

HOW DEEP IS THE SKY?

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Emmie. She had sparkling eyes and golden brown hair and she was loved by everybody who knew her.

When Emmie was born flowers in her grandmother's garden whispered to each other, "A friend has come to be with us." Tall grass waved back and forth in the wind, dancing with joy.

Trees bent down and their leaves rustled gently saying, "We will always protect her." And clouds puffed great billowy pictures of dragons and angels and ships.

Emmie had a mother who she called Mommy. She had a father who she called Daddy. She had a sister named Naomi and a baby brother named Caleb.

And she had another father named Nat who she called Pa. Emmie went with Pa to his house every other weekend. Naomi didn't go and neither did Caleb.

As Emmie grew up she learned how to duck her head under the water. She learned how to jump off a step – and then two steps – and then three. She learned how to write her own name. And she could clean up her toys and even help Mommy wash the dishes.

At Pa's house Emmie was allowed to jump right in the middle of mud puddles. Sometimes Pa let her use his tools and, if she was really careful, she could play nearby while he worked. But still, sometimes she missed her family when she was at Nat's.

At home with Mommy and Daddy, Emmie got to hear a story every night before bed if she had her pajamas on in time. She never got lonely there and there was always something fun to do. But sometimes she missed Pa because two weeks was a long time until she got to see him again.

Emmie grew bigger. Sometimes she played in the meadow near Pa's house with Pa's dog. Emmie learned how to climb trees – and pick cherries. She could eat as many as she wanted and they made her mouth turn purple.

One of the trees she loved was the Umbrella Tree. The Umbrella Tree had branches that came all the way down to the ground. It was easy to climb because there were lots of branches.

Sometimes while she was sitting high up in the Umbrella Tree swaying gently back and forth, Emmie wondered about things. She wondered what made the wind blow. She wondered why the coyotes howled when the moon was big and round.

And sometimes she wondered why she had two fathers.

Emmie loved to watch her mother make flowers on cakes. One day while Emmie was helping Brook frost a cake, Emmie asked, “Mommy, why do I have two fathers and Naomi only has one?”

Her mother said, “Well Emmie, a long time ago, before I knew Daddy, Nat and I found out we were going to have a baby.” Brook put some purple frosting on Emmie’s finger for her to lick.

“But Nat was very young. He wasn’t ready to make a family. He was sad because already he loved you and wanted to be close to you.” She made a purple rose and then she made five more so fast it looked to Emmie like the cake was blooming.

At first I was sad too but soon after that I met your Daddy. Daddy loved me very much and he was excited to be a Daddy. So Daddy and I made a family for you. Emmie smiled and said, I’m glad you’re my Mommy, as she cuddled up to her mother. Mommy held her close and some purple frosting got on Emmie’s nose.

That night when Daddy was teaching Emmie how to ride her bike, Emmie said, Daddy, what makes the wind blow?

Dylan said, God makes the wind blow so seeds from the flowers will plant fields of new flowers and you will have plenty to pick when Summer comes.

He held her bike up for her and Emmie tried one more time.

That Saturday at Pa’s house, Emmie and Pa were building a fort. Emmie said, Pa, why do the coyotes howl when the moon is big?

Nat said, the coyotes howl to tell you that I’m thinking of you always, even when I’m not there with you. And he tossed Emmie onto his back and galloped down the path to find some more boards for the fort.

When Pa brought her home that day, Mommy had made a big pot of delicious bubbling soup. Daddy brought home a carton of Naomi’s favorite ice cream, RAINBOW.

They all sat down to eat. As they held hands in a circle around the table and Daddy said a prayer, Emmie thought how lucky she was to have so many people who loved her.

Emmie looked out the window and smiled. She watched a big bird flying in slow circles over the field – circling and moving further away until it was only a speck. And she thought...I wonder how deep the sky is?

{Run for it Agnes. AAAAAAAAH NO! (flies) I’m hungry! (Buford)
AAAAAA (flies) Ribbit! (Buford)}

The End