



THE BROWNIE STORIES of the World

No. 2: France, India, Netherlands,
Norway

NORWAY

10



Mélie

11

"You're quite right," twittered one, and perched on Kari's hand. "All of us have the Little Wing and the Large Wing." The other three birds landed right in Kari's lap.

"But your wings are both the same size," Kari objected.

"Right you are," said one of the birds. "The Little Wing and the Large Wing are awards which we get from Mother Owl when we have been very clever."

Kari put her forefinger carefully against the velvety black head. She knew it was a moor-titling; she recognised its yellow breast.

"All of us lead our own broods," twittered the bird on Kari's finger, and shook its beautiful blue wings proudly. "You'll spot my brood of finches over there by those bluebells. They can be awfully scatterbrained and all thumbs, but we help Mother Owl and the owllet when the finches meet here in the forest."

One of the four birds suddenly perched upon Kari's head. "I am going to be tested for my singing badge today," she twittered. "Shall I sing you a song now?" But the others thought poorly of the idea.

"You know that Mother Owl must be here to listen to you and besides, your little finches over there need you this very minute! Just listen to the noise that they are making!"

"Before I passed the test for the Big Sister badge," said another bird, "I could hardly keep my brood in order."

"I'm very glad that I have always had a quiet group," said one of the others, "but I feel very concerned for one of my little ones. Somebody threw a stone and hurt her leg badly."

But the finches reminded her that they had all promised to do their best to be helpful. And the moor-titling added that she was going to ask her whole brood to be kind to the lame one.

At this point Mother Owl flew down with two owllets and sat on the grass. She directed all the youngest finches to gather over by the daisies, while one of the owllets and the four little leaders played around the mushroom with those who had become proper blue-finches.

Mother Owl was very busy training the youngest ones. "Do you know our motto?" she asked, and all the little ones twittered back, "I will do my best."

"And what is our Promise?"

Everybody knew the proper answer. "I promise to do my best to be obedient and helpful at home and everywhere."

Kari blushed. She had just remembered the burnt porridge and the hair