




Tom's Power Flower

A gentle explanation of how babies are made





One bright Monday morning,
Miss Byrne took her class
Out to the garden to sit on the grass.

“Look at these flowers,” said Miss Byrne.
“The most important thing you’ll learn
Is that each of you is like a flower,
Beautiful, special and full of power.”

Tom put his hand up and said, "That's wrong!
I'm not like a flower, Miss. I'm big and I'm strong!
You need seeds to make flowers - they're tiny and small,
And children are not made the same way at all."



"Tom," Miss Byrne said, "I have news for you:
Children start out as tiny seeds too!"



Children from seeds? That couldn't be right.
Tom ended up having some weird dreams that night.

The next day Miss Byrne said, "Today is your chance
To sow your own seeds and to grow some nice plants."



Tom asked, while he pushed his seed into the clay,
“Miss, what did you mean about seeds yesterday?
Babies do not grow from seeds in the ground.
So where can these seeds that make babies be found?”



"All this information must seem very new."
Miss Byrne went to the whiteboard and on it she drew
A matchstick woman who looked like this-



Michael asked, "What's in her belly there, Miss?"

"Inside a woman there is a space
We call a 'womb' and that's the place
A baby-seed can happily grow,
Safe and cosy from head to toe.
Every person here on earth
Came out of a womb - we call that 'birth'."



Tom asked, "How can a person tell
If it's a boy or a girl?" Miss Byrne said, "Well ..."



"If we look at our baby-dolls, Jack and Liz,
We'll see what the difference between them is.
At the top of their legs, each baby has got
Something that the other does not.
Boys have a penis – you might know that word,
Girls have a vulva, you may not have heard."

It was a lot for the children to think about,
All the strange, new words they were finding out.
They thought and they talked for a while and then
They all got back to their flower pots again.





A few weeks later, in almost every child's pot,
Was a flower, but in Tom's ... there was not!

That night Tom had so many things to say
When his mam asked to hear all about his day.
"Well, Miss Byrne made us sow these seeds in school
And at first I thought it was really cool.
But my flower couldn't be bothered to grow.
I've never seen anything moving so slow!"



“Calm down, Tom, it isn't a race,”
Mam said, as she carefully wiped his face.
“I know what it's like to wait and wait
For something special that's running late.
I remember I got a bit cranky too
When I was pregnant and waiting for you!”





She gave Tom a kiss on the top of his head.
“Was I in your womb back then?” he said,
“Growing from a tiny baby seed?”

"Yes," said Mam, "You were indeed.
And Tom, I'll tell you this for sure:
You were a baby worth waiting for.
We have to be careful to let every seed
Grow in its own way and at its own speed.
It's lovely you care so much for your flower
But let's not forget that it has its own power.
Just give it time and you will see
How special your flower turns out to be."





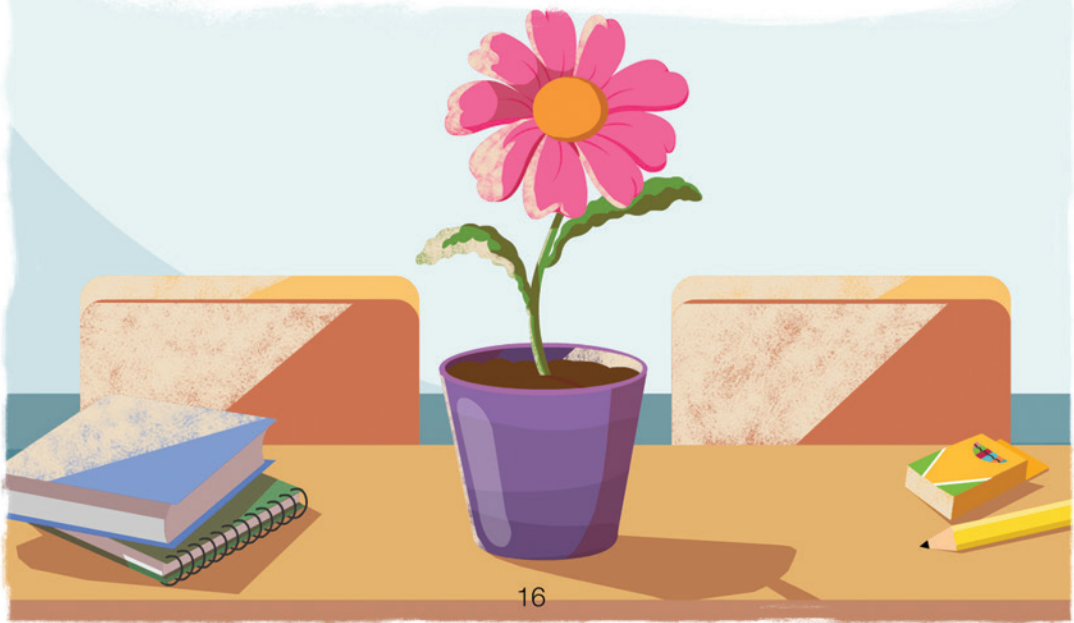
There were so many questions in Tom's head
As his dad tucked him into bed.
"Why do men not have wombs too?
Is there no special job for them to do?"

"A nice cosy womb is needed, for sure,
But for making a baby, it takes something more."
A woman and man make the small baby seed.
Then, snug in the womb, it will get all it needs'.
"So it takes two people to make a child?"
"Exactly," said Dad, as he hugged Tom and smiled.






Next day Tom saw something which made his heart lift:
A flower in his pot, like a big surprise gift.



It was his favourite of all the flowers,
His mam was right about special powers!





The story booklet, *Tom's Power Flower*, is a part of the *Talking to Your Young Child about Relationships, Sexuality and Growing Up* resource. The resource was developed by the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) in line with the National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020.

The story was written by Kathleen O' Rourke, a primary school teacher and author, best known for her work on the Oscar-nominated *Granny O' Grimm*.

Book design and illustrations by Igloo Animations

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