

## The Pixie in the Pond – Enid Blyton

Once upon a time there was a small pixie called Whistle. You can guess why he had that name he was always whistling merrily! He lived with his mother and father in a little toadstool house not far from a big pond. It was a lonely house, for no other pixies lived near, and as white ducks swam on the pond there were no frogs or toads for Whistle to play with.

"I'm very lonely, Mother," Whistle said, a dozen times a day. "I wish I could play with the field-mice. They want to show me their tunnels under the roots of the oak tree."

"No, Whistle," said his mother firmly. "The last time you went to see a mouse's nest you got lost underground, and I had to pay three moles to go and look for you. You are not to play with field-mice."

"Well, can I play with the hedgehog then?" asked Whistle. "He is a good fellow for running about with me in the fields."

"Certainly not!" said his mother. "His prickles would tear your nice clothes to pieces. Now run out and play by yourself, Whistle, and don't worry me any more."

So Whistle went out by himself, looking very gloomy. It was dull having to play by himself, very dull. He shook his head when Tiny the field-mouse ran up to him and squeaked to him to come and play. He didn't go near the hedgehog when he saw him in the ditch. Whistle was an obedient little pixie.

He ran off to the pond. He liked to watch the big dragon-

flies there. They were nearly as big as he was.

It was whilst he was watching the dragon-flies that he saw a merry little head poking out of the water nearby, watching the dragon-flies too!

Whistle stared in surprise. He didn't know there was anybody else near, and here was a little pixie in the pond - a pixie about as small as himself, too!

"Hallo!" said Whistle. "Who are you?"

"I'm Splash, the water-pixie," said the little fellow, climbing out of the water and sitting beside Whistle. "I live in the pond with my father and mother. We only came last week. I didn't think there was any one for me to play with, and now I've found you. What luck!"

"Oh, Splash, I'm so pleased!" said Whistle. "My name is Whistle. We can play together every day. What shall we play at?"

"Come into the water and I'll teach you to swim," said Splash.

"But what about my clothes?" said Whistle. "They'll get wet."

"Well, they'll dry, won't they?" said Splash. "Come along! Mind that mud!"

But dear me, Whistle was so anxious to get into the water that he floundered right into the mud, and you should have seen how he looked! He was black from head to foot!

"Oh dear!" said Whistle, in dismay. "Look at that! I'd

better get out and dry myself, and then see if the mud will brush off. Come and sit by me, Splash, and I'll teach you to whistle."

So Splash sat by Whistle in the sun, and the pixie taught his friend to whistle loudly. By the time the dinner-hour came, Splash could whistle like a blackbird! Whistle's clothes were dry, but the mud wouldn't brush off. It stuck to his clothes, and was all over his face and hands too. The two pixies said good-bye, and each ran off to his dinner.

Oh dear! How cross Whistle's mother was when she saw his clothes! "You bad, naughty pixie!" she scolded. "You have been in the pond. Take off your clothes at once. You must have a hot bath."

"Oh, Mother, don't be angry with me," begged Whistle. "I have found a friend to play with. It is a water-pixie called Splash!"

"Indeed!" said his mother, pouring hot water into the tin bath. "Well, just remember this, Whistle you are not to play with water-pixies at all! You will only get muddy and wet, and I won't have it!"

"But, Mother!" cried Whistle, in dismay, "I do so like Splash! He is so nice. He wanted to teach me to swim."

"You'll drown before you learn to swim in that weedy pond," said his mother. "Now remember, Whistle, I forbid you to play with that water-pixie."

Whistle said no more. He knew it was no use, but he was very sad. It was hard to find a friend, and then not to be allowed to keep him. That afternoon, Whistle stole

down to the pond. Splash was there, sitting in a swing he had made of bent reed. He was whistling away, having a lovely time, eagerly waiting for Whistle.

"What's the matter?" he cried, when he saw the pixie's gloomy face.

"Mother was very cross about my muddy suit, and says I mustn't play with you," said Whistle sadly. "So I came to tell you. After this I shan't come down to the pond, because if I do I might see you and play with you, and I don't want to upset my mother."

"Oh, bother!" said Splash, in dismay. "Just as we have found one another so nicely. It's too bad!"

"Good-bye, Splash," said Whistle. "I'm very, very sorry, but I must go."

Off he ran home; and just as he got there he met his father, who called to him.

"Whistle! How would you like to go for a sail on the pond this afternoon? I've got a fine little boat here that used to belong to a child."

"Ooh, how lovely!" said Whistle, looking at the toy boat, which was leaning up against the side of the toadstool house and was even bigger than the house itself!

"Mother! Where are you?" called Whistle, in excitement. "Are you coming for a sail too?"

"Yes!" said his mother. So in a short time the little family set off to the pond, Whistle and his father carrying the ship, and his mother running behind. They set the boat on the water, and then they all got in.

It was a windy day. The wind filled the little white sail and the ship blew into the middle of the pond. What fun it was! Whistle's father guided the boat along and Whistle leaned over to look for fish. He saw a big one, and leaned so far over that he lost his balance! Splash! Into the water he went head-first!

"Oh! Oh! Save him! He can't swim!" cried Whistle's mother in dismay. "Oh, Whistle, Whistle! Quick, turn the boat about and save Whistle!"

But just then the wind blew so hard that the ship simply tore across the pond and left Whistle struggling in the water. Poor little pixie he couldn't swim, and he was in great trouble.

But suddenly up swam Splash, the water-pixie. He had watched the boat setting sail, and had kept by it all the way, though the others hadn't seen him. As soon as he saw his friend fall into the water he swam up to him, and catching hold of him under the arms, he swam with him to the boat.

"Oh, you brave little fellow!" said Whistle's father, as he pulled the two of them into the boat. "You have saved Whistle! He might have drowned! Who are you?"

"I am Splash, the water-pixie," said Splash. "I live in the pond. I would very much like to be friends with Whistle and teach him to swim. He has taught me to whistle like a blackbird, and my mother is very pleased. I should like to do something for him in return."

"Oh, you brave little fellow!" said Whistle's father.

"Oh, you are the bravest little pixie I have ever seen!"

cried Whistle's mother, as she sat hugging Whistle to her. "Please be friends with Whistle. He must certainly learn to swim. I will make him a little bathing suit, and then it won't matter if he gets wet or muddy."

"Oh, Mother, how lovely!" cried Whistle, in delight. "I told Splash this afternoon that I could never see him again, and I said good-bye to him, because you said I wasn't to play with him and now he is to be my friend after all!"

"You deserve it, for you're a good, obedient little pixie," said his father. "Now you'd better bring your friend home to tea with you, if Mother has enough cake!"

"Oh yes, I made treacle buns this morning," said Whistle's mother, "and there is some new blackberry jam too. Ask your mother if you can come, Splash!"

Splash jumped into the water and swam to his cosy little home in the reeds. In a moment or two, three pixies popped their heads out of the water for Splash had brought his father and mother.

"Thank you for the invitation," said Splash's pretty little pixie mother. "He will be most delighted to come. I am just going to brush his hair. Perhaps you will all come to tea with us to-morrow? We should love to have you."

So all the pixies became friends, and now Splash and Whistle play together all day long, and Whistle can swim just as well as Splash can; and as for Splash's whistling, well you should just hear it! The two pixies sound like a cage full of canaries!