

## **Mollie Moyle has a Party**

Hello. My name is Mollie Moyle. I have just had my sixth birthday. Mummy and daddy said I could have a party with all my friends, and could also invite all the new kids I've met at school this year. I was completely surprised and so excited, as my past birthdays have usually been with family, cousins and the like.

Not that I don't enjoy family stuff, as there is always lots of yummy food and of course presents. This birthday was going

to be different. I could invite who I wanted, and decide what kind of party to have, as well as all the special treats.

I couldn't wait to tell my best friend Clare. We have known each other since kindy, and my dad says she and I are like Siamese twins, "joined at the hip". I don't really understand what he is talking about, but you know how my dad is, so it's not surprising what he comes out with, is it?

My four year old brother Mickey didn't seem too impressed with having a bunch of girls over at our place for a party. Dad said he would make sure that all Mickey's toys would be safely put away in his bedroom, far away from all the action. Besides, I was thinking of inviting some of the nicer boys from school, as Clare and I quite like some of them. Not that I have a special boy as a friend, but Clare is always joking that some of the boys seem to have "an eye" on me. I told her not to mention it to

my dad, as I know he would tease me about that!

There are 22 kids in my class and most of them are boys, so it was up to me and Clare to work out who I wanted at my party. Mummy said I should also ask my cousins and other special friends not from my school. So the list was very long and took ages to work through, as I wanted to be fair and not upset anyone.

My dad said I should invite everyone, and then let each one decide if they

wanted to come or not. I had to think about that, as there were certain kids I really didn't want to come. Not that I disliked them too much, but some of the kids from school, mostly boys, are mean and nasty and chase us girls all the time. I didn't want them to spoil my party, so I easily decided to cross them off the list.

The next step was to think about what kind of party I wanted. We had already decided to have it at home, as we have a large back yard with plenty of space for

games and running about. My friend Clare had lots of ideas too, and together we imagined how different themes would work. In the end it came down to deciding between a fairy and a princess setting.

Mummy took us off to the local library to check out ideas, and before long we had books stacked everywhere as we eagerly looked through the pages. I think my mum was getting a little stressed when we showed her pictures of a large fairy castle with towers and

draw-bridges. There were elves and goblins peeking out of the windows that were set in walls covered in vines.

We found a beautiful book with lots of pictures of Princesses dressed in colourful gowns glittering with jewels. Their tiaras were studded with gems. Clare and I smiled at each other as we imagined how we could dress up to look like them. Somehow though we knew that wouldn't work too well for a mixed birthday party. So reluctantly we put the book aside. This was more difficult

than I thought it would be and I was becoming anxious that it all was just too hard.

Then Clare picked up another book and showed me a picture of a huge magic castle perched on a large white cloud, with witches on broomsticks riding over its rooftop. We showed it to my mum and she gasped in surprise. "That's it" she said "let's get a magic castle". Clare and I were speechless...what was she talking about? Did she mean a plain old "jumping castle"?



Everyone knows about jumping castles and I wasn't keen about having one of them! Mummy could see the disappointed look on our faces, but she smiled and got all excited. She explained she had read a story in the local newspaper about creating your own unusual cubby houses. The article showed a few pictures and she remembered one was a castle design for a "princess".

Of course we couldn't just go ahead and built a proper cubby house without permission from the authorities. Mum suggested we design it ourselves and use materials that didn't require council approval. I can't remember the last time I'd seen my mum so excited. Her eyes were huge and her smile even bigger, as if her face would split in two! There was no stopping her.....out came her camera as she clicked away at the pictures in the story books. All Clare and I could do was watch in amazement.

Dad was just as delighted when mum explained the idea to him. Now my dad is very practical....well, sometimes he is.....and he said we would have to make sure everything we used to build the castle was safe, and couldn't cause any injury. It would not be permanent and would have to be disposed of after the party. Well, Clare and I didn't really understand all the fuss about approvals and the like. My dad said he would help us put it all together and then we could do the finishing touches.

The next week our household was a hive of activity! Mum did all the invitations on her computer....she is so good at that....they looked so incredible. I was so happy I gave her heaps of hugs and kisses. My dad had collected a stack of large cardboard and Styrofoam cartons from our local retail shops. They would be used for our castle walls. He even found some interesting bits and pieces that were advertised "free" in our local newspaper.

The day before the party there were people everywhere in our backyard come to help assemble the "castle". My uncles Ben and Adam were there to give dad a hand with the heavy stuff, while my aunts and cousins joined Clare and me with cutting, pasting and decorating the walls and roof. Mummy and Mickey were great making sure we had plenty of drinks and lots of snacks as we worked through the morning.

By lunchtime the walls were up, with openings in each of the walls, three for

windows and of course a doorway. Clare and I looked at the structure from every angle and we were a little disappointed at what we saw. Dad came over and put his arm around my shoulders and asked why I was looking so glum. "Doesn't look like a castle" was all I said, but he could tell by my voice and the tears in my eyes that I was really upset.

"Mollie, my girl, you need to keep the faith" he said cheerfully, pointing to the weird assembly in the corner of the backyard. "The finishing touches is what

will transform this into your magical castle fit for a princess". I so wished I could believe him but I wasn't convinced by his optimism.

Clare and I were very quiet while everyone took a break and sat around eating and chatting. Mickey came up and sat beside me with a lopsided grin on his face, "Cheer up Mollie, remember what dad always says, it's not over until the fat lady sings". Well, that was enough to send everyone into peels of laughter, especially my dad. Mickey just shook his head and didn't know

what had happened to change the mood around the table.

Suddenly, there were jokes and stories being told with my uncles and aunts joining in, but none can do it better than my dad when he gets going. Mum says it's the Irish in him but I don't really get what she is talking about. Anyway, we were all happy again and excited to get started on the decorating and putting together the finishing touches of the castle.



What a team we made. For the next three hours it was non-stop. The walls and windows were finished first. All painted with bright colours and then came the pasting of the cutouts Clare and I had made. Next we sprinkled glitter everywhere and then dad and my uncles used thumb tacks to attach the paper flowers and vines around the windows.

My dad was very proud of the roof he had made from some garden netting and crepe paper. Clare and I didn't think it was going

to look very good but dad just smiled and kept working.

How surprised and happy we were when he was finally finished. Dad just stood there with his hands on his hips, the grin still on his face as he watched Clare and me jumping up and down, hugging each other and shouting with joy.

It was now time to add the final touches we had been making all week. The cardboard wizard, painted and decorated in his spectacular robes, took pride on

place at the doorway. The witches on the broomsticks were attached to the roof and the goblins and fairies at each of the windows. We had a container filled with fairy wands inside - each one had a name tag so every guest would feel special. This was my mum's idea and it turned out to be a great hit with everyone.

Dad and my uncles had tied large cutout stars to the overhanging tree branches and had streamers trailing from them. These formed a curtain on each side of

the castle doorway and it all looked just amazing.

The invitations mum had sent out stated the theme of the party and invited everyone to dress up in their favourite character costume. I had a new princess outfit I was to wear with a jewel tiara and Clare had a beautiful fairy godmother dress with gossamer wings attached. We would be the "stars".

I thought I would be too excited to sleep that night but I was so tired after the

busy day, I was asleep as soon as my head hit the pillow. Next thing I knew, Mickey was beside my bed and whispering in my ear. Rubbing my eyes, I sat up and saw mum and dad standing in the doorway both grinning. Then they started singing Happy Birthday and Mickey jumped up and down on my bed as he gave me a big hug. We rolled over and over until we both landed on the floor, giggling our heads off.

What a crazy family I have.....but I wouldn't want to be anywhere else in the world!

My mum had been up early preparing the food and all the party games, while dad and Mickey had tidied up everything in the garden and had the signs and balloons on the front gate to welcome everyone. The weather was perfect, sunny and warm with a gentle breeze. All was ready for the party to begin.

The next few hours were just fantastic and went too quickly. It seems somewhat of a blur to me now but mum took lots of photos so we can enjoy the day over and

over again every time we look at them. My uncle Ben had brought his video camera too and I don't know how he managed to film every aspect of the party.....but he did. It is just great to relive each and every one of those happy moments over and over again.

Everyone turned up in colourful costumes and Mickey handed out the magic wands as they came in the gate. Mum had organised a variety of games that were so much fun. The party food was quickly eaten and the birthday cake was awesome. The castle

was the biggest "hit" of all. The time just flew by and soon the parents were arriving to collect their kids. Nobody wanted to go as we were having so much fun.

As everyone said "goodbye" my mum and dad looked pleased that the party was such a success. Mickey was pretty happy too. He was dressed as a goblin and some of the girls said he looked "really cute". I'm not sure why they would say that, but then they don't have to put up with his teasing ways every day.



We knew this was going to be the best party ever.....and so it was.

