



**HARRY HEDGEHOG'S
BIRTHDAY**



One summer morning, Berry the snail, Dolly the ladybird and their forest friends were playing in the meadow. They were taking turns on the leaf swing.



"It must be so much fun to play on that swing. It's a shame I'm too heavy for it," Harry Hedgehog sighed. His friends didn't know what to say.



The next day, Berry, Dolly, Balthazar and Flutter were chatting in the meadow. "It's Harry Hedgehog's tenth birthday next week," the ladybird said. "That's right, he'll be ten years old," the little snail nodded. "What do you think he'd like for his birthday?" "I know what he'd really like!" Balthazar exclaimed and jumped to his feet. "A swing!"



"That's a super idea. Let's make a big swing for Harry," Dolly said enthusiastically. The little friends got to work immediately. They brought a saw, a hammer, nails and screws and searched for some strong branches.



Soon the swing was ready. They tied the swing to thick wooden poles with very strong string.

"It looks lovely. I'm sure this one will be strong enough for Harry," Berry said.



When the swing was ready, they all went to Balthazar's house to bake a cake. They broke eggs and added all the other ingredients. The mixer whirred away and wooden spoons clattered in bowls. The little bee's kitchen was soon filled with delicious smells.



The cake had five tiers! And they decorated it all over with cherries, raisins and walnuts. "Let's put the candles on it," Flutter said. "Yes, ten candles," Dolly nodded.



"And now let's write a letter to Harry," Berry said and sat down to write.

"Dear Harry, Please come to Balthazar's house at lunchtime. We'll all see you there!"



"Here's the letter, Bubble. Can you take it to Harry, please?" Berry asked.
"But don't say a word about the cake and the swing," Dolly shouted after him.



Balthazar and Stanley put the cake on a round table and carried it out of the house. The little ants were playing hide-and-seek in the meadow.
"Be careful! Don't tip the table over!" Dolly shouted, but it was too late.



The smallest ant ran right into the little table.

"You tipped the table over! The cake's ruined!" Balthazar moaned.

"The cake! What are we going to do now?" Dolly sobbed.

"Harry Hedgehog will be here any minute and he won't have a cake," Berry said sadly.



The little ants felt very sorry for what they'd done. Suddenly, one of them had an idea. "Let's gather lots of fruit and berries and build a big pile. It'll be almost like a cake, won't it?" "That's a good idea," Stanley said. "I know Harry loves fruit."



Berry, Dolly, Balthazar, Stanley and the little ants began to gather fruit in the forest. Eddy the potato beetle, Zephyr the dragonfly and Rosita the rose beetle helped them too. They soon had a very big pile indeed.



Stanley stuck ten candles on top of the fruit just seconds before Bubble arrived with Harry Hedgehog.
"Happy birthday, Harry!" they all shouted.



“Wow, look at all that delicious fruit! My favourite! Thank you very much!” the hedgehog exclaimed.

Eddy lit the candles and they all started to sing. “Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear Harry, happy birthday to you!” Then the song ended and Harry blew out the candles.



"And now close your eyes, Harry. We've got a surprise for you!" Dolly said, and they led Harry to the swing.



"Now open your eyes!" Stanley shouted.

Harry was very surprised.

"What a big swing! Can I use it?" he asked cheerfully.

"Yes, we built it for you," Berry replied.



“Hurray, now I can swing too! Thank you so much!” Harry said thankfully. He climbed into the swing and all his friends gave him a push. The swing flew high in the air.



"Can we try it now?" Flutter asked.
"Of course! Everybody can!" Harry replied.



They all played in the swing for the rest of the afternoon. Then they stood around the fruit pile and began to eat. They ate and ate until nearly all the fruit was gone.



They stuck the leftover apples and pears on Harry's spikes, and he took them home to his mossy house. Harry went to bed with a happy smile and looked forward to tomorrow when he'd swing with his friends again.