

CHAPTER ONE: MOLLY AND THE BIRD FEEDER

One day a little girl called Molly woke up and everything had changed. She didn't need to put on her school -uniform and she wasn't meeting her best friend Jack to walk to school. Mummy wasn't making her packed lunch in the kitchen and everything was very quiet.



She opened her front door and stepped outside. She looked around. She couldn't see her friends walking to school with their mums and dads; she couldn't see cars driving past. She rubbed her eyes and stood very still. Then she started to hear sounds. Not the sounds of planes that always passed over her house, nor the lorries and sirens from the busy road at the end of her street.



Instead she heard tweets from tiny birds. They grew louder and more intense and then she noticed a robin flying in the direction of a nearby tree with a worm in its mouth. She realised the sounds were coming from the tree and as she looked up, shading her eyes from the light, she noticed a nest, hidden in the wide branches of the old oak tree, nearby. She ran indoors and climbed the stairs to her bedroom and pressed her nose to the window. There she saw

2 little faces, with mouths wide open, cheeping and eagerly awaiting to be fed worms and insects that their mum had found in the garden below.



Molly was enchanted. She loved nature. She knocked on her sister's door. Alice was already up and wondering what to do. She would have school lessons online soon but there was still plenty of time before they started. Molly and Alice watched the birds for a few minutes and then decided they would spend some time in their back garden watching for different birds. They didn't know the names of many birds but they decided they would take photos and stick them in a scrapbook, and then find out what species they were. Maybe they could make a bird feeder to attract more birds.

Molly grew quite excited. She wondered what she needed to make a bird feeder and asked Alice if she would help her. Alice told her that now the summer was approaching and the days would be warm she should find food that would stay fresh. She told Molly not to use fatty foods such as lard as the warm weather could turn this type of food rancid, sour and unpleasant.



Instead she suggested they find some raisins, apples and cut them up and place them in cardboard containers and hang them in the trees, high enough for the birds to feel safe to reach the food. Molly asked Alice why they couldn't just eat worms and Alice explained that at this time of year when there were so many baby mouths to feed, the birds would be really appreciative of some help as it was pretty exhausting looking for food all day, and then flying back and forth to their nests.



Molly wondered if they could add some leftovers, such as cooked pasta and rice and cooked veg. Alice said that would be fine too, as long as it didn't have salt in it and was still fresh, and also to avoid bread.

Molly and Alice got to work. They wondered if they should use a plastic bottle with holes in it, as this would keep its shape, even if it rained. They thought that a recycled plastic bottle would be the best receptacle for bird seed whilst the fresh food could be placed on a dish on their garden table. Molly and Alice found a simple method on you tube for making their bird feeder. They needed a few basic resources, but after searching through their Dad's tool- box they found a bradawl to poke holes with, and a screw with a washer. Molly and Alice have shared their link below.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnvHRQwoSxQ>

Soon it was time for lessons. Now that school and nursery were both closed, Molly and Alice used their computer to connect to their teachers. Molly missed her friends but enjoyed the lovely ideas her teacher sent and was looking forward to chatting to Jack to share some of the things she was doing.