

Lucifer and The Light Lady

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Lucifer was a very young lightning bug, but although he was very young, he knew his way around. All the lady lightning bugs were acquainted with Lucifer and they were fond of him.

"That Lucifer," they said. "He's quite a lad. He knows his way around," they said.

But although Lucifer had taken countless young lightning bug things out for dew sodas, with a little sparking before he took them back to their mamas, Lucifer was not at all happy about his love life.

"Some thing's lacking," he often observed to himself. "Yes, some thing's definitely lacking."

Frequently he had long talks with the oldest lightning bug, who had lived for at least a week and whose opinion was, therefore, highly respected. Frequently Lucifer said to him, "But, Grandfather I can't find a girl who isn't fickle. They all go on and off; one moment great brightness, the next, complete darkness. I want a flame which is constant.

"You go on and off yourself, son," the oldest lightning bug sagely observed.

"I know, but it's different with men," said Lucifer, and nothing seemed to satisfy him.

One cool, summer evening Lucifer was flying in the trees, gleaming greenly, when he saw the man walk into the garden and seat himself upon one of the lawn chairs. The man lit a match, and, strangely enough, there appeared an odd orange red glow about two inches from his face. The glow

never went out. Sometimes its intensity diminished a trifle, but it never went out. It flew about in downward and upward arcs, remaining always close to the man.

"Aha," said Lucifer. "This is what I have been looking for. The constant flame. Here is a lightning bug with great capacities for fidelity."

Swiftly he flew from his leafy place and approached the new variety of lightning bug.

"Dear me," he said to himself. Do I have the courage. She may not like me." But that seemed so completely improbable that it served to encourage him.

"The next time," he said, "she flies down from the man's face, I'll go make friends with her."

Impatiently he waited. Finally, however, the glow moved downward in an arc, and Lucifer, greatly excited, flew toward it and put his nose against its red side.

When he regained consciousness, the oldest lightning bug was sitting by his side.

"It burned me," said Lucifer confusedly. "When I tried to make friends with it, it burned me. And I thought it was the constant flame," he added sadly.

"I know," said the oldest lightning bug. "I was there, and saw it all happen. You'd better go with the ordinary girls, Lucifer. They may not be so much on the gleam, but when their light goes off, it always comes on again. I observed," said the oldest lightning bug, "that when the flame of this strange lightning bug went out, it was out for good!"