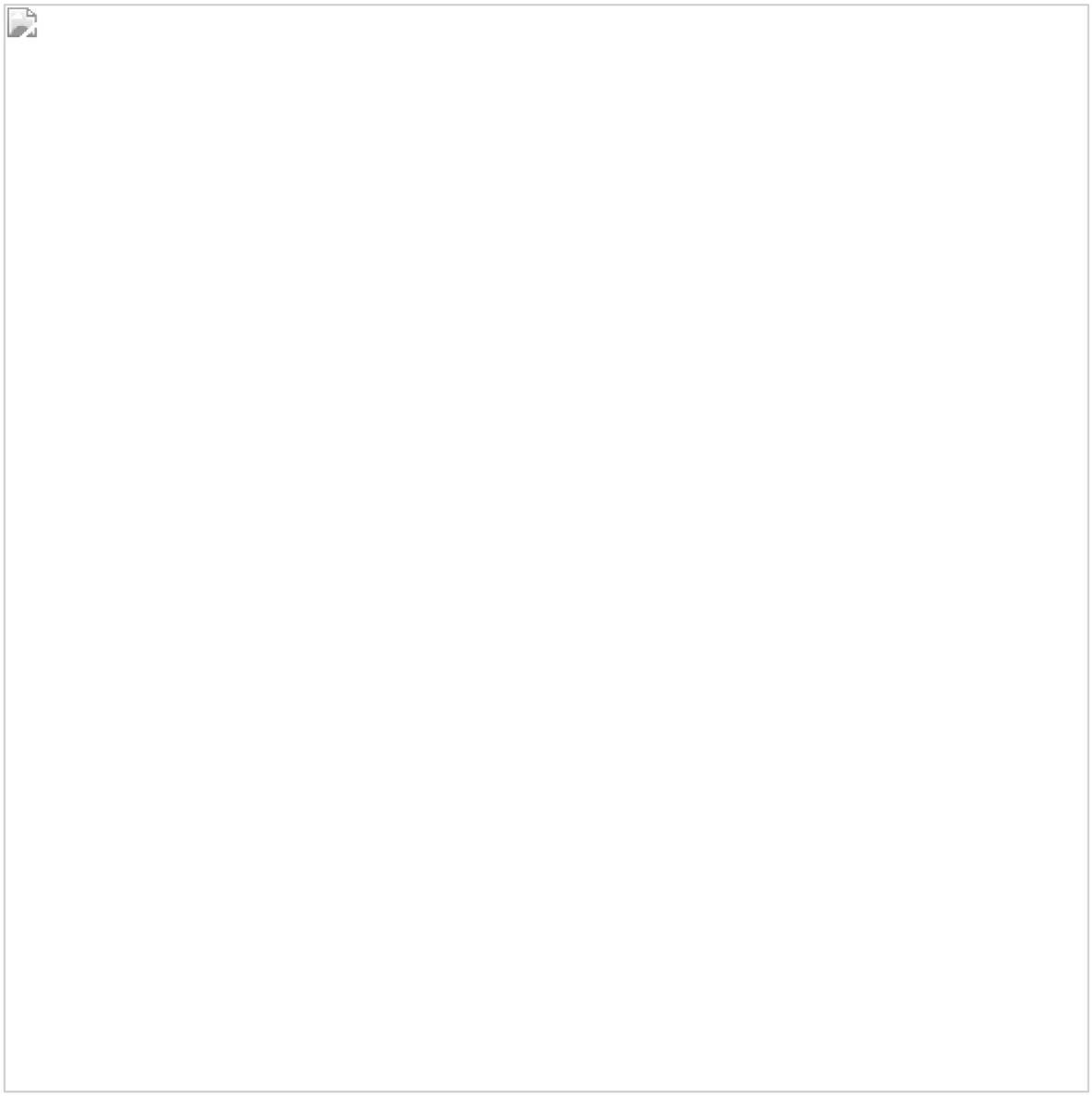
1. What kind of bird sang outside the window?

- ○ A linnet
- ○ An eagle
- ○ A parrot

2. What did the Giant think the music was at first?

- ○ The King's musicians passing by
- ○ A flute in the garden
- ○ The wind in the chimney

The Children in the Trees



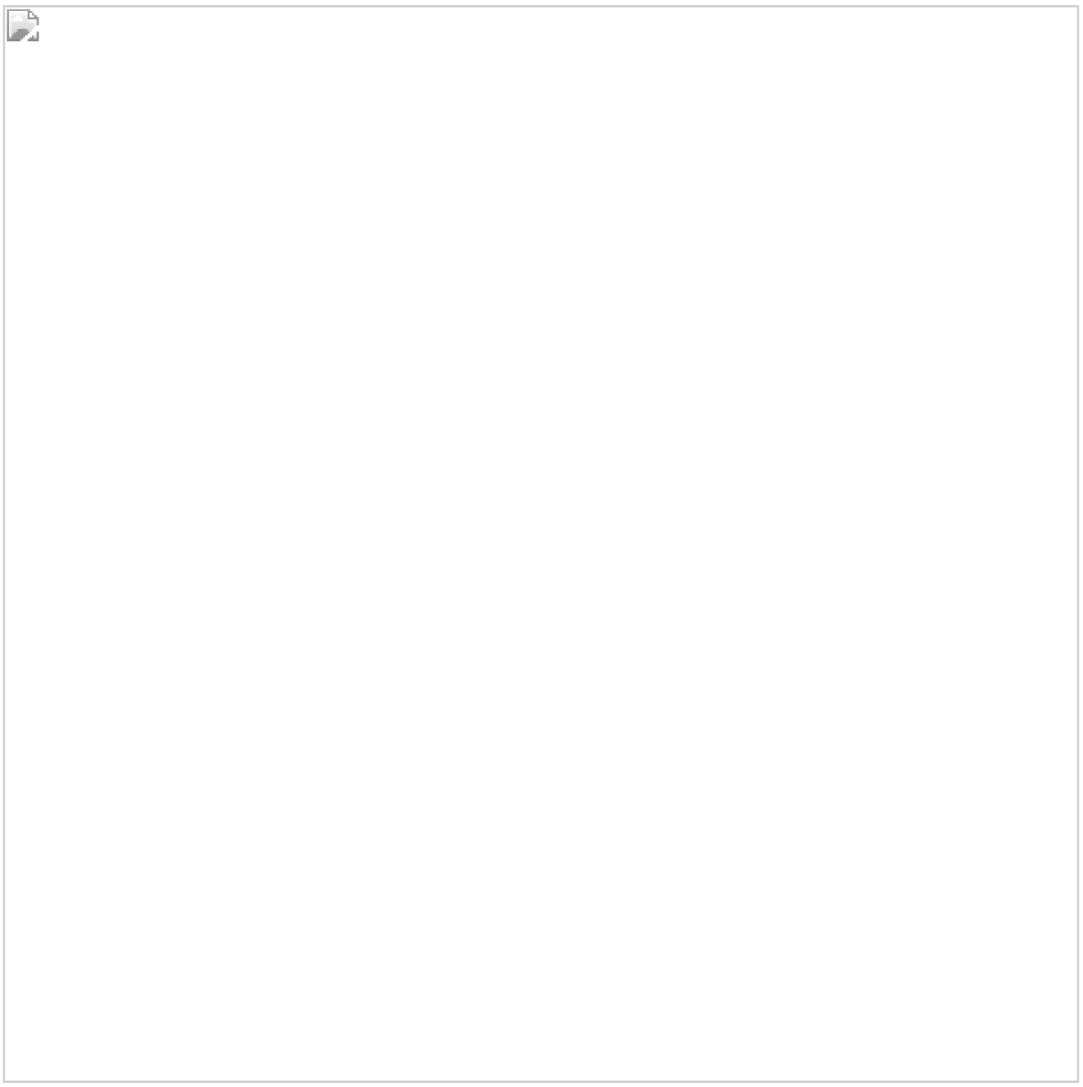
What did he see? Through a little hole in the wall the children had crept in, and they were sitting in the branches of the trees. The trees were so glad to have them back that they had covered themselves with blossoms.

Only in one corner of the garden it was still winter. In the farthest corner stood a little boy. He was so small that he could not reach up to the branches of his tree, and he was wandering all round it, crying bitterly.

“Climb up! little boy,” said the Tree, and it bent its branches down as low as it could. But the boy was too tiny.

TALK ABOUT IT

What would you do if you saw a child who could not reach the tree?



Think about it

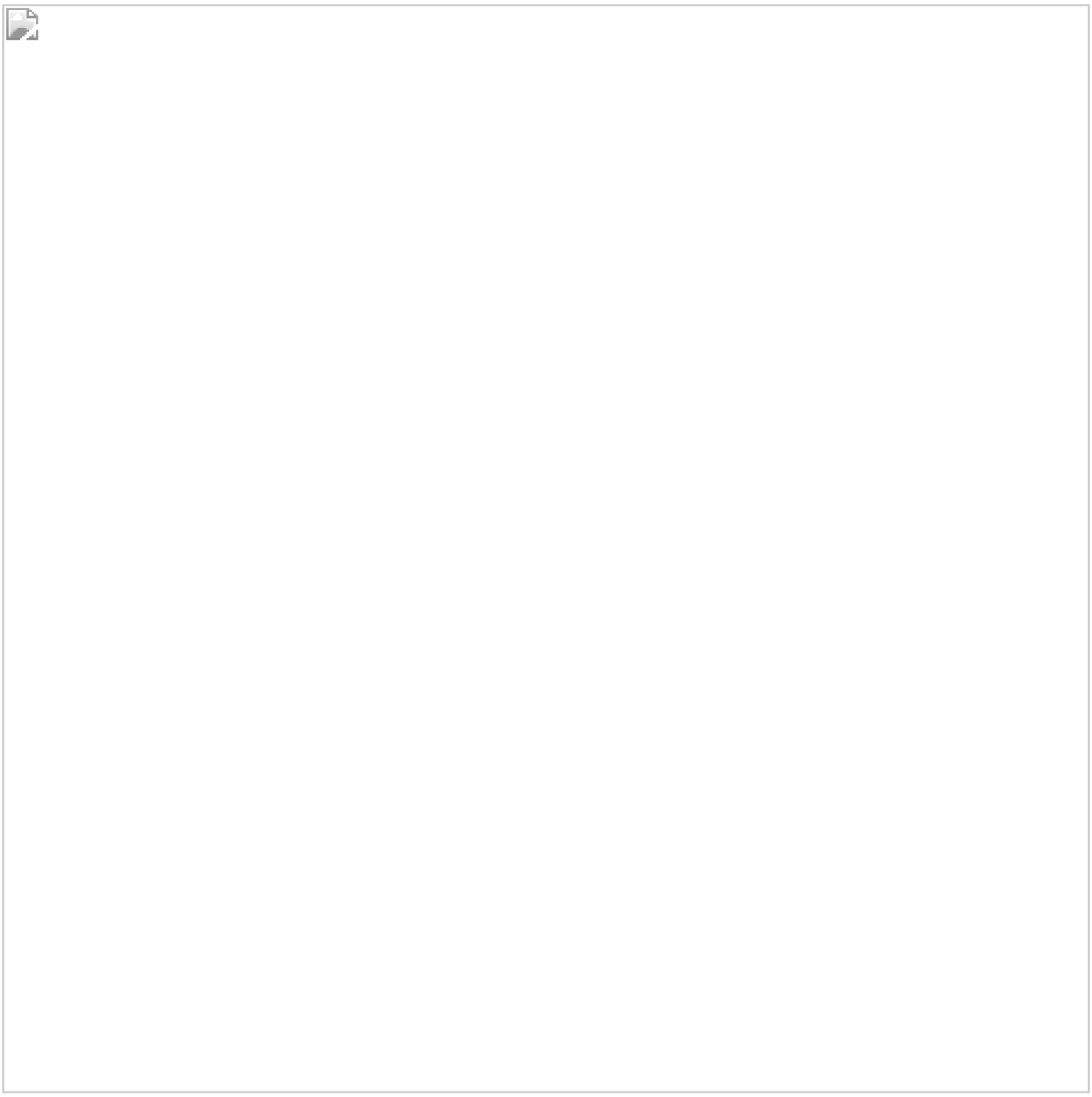
1. How did the children get into the garden?

- ○ Through a little hole in the wall
- ○ Over the gate
- ○ By a ladder

2. Why was the little boy crying?

- ○ He was too small to reach the branches
- ○ He lost his hat
- ○ He was hungry

The Giant's Heart Melts



And the Giant's heart melted as he looked out. "How selfish I have been!" he said; "now I know why the Spring would not come here."

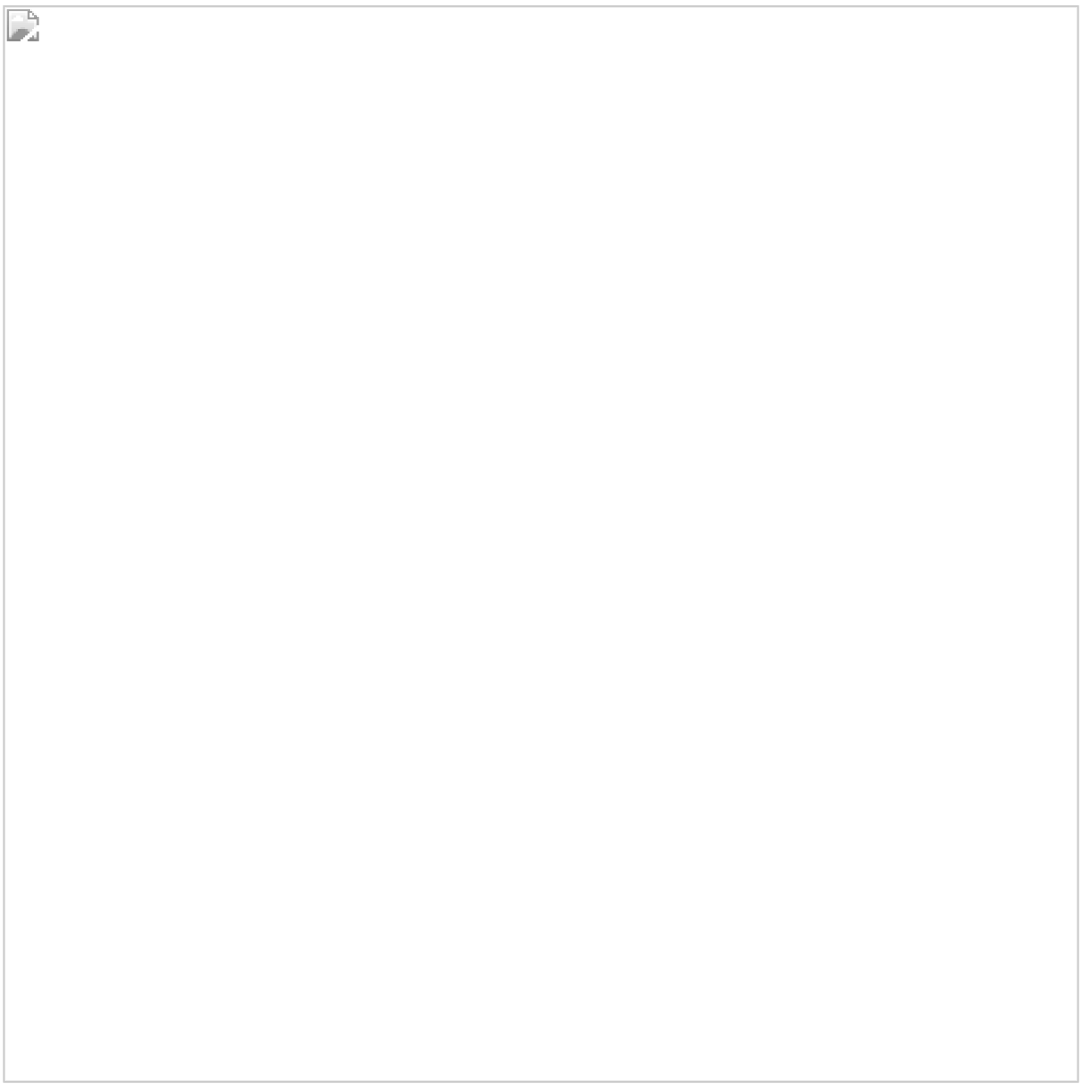
He crept downstairs into the garden. But when the children saw him they were frightened and ran away, and the garden became winter again. Only the little boy did not run, for his eyes were so full of tears that he did not see the Giant coming.

The Giant took him gently in his hand and put him up into the tree. At once the tree broke into blossom, and the boy flung his arms round the Giant's neck and kissed him.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you think changed inside the Giant? Have you ever changed your mind about something?

The Giant's Heart Melts · another picture



Think about it

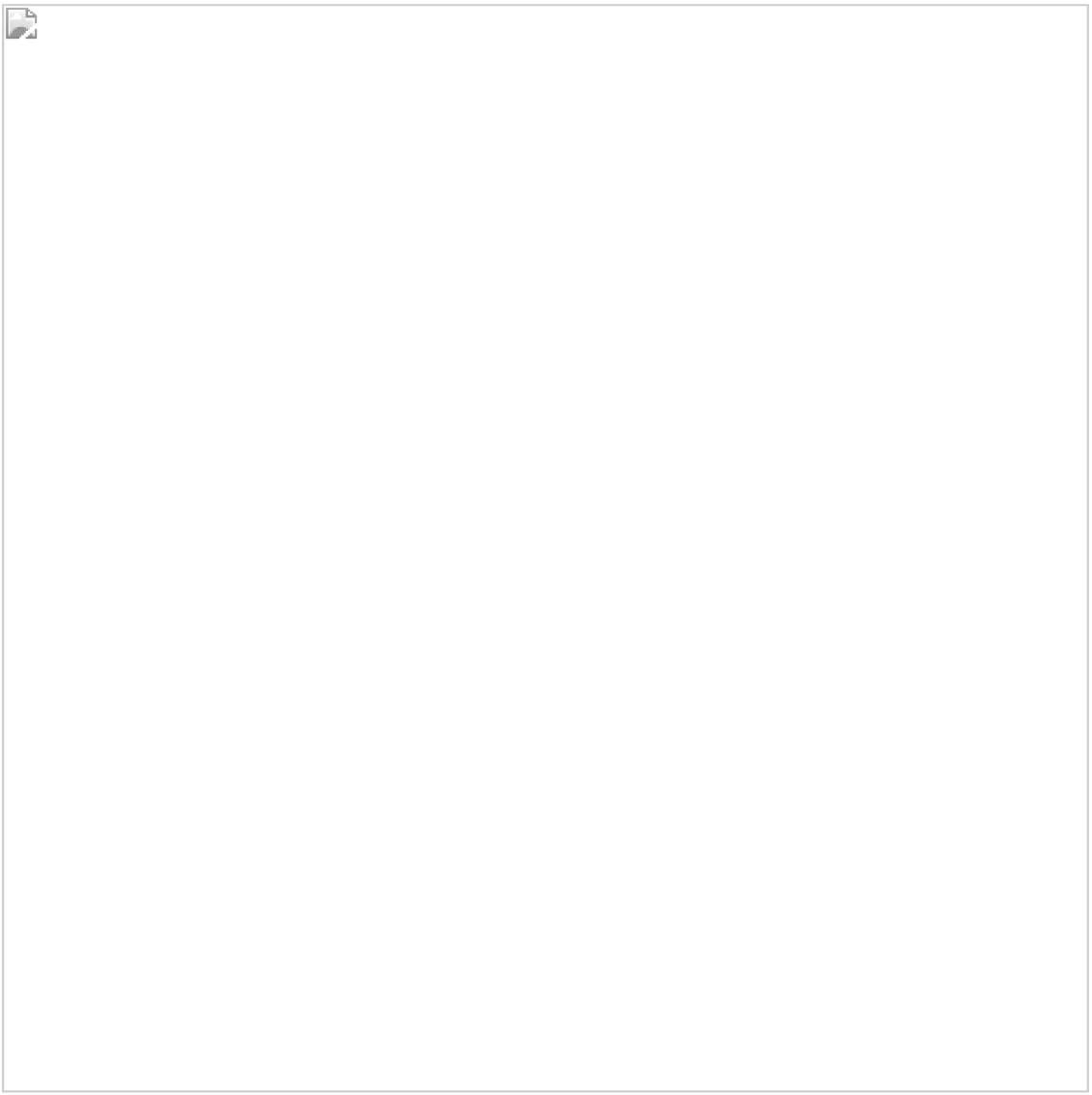
1. What did the Giant do for the little boy?

- ○ Put him gently up into the tree
- ○ Sent him home
- ○ Gave him an apple

2. What happened to the tree when the boy was in it?

- ○ It broke into blossom
- ○ It fell over
- ○ It grew very tall

The Wall Comes Down



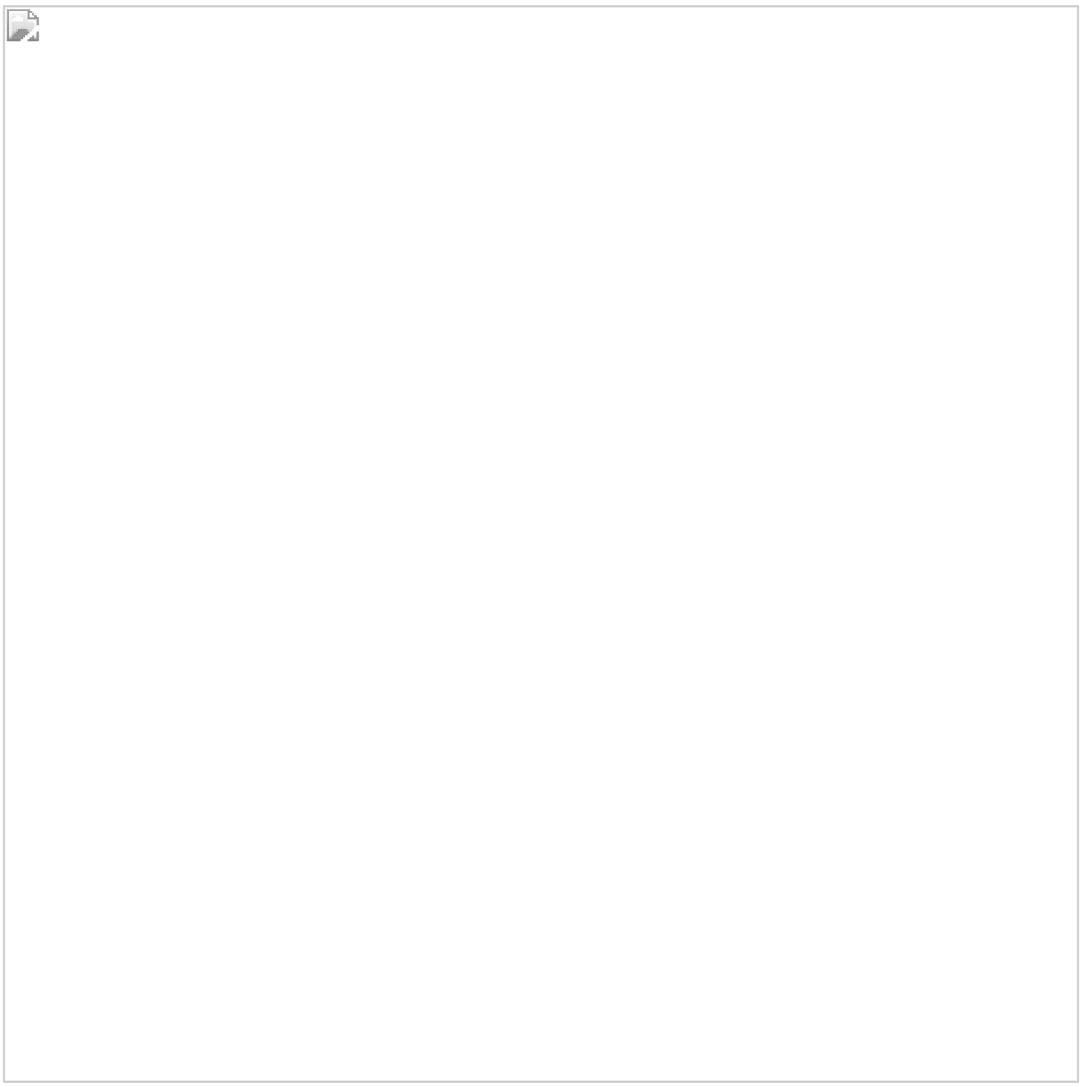
The other children saw that the Giant was not wicked any longer, and they came running back. With them came the Spring.

“It is your garden now, little children,” said the Giant, and he took a great axe and knocked down the wall. When the people went to market at twelve o’clock, they found the Giant playing with the children in the most beautiful garden they had ever seen.

All day long they played. In the evening the children came to say good-bye. “But where is your little companion?” asked the Giant, “the boy I put into the tree.” The Giant loved him the best because he had kissed him.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you think it was like to play in the garden once the wall was gone?



Think about it

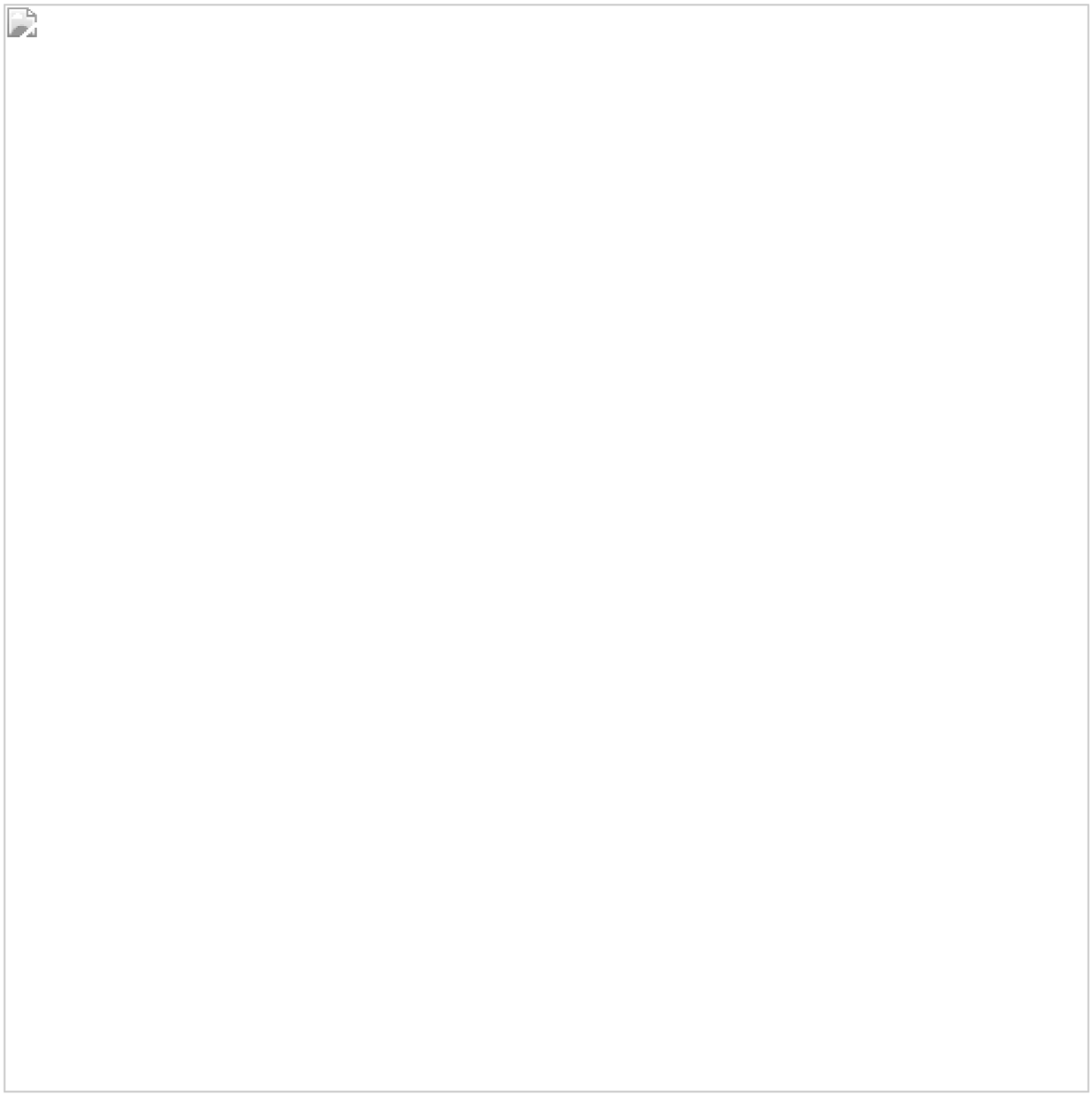
1. What did the Giant do with the wall?

- ○ Knocked it down
- ○ Painted it
- ○ Made it higher

2. Which child did the Giant ask about at the end of the day?

- ○ The little boy he had put in the tree
- ○ The tallest boy
- ○ The girl with the red hat

Years Go By



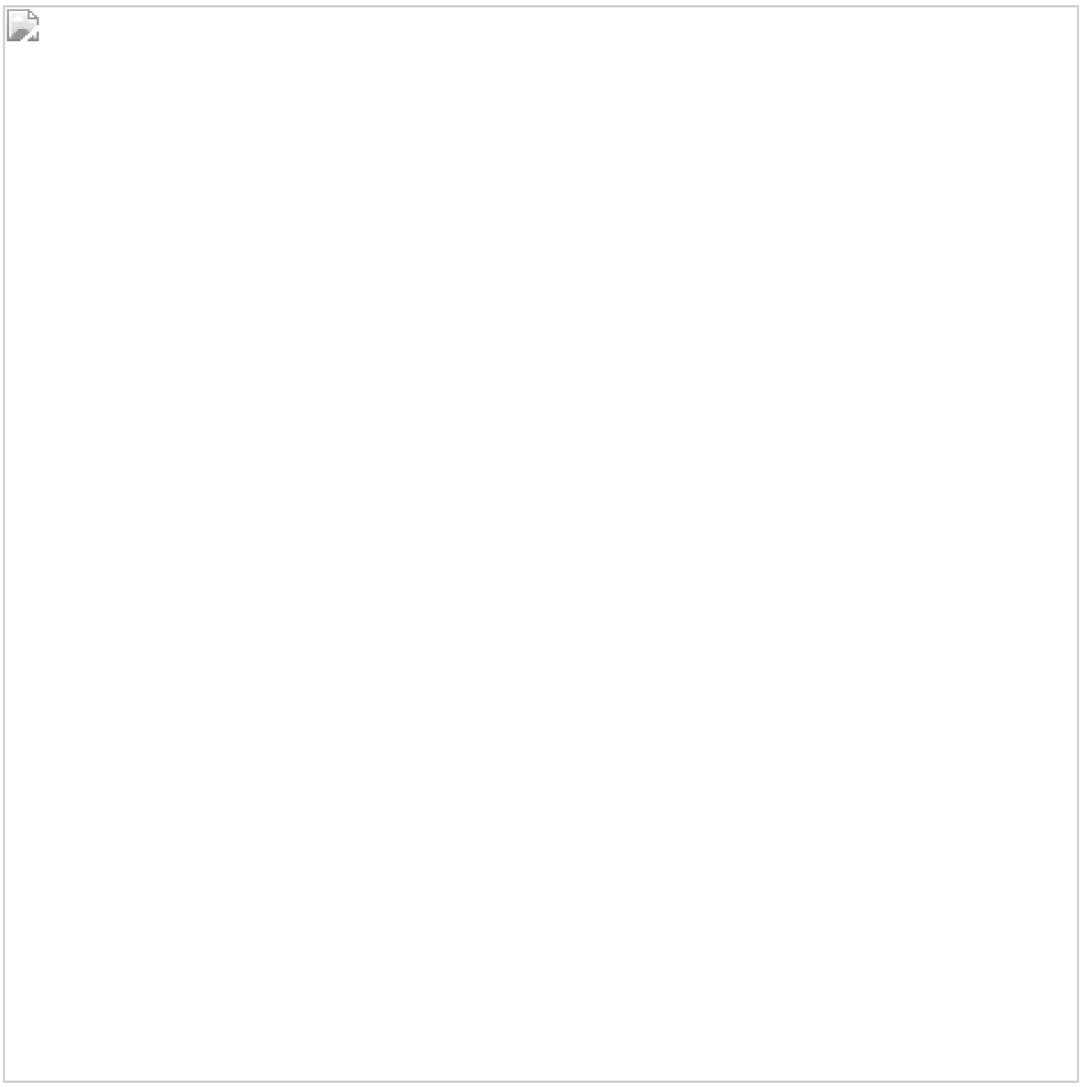
“We don’t know,” answered the children; “he has gone away.” They did not know where he lived, and had never seen him before. The Giant felt very sad.

Every afternoon the children came and played with the Giant, and he was very kind to them all. But the little boy he loved was never seen again, and the Giant often said, “How I would like to see him!”

Years went over, and the Giant grew very old and feeble. He sat in a huge armchair and watched the children at their games. “I have many beautiful flowers,” he said; “but the children are the most beautiful flowers of all.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Who is someone you miss? What would you want to tell them?



Think about it

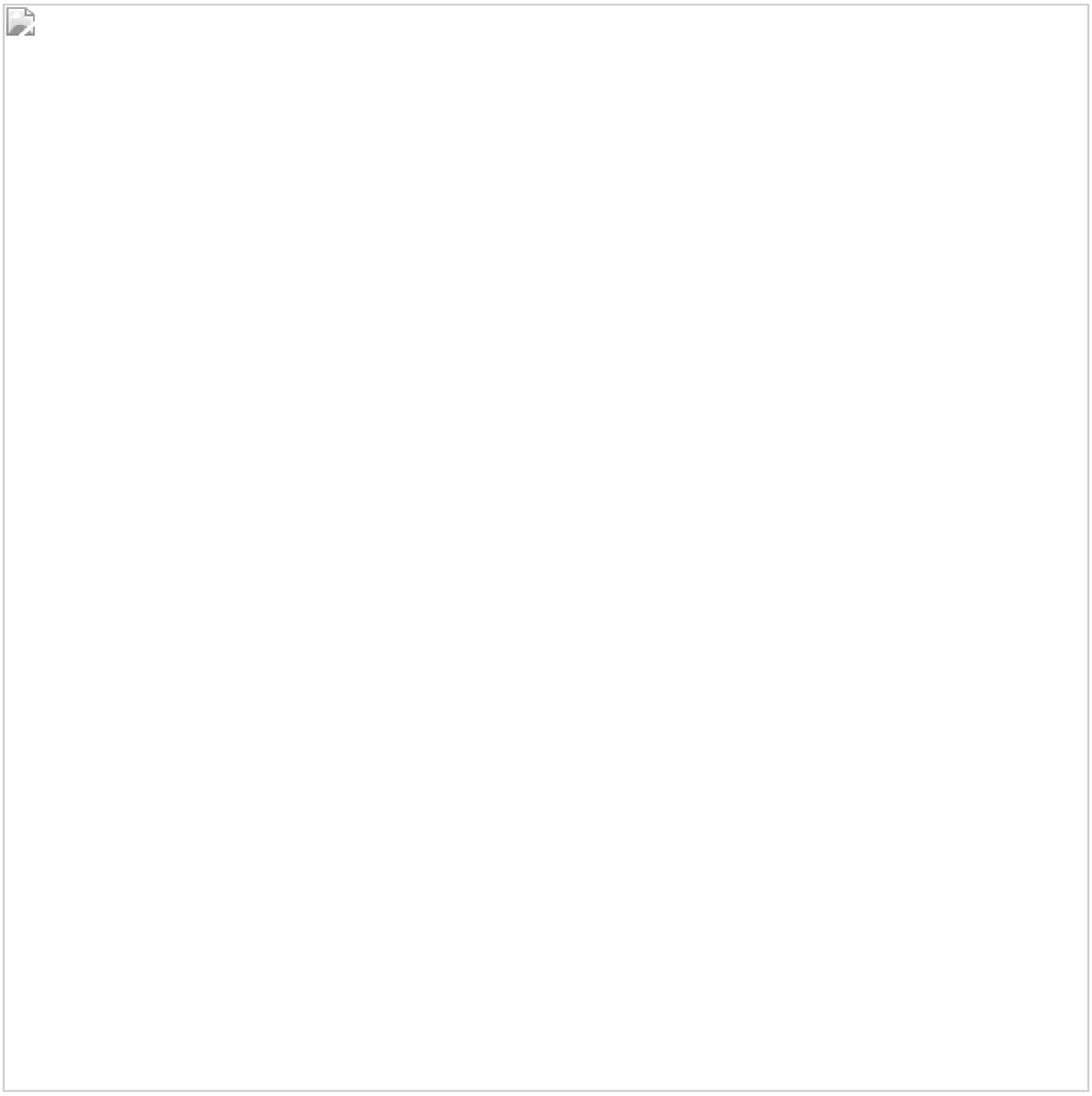
1. Did the children know where the little boy lived?

- ○ No, they had never seen him before
- ○ Yes, down the road
- ○ Yes, in the castle

2. What did the old Giant say were the most beautiful flowers of all?

- ○ The children
- ○ The peach blossoms
- ○ The roses

The Tree in the Corner



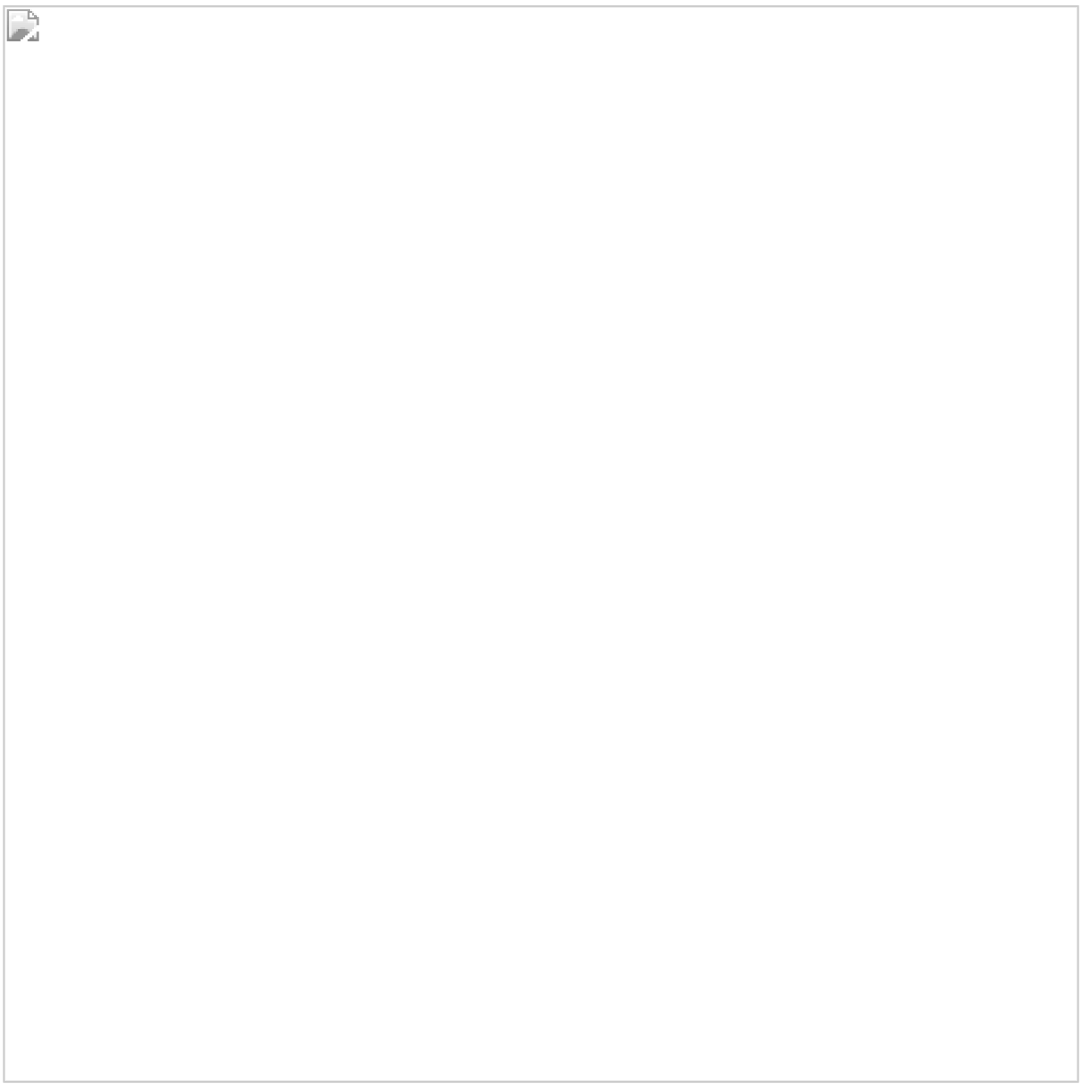
One winter morning the Giant looked out of his window as he was dressing. He did not hate the Winter now, for he knew that it was merely the Spring asleep.

Suddenly he rubbed his eyes and looked and looked. In the farthest corner of the garden was a tree quite covered with lovely white blossoms. Its branches were all golden, and silver fruit hung down from them. And underneath it stood the little boy he had loved.

Downstairs ran the Giant in great joy, and out into the garden.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you notice about that tree? Why might Wilde have made it so special?



Think about it

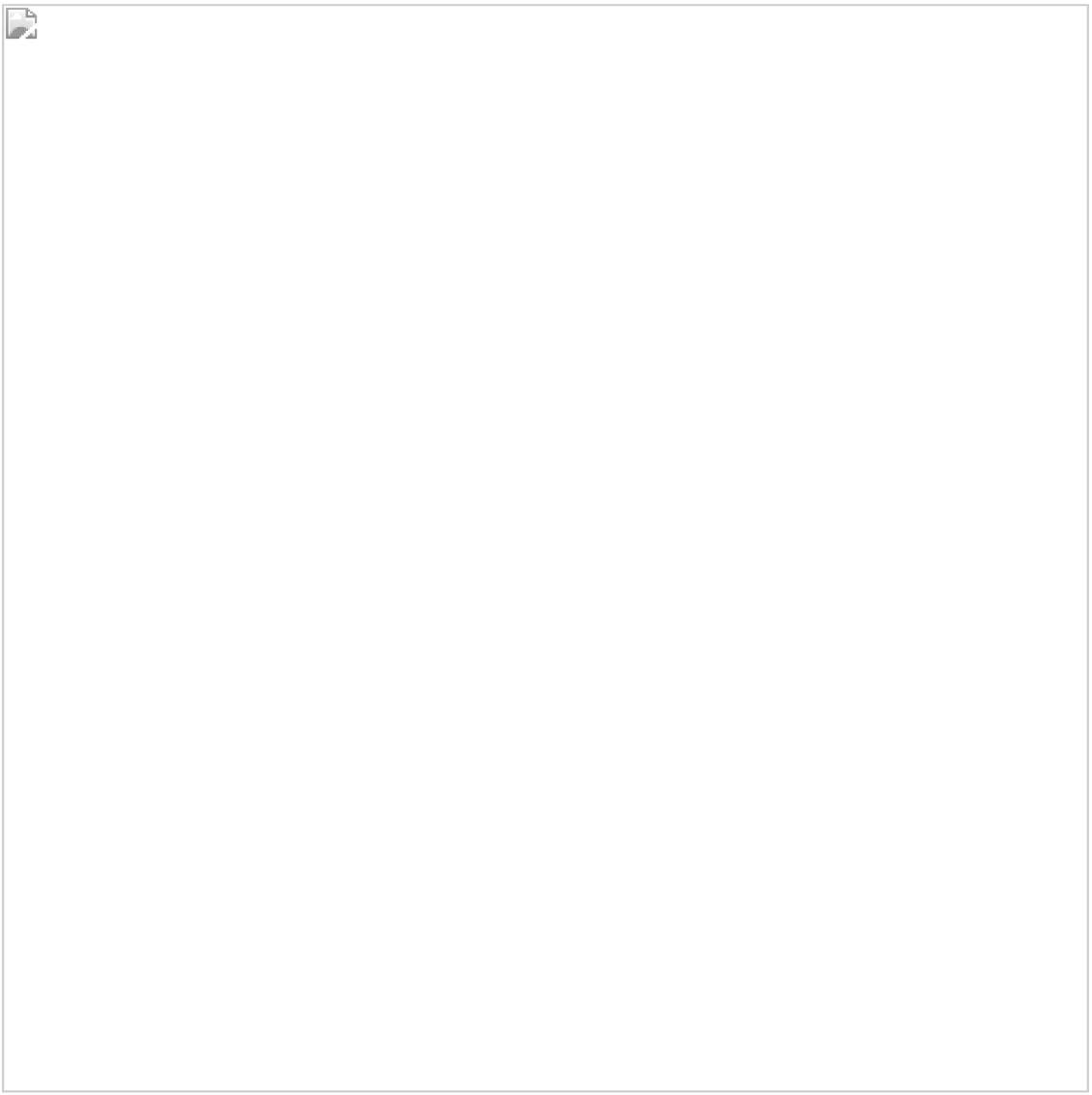
1. What did the Giant now know about Winter?

- ○ It was only the Spring asleep
- ○ It was too long
- ○ It was the best season

2. Who stood under the beautiful tree?

- ○ The little boy he had loved
- ○ The North Wind
- ○ A bird

The Wounds of Love



Close up, the Giant saw the prints of two nails on the palms of the child's hands, and on the little feet. "Who hath dared to wound thee?" cried the Giant.

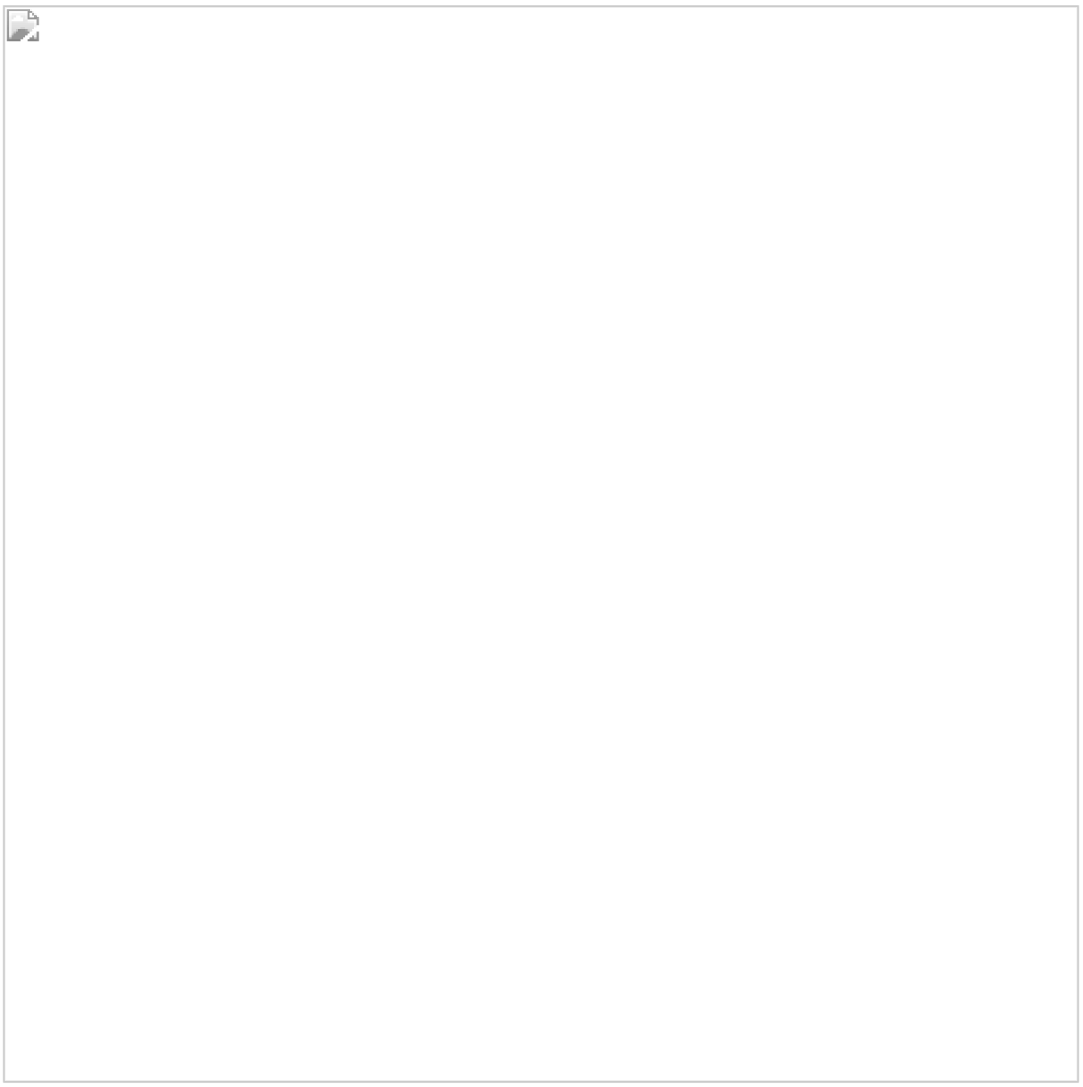
"Nay!" answered the child; "but these are the wounds of Love." Then a strange awe fell on the Giant, and he knelt before the child.

And the child smiled on him and said, "You let me play once in your garden, to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise."

When the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you think the little child wanted the Giant to know? What do you wonder about him?



Think about it

1. What did the child say the marks on his hands and feet were?

- ○ The wounds of Love
- ○ Scratches from the tree
- ○ Paint

2. Where did the child say they would go?

- ○ To his garden, which is Paradise
- ○ Back to school
- ○ To the market

“There is no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

— Yeshua HaMashiach

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