

The Flower That Froze

Once upon a time a plant began to grow from a seed. It was a very strong plant — its leaves were healthy, its branches sturdy and it grew tall and straight.

One spring day, a late winter storm suddenly turned the sky grey, dropping snow and sleet. The sleet hit the plant with a hard force, tearing the leaves and injuring the branches and stem. Because this storm was unexpected, the plant was not prepared for it.

Even after the storm was over and the spring sun returned, the plant remained damaged. As the days changed to summer, the other plants in the area recovered from the storm, growing and changing. But this plant had problems recovering. It still had torn leaves and broken stems and branches. The storm had been so sudden and scary that the plant seemed to freeze as if it were a silk plant rather than a living plant. The other plants grew tall, shading this plant from the sunlight it needed to grow.

One day a group of boy scouts, looking for rare and unique plants to earn a badge, came trooping through the area where the frozen plant was hidden. These boys looked here and there searching for plants. One of the scouts, who was very curious and determined, looked under logs, between trees and behind bushes hoping to discover unusual plants. In doing this, he pushed aside the plants which had been hiding the frozen plant. The scout looked carefully at the leaves of the plant. Pulling a book on plants out of his pack, the scout found a picture of the plant he had discovered. Seeing that this plant was rare, he called to the scout master, "I have discovered a very rare plant, but something has happened to it. It does not seem to be growing. By this time of the summer, it should be tall and have many berries."

"Well," the scout master responded, "perhaps we can change that."

The scouts did not dig up unique plants, believing that they should remain in the wild. Instead, they cut away all the weeds from around the plant. They watered it and fertilized it.

Then the scouts spoke words of encouragement to the plant. "You are a unique plant. Find the power to grow and be magnificent as you were intended to be."

The plant somehow understood the words of the boy scouts, but seemed frozen with fear. The scouts did not give up. They continued to visit the plant. They brought pictures of similar plants bearing red flowers or berries. "The plants in these pictures have grown as nature intended them to," one scout said to the frozen plant.

The enthusiasm of the scouts moved into the deepest core of the plant, seeming to wake it up from the sleep which had frozen it in time.

Soon, the plant began to grow. The scouts returned each week and were wonderfully surprised to find the plant grew stronger and taller each time they visited. The broken leaves fell off, the torn stems mended and the main branch of the plant came together. Soon there was little sign that the plant had ever been through a storm at all. The plant, however, remembered the storm and grew very strong just in case it had to face another storm in the future.

One day when the scouts visited the plant, they discovered it was forming flowers. Each week they watched it flower, and soon the flowers turned to berries. Even though the scouts did not dig up unique plants, picking berries was something else. So they made a campfire near the plant and used the berries to make a tasty jelly, earning themselves yet another badge. While the jelly was still warm, they ate it on biscuits brought along just for that purpose. The scouts told themselves how lucky they had been to discover the unique plant among the weeds that surrounded it. They talked about the badges they had earned while working with the plant.

The plant realized it was really the lucky one. The scouts had helped the plant understand it was unique and special. Because of this knowledge, the plant discovered that summer is no time to stay frozen, and love and attention can help you to grow.

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