

Wow, Look At That!

By Jim Gold

Once upon a time there was a little girl, full of awe and wonder, who always said, “Wow, look at that!” When she looked at the sidewalk, she’d point down and shout, “Wow, look at that!” When she saw a car pass by or an airplane overhead, she’d point to it and cry, “Wow, look at that!” When she spotted a bird, mouse, dog or cat, flower or tree, pony, man, woman or child, she’d gaze at them with eyes aglow and exclaim, “Wow, look at that!”

One day a bad fairy flew through the window of the little girl’s house and told her, “You’re a stupid moron! What is wrong with your brain? Don’t you know it’s impolite to shout, ‘Wow, look at that!’? Worse, it is *wrong*. The things you are pointing at are ugly and bad. You’re a silly fool to think otherwise. Be suspicious of what you see. Things are not the way they seem. Dogs get old, cats die, chickens get roasted, flowers fade, children age, old men and women abandon you, cars break down, planes get rusty, mice get run over and rot on the street. The world is full of misery. Remember that next time you want to say, ‘Wow, look at that!’”

The girl felt terrible. How could she have been so stupid and wrong? She began looking at the world differently. She soon said nothing when she left the house. Her daily smile quickly faded. Her eyes grew dead. And the expression on her face soon resembled a pancake after it has been squashed by a bus.

She got sadder and sadder. But she couldn’t even cry, because she now thought that smart, sophisticated little girls didn’t do that sort of thing.

One day she finally hit bottom. She lay down on her living room floor, fell asleep, and had a dream about the sun. It reminded her that, once upon a time, her world had been filled with awe and wonder. What had happened?

Then another fairy appeared. “Hello,” it said. “I’m the good fairy. The bad fairy and I work together. We teach little girls about life. We’re really the *same* fairy, but we wear disguises and try to fool you by looking different. The bad fairy teaches

you to feel bad and sad until you reach the bottom of her dark, dreary, nightmare cellar. But there in the darkness, you'll find a strange twisted root. It contains a secret nutrient that, when you eat it, gives you confidence. When you wake up after that, you know for certain that the best way to leave home is with the words: 'Wow, look at that!'"

from *Carlos the Cloud*

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