

The Lilies and the Thistles

by RV Staff Writer J.C.

In a patch of garden, in a sunny corner of the backyard, stood a proud group of yellow lilies. They were tall flowers: elegant, graceful, and beautiful. They were surrounded by a ring of scruffy, prickly, purple thistles that had sprung up recently with all the April showers and May sunshine. The lilies were not impressed with their new garden-mates.

“Ugh, what nasty weeds,” sneered one lily plant, to the others. “How ugly they are.” The other lilies nodded in agreement.

The tallest thistle thought this was rude. It was time to stand up for herself and her friends. “Actually, I think our purple color is quite pretty.”

“You don’t smell nice like we do,” said another lily, peeking out from behind the first one.

“Don’t be such a snob. The bees and butterflies like us just as much as they like you,” the tall thistle replied.

The lilies were still annoyed. “You don’t belong here with us. The gardener will pull you up by your roots and throw you away.”

The thistles were getting mad. “If the gardener is clever, she will know that we thistles are quite tasty in a soup. Everybody knows eating a lily will make a human sick! But don’t be sad; at least the rabbits enjoy snacking on you!”

“Those pesky bunnies are always trying to bite off our petals. What a nuisance!” The lilies did not like it when rabbits invaded the garden to chew up the flowers.

“You should be grateful that we are here now,” said the thistles. “Our spiky prickles are helpful for keeping the bunnies out of the garden and preventing them from nibbling on you! You might be pretty, but we are certainly more useful.”

The lilies hadn’t considered that sharing the garden with the weedy thistles might actually be a good thing. “Oh, you are right! We are sorry for being rude before! Let’s be friends, okay?”

Questions

1. What was one reason the lilies disliked the thistles?
2. For the reason you gave in Question 1, how did the thistles respond to the lilies' reason?
3. How would you describe the character of the lilies?
4. The lilies were pretty, but the thistles were useful. Which trait do you think is more important and why?