“I think it’s time you gave up your dummy, don’t you?” Mum said one day to baby **Marie**. The child was three now and her mother was getting to the stage where she felt a dummy was something that was no longer needed.

At first **Marie** looked at her mum thinking a game was on. She giggled and as she did her golden hair **< CHECK THIS as the JACKET COVERS need to match the inside descriptions>** danced around her head. Sometimes they would play ‘hide the dummy’ and she thought perhaps this is what her mum meant. There was something , though, about the particular look on her mother’s face this time that managed to get the attention of the 3 year old girl and she had to admit that she didn’t like that look at all.

‘No. Don’t want to.’ said **Marie**.

‘Well, you are getting a bit big for a dummy now.’ Her mother said fearing that this might be a bit of a struggle.

‘No.’ said the child in her most petulant voice. She immediately scooped up the nearest 3 of her dummies and cradled them in her arms. Now it might be fair at this point to mention that **Marie** was a bit addicted to dummies (addicted is a word that grownups sometimes use to describe when they really can't do without something). Often, to save having to get up in the middle of the night to retrieve a lost dummy, **Marie**'s mummy and daddy kept a number of spares around the place. Over time these had all come into **Marie**'s possession. In fact, **Marie** now had more dummies than even her parents knew of. Oh yes, there were the obvious ones that she kept on or near her most of the time, but there were also several others that her parents had lost track of and that **Marie** had hidden now in various parts of the house.

'Now **Marie**.' said her mother in her slightly cross voice. 'You are a big girl and I think far too grown up for dummies don’t you?'

At the suggestion she was grown up **Marie**'s position softened just a tad before setting into a frown once more.

'Don’t want to be grown up.' She responded stressing her position with a small stomp of her right foot.

Oh this will never do, **Marie**'s mother thought to herself. She needed a way to convince Marie that she should give the dummies up.

‘Well, I guess that poor child will have to go without.’ She said with a sigh.

**Marie** looked up.

‘What child?’ She asked, her curiosity getting in the way of her crankiness.

‘There is this poor little baby that I have heard about, you see. Her name is Maddy she has no dummies of her own and is having problems going to sleep at night. Do you remember when you used to have problems going to sleep at night?’

Though that was a long time ago **Marie** nodded her head knowingly. She had heard the story of how she used to be awake at night so many times that she now knew it off by heart.

‘Yes it was tewible mumma.’ She said nodding her head.

‘It *is* terrible darling and I thought, seeing as you are such a good girl that you might like to give your dummies to baby Maddy to see if that will help her sleep at night. I mean you are all grown up and able to get yourself off to sleep now……’

‘No.’ She said stomping her feet as she saw the trap her mother had set for her.

‘But don’t you want to help this poor baby?’ She asked.

‘No! Don’t! If she was my baby I would smack her if she did not go to sleep!’ **Marie** said.

And so the conversation finished without result.

Now despite the way she had just behaved, **Marie** was a pretty generous child at heart - she always had been. And as for smacking, well, Marie had never even smacked her teddy far-less anyone else. But it was clear that it was going to take something pretty special to convince her to give up her dummies to baby Maddy that’s for sure. It was a challenge that her special friends the Fairies would help her with this very night.

Who are these Fairies, I hear you ask? Well, the two fairies in question are of course, **Pixie** and **Dixie** the Tree Fairies who live in the hollow of an old oak tree not far from **Marie** in the village of Tumbledown. They were special friends with **Marie** and it was that friendship that had led them through many adventures together.

They could tell straight away that something was wrong with the child from the moment they arrived for their evening visit. Normally excited to see them, the child was sat on the old ‘insy-winsy’ chair in her room, her legs and arms crossed and a very fixed frown on her face. It was not the frown though that got their attention but rather the fact that she had managed to shove 3 dummies in her mouth at the same time (pink dummy, purple swirly dummy and 'chewed through' dummy which her parents had been trying to get rid of for several weeks). To top that off she had 2 more dummies in each hand!

'Oh.' Said **Pixie** in surprise upon seeing the child. Her green <> eyes had grown wide at the sight.< describe her >

'Hmmmmm.' Said **Dixie** her little wings a-flutter. < describe her >

Never had they seen such a sight! Something was going on and that was for sure but how do you talk to a 3 year old with a mouth full of dummies and a very cross look on her face?!

'Is something bothering you little sweet heart?' **Dixie** asked the child fluttering over to her and giving her a big smile.

But **Marie** did not respond. She lifted her arms dramatically and re-set them into their crossed position (clearly to confirm her annoyance at whatever it was that was annoying her) and continued to frown.

'Err...' Said **Dixie** looking over to **Pixie** for help. **Pixie** shrugged her shoulders but fluttered over to join them.

‘Come on sweetheart.’ **Dixie** wheedled. ‘It is clear something is bothering you and we would like to help.’

**Marie** looked at her very intensely for what seemed ages (it was actually only a couple of seconds) before her frown softened.

‘Can I take these out for you so you can tell us what’s going on princess?’ asked **Pixie** reaching out her tiny fairy hands to her but the child pulled her head back and shook her head furiously from side to side.

‘You don’t want us to touch your dummies? We won’t.’ said **Dixie**. ‘But how about you just pop them on to the bed right beside you and we will promise not to touch them.’ She suggested.

**Marie** looked a bit suspiciously at the two of them before slowly taking her dummies out and watchfully placing them next to her.

‘Okay sweetie, what’s the problem?’ **Pixie** asked.

'I don’t like Maddy.' **Marie** replied instantly in a very cross voice.

The fairies looked at each other in confusion.

'Who is Maddy?' **Pixie** asked her slowly trying to coax more information out of the child.

'She is the wobber!' The child said loudly and in obvious disgust. 'Wobber! Wobber! Wobber!'

'Wobber? What's a wobber?' **Pixie** asked but a moment later 'Oh robber! She means robber.' She said pleased that she had worked it out. But then suddenly she realised exactly what the word meant. 'Robber! What robber?' **Dixie** asked now completely bewildered and not a little frightened. They were not aware of any robbery and in a village as small as Tumbledown a robbery was something they were sure to have heard about.

‘She is the wobber of my dummies!’ **Marie** said eyes blazing with 3 year old fury and then she told them the story.

Now you must remember that that the way a 3 year old is likely to tell a story as complicated is this suggests it might be a bit hard to follow. And you would be right. But the Fairies got the gist of it never-the-less.

‘So, let me get this straight, there is a naughty, won’t-go-to-sleep-at-night baby called who Maddy is coming to steal your dummies. Is that right?’ Asked **Pixie** carefully.

‘Yes!’

‘Oh dear.’ Said **Pixie**. It was clear that this was not right but she had no idea what the real truth might be. The two little fairies fluttered a short distance away from **Marie** so that they could chat.

‘Wait a minute!’ Said **Dixie** clapping her tiny little hands together. ‘Do you remember overhearing **Marie**’s mummy discussing with her daddy about needing to get **Marie** to stop using dummies?’

‘Yes! Yes, I do remember.’ Replied **Pixie**. ‘You think it has got something to do with that?’

‘It must do!’ said **Dixie**. ‘They must have thought that telling her a story about a baby who can’t sleep might get her to give them up.

‘But it is clearly not working! She is crankier than ever.’ **Pixie** said.

‘That’s true.’ Dixie said fluttering around, her mind awhirl as she thought it through. Suddenly her eyes lit up. ‘Wait a minute, I have it! Play along with me Pixie.’ She said excitedly.

They both flew back over to the little girl who was watching them closely.

‘We have had a talk little one and we have decided we agree with you.’ Dixie said to the little child.

‘You hab?’ said **Marie** all smiles now.

‘Of course we have. If you don’t want to give up your dummies for a little girl who has no Fairies of her own to look after her then we will understand.’

‘Okay.’ Said **Marie** but then suddenly her frown returned. ‘She has no Faiwies?’ she asked as the words sunk in.

‘No princess, unlike you she has no Fairies to look after her.’

Her little mind chewed furiously over this new development.

‘No Fairwies is not fair!’ she said after a while.

‘No sweetheart, its not fair.’

Suddenly, **Marie** got up out of her chair. She scooped all of her dummies up off the bed in one go (not an easy thing given how many there were) and held her little hands out to the Fairies.

‘Here you go.’ She said.

**Pixie** and **Dixie** looked at each other and then back at the child.

‘Are you sure pumpkin?’ **Dixie** asked her.

**Marie** nodded her head and looked up sweetly at the two Fairies.

‘Baby Maddy can have my dummies but she can’t have my fairwies.’ She said and smiled.

**The End**