

How the Leaves Came Down



I'll tell you how the leaves came down.
The great Tree to his children said,
"You're getting sleepy, Yellow and Brown,
Yes, very sleepy, little Red;
It is quite time you went to bed."

"Ah!" begged each silly, pouting leaf,
"Let us a little longer May;
Dear Father Tree, behold our grief,
'Tis such a very pleasant day
We do not want to go away."

So, just for one more merry day
To the great Tree the leaflets clung,
Frolicked and danced and had their way,
Upon the autumn breezes swung,
Whispering all their sports among,

"Perhaps the great Tree will forget
And let us stay until the spring
If we all beg and coax and fret."
But the great Tree did no such thing;
He smiled to hear their whispering.

"Come, children all, to bed," he cried;
And ere the leaves could urge their prayer
He shook his head, and far and wide,
Fluttering and rustling everywhere,
Down sped the leaflets through the air.

I saw them; on the ground they lay,
Golden and red, a huddled swarm,
Waiting till one from far away,
White bed-clothes heaped upon her arm,
Should come to wrap them safe and warm.
The great bare Tree looked down and smiled.
"Good-night, dear little leaves" he said;
And from below each sleepy child
Replied "Good-night," and murmured,
"It is so nice to go to bed."



By Susan Coolidge