

And Lyon—you will pick up the little twigs and branches and later we will haul them away for a grand bonfire tonight!

CHILDREN: Oh! A bonfire!

LYON: With roasted marshmallows and everything?

GAEA: May-be. After your work is done!

(The Children begin to work very industriously.)

Now—look around you and see what you have accomplished! Why, a small part of the forest is already clean! When you work together—you are unbreakable. If you are separate—you are just one stick—easily broken. But when you are united—you are strong! Do you understand?

LOWRY: I get it! You didn't really want to clean-up the forest, did you? You were just trying to teach us a lesson.

GAEA: Actually, I really wanted the forest clean. I have horrible allergies and this will help. Please—continue your chores. The back clearing is especially messy. Why don't you go there now? This place is looking pretty good. Follow me. I'll take you there. And—bring the broom!

(And the five children follow Gaea off—with the broom. Or they lurk in the shadows. The Tree Shadows also clear the area.)

AESOP: What did you think?

GEORGE: Well—they were getting a bit whiney—

AESOP: Did we bore you?

GEORGE: You did get a little preachy.

AESOP: Preachy. Hmmm. I'll need to work on that! Can you do better?

GEORGE: *(Asking the Echoes:)* I don't know, can we?

SAM: Well—I have this fabulous idea for a play!