

Listening and Reading

The seasons in Tree Street

In Tree Street, there is a whole lane of trees. The people who live in Tree Street think they are just trees. But more than just trees live in Tree Street. Come, let me tell you about the other residents of Tree Street. In the big peach tree at the end of Tree Street, there lives a fairy too. Her name is Spring. Spring is the fairy who wakes up the trees. Spring gently sprinkles water with her watering can on the trees and skips among the trees like a gentle breeze. She sings to the trees: "Wake up, wake up! I'm Spring Fairy and I'm calling all to wake up. Come on little leaves, come on flowers, come and peep out and see the new season. Come on, come on, come on, all you beautiful things!" Quite soon, you see new life in the trees. The trees that have shed their leaves for winter are pushing out new ones. The peach tree boasts the prettiest pink blossoms. The birds, also residents of Tree Street, are very busy too. It is time to build new homes and lay eggs. They are getting ready for summer. They must lay eggs now so that they can hatch. The bird children must be here when summer comes and there is plenty of food. Much food is needed when you have a nest full of hungry children to feed. Spring looks around contentedly. Yes, her street looks pretty now. There is only one thing that is bothering Spring now. The sun is now getting so hot that her wings are almost melting in the hot sun. A few months later, the fairy queen sends Summer to take over the work in Tree Street. Summer looks around in Tree Street. She is satisfied with the work Spring has done. Fresh new leaves are hanging from the trees and there are beautiful flowers everywhere. Now she begins with her job. The flowers must now begin to make fruit, otherwise they will not have enough time to ripen. She flies over the peach tree and waves her wand. Slowly the pink petals begin to drop off and tiny fruits poke out their tiny heads. Everywhere in the birds' nests, tiny heads begin to poke out and shrill little voices ask for food. Mommy and Daddy Bird fly to and fro to bring food and stuff it into the open mouths. In the wild fig tree, the little monkeys play hide-and-seek among the leaves which are now dense. Their mummies are still nursing them, but they are now also beginning to eat some of the fruit and plants the other monkeys eat. Summer goes and looks at the peach tree again. Yes, the peaches are swollen and plump already. She kisses each peach on the cheek to make sure that they will have lovely red cheeks. Of course, go-away bird loves this very much. She takes her children who have just learnt how to fly for a tasty feast in the tree. It has been a long summer. Summer Fairy has worked hard to see that all the fruit ripen and to pour out watering cans full of water to see to it that the trees and all the plants are not thirsty. Now, she is dog tired from all the work and returns to the fairy palace for a well-earned holiday. Autumn Elf arrives in Tree Street, struggling to carry big tins of paint. Tired, he sits down on the tin of red paint and looks at Tree Street. Much work. No time for sitting still, he decides and starts working. The leaves must be painted. "You must hurry up," he tells the squirrels of the oak tree at the end of the street. "You should start gathering food for winter. Come on, get to work! Just stay out of my way because I am busy. And please don't knock over my paint tins," and he paints and paints --- and paints. The swallows sit on the telephone wires and discuss their travelling plans. In the mulberry trees, in the middle of Tree Street, the worms are spinning themselves into cocoons of silk and waiting for summer to come again. Autumn Elf does not stay long in Tree Street but he has worked very hard. He pushes his cap back on his head and looks contentedly at his work. Wow, Tree Street looks beautiful, all dressed up in cheerful yellow, red, orange and brown. Autumn Elf suddenly rubs his arms. He is cold now. Is that just because he is now standing still and not doing anything after all his hard work? Winter Wind teases him a bit and lifts his jacket a bit and blows cold air on his legs. Autumn Elf packs up his paintbrushes. This winter's wind is not good for his thin arms and knobby legs. "I'm off," he says and there he goes down the street, nobody knows where to. Winter Wind only laughs and shakes the oak tree so that the leaves wave to Autumn Elf one last time. Then Winter Wind first blows quietly through Tree Street. He is now master of Tree Street. Yes, everyone has worked hard this year. All the trees and plants have grown well and have done their best, but now it is time for everyone to rest a little. To work all the

time is no fun at all. He blows among the trees. "Time to let go and to travel," he tells the pretty coloured leaves. Some leaves are eager to go on a journey and see the rest of the world and they let go immediately.

"Goodbye. Goodbye!" they call and start their exciting journey to strange places. "Have a safe journey," the oak tree calls after its leafy children. Winter Wind quickly hurries them on but has to work harder to get the last ones to let go and venture into the unknown. He howls and scolds around the trees, he blows his cold breath on all and everyone but to no avail with some of the trees and their leaves. He tries every year but every year, the leaves of the yellowwood tree cling stubbornly and simply refuse to be blown away. Winter Wind sieves the frost in a thin layer on the lawn and makes the prettiest sculptures from the water dripping from the tap outside. Someone has forgotten to turn off the sprinkler and Winter Wind converts the trees into a fantasy world of crystals he hangs from the trees. He calls Winter Sun to come and look. She is amazed at the magical display and looks at the crystals from all angles and throws the loveliest rainbow colours into them. Winter Wind and Winter Sun are very satisfied. It is beautiful! And to think that there are people who don't like winter, Winter Sun thinks. Winter Wind just makes it a bit too cold. "I hope those fairies and elves are safe in their homes so that they are not cold. They must come back to Tree Street again next year," Winter Sun tells Winter Wind.