

A WALK WITH MY SISTER

My sister Sarah and I are just waking up one morning when Mom comes into our room and opens the window.

"Get your clothes on, you two," she says. "It is a beautiful day, and we're going on a walk."

I am too tired to go for a walk. I look over at Sarah, and I can tell she does not want to go either. "But mom," Sarah pleads, "every day is a beautiful day . . . and, besides, it's going to be just as beautiful INSIDE as it will be OUTSIDE."

Sarah has an excuse for everything. Mom says she does stuff sometimes just so she can think up an excuse for it. It's too much work, if you ask me.

Anyhow, it doesn't work. Sarah complains a little more, but before we know it, we have dressed, eaten breakfast, and we are walking out the door.

"You'll thank me for this some day," Mom says, but she sounds like she is teasing.

"What if we don't?" I think to myself. "What if I never end up being happy that you made us go on walks all the time?" But I don't say anything, 'cause I don't want to be fresh. Actually, Mom doesn't seem to mind when Sarah talks back, though.

So we go to the woods near Peakes Brook, where Mom takes us lots of times for short walks. It is like a park, but not many people go there. There is a path that goes into the woods, curves around by the water, and then goes back out to the road.

We are just getting to the beginning of the path when Mom stops and says, "Will you two look at this! What a day!"

Sarah says, "I don't know, Mom, I kind of think that buildings and cars in the city are a lot prettier."

Mom just keeps smiling, so I decide to butt in. "Are you crazy or something? Those big old buildings in the city are plain and ugly . . . trees are soft and green. Besides . . . this is prettier here, right Mom?"

"Some people like the country," Sarah says, "and some people like the city."

"Some people are wrong!" I shout.

Sarah does not answer me. She just runs on ahead into the woods, yelling, "See you later, Peg!" I run after her. Boy, that makes me mad when she doesn't answer me.

I catch up with her at the stream. She jumps from one side to the other by stepping on the rocks. I start doing it, too. I almost knock her over, though, because all of a sudden she stops and points at something.

"Ooh, yum, Peg, let's have a snack!"

She is pointing to some empty bottles and cans and some food and stuff that someone had dumped by the side of the river.

I try to ignore her stupid joke. "I've got a better idea---why don't we clean it up?"

"What are you, nuts?" she says. "That stuff is gross. Besides, even if we clean it up, they'll just come back again and throw some more garbage here."

"Maybe not."

"Maybe not? Of course they will. Besides, we're not supposed to interfere with Mother Nature!"

I start to pick some of the trash up anyway, putting it into a plastic bag that the people had also thrown there. I keep talking with Sarah:

"That's not what that means. If you do something good, then you're not interfering. I still say we should clean it up."

"Well," says Sarah, "what if we don't? What difference would it make?"

"What do you mean, what difference would it make? If we don't clean up the water, then people won't have anything to drink, or help them grow food and stuff."

"Who cares?" she replies, "So what if we just kept piling up more and more garbage

until there was no more room for any people or other animals or plants or anything? What if we turned the whole world into a garbage can? So what?"

"It wouldn't be any fun--that's what."

"But Peg, there wouldn't be anybody for it not to be any fun for, so it still wouldn't matter."

I cannot think of anything to say, and by this time I have already picked up all the garbage anyhow. So I run off to find Mom. "See you later!" I yell.

"Silly Peg," I hear her say, and she runs after me.

James Heinegg

EXERCISE: Interfering with nature

For each of the following examples, say whether you think it would be an instance of interfering with nature or not. Give reasons for your answer.

	<u>Interfering</u>	<u>Not interfering</u>
1. Picking up garbage in the woods		
2. Throwing garbage in the woods		
3. Throwing garbage in the city		
4. Helping a wild animal that has been hurt		
5. Feeding wild animals		
6. Building a factory		
7. Building a house		
8. Cutting down trees		
9. Going for a walk in the woods		

EXERCISE: Mother Nature

Draw a picture of Mother Nature.

Discussion Plan: Beauty

1. Could a rainy day be beautiful?
2. Could a snowy day be beautiful?
3. Could a sunny day not be beautiful?
4. Could a day be beautiful for one person and not beautiful for another person?
5. Could a person think a day is beautiful and be wrong?
6. What makes a day beautiful? Likelihood and Certainty