

# The Missing Mushroom

It was a crisp, beautiful Autumn day in Ponderosa Valley, the home of the Poekies. "The Poekies?" you say, "Who are they?" Why the Poekies are the little animals made of cloth! Anyway, Autumn had made its way to Ponderosa Valley and many different colored leaves were falling. A little gnome named Yule and her friend Ariel, the hippo, were playing in those beautiful autumn leaves. Gleefully, Ariel playfully threw some leaves at Yule. Yule threw some back and soon they were lying on their backs on the freshly turned leaves. Suddenly, they heard the crack of a twig breaking farther on in the brush. They listened, and soon they heard the sound again. This time the crack was much farther in the forest. "Should we investigate?" asked Ariel.



"Of course," said Yule, "But first we should get my mushroom, he loves a mystery!" (Poekies have can have many different pets including mushrooms, mice, and cats)



"Okay," said Ariel. They ran through the woods until they got to Yule's house.

"Come on!" said Yule. Ariel followed Yule around the side of the house until they reached a small pen "Mushroom, come here, where are you hiding?" They looked all around the pen, but it was clearly empty. "Oh No!" said Yule, "Mushroom's gone!"

"Where's your mom?" asked Ariel.

"At the meeting at Town Hall with all the other Poekies," groaned Yule.

"Well, come on then," said Ariel, "If we wait a little while then we can catch her right when she comes out the building!"

"I don't know if we have a little while," said Yule, but she followed her friend anyway.

When they reached the building it looked like they had arrived just in time. Already many fancily dressed Poekies were streaming out of the town hall. There was no sign of Noel, Yule's mom yet,



though. Finally, they saw her and Yule went running up to her shouting "Mama, Mama, guess what!?"

"What?" asked Noel.

"Mushroom is gone!"

"Oh no!" said Noel, "Come on girls, we must search the forest now!"

They searched and searched, high and low, in cracks and crannies, and in caves

but there was no sign of Mushroom. Ariel and Yule and their stomachs began to grumble.

Finally, Noel said, "That's it girls, we've entire forest and Mushroom is clearly not in it."

"What does that mean?" asked Yule.



and gulches,  
began to tire

searched this

"It can mean only one thing," said Noel, "It means that Mushroom must have been stolen!"

"Who could have stolen him? I thought everyone else was at the Town Hall," asked Ariel over a cup of hot tea at Yule's house.

"Well," said Noel taking a sip from her cup, "Well, everyone was at Town Hall except Dale."

"Dale the lion?" asked Yule, "But he's so nice."

"I know, but it's the only explanation of it," said Noel.

"Well, anyway, the most important thing is to get Mushroom back, so let's go talk to Dale," said Ariel.

They found Dale outside his house with a basket of berries in his hand. "Hello!" he said, "How have you been?" Noel decided to get straight to the point.

"Where's our mushroom, Dale? Give him back."

"What do you mean? I don't have your mushroom."

"Why would you think I do?"

"Because everyone else was at the town meeting and he was there when I left."

Now a crowd was gathering around them. "Well, I didn't do it!" cried Dale.

"Well then, where were you?" said Noel.

"I was actually sitting right here when I saw a shiny, red flash in the bushes. I was going to investigate, but then I lost it so I came back here."



"Is he trying to put the blame on me? I was at the meeting. Everyone saw me!" cried Peppermint, a little red fox, "Anyway, none of the Poekies or anything else around here is shiny!"

"Quiet!" said Noel, "Yule is trying to say something."

"Everybody, I don't want a bunch of ruckus or anything. All I want is the safe return of my mushroom. Please, whoever does have him, would they please return him to my house and no questions will be asked," said Yule. Everyone nodded and eventually the crowd dispersed, but a few Poekies shot angry glances at Dale.

All he said was, "I didn't take him." Then he walked off.

"I'm really proud of how you are handling this, sweetie," Noel said to Yule. Yule gave her mom a hug. Then Noel said, "Why don't you go see your Aunt Pippafee?" Yule nodded and walked away through the wood to Aunt Pippafee's house.

When she arrived, she knocked on the door and Pippafee opened it and gave Yule a hug. "Come in, my dear, come in! We have a new visitor in town." Inside, Yule turned around and saw an interesting creature who was entirely red and very shiny. The creature said, "Hello, I am Larry Lobster and I come from the sea, what is your name and who might you be?"

"My name is Yule, and I am a Gnome, and it is very nice make your acquaintance."

Pippafee said, "He came to my door with a mushroom in his pinchers. He thought the mushroom was a krill and he asked me how to cook it. I told him it was a mushroom not a krill, and he apologized greatly and rushed off to put it back in its pen."

Yule stood there with her mouth wide open. Then she explained about the missing mushroom and the crack in the woods and poor Dale." Oh little Gnome I am so sorry I didn't know, but he is safe in his pen now if you want I can show ?", exclaimed Larry Lobster.

"It's okay," said Yule, "But poor Dale ! I must go and apologize to him right away!"

Larry said, "Good Luck, and Farewell my sweet little Gnome. I hope someday you will visit my home."

"I hope so, too," said Yule

"Well, good bye then Yule. I hope to see you again soon," said Pippafee.

"Bye !" said Yule.

She waved to both of them and went running out the door.

She found Dale outside his house with a big sack over his shoulder. "Dale, where are you going ?" she asked him.

"I'm moving," he replied, "If even my friends don't trust me, why should I stay ?"

"But Dale, you are innocent!" Then she explained about Larry and Pippafee and everything.

Finally everything was fixed. There was a huge feast in honor of finding Mushroom. Everyone attended including Larry, Pippafee, and even Mushroom himself (though eventually he ate too much and had to sleep it off ). Everyone made up with Dale and they all lived happily ever after.

*THE END*



P.S. Larry Lobster actually moved into Ponderosa Valley and became a full time resident.

