**The Circle Friends**

*Written in 2017 for an 8 year old girl who has ‘controlling friends’ – the mother contacted me asking could I write a story to encourage her daughter to have clear boundaries, make her own choices and have balanced play with many friends. After some weeks I heard back from the mother: “Thank you for the story. It was a really powerful tool for my daughter’s journey.  One for realising what was happening and two that she needed outside help.”*

In the land of shapes, amongst the squares and the triangles and the pentagons (to name but a few), lived three circle friends. One was red, one was blue and one was yellow.

The circle friends loved doing everything together.

The circle friends loved going everywhere together.

Every day they could be seen out and about, playing and having fun – rolling along the ground, spinning fast and bouncing up and down. So many movements that they could do!

Their bright colours brought such joy to all who lived there.

However, something was happening that seemed to go unnoticed for a long time. The blue circle and the red circle were taking turns as the leaders in the play, and the yellow circle was more and more following everything her friends wanted to do. She hardly took a turn being a leader, and as much as possible, she would hide between her two friends. Sometimes, as they all rolled along the ground, or spun fast, or bounced up and down, the yellow circle could hardly be seen at all.

Then one day, this was noticed! It was noticed in the Royal Shapes Castle itself - by the most regal in the land of shapes – *The Queen of All Shapes.*

Every day *The Queen of All Shapes* would visit her Grand Mirror Room to check on all the shapes that lived in her Queendom. In this Grand Mirror Room was a mirror for every kind of shape – a square mirror, a triangle mirror, a pentagonal mirror and many more – including, of course, a circle mirror!

Now as you may already have imagined, these were not ordinary mirrors. Every one of the mirrors was magical. When *The Queen of All Shapes* looked into them, instead of seeing her regal self, she could see what all her shape subjects were doing across the land.

And for quite some time, when she looked into the circle mirror each day, *The Queen of All Shapes* had been noticing something not quite right. She could see that the yellow circle shape was more and more hiding between her friends and not showing her beautiful round shining yellow self.

Finally *The Queen of All Shapes* decided to offer some queenly help. She lifted up her regal hand, lent in to the mirror and blew a kiss to the yellow circle that was rolling along between the circle friends. The kiss turned into a little wind that whooshed and swirled and whirled around the mirror.

Back in the real shape world, in real shape time, the yellow circle suddenly experienced a bit of a whoosh, a bit of a swirl, a bit of a whirl. She saw a new winding path she had never noticed before and a friendly wind was helping to blow her towards it. It felt good to flow with this little wind so she decided to follow the new path.

This led her to a different part of shape land that she had not known about. It was so exciting – well, a little bit scary, but mostly exciting! So many new things to explore, so many new shapes to meet! Hexagons and octagons and nonagons and dodecagons and hexadecagons! Rectangles and ovals and stars! Trapezoids and parallelograms!

The yellow circle couldn’t wait to tell her friends. Next time she met them rolling along, she led the way to her new discoveries, and together they enjoyed exploring and playing.

Meanwhile, in the Royal Shape Castle, *The Queen of All Shapes* continued her daily visits to the Grand Mirror Room. When she looked into the circle mirror, she was now happy to see the yellow circle having fun, rolling along, spinning fast and bouncing up and down, shining her yellow light across the land. *The Queen of All Shapes* would smile to herself and continue working. Then, at the end of the day, after taking off her velvet gown and golden circle crown, she would relax with a cup of tea in the Royal Shape Gardens.

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