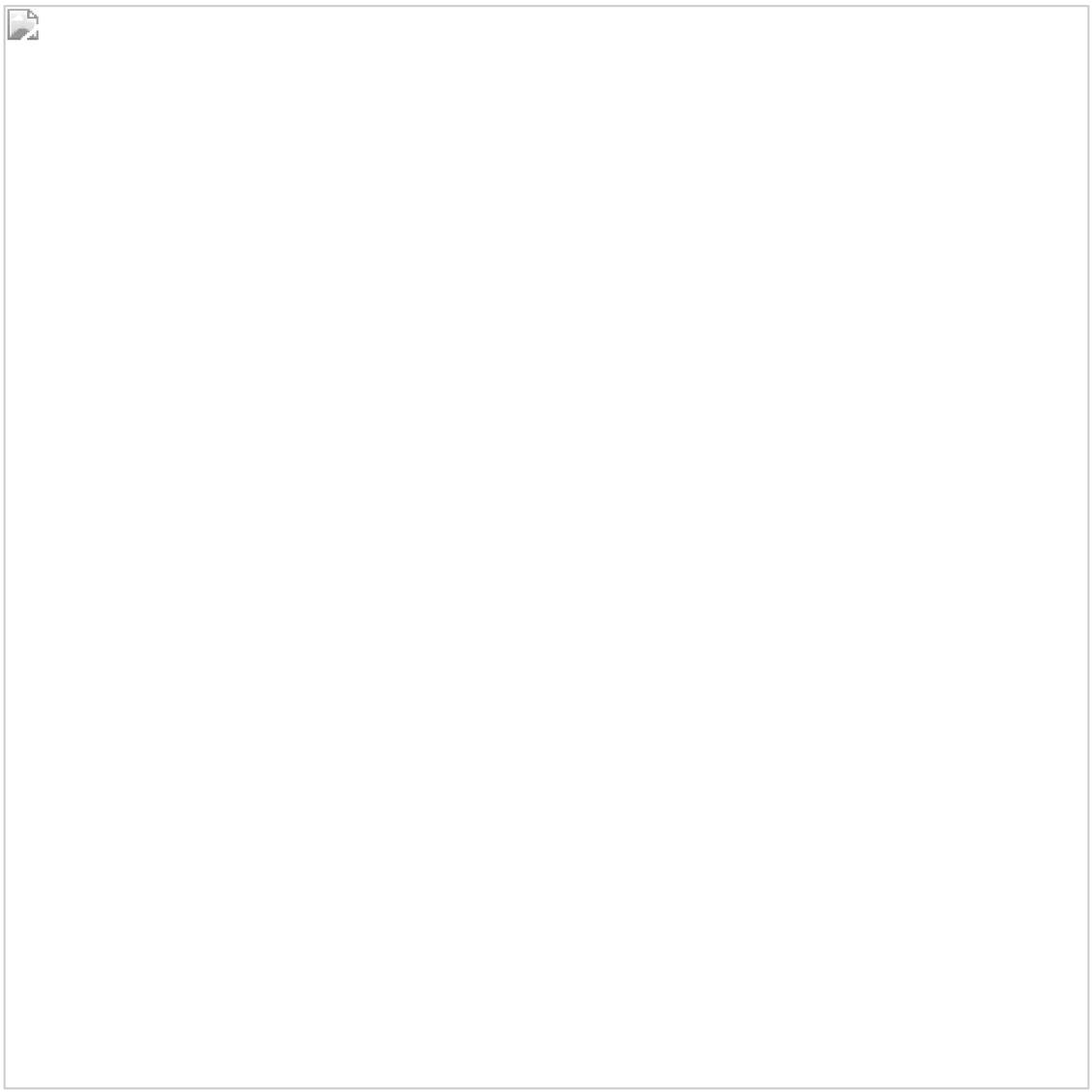
COLORING THE CLASSICS

Thumbelina

A Very Little Girl



There was once a woman who wished for a very little child, but she did not know where she should find one. So she went to an old witch and said, “I do so very much wish for a little child!”

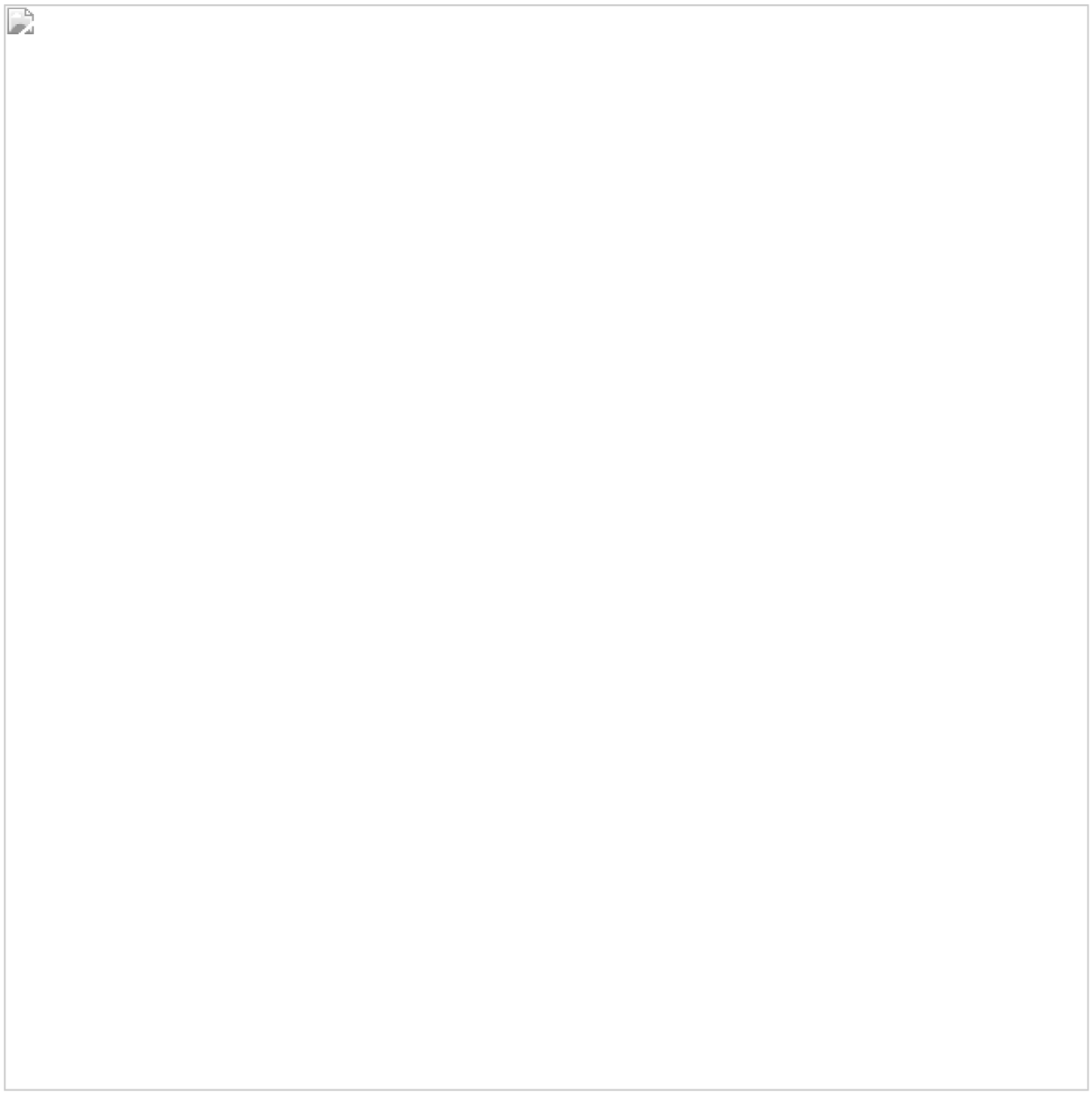
The witch gave her a barleycorn. “Put it into a flower-pot,” she said, “and you shall see what you shall see.”

TALK ABOUT IT

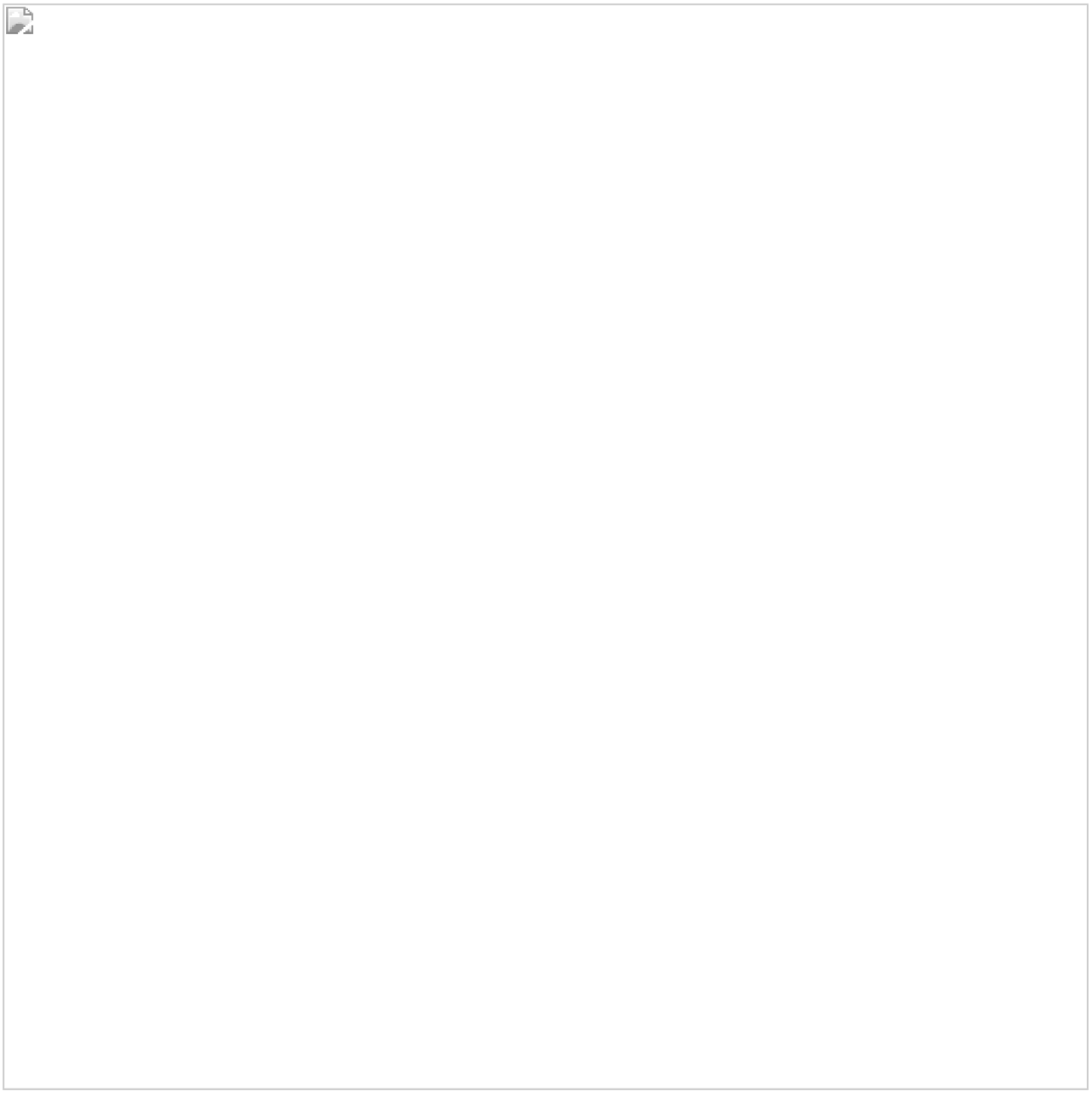
The woman wished for a very little child. What do you think she hopes will grow?

This book belongs to _____

Thumbelina · another picture



A Flower That Opened



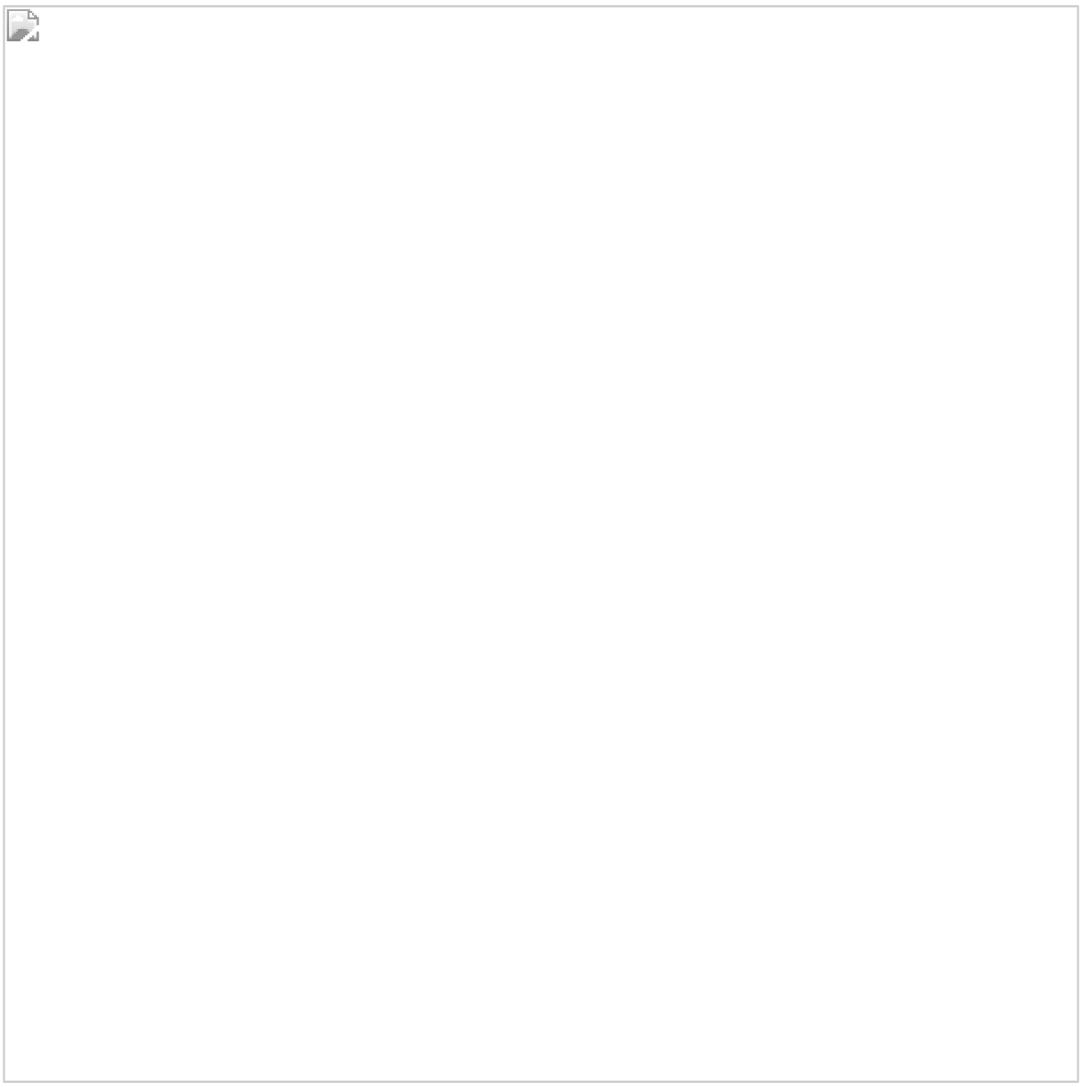
The woman planted the barleycorn, and a great handsome flower grew up, like a tulip, with its leaves tightly closed.

“It is a beautiful flower,” said the woman, and she kissed its yellow and red leaves. The flower opened with a loud crack. In the middle, on the green stamens, sat “a little maiden, delicate and graceful to behold.” She was scarcely half a thumb’s length in height, so she was called Thumbelina.

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina came out of a flower. What would you say to her first?

A Flower That Opened · another picture

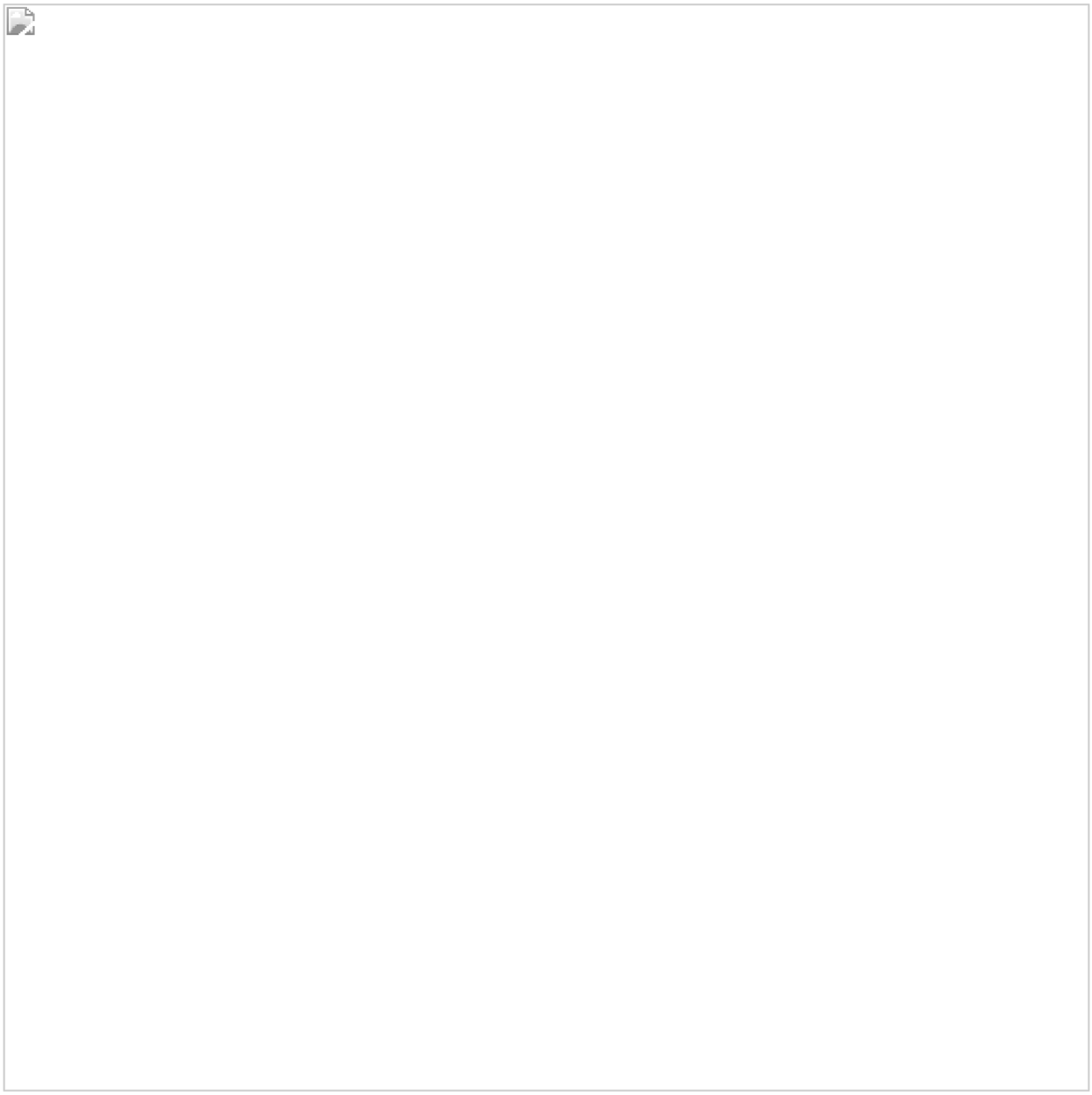


Think about it

1. Where did Thumbelina sit when the flower opened?

- ○ On the green stamens in the middle
- ○ On the woman's shoulder
- ○ On a chair

A Walnut-Shell Bed



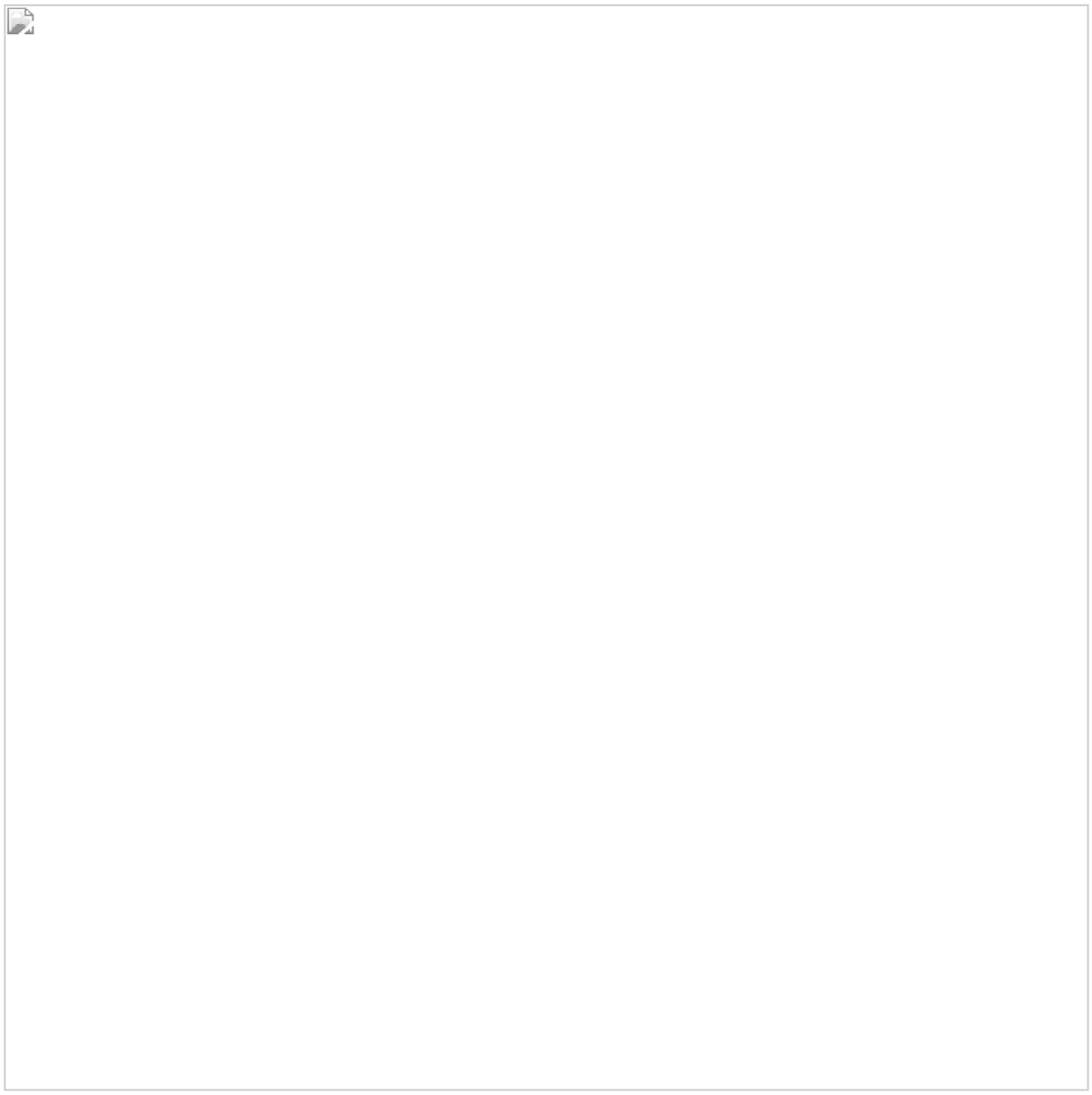
A neat polished walnut-shell was Thumbelina's cradle, with blue violet-leaves for mattresses and a rose-leaf for a coverlet.

In the daytime she played on the table, where the woman had put a plate of water with flowers around it. A tulip-leaf floated there, and Thumbelina sat on it and rowed across the plate, "with two white horse-hairs for oars." She could sing so delicately and sweetly that the like had never been heard.

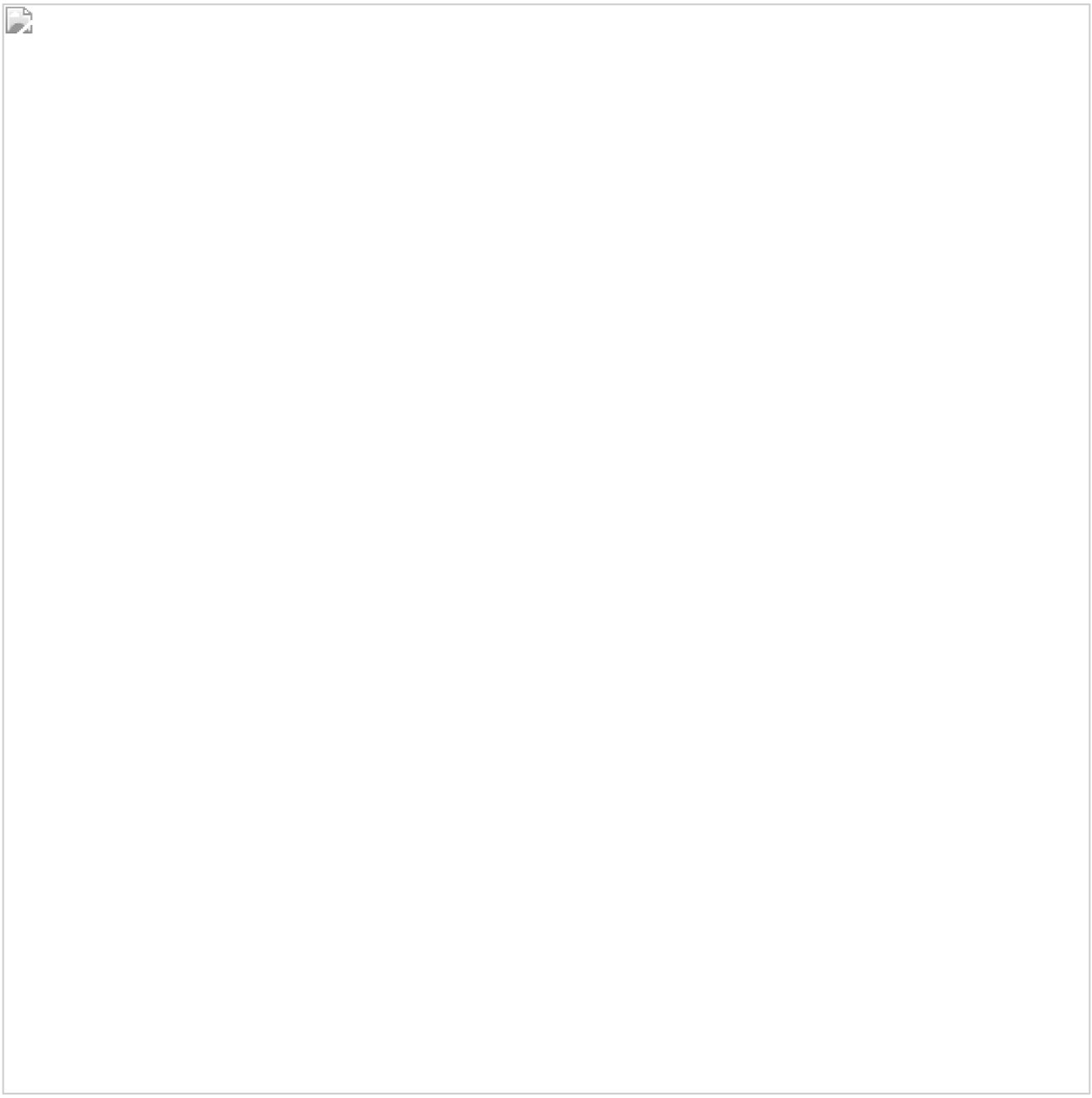
TALK ABOUT IT

Which part of her bed would you like best, the walnut-shell, the violet-leaves or the rose-leaf?

A Walnut-Shell Bed · another picture



The Toad Comes in the Night

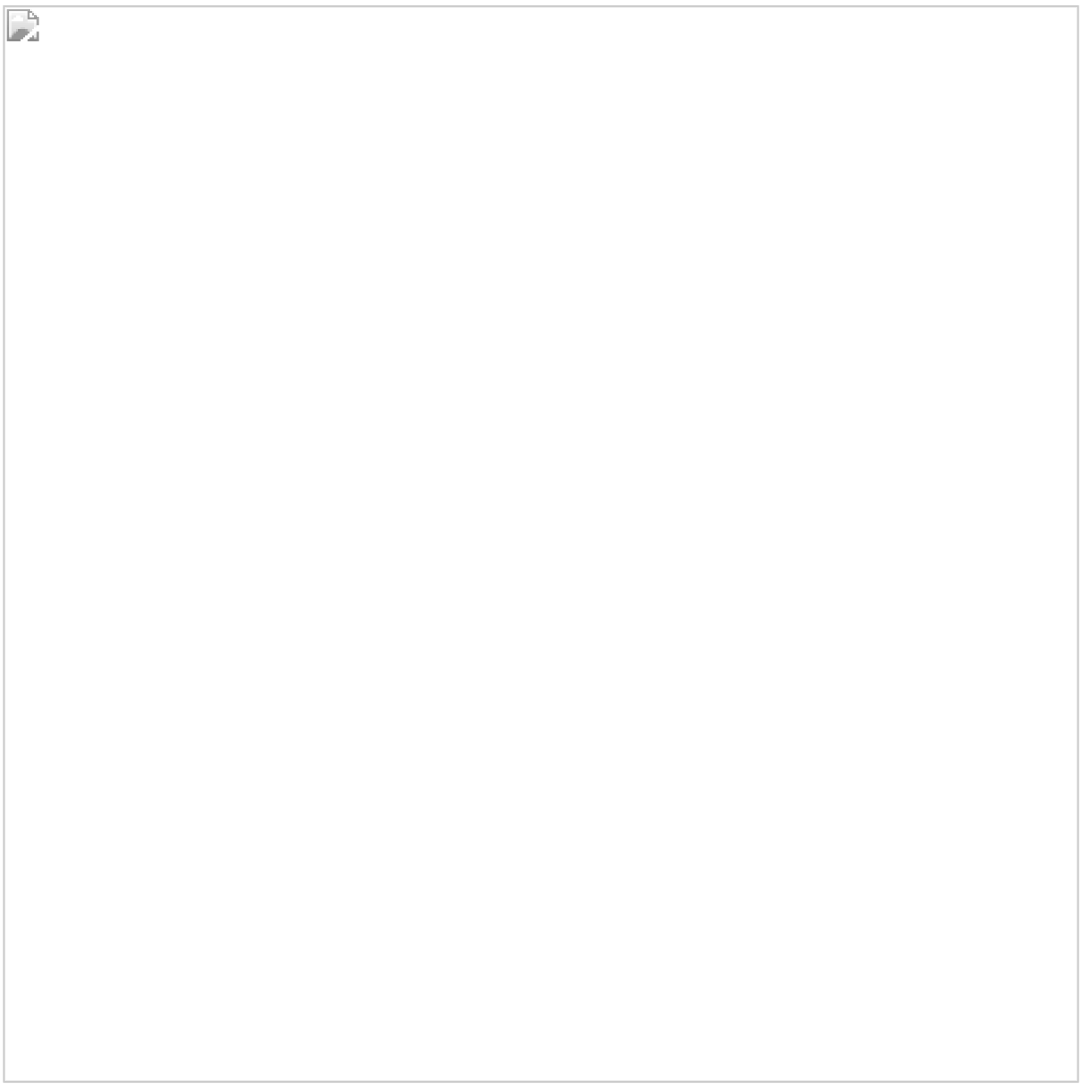


One night, while Thumbelina lay asleep, a horrid old Toad hopped in at the broken window. She was ugly, big and damp.

“That would be a handsome wife for my son,” said the Toad. She took the walnut-shell with Thumbelina asleep inside, and hopped away with it into the garden.

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina was carried off in her sleep. How do you think she felt when she woke up?

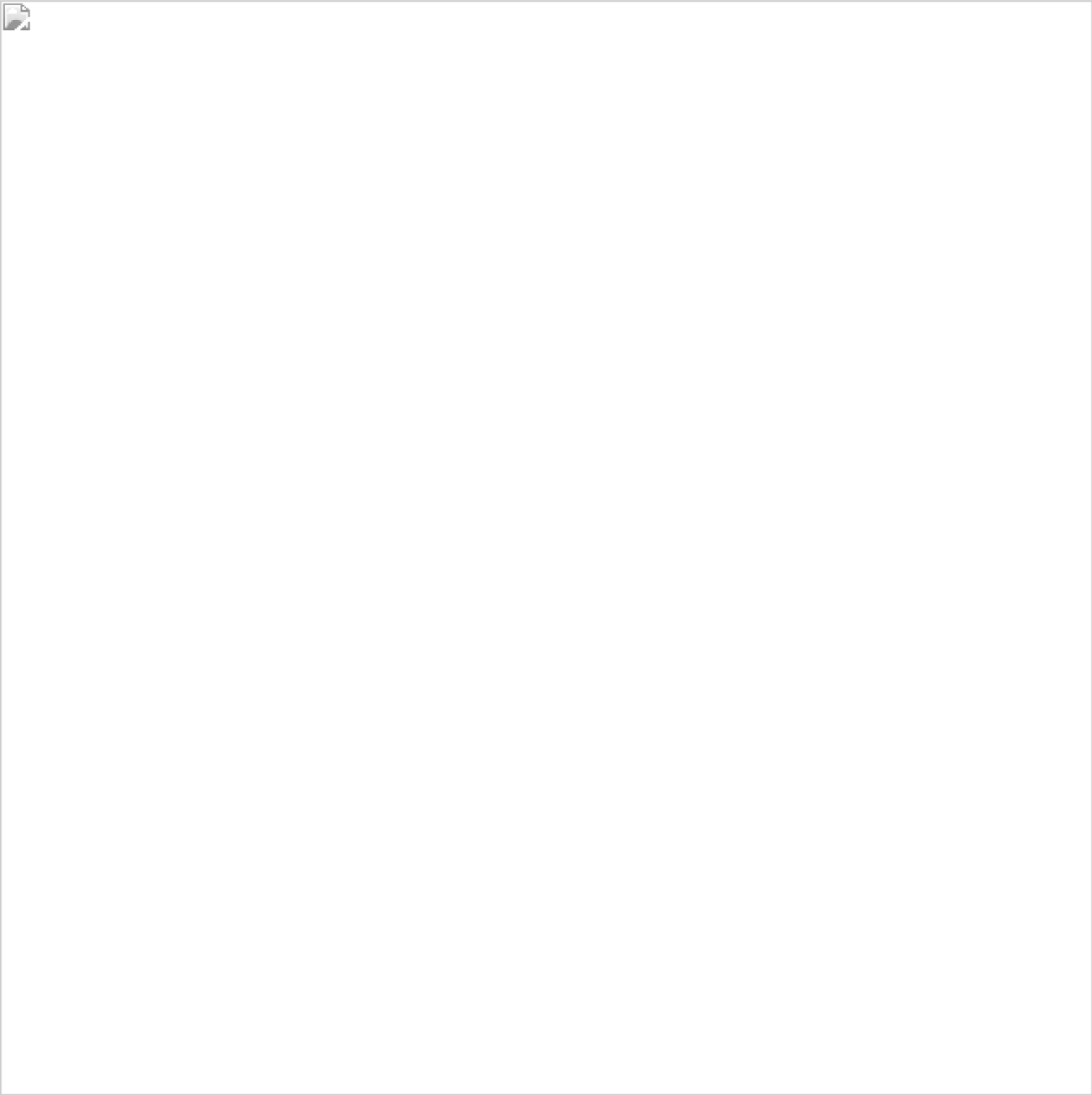


Think about it

1. What did the Toad take away?

- ○ The tulip
- ○ The walnut-shell with Thumbelina in it
- ○ The plate

A Leaf in the Brook



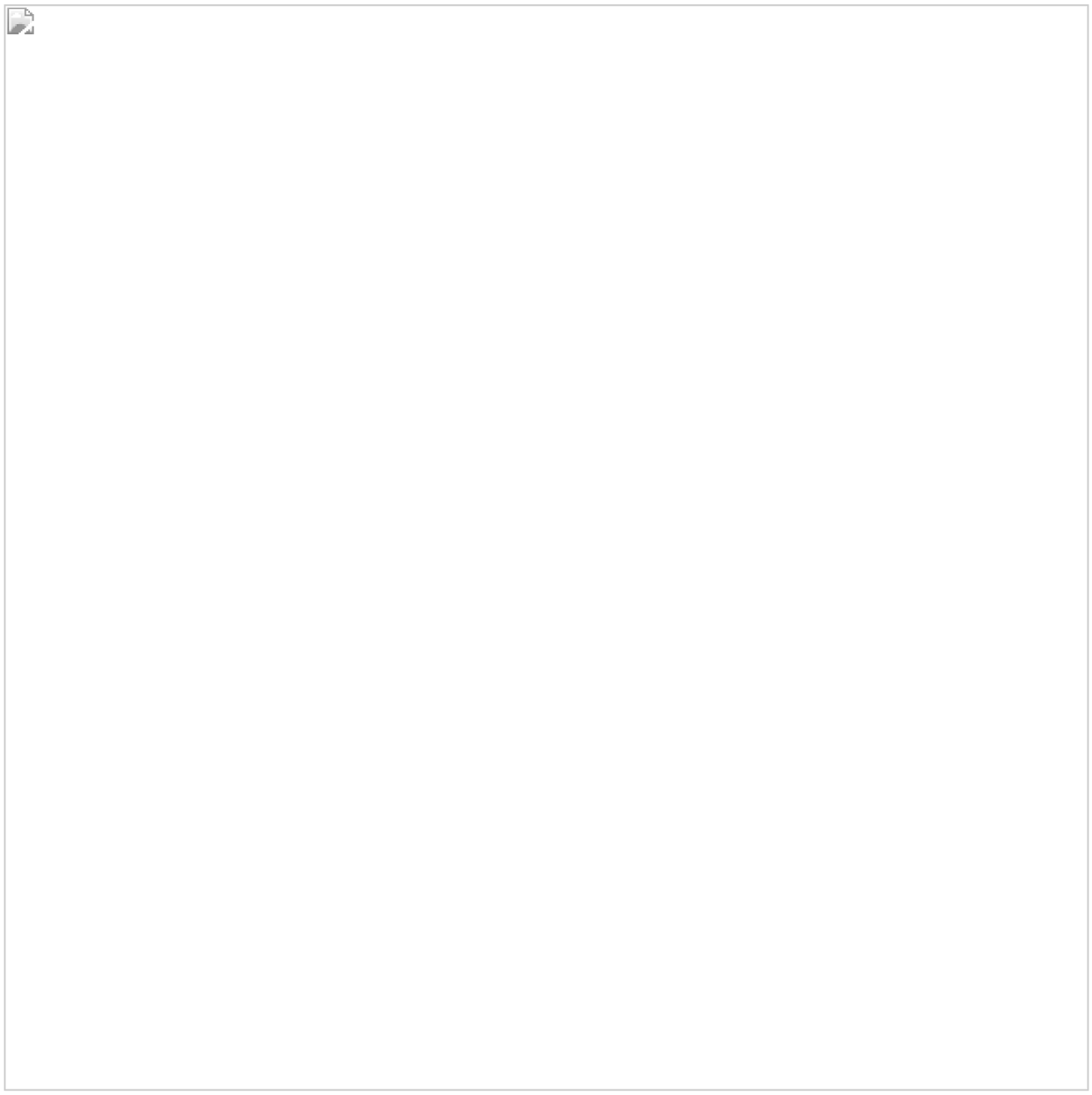
The Toad and her ugly son lived by a broad brook. “Croak! croak! brek-kek-kex!” was all the son could say.

They put Thumbelina on a broad water-lily leaf, far out in the water, so she could not get away. When she woke and saw where she was, she began to cry very bitterly.

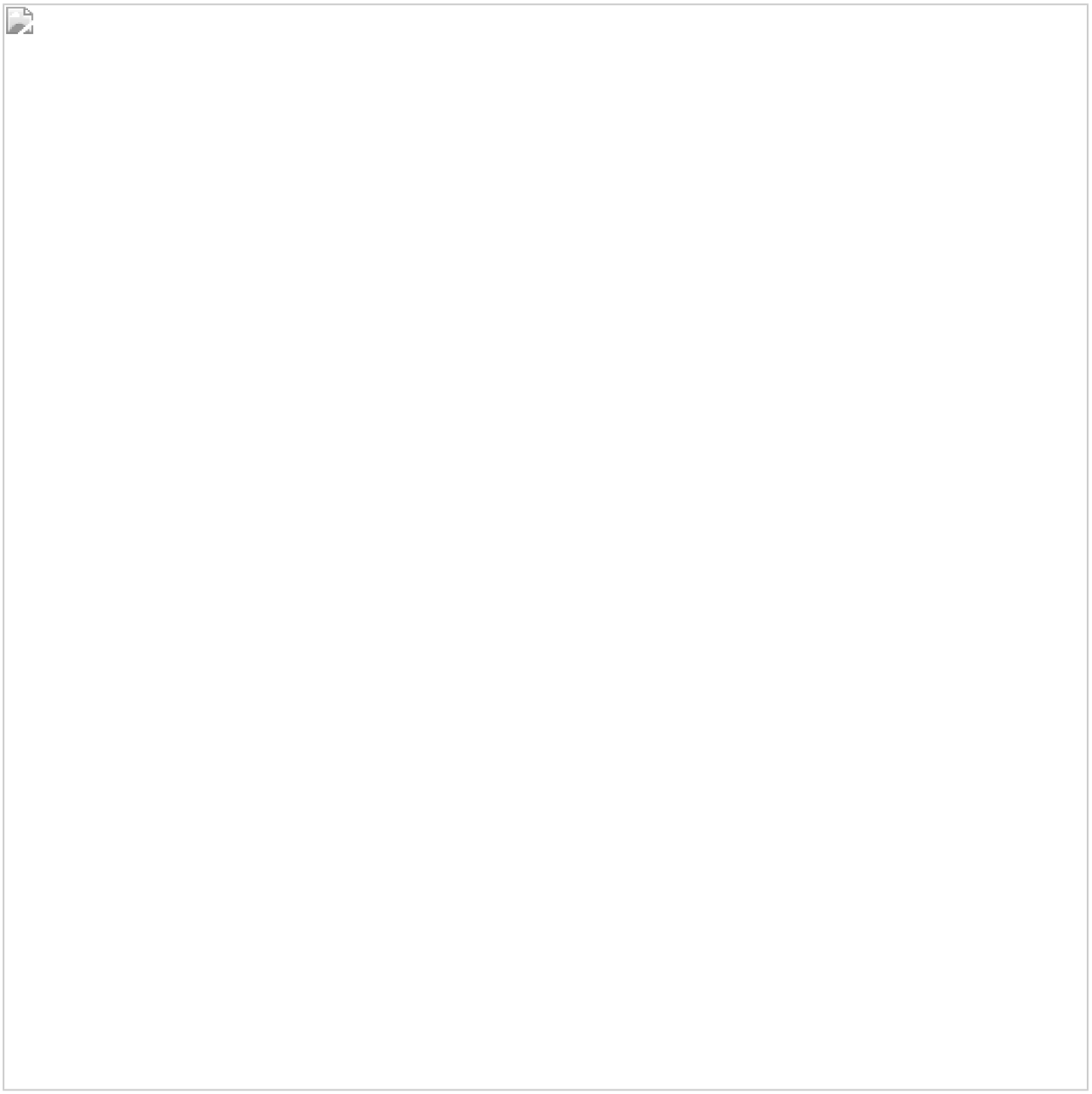
TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina was all alone on a leaf. What would you do if you were her?

A Leaf in the Brook · another picture



The Little Fishes



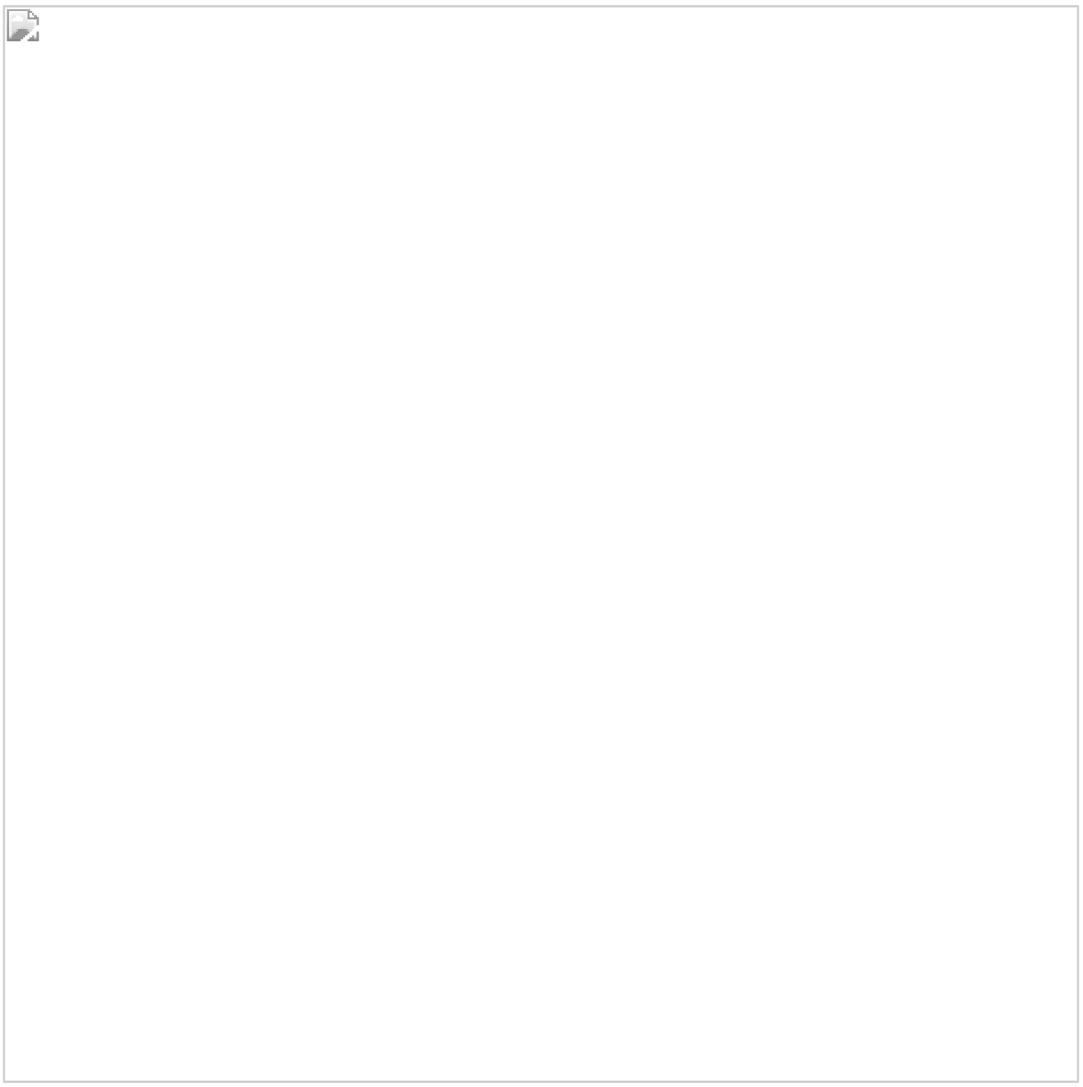
The little fishes below had heard what the Toad said. They thought Thumbelina was so pretty that they felt very sorry she should go to the ugly Toad. “No, that must never be!” they thought. They gathered around the green stalk, and with their teeth they gnawed it through.

The leaf floated away down the stream, far from the Toad. The little birds in the bushes saw her and said, “What a lovely little girl!”

TALK ABOUT IT

The little fishes helped someone they hardly knew. Have you ever helped a stranger?

The Little Fishes · another picture

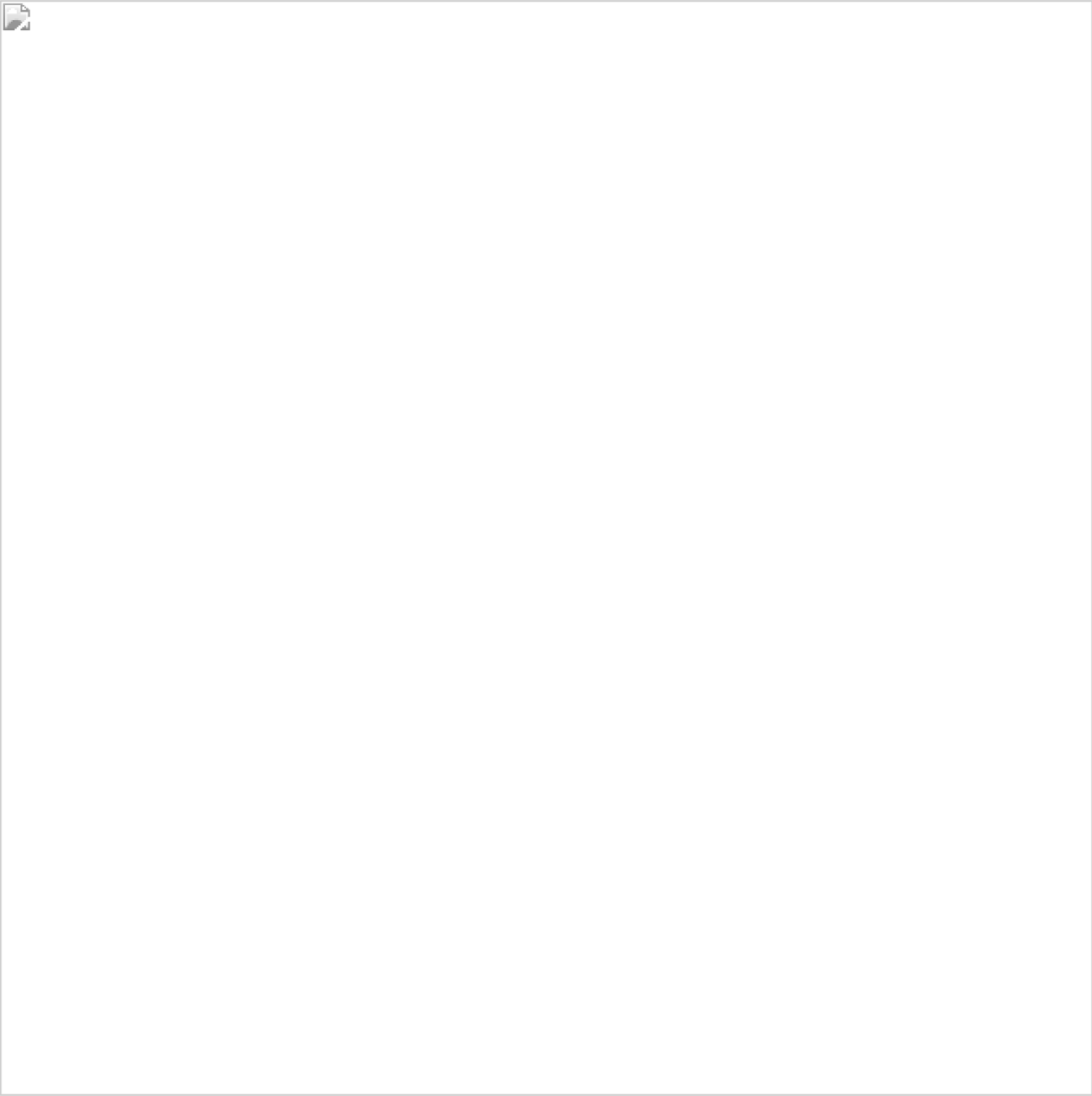


Think about it

1. Who gnawed through the stalk to set Thumbelina free?

- ○ The butterflies
- ○ The little fishes
- ○ The birds

The Cockchafers

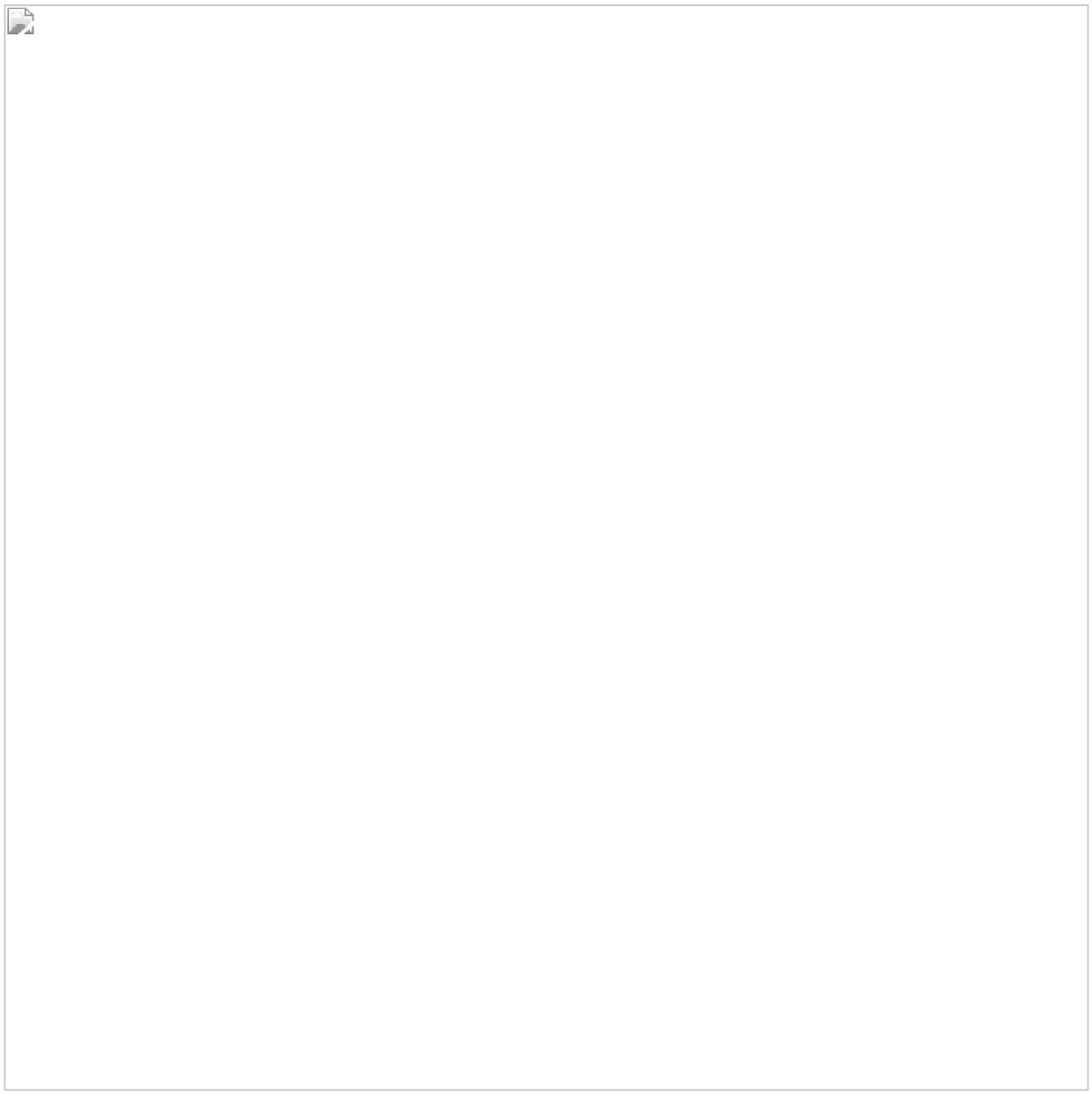


A big Cockchafer flew up, clasped his claws round her slender waist, and flew with her up into a tree. He thought she was very pretty.

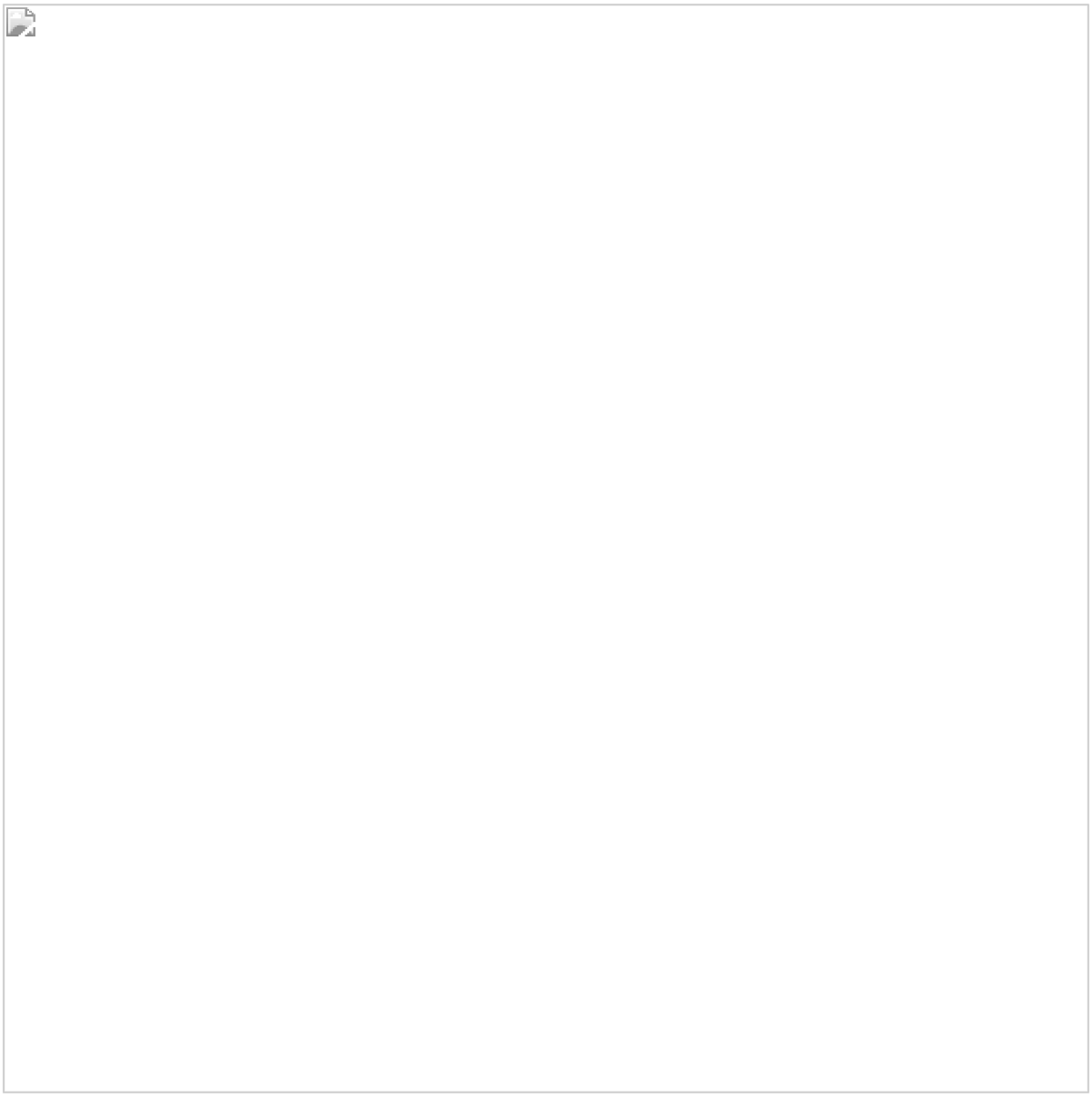
But when the other cockchafers came to look, they said, “how ugly she is!” and the Cockchafer believed it at last. He flew down and set her upon a daisy. She wept, though she was “the loveliest little being one could imagine.”

TALK ABOUT IT

The cockchafers were not kind. What would you say to them?



The Field Mouse



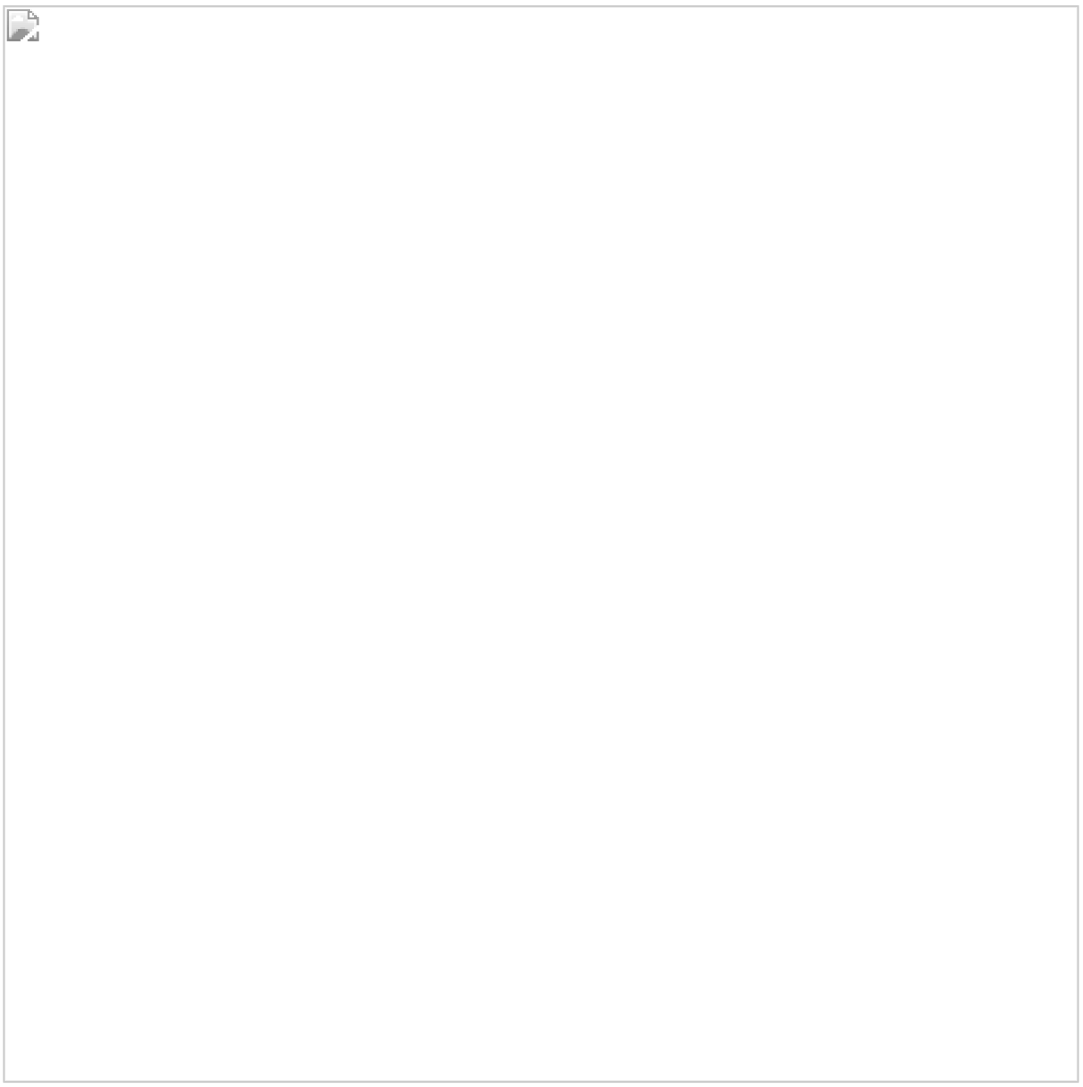
All summer Thumbelina lived alone in the great wood, and when winter came it was cold and the corn had been cut. Only dry stubble stood in the frozen ground.

She came to the door of a Field Mouse, who lived warm in a hole under the stubble. Thumbelina begged for a little bit of barleycorn. “You poor little creature,” said the Field Mouse, “come into my warm room and dine with me.” She told Thumbelina she could stay for the winter if she kept the room clean and told stories.

TALK ABOUT IT

The Field Mouse took in a cold, hungry stranger. What did that cost her, and what did she give?

The Field Mouse · another picture

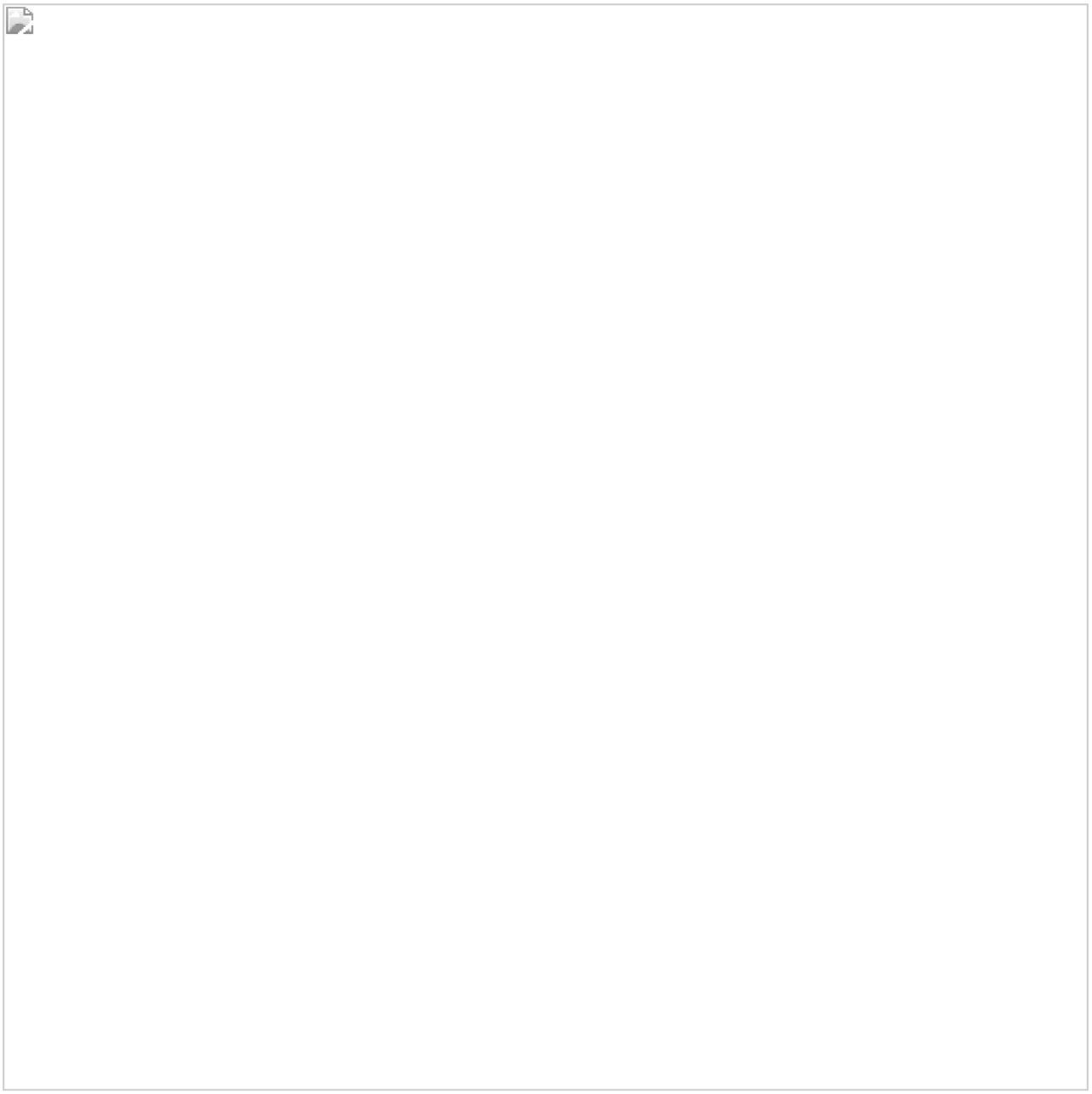


Think about it

1. What did the Field Mouse say when Thumbelina begged at her door?

- ○ Go away, it is late
- ○ Come into my warm room and dine with me
- ○ Wait here until the spring

The Mole Who Could Not See



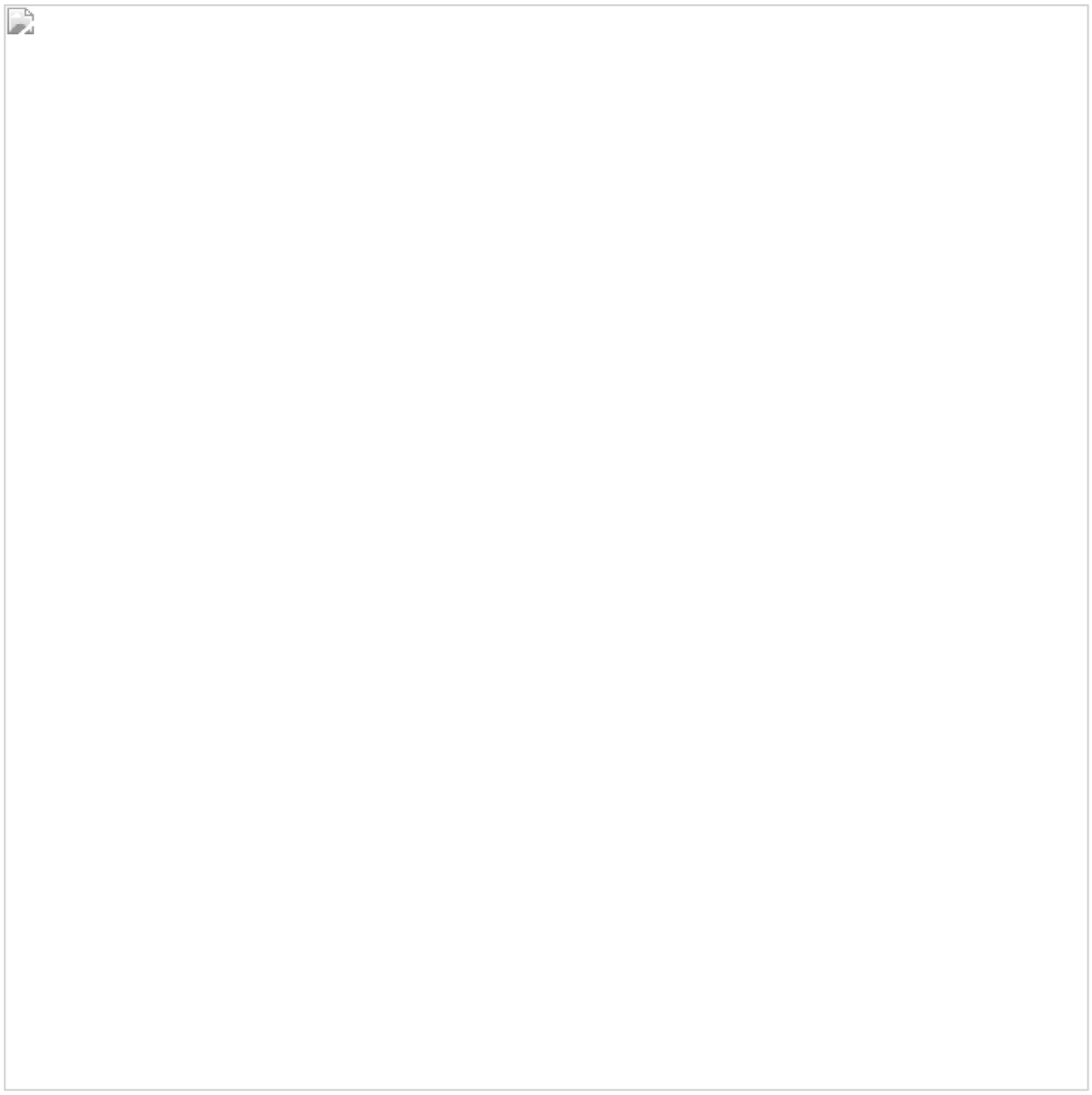
“My neighbour is in the habit of visiting me once a week,” said the Field Mouse. He was a Mole in a black velvet coat, rich and learned, with big rooms. But he could not see at all, and he did not like the sun or the beautiful flowers, and said nasty things about them, for he had never seen them.

The Field Mouse wanted Thumbelina to marry him. But Thumbelina did not care for the Mole at all.

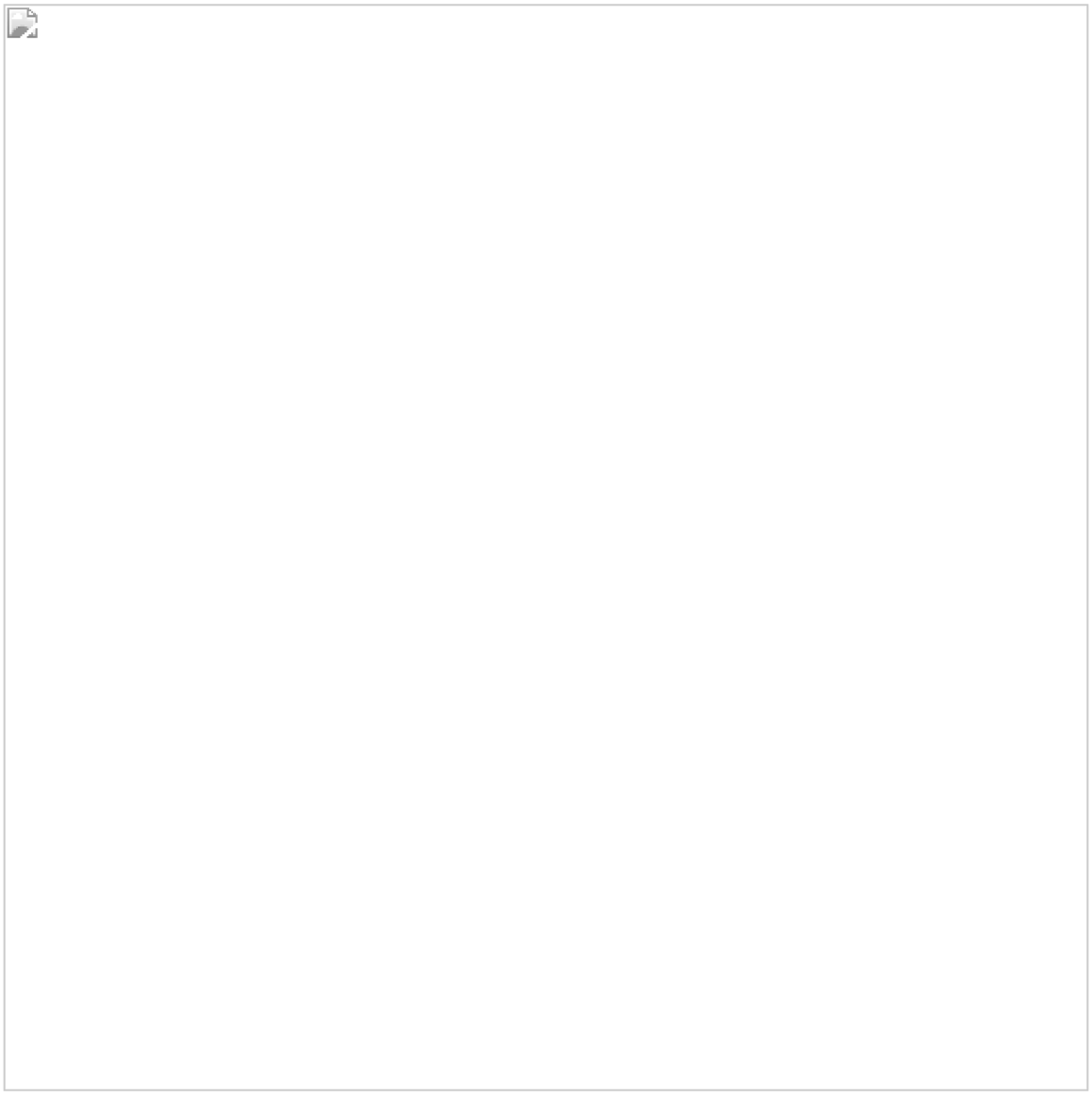
TALK ABOUT IT

The Mole said nasty things about what he had never seen. Have you ever done that?

The Mole Who Could Not See · another picture



The Swallow in the Passage



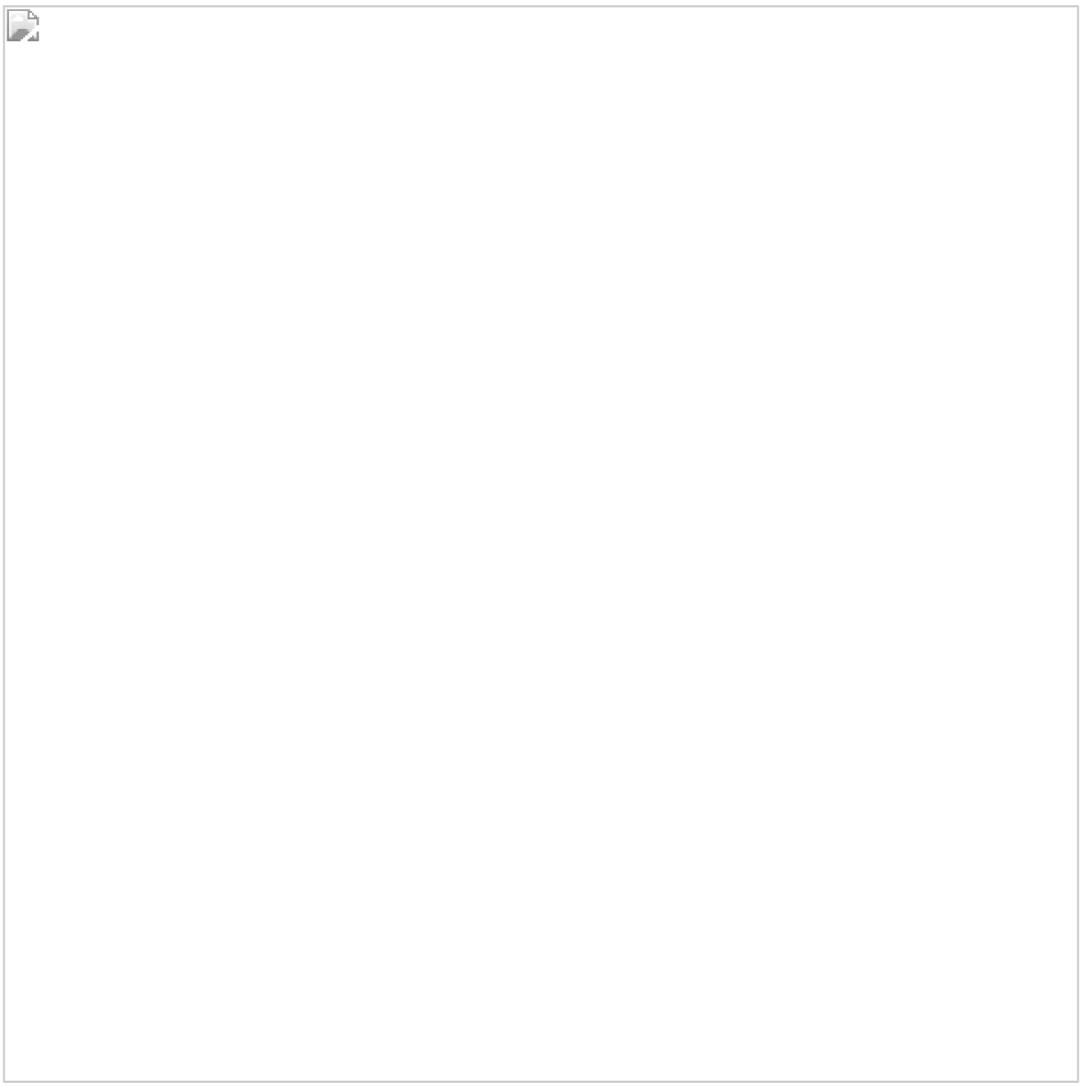
The Mole had dug a long passage from his house to theirs. The three of them went through it, and they found a Swallow lying there. The poor bird looked as if he had died of cold.

When the two others turned their backs, Thumbelina kissed him on his closed eyes. That night she wove a carpet of hay and spread it over him with soft cotton at his sides. Then she laid her head on his breast and felt something beating. "The bird was not dead," the story tells us. He was only cold, and now he had been warmed, and came to life again.

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina was kind to the Swallow when she thought he was dead. Why do you think she bothered?

The Swallow in the Passage · another picture

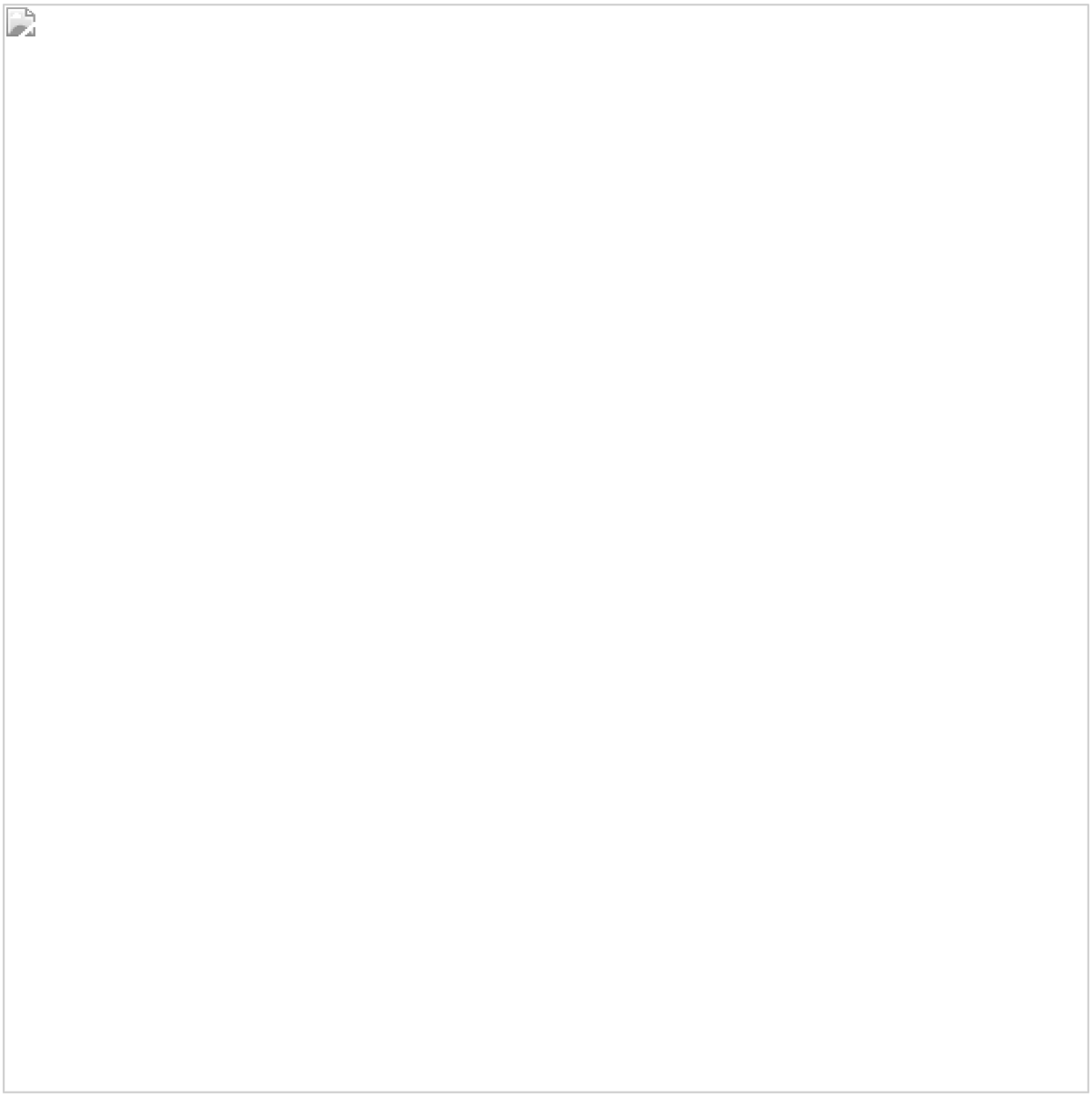


Think about it

1. What did Thumbelina feel when she laid her head on the bird's breast?

- ○ Nothing at all
- ○ Something beating inside
- ○ A cold feather

A Winter of Nursing

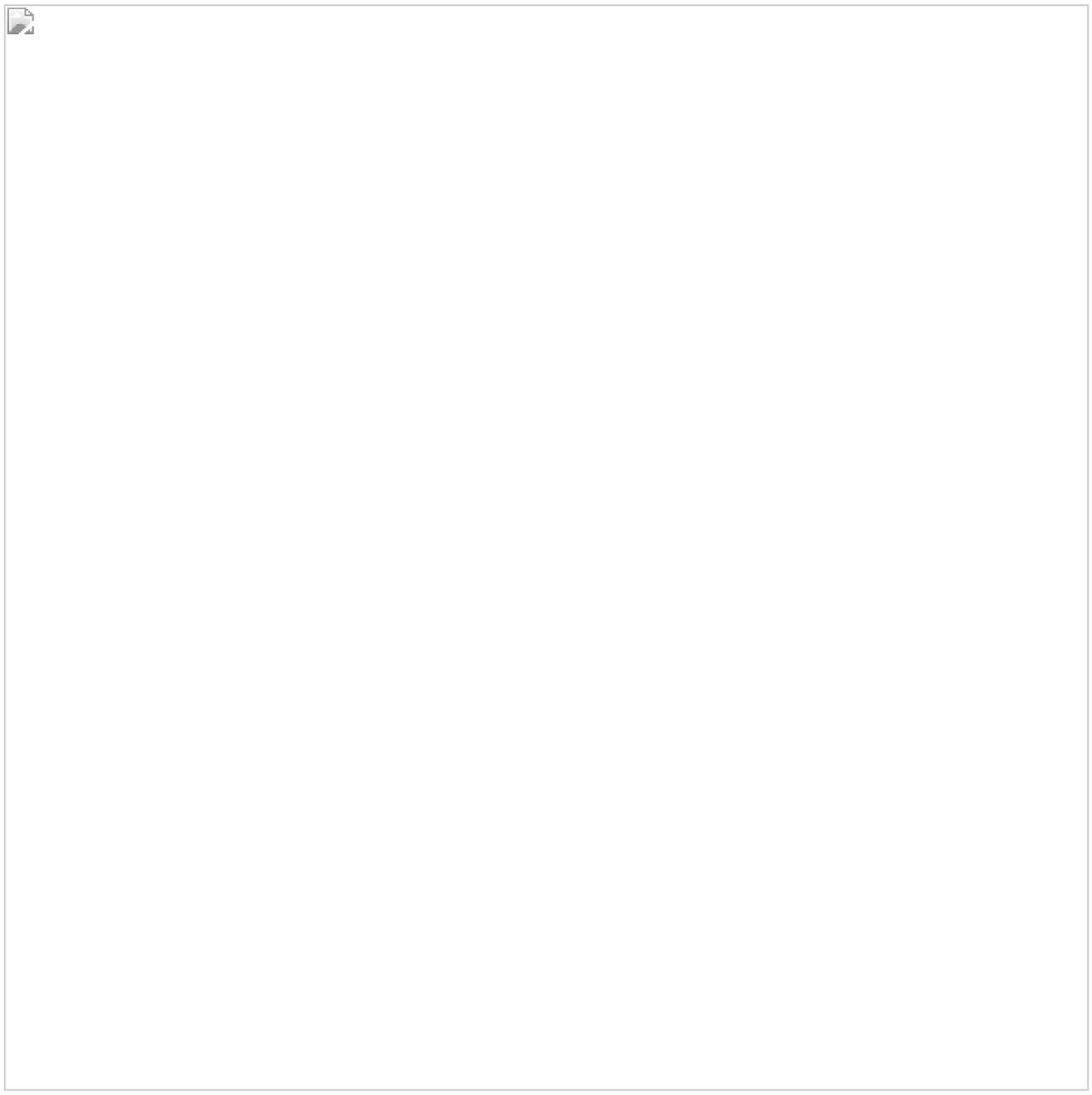


“Stay in your warm bed, and I will nurse you,” said Thumbelina. She brought the Swallow water in the petal of a flower, and he told her how he had torn a wing in a thorn bush and fallen behind the other swallows.

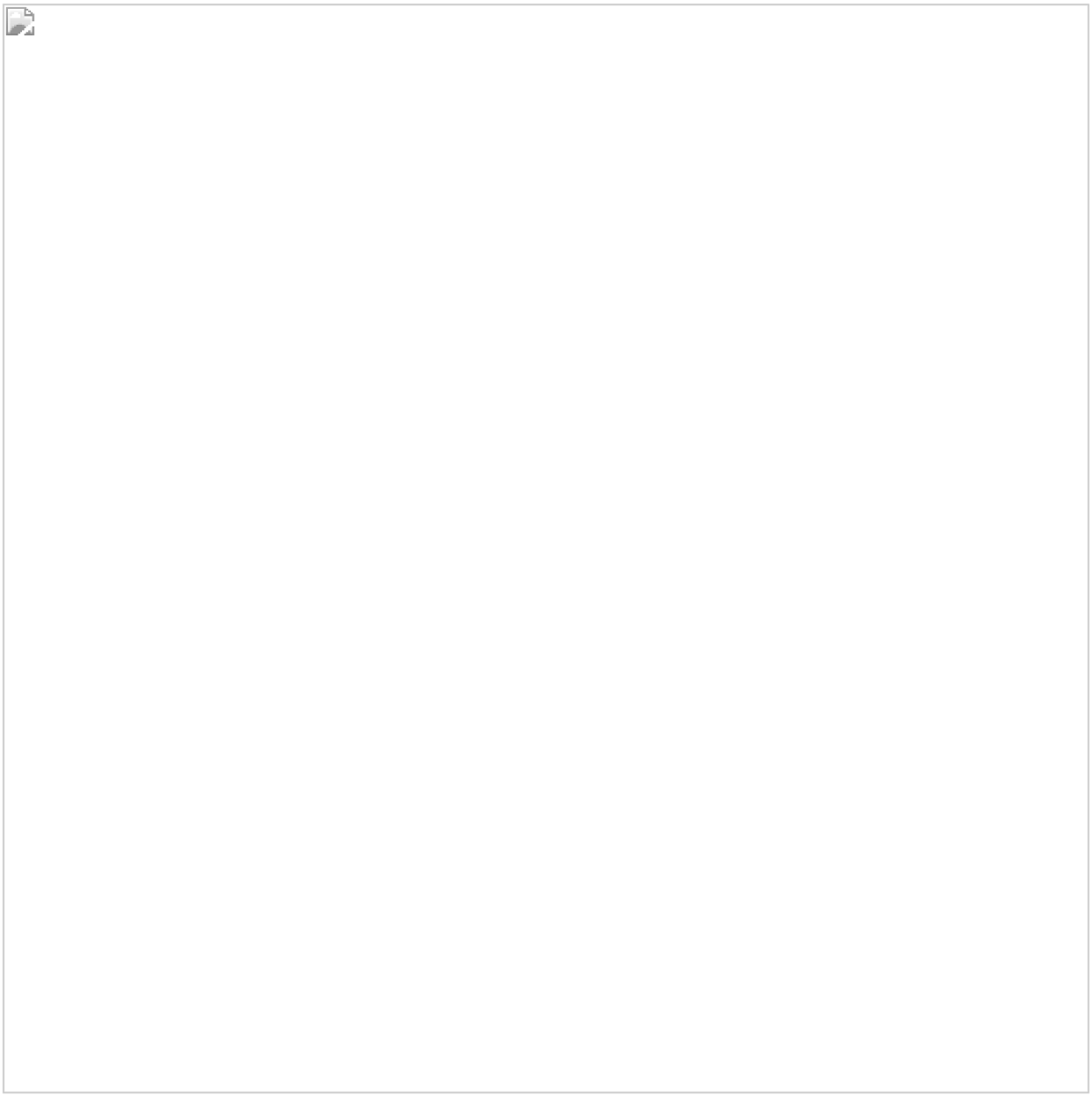
All winter the Swallow stayed, and Thumbelina nursed and tended him heartily. In the spring he asked her to fly away with him. “No, I cannot!” said Thumbelina, because the old Field Mouse would be grieved. The Swallow flew into the green forest, singing, “Tweet-weet! tweet-weet!”

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina stayed because she did not want to hurt the Field Mouse. Was that a hard choice?



A Wedding Underground



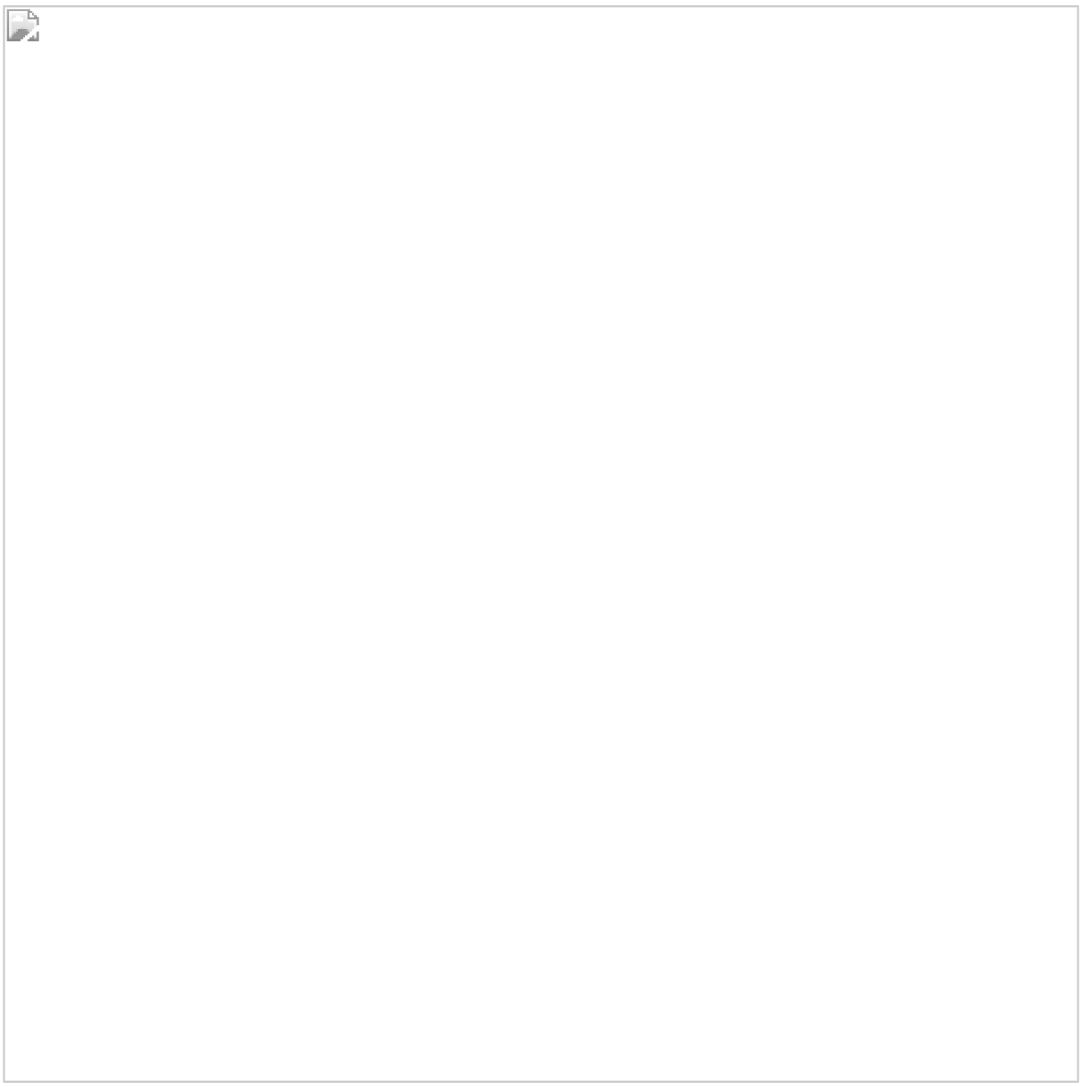
The Field Mouse said Thumbelina must make her wedding clothes, for the Mole had asked for her hand. Thumbelina turned the spindle, and the Mole hired four spiders to weave. But Thumbelina wept, and said she would not have the tiresome Mole. “Nonsense,” said the Field Mouse; “don’t be obstinate.”

The Mole wanted her to live deep under the earth and never come out into the sun. “Farewell, thou bright sun!” said Thumbelina, stretching out her arms toward it.

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina did not want this wedding. What would you tell the Field Mouse?

A Wedding Underground · another picture

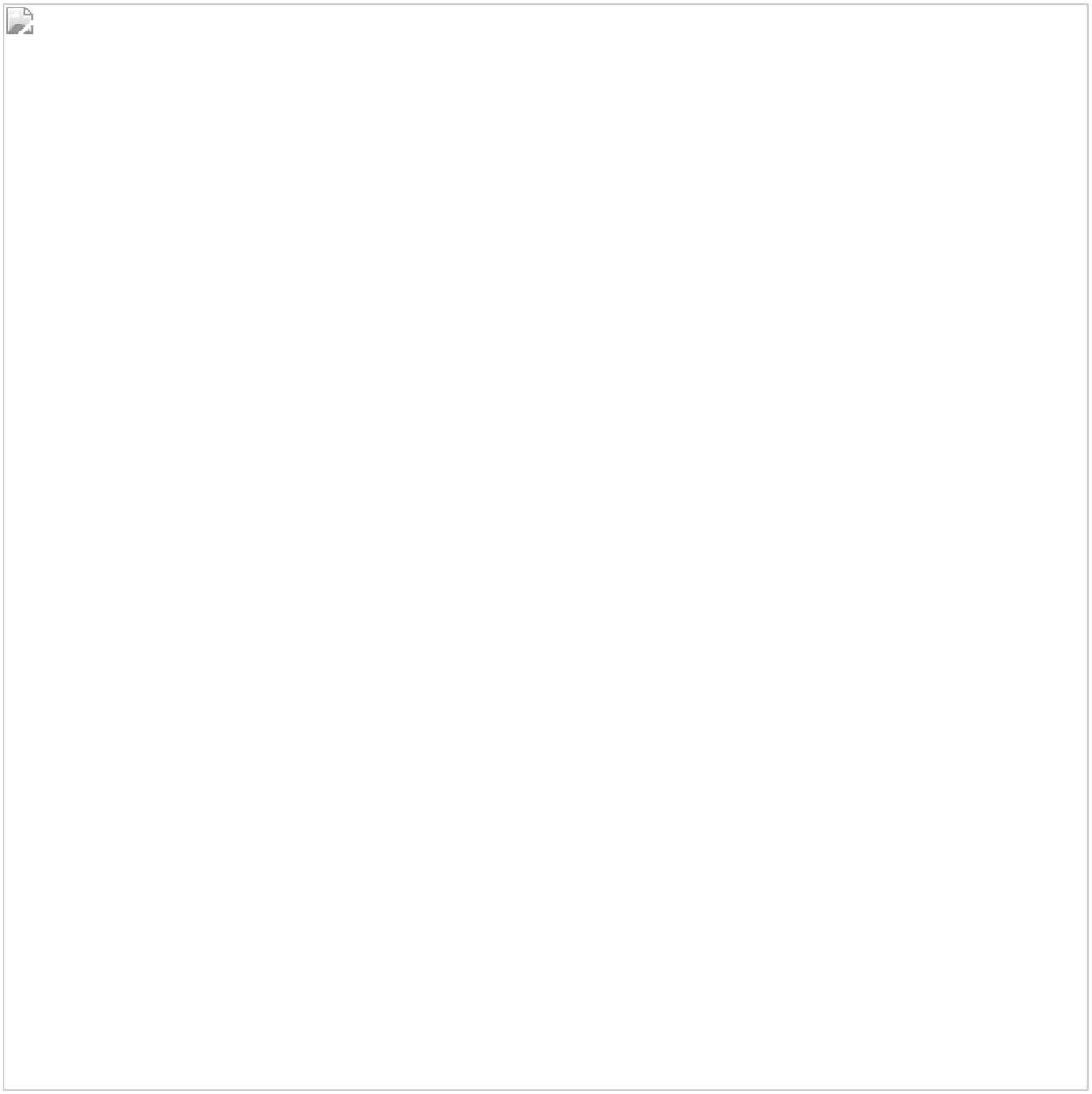


Think about it

1. Where did the Mole want Thumbelina to live?

- ○ In the treetops
- ○ Deep under the earth
- ○ By the brook

Up and Away

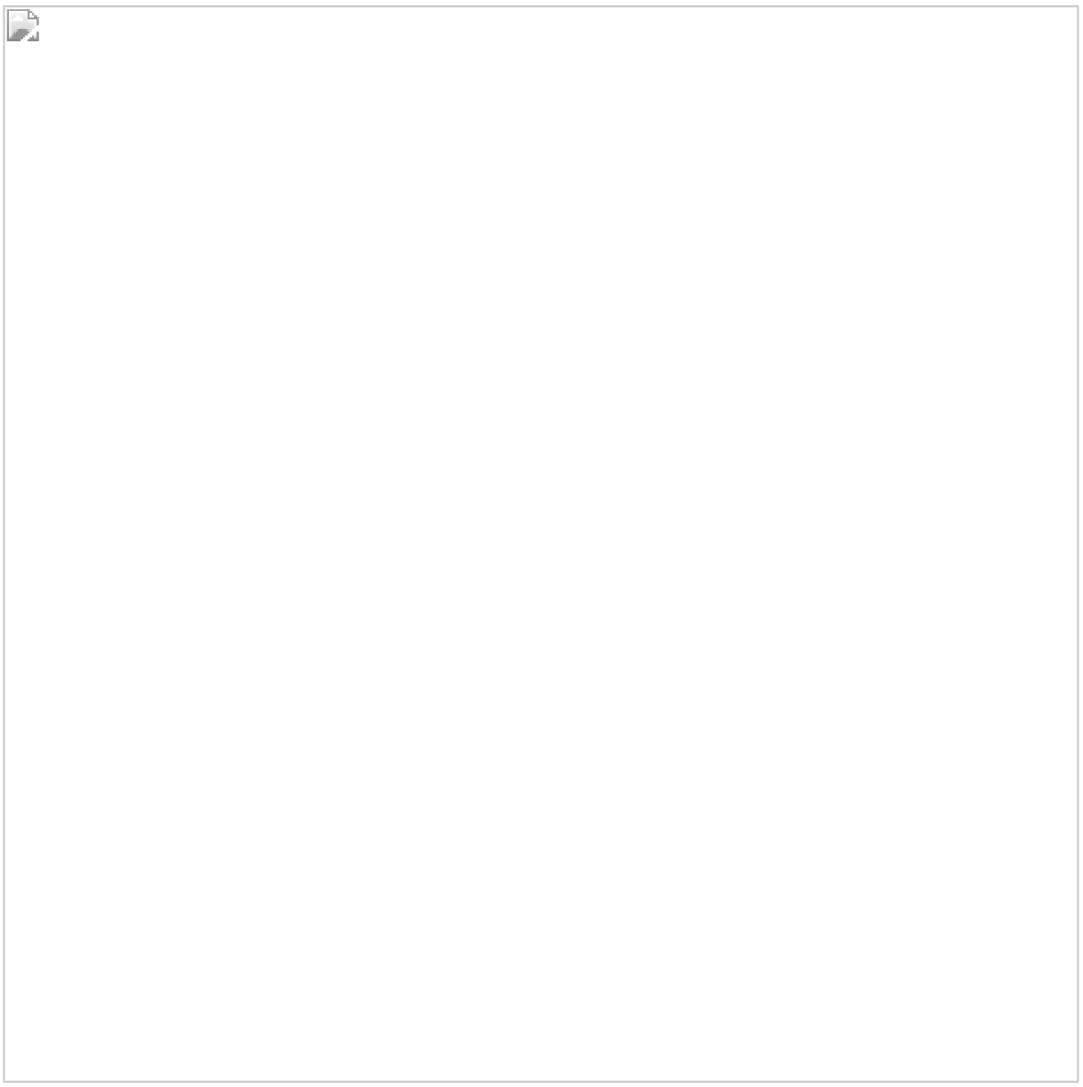


“Tweet-weet! tweet-weet!” a voice suddenly sounded over her head. It was the Swallow, flying by. The cold winter was coming, and he was going to fly to the warm countries. “Will you come with me?” he asked.

“Yes, I will go with you!” said Thumbelina. She sat on the bird’s back, tied her girdle fast to one of his strongest feathers, and they flew high over forest and sea and the great mountains where the snow always lies.

TALK ABOUT IT
Thumbelina saved the Swallow, and now the Swallow saved her. What do you think of that?

Up and Away · another picture

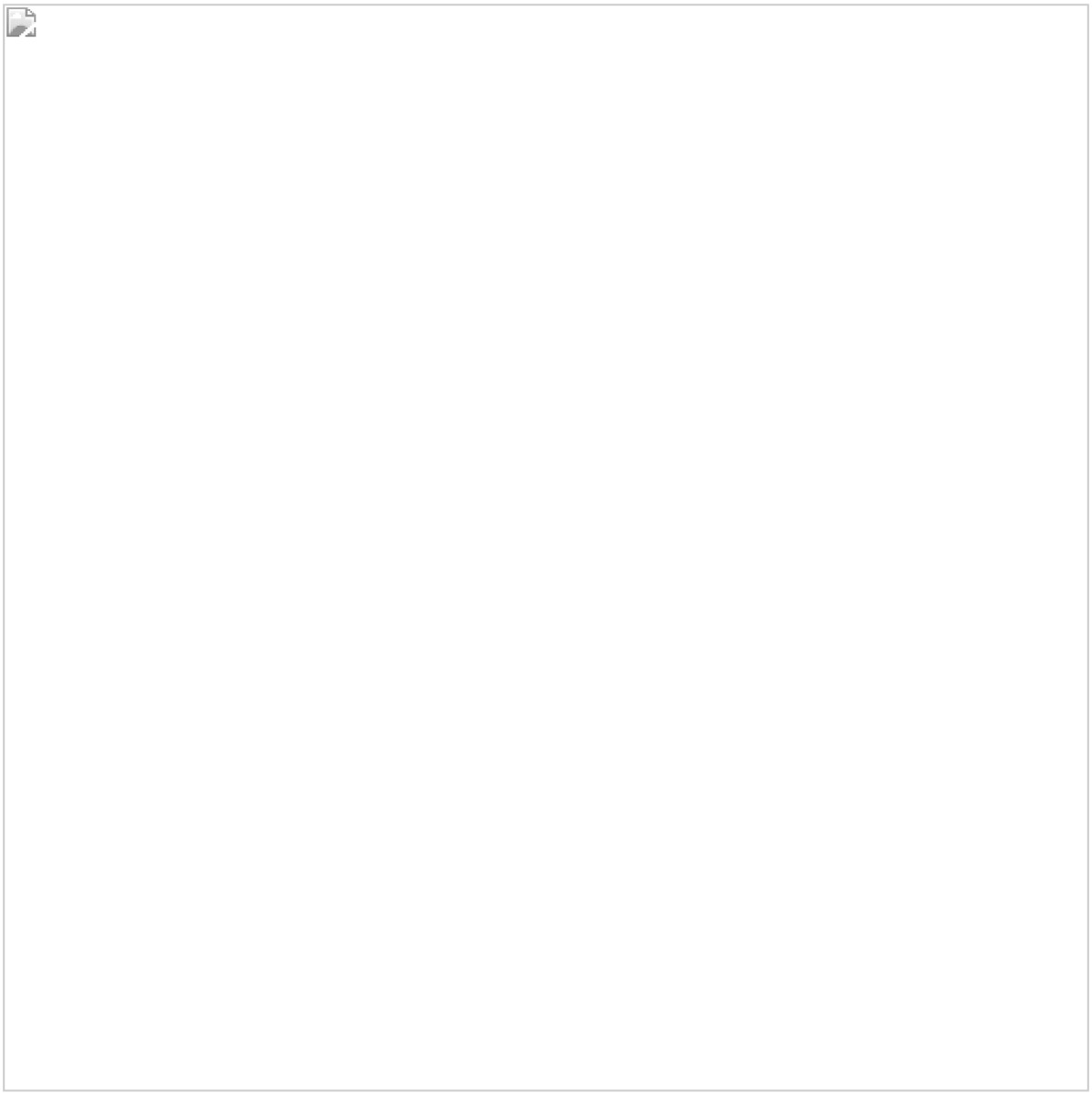


Think about it

1. How did Thumbelina stay safe on the Swallow's back?

- ○ She held on to his wings
- ○ She tied her girdle to one of his feathers
- ○ She sat in a basket

The Land of Flowers



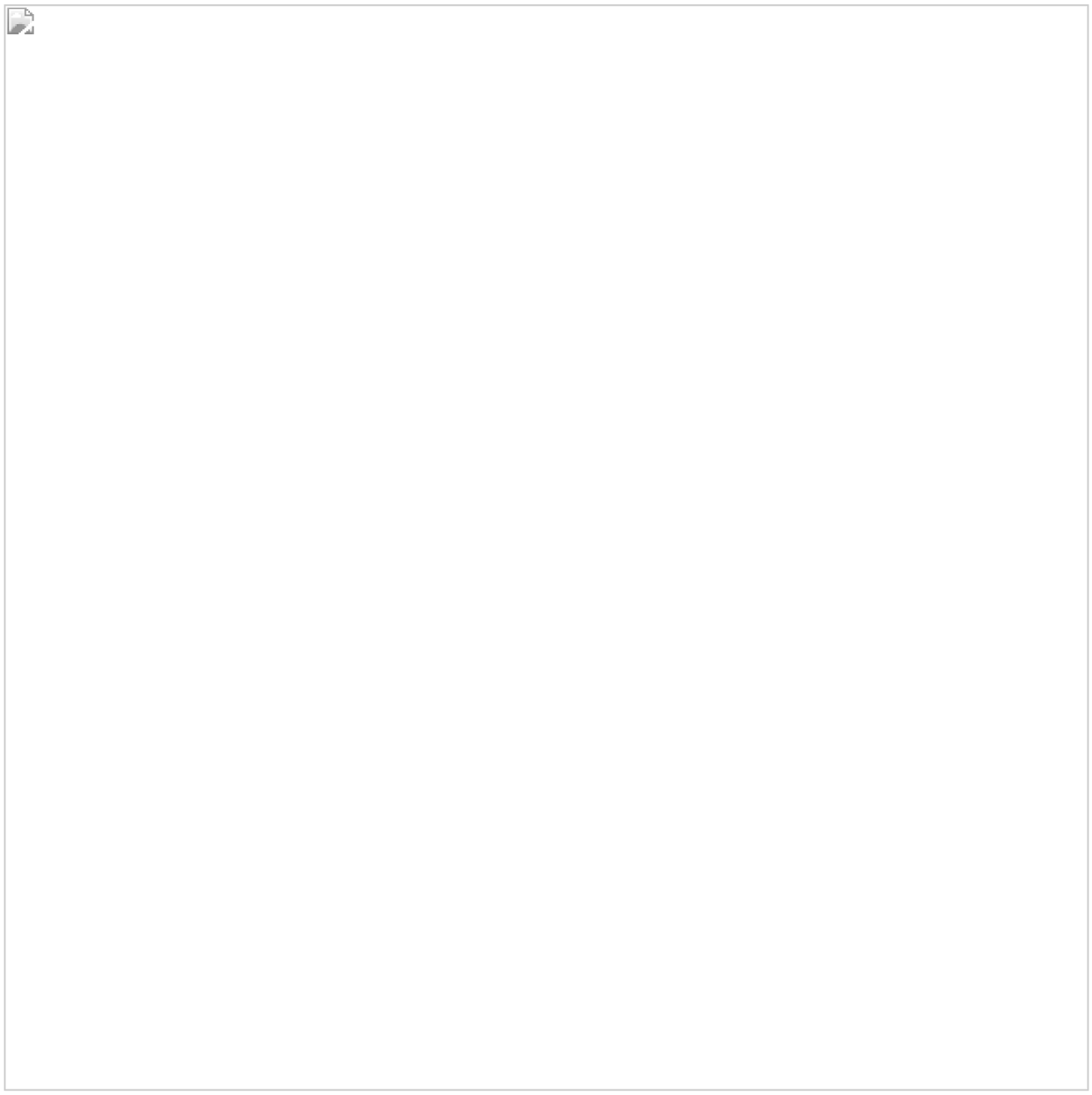
At last they came to the warm countries. The sun shone far brighter, lemons and oranges hung in the woods, and under glorious green trees by a blue lake stood a palace of dazzling white marble.

The Swallow set Thumbelina on a broad white flower. A little man sat there, as white and transparent as glass, with a gold crown and bright wings. He was the angel of the flower. “Heavens! how beautiful he is!” whispered Thumbelina. When he saw Thumbelina he took off his crown, put it on her head, and asked if she would be his wife.

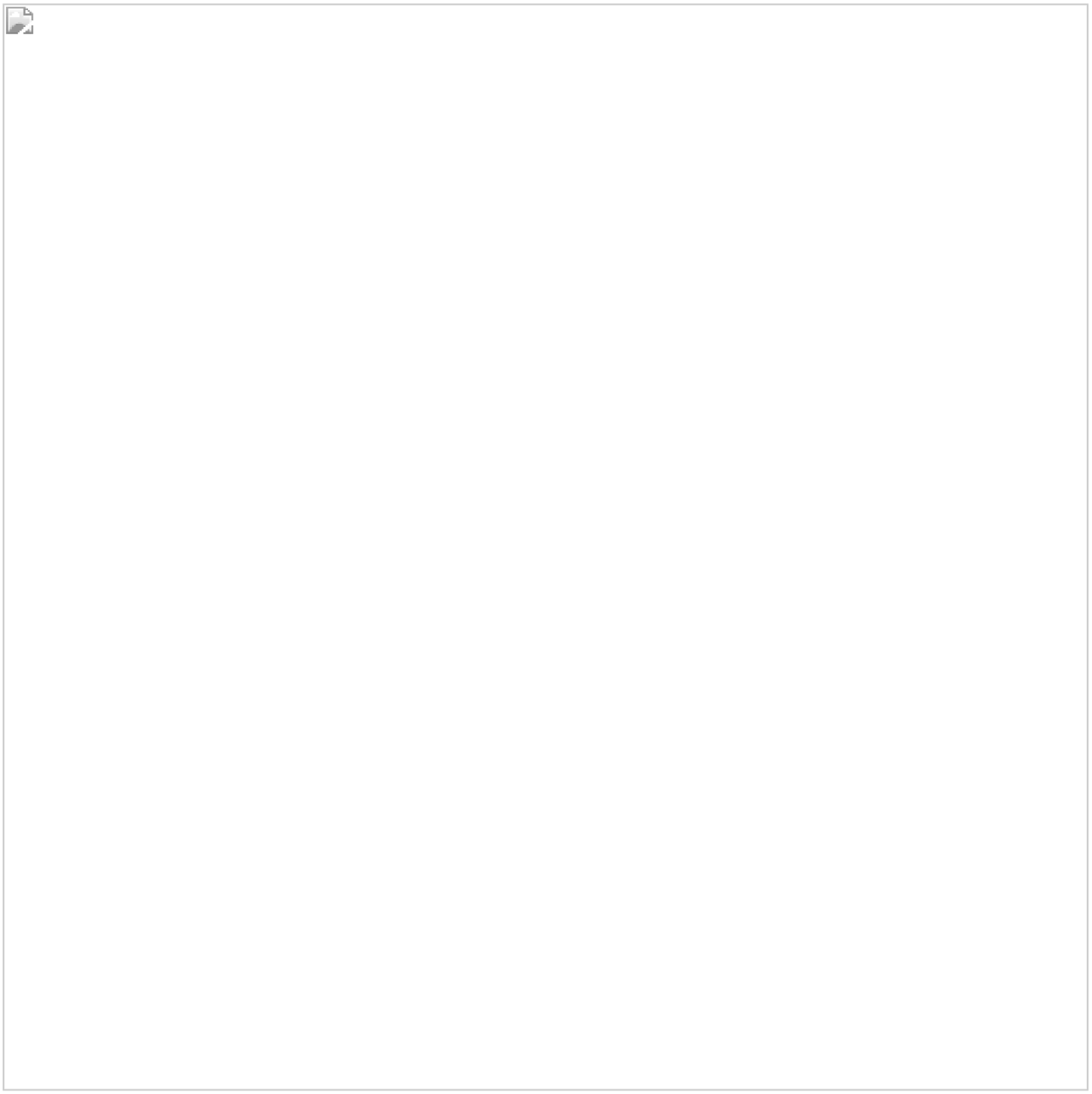
TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina finally found someone her own size. What do you think she is feeling?

The Land of Flowers · another picture



A New Name

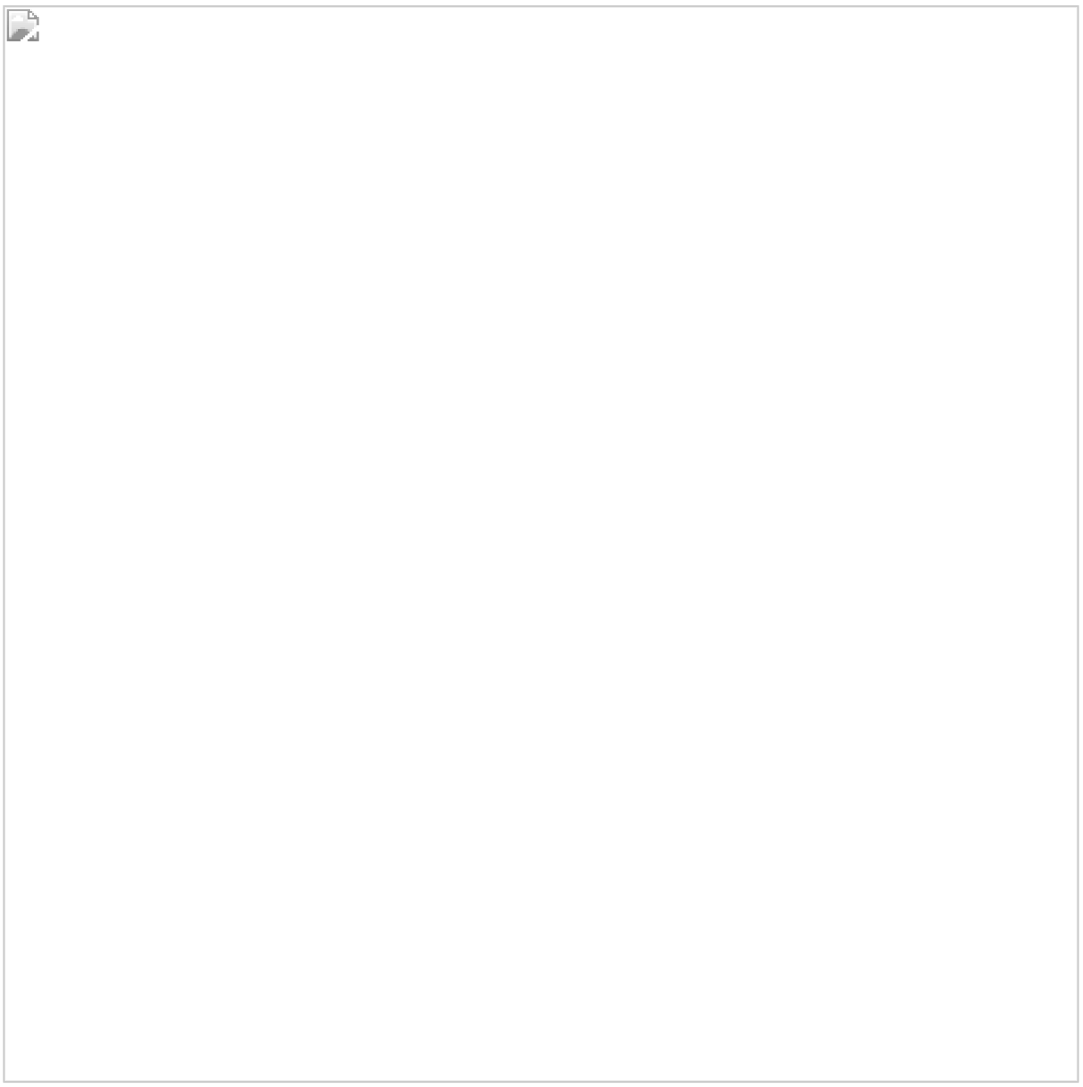


Thumbelina said yes to the charming prince, and out of every flower came a lady or a lord, each bringing her a present. The best gift was a pair of beautiful wings, so now she could fly from flower to flower.

“You shall not be called Thumbelina!” said the Flower Angel to her; “we will call you Maia.” The Swallow flew back to Denmark and sang to the man who can tell fairy tales, “and from him we have the whole story.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Thumbelina got a new name and a new home. What would you want your home to be like?



Think about it

1. What new name did the Flower Angel give her?

- ○ Maia
- ○ Rose
- ○ Lily

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

— Yeshua HaMashiach

Free to read, color, and print in the Book Library

Made with love by Love is a Habit