



READ AND FIND OUT

Q1. Who is Jo? How does she respond to her father's story-telling?

Ans: Jo is the shortened form of Joanne. She is the four year old daughter of Jack and Clare. For the last two years, her father, Jack, has been telling her bed-time stories. Since these stories are woven around the same basic tale and have the same characters and turn of events, Jo takes so many things for granted and takes active interest in the story-telling session. The protagonist (main character) is always named Roger. It may be Roger Fish, Roger Squirrel, Roger Chipmunk or Roger Skunk. The other characters are the huge, wise, old owl and the thin small wizard. The creatures of the forest—small animals—also take part in playing with Roger and liking/disliking him.

Q2. What possible plot line could the story continue with?

Ans: Jack told the story of Roger Skunk—an animal which emitted a foul smell and how the wizard changed his smell to that of roses at his request. The other little creatures, who earlier hated Roger Skunk, now gathered around him because he smelled so good. They played various games of children till dark and then went to their homes happily.

Jo thought that the story was all over. Jack continued the story. When Roger Skunk returned home, his mother felt angry at the unusual smell he had acquired. She called it an awful smell and asked who had made him smell like that. She took her umbrella and went to the wizard with Roger Skunk. She hit the wizard right 'wer the head. The wizard agreed to change his smell back. She wanted that a skunk should smell the way a little skunk should have. It should behave naturally and normally and not roaxn ahout in acquired smell or artificial manners. After a while the other small creatures got used to bhe typical smell of the skunk—the foul odour—and did not run away.

Q3. What do you think was Jo's problem?

Ans: Little Jo had been accustomed to the happy ending of the stories of Roger, where the wizard was helpful to him in fulfilling his wish. At the request of Roger Skunk, the wizard had changed his awful smell to that of the roses. Other small animals liked it and played with Roger Skunk happily. She could not digest the ending of the extended story where Roger Skunk's mother hit the wizard on the head and forced him to change Skunk's smell to the earlier foul one.

Jo could not accept Skunk's mother's stubbornness e.g. hitting the wellwisher of her son, Roger Skunk. Jo insisted that her father should tell her the same story again the next day with changed ending. The wizard should hit that unreasonable mOmmy on the head and leave Roger Skunk emitting the pleasant smell of roses. In the beautiful world of a child's imagination, fairies and wizard's are more real than reality itself. She could not digest the harsh realities of life. She did not like the rude mother who hit the benefactor of her own son.

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