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**ATLANTIS SHORT STORY CONTEST**

**WINNING STORY**

Sun, Rain, Snuggle Down

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**Word Count: 621.**

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## Sun, Rain, Snuggle Down

Wispy white clouds moved across the soft blue sky. Bright sun rays stole down upon the surface of the pond and filtered through the water, casting little rainbows.

The young goldfish twitched her tail and made her bright scales sparkle in the sunlight. Orange to gold, gold to orange, white to pearl, pearl to white, back and forth it went as she swished her tail, delighting in the cool, clear water. She may be little but she could shine like a star.

The young anole hung upside down on the nearby wall. He clung to the limestone, his tiny claws finding purchase in the small holes in the rock. He was hanging upside down! He tilted his head to see the rainbow colors sparkle under the water and reflect upward into his eyes. Mesmerized, he sat and watched. So pretty.

The young leopard frog sat and warmed himself on the waterlily pad. The leaf's surface felt slick under his new back feet. The soft white petals tickled his smooth back. His tail was much smaller, shorter even than yesterday. He was proud of his new grownup look.

The white clouds above began to darken and turn grey. The rainbow colors disappeared as the sun was chased away. The air seemed to crackle with electricity. The lizard felt a cold

breeze blow across his back. He felt lighter, as if he could float, as he clung to the rock under that heavy charcoal sky.

The wind picked up. The lizard ran up the wall and squeezed into a crevice under the overhang. He snuggled further into the tight little cave.

Little waves chased each other across the pond. As the water turned choppy, the leopard frog felt the lily pad tilt under his feet. Drops began to fall. Ping, ping, they hit the water, dimpling it and being spit back up.

The frog jumped off his pad and swam toward the water's edge. The drops grew bigger and fell faster and harder. The frog wiggled backwards under a moss covered rock, hidden among the irises along the shore. He snuggled deeper into the soft mud.

The sky opened up and the heavens poured forth. The goldfish dived deep toward the bottom of the pond. She snuggled against a Hydrilla plant, the soft feathery leaves tickling her sides.

The lizard, the frog and the goldfish all snuggled down and waited and waited. Gradually the rain slowed. The sky lightened. The drops went ping, ping on the surface of the pond and then finally stopped. The sun came out of hiding.

The lizard crawled out of the crevice and leapt onto a shiny green canna leaf glistening with water droplets. He turned bright green to match.

The rain had washed away the dust. Fresh smells were in the air. Everything was clean and sparkled in the sunlight.

The frog wiggled out from beneath the rock, making a slurping sound as he broke free of the sticky mud. He spotted a beetle flying past. Pushing hard with his strong back legs, the frog leapt after the insect. He missed but came so close he felt the wind from the beat of the beetle's wings on his face.

Slipping out from among the plants, the goldfish quickly swam upwards toward the surface.

The frog's leap turned into an unguided dive. Perplunk, he hit the water. He narrowly missed colliding with a fish.

The goldfish was almost to the top when a frog suddenly appeared in her path. She quickly swerved around it.

Upwards she swam, upwards, upwards until she finally broke free of the surface of the pond. She leapt for the pure joy of living, and for a moment, she flew.