

FAVORITE FAIRY TALES



Julia Greene

*** A Distributed Proofreaders US eBook ***

This eBook is made available at no cost and with very few restrictions. These restrictions apply only if (1) you make a change in the eBook (other than alteration for different display devices), or (2) you are making commercial use of the eBook. If either of these conditions applies, please check with an FP administrator before proceeding.

This work is in the Canadian public domain, but may be under copyright in some countries. If you live outside Canada, check your country's copyright laws. **If the book is under copyright in your country, do not download or redistribute this file.**

Title: Favorite Fairy Tales

Date of first publication: 1917

Author: Logan Marshall

Date first posted: Aug. 22, 2013

Date last updated: Aug. 22, 2013

Faded Page eBook #20130837

This eBook was produced by: Bruce Albrecht, Jacqueline Jeremy, Paul Ereaut & the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net>



Adventures of Tom Thumb
It Shone Down Upon the White Pebbles

FAVORITE FAIRY TALES

ARRANGED BY

LOGAN MARSHALL



ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS

THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY

CHICAGO

PHILADELPHIA

TORONTO

COPYRIGHT, 1917, BY

L. T. MYERS

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

C O N T E N T S

	PAGE
LITTLE SNOW WHITE	<u>5</u>
THE UGLY DUCKLING	<u>22</u>
ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP	<u>43</u>
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY	<u>64</u>
PUSS-IN-BOOTS	<u>73</u>
ADVENTURES OF TOM THUMB	<u>81</u>
THE THREE BEARS	<u>95</u>
THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL	<u>103</u>
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	<u>109</u>
THE STORY OF CINDERELLA	<u>122</u>
JACK THE GIANT KILLER	<u>135</u>
JACK AND THE BEANSTALK	<u>155</u>
DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT	<u>167</u>
THE STORY OF BLUEBEARD	<u>184</u>
LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD	<u>195</u>
SINDBAD THE SAILOR	<u>202</u>
HANSEL AND GRETEL	<u>230</u>
THE GOOSE GIRL	<u>247</u>

LITTLE SNOW-WHITE



ONCE upon a time in the middle of winter, when the flakes of snow were falling like feathers from the clouds, a Queen sat at her palace window, which had an ebony black frame, stitching her husband's shirts. While she was thus engaged and looking out at the snow she pricked her finger, and three drops of blood fell upon the snow. Now the red looked so well upon the white that she thought to herself, "Oh, that I had a child as white as this snow, as red as this blood, and as black as the wood of this frame!" Soon afterwards a little daughter came to her, who was as white as snow, and with cheeks as red as blood, and with hair as black as ebony, and from this she was named "Snow-White." And at the same time her mother died.

About a year afterwards the King married another wife, who was very beautiful, but so proud and haughty that she could not bear anyone to be better-looking than herself. She owned a wonderful mirror, and when she stepped before it and said:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

it replied:

"The Queen is the fairest of the day."

Then she was pleased, for she knew that the mirror spoke truly.

Little Snow-White, however, grew up, and became prettier and prettier, and when she was seven years old she was as fair as the noontide, and more beautiful than the Queen herself. When the Queen now asked her mirror:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,

Who is the fairest of us all?"

it replied:

"The Queen was fairest yesterday;
Snow-White is the fairest, now, they say."

This answer so angered the Queen that she became quite yellow with envy. From that hour, whenever she saw Snow-White, her heart was hardened against her, and she hated the little girl. Her envy and jealousy increased so that she had no rest day or night, and she said to a Huntsman, "Take the child away into the forest. I will never look upon her again. You must kill her, and bring me her heart and tongue for a token."

The Huntsman listened and took the maiden away, but when he drew out his knife to kill her, she began to cry, saying, "Ah, dear Huntsman, give me my life! I will run into the wild forest, and never come home again."

This speech softened the Hunter's heart, and her beauty so touched him that he had pity on her and said, "Well, run away then, poor child." But he thought to himself, "The wild beasts will soon devour you." Still he felt as if a stone had been lifted from his heart, because her death was not by his hand. Just at that moment a young boar came roaring along to the spot, and as soon as he clapped eyes upon it the Huntsman caught it, and, killing it, took its tongue and heart and carried them to the Queen, for a token of his deed.

But now poor little Snow-White was left motherless and alone, and overcome with grief, she was bewildered at the sight of so many trees, and knew not which way to turn. She ran till her feet refused to go farther, and as it was getting dark, and she saw a little house near, she entered in to rest. In this cottage everything was very small, but very neat and elegant. In the middle stood a little table with a white cloth over it, and seven little plates upon it, each plate having a spoon and a knife and a fork, and there were also seven little mugs. Against the wall were seven little beds arranged in a row, each covered with snow-white sheets.

Little Snow-White, being both hungry and thirsty, ate a little morsel of porridge out of each plate, and drank a drop or two of wine out of each mug, for she did not wish to take away the whole share of anyone. After that, because she was so tired, she laid herself down on one bed, but it did not suit; she tried another, but that was too long; a fourth was too short, a fifth too hard. But the seventh was just the thing; and tucking herself up in it, she went to sleep, first saying her prayers as usual.

When it became quite dark the owners of the cottage came home, seven Dwarfs, who dug for gold and silver in the mountains. They first lighted

seven little lamps, and saw at once—for they lit up the whole room—that somebody had been in, for everything was not in the order in which they had left it.

The first asked, "Who has been sitting on my chair?" The second, "Who has been eating off my plate?" The third said, "Who has been nibbling at my bread?" The fourth, "Who has been at my porridge?" The fifth, "Who has been meddling with my fork?" The sixth grumbled out, "Who has been cutting with my knife?" The seventh said, "Who has been drinking out of my mug?"



Then the first, looking round, began again, "Who has been lying on my bed?" he asked, for he saw that the sheets were tumbled. At these words the others came, and looking at their beds cried out too, "Some one has been lying in our beds!" But the seventh little man, running up to his, saw Snow-White sleeping in it; so he called his companions, who shouted with wonder and held up their seven lamps, so that the light fell upon the little girl.

"Oh, heavens! oh, heavens!" said they; "what a beauty she is!" and they were so much delighted that they would not awaken her, but left her to sleep, and the seventh Dwarf, in whose bed she was, slept with each of his fellows one hour, and so passed the night.

As soon as morning dawned Snow-White awoke, and was quite frightened when she saw the seven little men; but they were very friendly, and asked her what she was called.

"My name is Snow-White," was her reply.

"Why have you come into our cottage?" they asked.

Then she told them how her stepmother would have had her killed, but the Huntsman had spared her life, and how she had wandered about the Whole day until at last she had found their house.

When her tale was finished the Dwarfs said, "Will you look after our household—be our cook, make the beds, wash, sew, and knit for us, and keep everything in neat order? If so, we will keep you here, and you shall want for nothing."

And Snow-White answered, "Yes, with all my heart and will." And so she remained with them, and kept their house in order.

In the morning the Dwarfs went into the mountains and searched for silver and gold, and in the evening they came home and found their meals ready for them. During the day the maiden was left alone, and therefore the good Dwarfs warned her and said, "Be careful of your stepmother, who will soon know of your being here. So let nobody enter the cottage."

The Queen meanwhile, supposing that she had eaten the heart and tongue of her stepdaughter, believed that she was now above all the most beautiful woman in the world. One day she stepped before her mirror, and said:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

and it replied:

"The Queen was fairest yesterday;
Snow-White is fairest now, they say.
The Dwarfs protect her from thy sway
Amid the forest, far away."

This reply surprised her, but she knew that the mirror spoke the truth. She knew, therefore, that the Huntsman had deceived her, and that Snow-White was still alive. So she dyed her face and clothed herself as a pedler woman, so that no one could recognize her, and in this disguise she went over the seven hills to the house of the seven Dwarfs. She knocked at the door of the hut, and called out, "Fine goods for sale! beautiful goods for sale!"

Snow-White peeped out of the window and said, "Good day, my good woman; what have you to sell?"

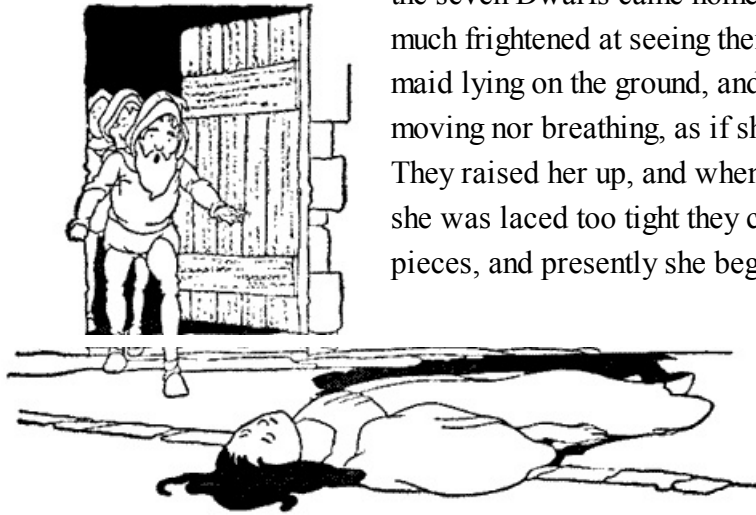
"Fine goods, beautiful goods!" she replied. "Stays of all colors." And she held up a pair which were made of many-colored silks.

"I may let in this honest woman," thought Snow-White; and she unbolted the door and bargained for one pair of stays.

"You can't think, my dear, how they become you!" exclaimed the old woman. "Come, let me lace them up for you."

Snow-White suspected nothing, and let her do as she wished, but the old woman laced her up so quickly and so tightly that all her breath went, and she fell down like one dead. "Now," thought the old woman to herself, hastening away, "now am I once more the most beautiful of all!"

At eventide, not long after she had left, the seven Dwarfs came home, and were much frightened at seeing their dear little maid lying on the ground, and neither moving nor breathing, as if she were dead. They raised her up, and when they saw that she was laced too tight they cut the stays to pieces, and presently she began to breathe



again, and little by little she revived. When the Dwarfs now heard what had taken place, they said, "The old pedler woman was no other than your wicked stepmother. Take more care of yourself, and let no one enter when we are not with you."

Meanwhile, the Queen had reached home, and, going before her mirror, she repeated her usual words:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

and it replied as before:

"The Queen was fairest yesterday;
Snow-White is fairest now, they say.
The Dwarfs protect her from thy sway
Amid the forest, far away."

As soon as it had finished, all her blood rushed to her heart, for she was so angry to hear that Snow-White was yet living. "But now," thought she to herself, "will I make something which shall destroy her completely." Thus saying, she made a poisoned comb by arts which she understood, and then, disguising herself, she took the form of an old widow. She went over the seven hills to the house of the seven Dwarfs, and knocking at the door, called out, "Good wares to sell to-day!"

Snow-White peeped out and said, "You must go farther, for I dare not let you in."

"But still you may look," said the old woman, drawing out her poisoned comb and holding it up. The sight of this pleased the maiden so

much that she allowed herself to be persuaded, and opened the door. As soon as she had bought something the old woman said, "Now let me for once comb your hair properly," and Snow-White consented. But scarcely was the comb drawn through the hair when the poison began to work, and the maiden fell down senseless.

"You pattern of beauty," cried the wicked Queen, "it is now all over with you." And so saying, she departed.



Fortunately, evening soon came, and the seven Dwarfs returned, and as soon as they saw Snow-White lying, like dead, upon the ground, they suspected the Queen, and discovering the poisoned comb, they immediately drew it out. Then the maiden very soon revived and told them all that had happened. So again they warned her against the wicked stepmother, and bade her open the door to nobody.

Meanwhile the Queen, on her arrival home, had again consulted her mirror, and received the same answer as twice before. This made her tremble and foam with rage and jealousy, and she swore that Snow-White should die if it cost her her own life. Thereupon she went into an inner secret chamber where no one could enter, and made an apple of the most deep and subtle poison. Outwardly it looked nice enough, and had rosy cheeks which would make the mouth of everyone who looked at it water; but whoever ate the smallest piece of it would surely die. As soon as the apple was ready the Queen again dyed her face, and clothed herself like a peasant's wife, and then over the seven mountains to the house of the seven Dwarfs she made her way.

She knocked at the door, and Snow-White stretched out her head and said, "I dare not let anyone enter; the seven Dwarfs have forbidden me."

"That is hard on me," said the old woman, "for I must take back my apples; but there is one which I will give you."

"No," answered Snow-White; "no, I dare not take it."

"What! are you afraid of it?" cried the old woman. "There, see—I will cut the apple in halves; do you eat the red cheeks, and I will eat the core." (The apple was so artfully made that the red cheeks alone were poisoned.) Snow-White very much wished for the beautiful apple, and when she saw

the woman eating the core she could no longer resist, but, stretching out her hand, took the poisoned part. Scarcely had she placed a piece in her mouth when she fell down dead upon the ground. Then the Queen, looking at her with glittering eyes, and laughing bitterly, exclaimed, "White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony! This time the Dwarfs cannot reawaken you."

When she reached home and consulted her mirror—

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

it answered:

"The Queen is fairest of the day."

Then her envious heart was at rest,
as peacefully as an envious heart can rest.



When the little Dwarfs returned home in the evening they found Snow-White lying on the ground, and there appeared to be no life in her body; she seemed to be quite dead. They raised her up, and tried if they could find anything poisonous. They unlaced her, and even uncombed her hair, and washed her with water and with wine. But nothing availed: the dear child was really and

truly dead.

Then they laid her upon a bier, and all seven placed themselves around it, and wept and wept for three days without ceasing. Then they prepared to bury her. But she looked still fresh and life-like, and even her red cheeks had not deserted her, so they said to one another, "We cannot bury her in the black ground." Then they ordered a case to be made of glass. In this they could see the body on all sides, and the Dwarfs wrote her name with golden letters upon the glass, saying that she was a King's daughter. Now they placed the glass case upon the ledge on a rock, and one of them always remained by it watching. Even the birds bewailed the loss of Snow-White; first came an owl, then a raven, and last of all a dove.

For a long time Snow-White lay peacefully in her case, and changed not, but looked as if she were only asleep, for she was still white as snow, red as blood, and black-haired as ebony. By and by it happened that a King's son was traveling in the forest, and came to the Dwarfs' house to pass the night. He soon saw the glass case upon the rock, and the beautiful maiden lying within, and he read also the golden inscription.

When he had examined it, he said to the Dwarfs, "Let me have this case, and I will pay what you like for it."

But the Dwarfs replied, "We will not sell it for all the gold in the world."

"Then give it to me," said the Prince; "for I cannot live without Snow-White. I will honor and protect her as long as I live."

When the Dwarfs saw that he was so much in earnest, they pitied him, and at last gave him the case, and the Prince ordered it to be carried away on the shoulders of his attendants. Presently it happened that they stumbled over a rut, and with the shock the piece of poisoned apple which lay in Snow-White's mouth fell out. Very soon she opened her eyes, and raising the lid of the glass case, she rose up and asked, "Where am I?"

Full of joy, the Prince answered, "You are safe with me." And he told to her what she had suffered, and how he would rather have her than any other for his wife, and he asked her to accompany him home to the castle of the King his father. Snow-White consented, and when they arrived there they were married with great splendor and magnificence.

Snow-White's stepmother was also invited to the wedding, and when she was dressed in all her finery to go, she first stepped in front of her mirror and asked:

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

and it replied:

"The Queen was fairest yesterday;
The Prince's bride is now, they say."

At these words the Queen was in a fury, and was so terribly mortified that she knew not what to do with herself. At first she resolved not to go to the wedding, but she could not resist the wish to see the Princess. So she went; but as soon as she saw the bride she recognized Snow-White, and was so terrified with rage and astonishment that she rushed out of the castle and was never heard of again.



[Back to contents](#)

THE UGLY DUCKLING



IT was beautiful in the country. It was summertime. The wheat was yellow, the oats were green, the hay was stacked up in the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on his long red legs, talking in Egyptian, which language he had learnt from his mother.

The fields and meadows were skirted by thick woods, and a deep lake lay in the midst of the woods. Yes; it was indeed beautiful in the country! The sunshine fell warmly on an old mansion, surrounded by deep canals, and from the walls down to the water's edge there grew large burdock leaves, so high that children could stand upright among them without being seen.

This place was as wild as the thickest part of the wood, and on that account a Duck had chosen to make her nest there. She was sitting on her eggs; but the pleasure she had felt at first was now almost gone, because she had been there so long, and had so few visitors, for the other Ducks preferred swimming on the canals to sitting among the burdock leaves gossiping with her.

At last the eggs cracked one after another, "Chick, chick!" All the eggs were alive, and one little head after another peered forth. "Quack, quack!" said the Duck, and all got up as well as they could. They peeped about from under the green leaves; and as green is good for the eyes, their mother let them look as long as they pleased.

"How large the world is!" said the little ones, for they found their new abode very different from their former narrow one in the egg-shells.

"Do you imagine this to be the whole of the world?" said the mother.

"It extends far beyond the other side of the garden in the pastor's field; but I have never been there. Are you all here?" And then she got up. "No, not all, for the largest egg is still here. How long will this last? I am so weary of it!" And then she sat down again.

"Well, and how are you getting on?" asked an old Duck, who had come to pay her a visit.

"This one egg keeps me so long," said the mother. "It will not break. But you should see the others! They are the prettiest little Ducklings I have seen in all my days. They are all like their father—the good-for-nothing fellow, he has not been to visit me once!"

"Let me see the egg that will not break," said the old Duck. "Depend upon it, it is a turkey's egg. I was cheated in the same way once myself, and I had such trouble with the young ones; for they were afraid of the water, and I could not get them there. I called and scolded, but it was all of no use. But let me see the egg—ah, yes! to be sure, that is a turkey's egg. Leave it, and teach the other little ones to swim."



The Ugly Duckling

What is the Matter? asked the Old Woman

"I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck. "I have been sitting so long, that I may as well spend the harvest here."

"It is no business of mine," said the old Duck, and away she waddled.

The great egg burst at last. "Chick! chick!" said the little one, and out it tumbled—but, oh! how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it. "That is a great, strong creature," said she. "None of the others are at all like it. Can it be a young turkey-cock? Well, we shall soon find out. It must go into the water, though I push it in myself."

The next day there was delightful weather, and the sun shone warmly upon the green leaves when Mother Duck with all her family went down to the canal. Plump she went into the water. "Quack! quack!" cried she, and one duckling after another jumped in. The water closed over their heads, but all came up again, and swam together quite easily. Their legs moved without effort. All were there, even the ugly grey one.

"No; it is not a turkey," said the old Duck; "only see how prettily it moves its legs, how upright it holds itself! It is my own child. It is also really very pretty, when you look more closely at it. Quack! quack! now come with me, I will take you into the world and introduce you in the duck-yards. But keep close to me, or someone may tread on you; and beware of the Cat."

So they came into the duck-yard. There was a horrid noise; two families were quarreling about the head of an eel, which in the end was carried off by the Cat.

"See, my children, such is the way of the world," said the Mother Duck, wiping her beak, for she, too, was fond of eels. "Now use your legs," said she, "keep together, and bow to the old Duck you see yonder. She is the most distinguished of all the fowls present, and is of Spanish blood, which accounts for her dignified appearance and manners. And look, she has a red rag on her leg! That is considered extremely handsome, and is the greatest honor a Duck can have. Don't turn your feet inwards; a well-educated Duckling always keeps his legs far apart, like his father and mother, just so—look! Now bow your necks, and say, 'Quack.'"

And they did as they were told. But the other Ducks, who were in the yard, looked at them and said aloud, "Just see! Now we have another brood, as if there were not enough of us already. And fie! how ugly that one is. We will not endure it." And immediately one of the Ducks flew at him, and bit him in the neck.

"Leave him alone," said the mother. "He is doing no one any harm."

"Yes, but he is so large and so strange-looking, and therefore he shall be teased," said the others.

"Those are fine children that our good mother has," said the old Duck with the red rag on her leg. "All are pretty except one, and that has not turned out well; I almost wish it could be hatched over again."



"That cannot be, please your Highness," said the mother.

"Certainly he is not handsome, but he is a very good child, and swims as well as the others, indeed, rather better. I think he will grow like the others all in good time, and perhaps will look smaller. He stayed so long in the egg-shell, that is the cause of the difference." And she scratched the Duckling's neck, and stroked his whole body. "Besides," added she, "he is a Drake. I think he will be very strong, so it does not matter so much. He will fight his way through."

"The other Ducks are very pretty," said the old Duck. "Pray make yourselves at home, and if you find an eel's head you can bring it to me."

So they made themselves at home.



But the poor little Duckling, who had come last out of its egg-shell, and who was so ugly, was bitten, pecked, and teased by both Ducks and Hens. "It is so large!" said they all. And the Turkey-cock, who had come into the world with spurs on, and therefore fancied he was an emperor, puffed himself up like a ship in full sail, and marched up to the Duckling quite red with passion. The poor little thing scarcely knew what to do. He was quite distressed, because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard.

So passed the first day, and afterwards matters grew worse and worse—the poor Duckling was scorned by all. Even his brothers and sisters behaved unkindly, and were constantly saying, "May the Cat take you, you nasty creature!" The mother said, "Ah, if you were only far away!" The Ducks bit him, the Hens pecked him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him.

He ran through the hedge, and the little birds in the bushes were terrified. "That is because I am so ugly," thought the Duckling, shutting his eyes, but he ran on. At last he came to a wide moor, where lived some Wild Ducks; here he lay the whole night, very tired and comfortless. In the morning the Wild Ducks flew up, and saw their new companion. "Pray who are you?" asked they; and our little Duckling turned himself in all directions, and greeted them as politely as possible.

"You are really uncommonly ugly!" said the Wild Ducks. "However, that does not matter to us, provided you do not marry into our families." Poor thing! he had never thought of marrying; he only begged permission to lie among the reeds, and drink the water of the moor.



There he lay for two whole days. On the third day there came two Wild Geese, or rather Ganders, who had not been long out of their eggshells, which accounts for their impertinence.

"Hark ye," said they; "you are so ugly that we like you very well. Will you come with us and be a bird of passage? On another moor, not far from this, are some dear, sweet Wild Geese, as lovely creatures as have ever said 'Hiss, hiss.' You are truly in the way to make your fortune, ugly as you are."

Bang! a gun went off all at once, and both Wild Geese were stretched dead among the reeds; the water became red with blood. Bang! a gun went off again. Whole flocks of Wild Geese flew up from among the reeds, and another report followed.

There was a grand hunting party. The hunters lay in ambush all around; some were even sitting in the trees, whose huge branches stretched far over the moor. The blue smoke rose through the thick trees like a mist, and was dispersed as it fell over the water. The hounds splashed about in the mud, the reeds and rushes bent in all directions.

How frightened the poor little Duck was! He turned his head, thinking to hide it under his wings, and in a moment a most formidable-looking Dog stood close to him, his tongue hanging out of his mouth, his eyes sparkling fearfully. He opened wide his jaws at the sight of our Duckling, showing

him his sharp white teeth, and, splash, splash! he was gone—gone without hurting him.

"Well! let me be thankful," sighed he. "I am so ugly that even the Dog will not eat me."

And now he lay still, though the shooting continued among the reeds, shot following shot.

The noise did not cease till late in the day, and even then the poor little thing dared not stir. He waited several hours before he looked around him, and then hurried away from the moor as fast as he could. He ran over fields and meadows, though the wind was so high that he had some difficulty in moving.

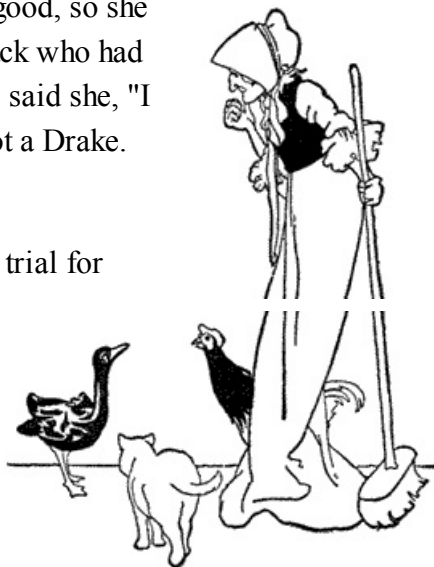
Towards evening he reached a wretched little hut, so wretched that it knew not on which side to fall, and therefore remained standing. The wind blew violently, so that our poor little Duckling was obliged to support himself on his tail, in order to stand against it; but it became worse and worse. He then noticed that the door had lost one of its hinges, and hung so much awry that he could creep through the crack into the room. So he went in.

In this room lived an old woman, with her Tom-cat and her Hen. The Cat, whom she called her little son, knew how to set up his back and purr; indeed, he could even throw out sparks when stroked the wrong way. The Hen had very short legs, and was therefore called "Chickie Short-legs." She laid very good eggs, and the old woman loved her as her own child.

The next morning the new guest was discovered, and the Cat began to mew and the Hen to cackle.

"What is the matter?" asked the old woman, looking round. But her eyes were not good, so she took the young Duckling to be a fat Duck who had lost her way. "This is a capital catch," said she, "I shall now have Duck's eggs, if it be not a Drake. We shall see."

And so the Duckling was kept on trial for three weeks, but no eggs made their appearance. Now the Cat was the master of the house, and the Hen was the mistress, and always used to say, "We and the world," for they imagined themselves to be not only the half of the world, but also



by far the better half. The Duckling thought it was possible to be of a different opinion, but that the Hen would not allow.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."

"Well, then, hold your tongue."

And the Cat said, "Can you set up your back? Can you purr?"

"No."

"Well, then, you should have no opinion when reasonable people are speaking."

So the Duckling sat alone in a corner, and felt very miserable. However, he happened to think of the fresh air and bright sunshine, and these thoughts gave him such a strong desire to swim again, that he could not help telling it to the Hen.

"What ails you?" said the Hen. "You have nothing to do, and therefore brood over these fancies. Either lay eggs or purr, then you will forget them."

"But it is so delicious to swim!" said the Duckling. "So delicious when the waters close over your head, and you plunge to the bottom!"

"Well, that is a queer sort of pleasure," said the Hen. "I think you must be crazy. Not to speak of myself, ask the Cat—he is the most sensible animal I know—whether he would like to swim, or to plunge to the bottom of the water. Ask our mistress, the old woman—there is no one in the world wiser than she. Do you think she would take pleasure in swimming and in the waters closing over her head?"

"You do not understand me," said the Duckling.

"What! we do not understand you? So you think yourself wiser than the Cat and the old woman, not to speak of myself? Do not fancy any such thing, child; but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Are you not lodged in a warm room, and have you not the advantage of society from which you can learn something? But you are a simpleton, and it is wearisome to have anything to do with you. Believe me, I wish you well. I tell you unpleasant truths, but it is thus that real friendship is shown. Come, for once give yourself the trouble to learn to purr, or to lay eggs."

"I think I will go out into the wide world again," said the Duckling.

"Well, go," answered the Hen.

So the Duckling went. He swam on the surface of the water, he plunged beneath, but all animals passed him by, on account of his ugliness. And the autumn came, the leaves turned yellow and brown, the wind caught them and danced them about, the air was very cold, the clouds were heavy with hail or snow, and the Raven sat on the hedge and croaked. The poor Duckling was certainly not very comfortable.

One evening, just as the sun was setting with unusual brilliancy, a flock of large, beautiful birds rose from out of the brushwood. The Duckling had never seen anything so beautiful before; their plumage was of a dazzling white, and they had long, slender necks. They were Swans. They uttered a singular cry, spread out their long splendid wings, and flew away from these cold regions to warmer countries, across the open sea. They flew so high, so very high! And the little Ugly Duckling's feelings were so strange. He turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and strange cry that it almost frightened himself. Ah! he could not forget them, those noble birds, those happy birds! When he could see them no longer he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself. The Duckling knew not what the birds were called, knew not whither they were flying; yet he loved them as he had never before loved anything. He envied them not; it would never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself. He would have been quite contented if the Ducks in the duck-yard had but endured his company—the poor, ugly creature.

And the winter was so cold, so cold, the Duckling was obliged to swim round and round in the water to keep it from freezing. But every night the opening in which he swam became smaller and smaller. It froze so that the crust of ice crackled and the Duckling was obliged to make good use of his legs to prevent the water from freezing entirely. At last, wearied out, he lay stiff and cold in the ice.



Early in the morning there passed by a peasant who saw him, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and brought him home to his wife.

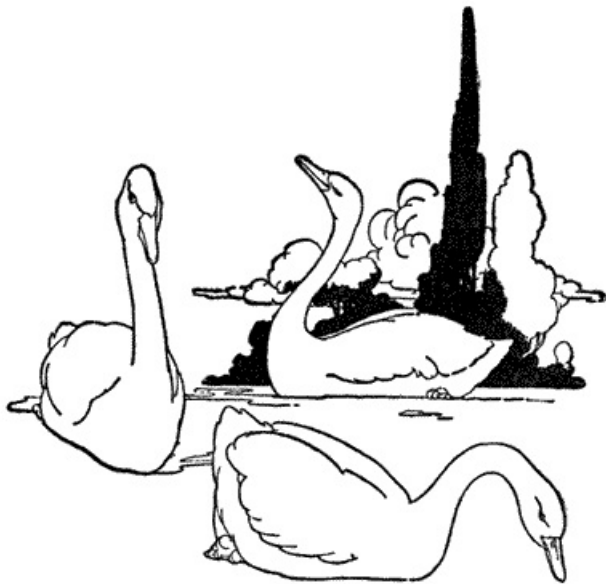
The poor Duckling soon revived. The children would have played with him, but he thought they wished to tease him, and in his terror jumped into the milk-pail, so that the milk was spilled about the room. The good woman screamed and clapped her hands. He flew from there into the pan where the butter was kept, and thence into the meal-barrel, and out again, and then how strange he looked!

The woman screamed, and struck at him with the tongs, the children ran races with each other trying to catch him, and laughed and screamed likewise. It was well for him that the door stood open. He jumped out among the bushes into the new-fallen snow, and there he lay as in a dream.

But it would be too sad to tell all the trouble and misery that he had to suffer from the frost, and snow and storms of the winter. He was lying on a moor among the reeds, when the sun began to shine warmly again; the larks sang, and beautiful spring had returned.

Once more he shook his wings. They were stronger than formerly and bore him forward quickly, and before he was well aware of it he was in a large garden where the apple-trees stood in full bloom, where the syringas sent forth their fragrance and hung their long green branches down into the winding canal. Oh! everything was so lovely, so full of the freshness of spring! And out of the thicket came three beautiful white Swans. They displayed their feathers so proudly and swam so lightly, so lightly! The Duckling knew the glorious creatures, and was seized with a strange sadness.

"I will fly to them, those kingly birds!" said he. "They will kill me, because I, ugly as I am, have dared to approach them. But it matters not. Better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the Ducks, pecked by the Hens, kicked by the girl who feeds the poultry, and to have so much to suffer during the winter!"



He flew into the water and swam towards the beautiful creatures. They saw him and shot forward to meet him. "Only kill me," said the poor creature, and he bowed his head low, expecting death. But what did he see

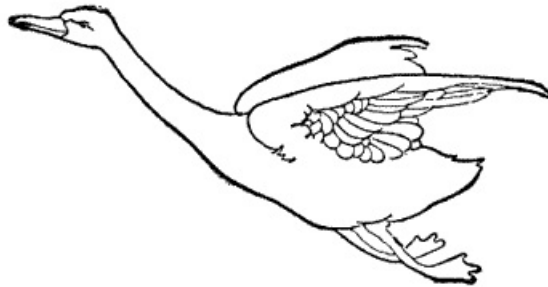
in the water? He saw beneath him his own form, no longer that of a plump, ugly grey bird—it was that of a Swan.

It matters not to have been born in a duck-yard, if one has been hatched from a Swan's egg. And now the Swan began to see the good of all the trouble he had been through. He would never have known how happy he was if he had not first had all his sorrow and unhappiness to bear.

The larger Swans swam round him, and stroked him with their beaks. Some little children were running about in the garden; they threw grain and bread into the water, and the youngest exclaimed: "There is a new one!" The others also cried out: "Yes, a new Swan has come!" and they clapped their hands, and danced around.

They ran to their father and mother, bread and cake were thrown into the water, and every one said: "The new one is best, so young and so beautiful!" And the old Swans bowed before him. The young Swan felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings. He scarcely knew what to do. He was too happy, but still not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

He remembered how he had been persecuted and laughed at, and he now heard everyone say that he was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. The syringas bent down their branches toward him low into the water, and the sun shone warmly and brightly. He shook his feathers, stretched his slender neck, and in the joy of his heart said: "How little did I dream of so much happiness when I was the despised Ugly Duckling!"



[Back to contents](#)

ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP



ALADDIN was the only son of a poor widow who lived in China; but instead of helping his mother to earn their living, he let her do all the hard work, while he himself only thought of idling and amusement.

One day, as he was playing in the streets, a stranger came up to him, saying that he was his father's brother, and claiming him as his long-lost nephew. Aladdin had never heard that his father had had a brother; but as the stranger gave him money and promised to buy him fine clothes and set him up in business, he was quite ready to believe all that he told him. The man was a magician, who wanted to use Aladdin for his own purposes.

The next day the stranger came again, brought Aladdin a beautiful suit of clothes, gave him many good things to eat, and took him for a long walk, telling him stories all the while to amuse him. After they had walked a long way, they came to a narrow valley, bounded on either side by tall, gloomy-looking mountains. Aladdin was beginning to feel tired, and he did not like the look of this place at all. He wanted to turn back; but the stranger would not let him. He made Aladdin follow him still farther, until at length they reached the place where he intended to carry out his evil design. Then he made Aladdin gather sticks to make a fire, and when they were in a blaze he threw into them some powder, at the same time saying some mystical words, which Aladdin could not understand.

Immediately they were surrounded with a thick cloud of smoke. The earth trembled, and burst open at their feet—disclosing a large flat stone with a brass ring fixed in it. Aladdin was so terribly frightened that he was about to run away; but the Magician gave him such a blow on the ear that he

fell to the ground.

Poor Aladdin rose to his feet with eyes full of tears, and said, reproachfully—

"Uncle, what have I done that you should treat me so?"

"You should not have tried to run away from me," said the Magician, "when I have brought you here only for your own advantage. Under this stone there is hidden a treasure which will make you richer than the richest monarch in the world. You alone may touch it. If I assist you in any way the spell will be broken, but if you obey me faithfully, we shall both be rich for the rest of our lives. Come, take hold of the brass ring and lift the stone."



Aladdin forgot his fears in the hope of gaining this wonderful treasure, and took hold of the brass ring. It yielded at once to his touch, and he was able to lift the great stone quite easily and move it away, which disclosed a flight of steps, leading down into the ground.

"Go down these steps," commanded the Magician, "and at the bottom you will find a great cavern, divided into three halls, full of vessels of gold and silver; but take care you do not meddle with these. If you touch anything in the halls you will meet with instant death. The third hall will bring you into a garden, planted with fine fruit trees. When you have crossed the garden, you will come to a terrace, where you will find a niche, and in the niche a lighted lamp. Take the lamp down, and when you have put out the light and poured away the oil, bring it to me. If you would like to gather any of the fruit of the garden you may do so, provided you do not linger."

Then the Magician put a ring on Aladdin's finger, which he told him was to preserve him from evil, and sent him down into the cavern.

Aladdin found everything just as the Magician had said. He passed through the three halls, crossed the garden, took down the lamp from the niche, poured out the oil, put the lamp into his bosom, and turned to go back.

As he came down from the terrace, he stopped to look at the trees of the garden, which were laden with wonderful fruits. To Aladdin's eyes it



appeared as if these fruits were only bits of colored glass, but in reality they were jewels of the rarest quality. Aladdin filled his pockets full of the dazzling things, for though he had no idea of their real value, yet he was attracted by their dazzling brilliance. He had so loaded himself with these treasures that when at last he came to the steps he was unable to climb them without assistance.

"Pray, Uncle," he said, "give me your hand to help me out."

"Give me the lamp first," replied the Magician.

"Really, Uncle, I cannot do so until I am out of this place," answered Aladdin, whose hands were, indeed, so full that he could not get at the lamp.

But the Magician refused to help Aladdin up the steps until he had handed over the lamp. Aladdin was equally determined not to give it up until he was out of the cavern, and, at last, the Magician fell into a furious rage. Throwing some more of the powder into the fire, he again said the magic words. No sooner had he done so than there was a tremendous thunder-clap, the stone rolled back into its place, and Aladdin was a prisoner in the cavern. The poor boy cried aloud to his supposed uncle to help him; but it was all in vain, his cries could not be heard. The doors in the garden were closed by the same enchantment, and Aladdin sat down on the steps in despair, knowing that there was little hope of his ever seeing his Mother again.

For two terrible days he lay in the cavern waiting for death. On the third day, realizing that it could not now be far off, he clasped his hands in anguish, thinking of his Mother's sorrow; and in so doing he accidentally rubbed the ring which the Magician had put upon his finger.

Immediately a genie of enormous size rose out of the earth, and, as Aladdin started back in fright and horror, said to him:

"What wouldst thou have of me?"

"Who are you?" gasped Aladdin.

"I am the slave of the ring. I am ready to obey thy commands," came the answer.

Aladdin was still trembling; but the danger he was in already made him answer without hesitation:

"Then, if you are able, deliver me, I beseech you, from this place."

Scarcely had he spoken, when he found himself lying on the ground at the place to which the Magician had first brought him.

He hastened home to his Mother, who had mourned him as dead. As soon as he had told her all his adventures, he begged her to get him some food, for he had now been three days without eating.

"Alas, child!" replied his Mother, "I have not a bit of bread to give you."

"Never mind, Mother," said Aladdin, "I will go and sell the old lamp which I brought home with me. Doubtless I shall get a little money for it."

His Mother reached down the lamp; but seeing how dirty it was, she thought it would sell better if she cleaned it. But no sooner had she begun to rub it than a hideous genie appeared before her, and said in a voice like thunder:

"What wouldst thou have of me? I am ready to obey thy commands, I and all the other slaves of the lamp."

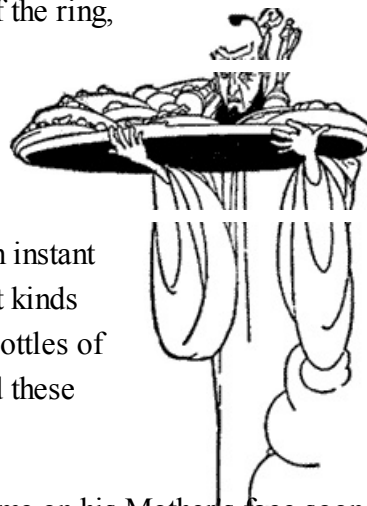
Aladdin's Mother fainted away at the sight of this creature; but Aladdin, having seen the genie of the ring, was not so frightened, and said boldly:

"I am hungry, bring me something to eat."

The genie disappeared, but returned in an instant with twelve silver dishes, filled with different kinds of savory meats, six large white loaves, two bottles of wine, and two silver drinking cups. He placed these things on the table and then vanished.

Aladdin fetched water, and sprinkling some on his Mother's face soon brought her back to life again.

When she opened her eyes and saw all the good things the genie had



provided, she was overcome with astonishment.

"To whom are we indebted for this feast?" she cried. "Has the Sultan heard of our poverty and sent us these fine things from his own table?"



"Never mind now how they came here," said Aladdin. "Let us first eat, then I will tell you."

Mother and son made a hearty meal, and then Aladdin told his Mother that it was the genie of the lamp who had brought them the food. His Mother was greatly alarmed, and begged him to have nothing further to do with genies, advising him to sell the lamp at once. But Aladdin would not part with such a wonderful possession, and resolved to keep both the ring and the lamp safely, in case he should ever need them again. He showed his Mother the fruits which he had gathered in the garden, and his Mother admired their bright colors and dazzling radiance, though she had no idea of their real value.

Not many days after this, Aladdin was walking in the streets of the city, when he heard a fanfare of trumpets announcing the passing of the Princess Badroulboudour, the Sultan's only daughter. Aladdin stopped to see her go by, and was so struck by her great beauty that he fell in love with her on the spot and made up his mind to win her for his bride.

"Mother," he said, "I cannot live without the Princess Badroulboudour. You must go to the Sultan and demand her hand in marriage for me."



Aladdin's Mother burst out laughing at the idea of her son wishing to

be the son-in-law of the Sultan, and told him to put such thoughts out of his head at once. But Aladdin was not to be laughed out of his fancy. He knew by this time that the fruits which he had gathered from the magic garden were jewels of great value, and he insisted upon his Mother taking them to the Sultan for a present, and asking the hand of the Princess in marriage for her son.

The poor woman was terribly frightened, fearing lest the Sultan should punish her for her impudence; but Aladdin would hear of no excuses, and at last she set forth in fear and trembling, bearing the jewels on a china dish covered with a napkin.



When she came before the Sultan, she told him, with many apologies and pleas for forgiveness, of her son's mad love for the Princess Badroulboudour. The Sultan smiled at the idea of the son of a poor old woman asking for the hand of his daughter, and asked her what she had under the napkin. But when the woman uncovered the jewels, he started up from his throne in amazement, for he had never before seen so many large and magnificent jewels collected together. He thought Aladdin must be a very unusual and extraordinary person to be able to make him such a valuable present, and he began to wonder whether it

might not be worth while to bestow the Princess's hand upon him. However, he thought he would ask for some further proof of his wealth and power; so, turning to the woman, he said:

"Good Mother, tell your son he shall have the Princess Badroulboudour for his wife as soon as he sends me forty basins of gold, filled with jewels as valuable as these, and borne by forty black and forty white slaves. Hasten now and carry him my message. I will await your return."

Aladdin's Mother was dismayed at this request.

"Where can Aladdin get such basins and jewels and slaves?" she thought, as she hurried home to him. But Aladdin only smiled when his Mother gave him the Sultan's message. He rubbed the lamp, and at once the

genie stood before him, asking him what was his pleasure.

"Go," said Aladdin, "fetch me forty basins all of massive gold, full of jewels, borne by forty black and forty white slaves."

The genie brought these things at once, and Aladdin then sent his Mother with them to the Sultan.



The Sultan was amazed at this wonderful show of wealth and at the quickness with which it had been brought, and he sent for Aladdin to come to the Court.

Aladdin first summoned the genie to bring him fine clothes and a splendid horse, and a retinue fit for the future son-in-law of the Sultan; and then, with a train of slaves bearing magnificent presents for the Princess, he set out for the Palace.

The Sultan would have married him to his daughter at once; but Aladdin asked him to wait until the next morning, when he hoped to have a Palace worthy to receive his wife.

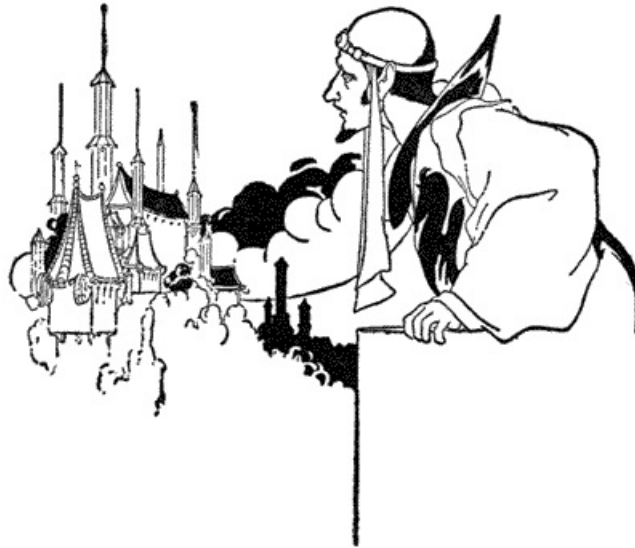


Once again he summoned the genie to his aid, and commanded him to build a Palace that in beauty and magnificence should surpass any that had ever been built on the earth before.

The next morning when the Sultan awoke and looked out of his window, he saw, opposite to his own, the most wonderful Palace he had ever seen. The walls were built of gold and silver, and encrusted with diamonds, rubies and emeralds, and other rare and precious stones. The stables were filled with the finest horses; beautiful gardens surrounded the building, and everywhere were hundreds of slaves and servants to wait on the Princess.

The Sultan was so overcome with all this magnificence, that he insisted upon marrying his daughter to Aladdin that very day, and the young couple took up their residence in the Palace the genie had built.

For a time they lived very happily, but the Magician, who had gone to Africa after he had left Aladdin to perish in the cavern, at length happened to hear of Aladdin's fame and riches; and guessing at once the source of all this wealth, he returned once more to China, determined to gain possession of the magic lamp.



He bought a number of new and beautiful lamps, disguised himself as an old beggar-man, and then, waiting until Aladdin was out hunting, he came to the windows of the Palace, crying out:

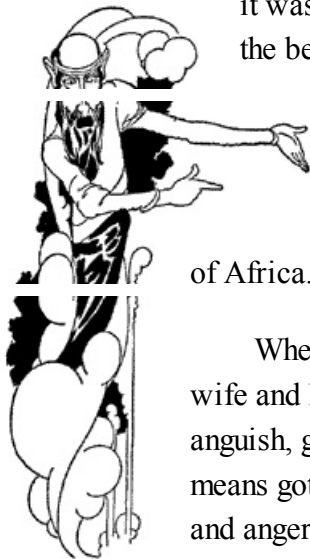
"New lamps for old; new lamps for old."

When the Princess heard this strange cry she was very much amused.

"Let us see," she said to her ladies, "whether this foolish fellow means what he says; there is an ugly old lamp in Aladdin's room," and taking the precious lamp, which Aladdin always kept by his bedside, she sent it out to the old man by one of the slaves, saying—

"Give me a new lamp for this!"

The Magician was overjoyed. He saw at once that it was the very lamp he wanted, and giving the Princess the best of the new ones in exchange, he hurried away with his treasure. As soon as he found himself alone, he summoned the slave of the lamp, and told him to carry himself, the Palace, and the Princess Badroulboudour to the farthest corner of Africa. This order the genie at once obeyed.



When Aladdin returned from hunting and found that his wife and his Palace had vanished, he was overcome with anguish, guessing that his enemy, the Magician, had by some means got possession of the lamp. The Sultan, whose grief and anger at the loss of his daughter were terrible, ordered him to leave the Court at once, and told him that unless he returned in forty days with the Princess safe and well, he

would have him beheaded.

Aladdin went out from the Sultan's presence, not knowing what to do or where to turn. But after he had wandered about for some time in despair, he remembered the ring which he still wore on his finger. He rubbed it, and in a moment the genie stood before him. But when Aladdin commanded him to bring back the Palace and the Princess, the genie answered—

"What you command is not in my power. You must ask the slave of the lamp. I am only the slave of the ring."

"Then," said Aladdin, "if you cannot bring my Palace to me, I command you to take me to my Palace." No sooner were the words out of his mouth than he found himself standing in Africa, close to the missing Palace.

The Princess Badroulboudour, who, since the moment when the Magician had had her in his power, had not ceased to weep and lament for her foolishness in exchanging the lamp, happened to be looking out of the window; and when she saw Aladdin she nearly fainted with joy, and sent a slave to bring him secretly into the Palace.

Then she and Aladdin made a plan to get the better of the Magician and to recover the lost lamp. Aladdin summoned the genie of the ring, who procured for him a very powerful sleeping-powder, which he gave to the Princess. Then Aladdin hid himself behind some curtains in the room, and the Princess sent a message to the Magician asking him to take supper with her.

The Magician was delighted at the Princess's invitation, and accepted it joyfully, never dreaming that Aladdin had found his way to Africa.

As they were eating and drinking together, the Princess put the sleeping-powder into the Magician's cup of wine—and no sooner had he tasted it than he fell down in a deep sleep as if dead.

This was Aladdin's chance. Hastily coming out from behind the curtains, he snatched the lamp from the Magician's bosom, and called the genie to come to his assistance.

The genie, having first thrown out the Magician, then carried the Palace with the Princess and Aladdin back to the spot from which it had been taken.



Great was the Sultan's joy at receiving back his daughter. The whole city was given over to rejoicings, and for ten days nothing was heard but the sound of drums and trumpets and cymbals, and nothing was seen but illuminations and gorgeous entertainments in honor of Aladdin's safe return.

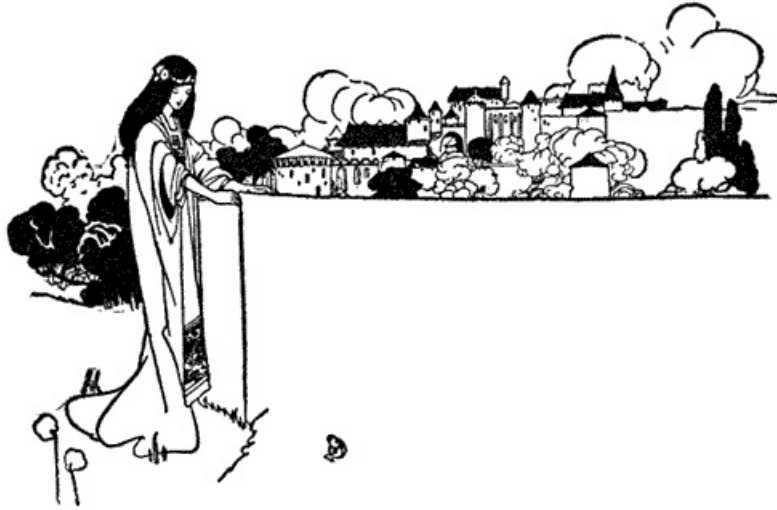


Aladdin and the Princess ascended the throne after the Sultan died and they lived long and happily and had many beautiful children.



[Back to contents](#)

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY



ONCE upon a time there lived a King and Queen who had no children. They longed very much for a child; and when at last they had a little daughter they were both delighted, and great rejoicings took place.

When the time came for the little Princess to be christened, the King made a grand feast and invited all but one of the fairies in his kingdom to be godmothers. There happened to be thirteen fairies in the kingdom; but as the King had only twelve gold plates, he had to leave one of them out.

The twelve fairies that were invited came to the christening, and presented the little Princess with the best gifts in their possession. One gave her beauty, one gave her wisdom, another grace, another goodness, until all but one had presented their offerings. Just as the last fairy was about to step forward and offer her gift, there came a tremendous knocking at the door, and before anybody could get there to open it, it was burst open, and in came the thirteenth fairy, in a furious rage at not having been invited to the feast.

When she saw all the gifts which the other fairies had presented the child, she laughed and exclaimed:

"A lot of good all this beauty and virtue and wealth will do to you, my pretty Princess! You shall pay for the slight your Royal Father has put upon me!" Then, turning to the terrified King and Queen, she said, in a loud voice:

"When the Princess is fifteen years old she shall prick her finger with a

spindle and die!" Having said this she flew away as noisily as she came.

The King and Queen were in despair, and the courtiers stood aghast at the terrible disaster; while the little Princess began to cry piteously, as if she knew the fate in store for her. Then the twelfth fairy stepped forward.

"Do not be afraid," she said, "I have not yet given my gift. I cannot undo the wicked spell, but I can soften the evil. The Princess, on her fifteenth birthday, shall prick her finger with a spindle, but she shall not die. Instead, she shall fall asleep for a hundred years."

"Alas!" cried the Queen, "what comfort will that be to us? Long before the hundred years are past we shall be dead, and our darling child will be as lost to us as if she were indeed to die!"

"I can make that right," said the fairy. "When the Princess falls asleep, you shall sleep, too; and awaken with her when the hundred years are passed."

But the King still hoped to save his daughter from such a terrible misfortune. So he ordered all the spinning-wheels in his kingdom to be burnt or destroyed, and made a law that no one was to use one on pain of instant death. But all his care was useless. On her fifteenth birthday the Princess slipped away from her attendants, and wandered all through the Palace. At last she came to a tower which she had never seen before, and, wondering what it contained, she climbed the stairs. From a room at the top came a curious humming noise, and the Princess, wondering what it could be, pushed open the door and stepped inside.



There sat an old woman, bent with age, working at a strangely shaped wheel. The Princess was full of curiosity.

"What is that funny-looking thing?" she asked.

"It is a spinning-wheel, Princess," answered the old woman, who was no other than the wicked fairy in disguise.

"A spinning-wheel—what is that? I have never heard of such a thing," said the Princess. She stood watching for a few minutes, then she added:

"It looks quite easy. May I try to do it?"

"Certainly, gracious lady," said the wicked fairy, and the Princess sat down and tried to turn the wheel. But no sooner did she lay her hand upon it than the spindle, which was enchanted, pricked her finger, and the Princess fell back against a silk-covered couch—fast asleep.



In a moment a deep silence fell upon all who were in the castle. The King fell asleep in the midst of his councillors, the Queen with her ladies-in-waiting. The horses in the stable, the pigeons on the roof, the flies upon the walls, even the very fire upon the hearth fell asleep, too. The meat which was cooking in the kitchen ceased to frizzle; and the cook, who was just about to box the kitchen boy's ears, fell asleep with her hand outstretched, and began to snore aloud. The butler who was tasting the ale, fell

asleep with the jug at his lips.

A great hedge sprang up around the castle, which, as the years passed on, grew and grew until it formed an impenetrable barrier around the sleeping Palace. The old people of the country died, and their children grew up and died also, and their children, and their children, and the story of the sleeping Princess became a legend, handed down from one generation to another; and a cloud of mystery, as thick and impenetrable as the hedge of thorns, lay over the old castle. Many brave and gallant Princes tried to force their way through the magic hedge, in order to solve the mystery and to see for themselves the beautiful maiden who lay in an enchanted sleep behind that thorny barrier. But the thorns caught them, and held them from going forward or back, and the gallant youths perished miserably in the thickets.

After many, many years there came a King's son into that country, who heard the story of the Princess and the hedge of briers; and he made up his mind to try and force his way to the castle to awake the sleeping Princess. People told him of the fate of the other Princes, who had also attempted this difficult task; but the Prince would not be warned.



"I have made up my mind to see this maiden of whose beauty I

have heard so many wonderful tales," he cried. "I will force a way through the hedge of thorns and awake this Sleeping Beauty, or die in the attempt!"

Now, it happened that this day was the last day of the hundred years; and when the Prince came to the thicket that surrounded the castle and began to push his way through, he found that the briars yielded readily to his touch. The thorns had all blossomed into roses that scented the air with fragrance as he went by. Primroses sprang up before his feet and made a pathway to lead him straight to the castle gates; and the birds suddenly broke forth into singing, as if to tell the world that the hundred years of enchantment were over, and the Princess about to be awakened from her long sleep.

The Prince passed through the council chamber, where the King and his councillors were sleeping; through the room where the Queen and her ladies slept. He passed on from hall to hall, climbed from stair to stair, until at last he reached the tower chamber where the sleeping Princess lay. For a moment he stood and gazed in wonder at her lovely face; then he sank on his knees beside her, and kissed her as she lay asleep.

Instantly the spell was broken. The King and Queen awoke, and all the courtiers with them; the horses neighed in the stables, and shook their glossy manes; the pigeons cooed upon the roof; the flies on the wall moved again; the fire burnt up brightly; and the meat in the kitchen began to frizzle once more as the spit turned round. The cook gave the kitchen boy the tremendous box on the ear that she had started to give him a hundred years ago, and everything and everybody went on just as usual, as if nothing at all out of the common had occurred.

And up in the tower chamber the Princess opened her eyes to meet the gaze of the Prince, who had dared to risk his life for her sake. What they said to each other nobody quite knows, for nobody was there to hear or see. But whatever it was, it must have been something very satisfactory; for very soon after they were married, and lived happily ever afterwards.



[Back to contents](#)

PUSS-IN-BOOTS



THERE was once a Miller, who, at his death, had nothing to leave to his three sons except his mill, his ass, and his cat. The eldest son took the mill, the second took the ass—and as for the youngest, all that remained for him was the cat.

The youngest son grumbled at this. "My brothers," said he, "will be able to earn an honest living; but when I have eaten my cat and sold his skin I shall die of hunger."

The Cat, who was sitting beside him, overheard this.

"Nay, Master," he said, "don't take such a gloomy view of things. If you will get me a pair of boots made so that I can walk through the brambles without hurting my feet, and give me a bag, you shall soon see what I am worth."



The Cat's master was so surprised to hear his Cat talking, that he at once got him what he wanted. The Cat drew on the boots and slung the bag round his neck and set off for a rabbit warren. When he got there he filled his bag with bran and

lettuces, and stretching himself out beside it as if dead, waited until some young rabbit should be tempted into the bag. This happened very soon. A fat, thoughtless rabbit went in headlong, and the Cat at once jumped up, pulled the strings and killed him.

Puss was very proud of his success, and, going to the King's palace, he

asked to speak to the King. When he was shown into the King's presence he bowed respectfully, and, laying the rabbit down before the throne, he said

"Sire, here is a rabbit, which my master, the Marquis of Carabas, desires me to present to your Majesty."

"Tell your master," said the King, "that I accept his present, and am very much obliged to him."

A few days later, the Cat went and hid himself in a cornfield and laid his bag open as before. This time two splendid partridges were lured into the trap, and these also he took to the Palace and presented to the King from the Marquis of Carabas. The King was very pleased with this gift, and ordered the messenger of the Marquis of Carabas to be handsomely rewarded.

For two or three months the Cat went on in this way, carrying game every day to the Palace, and saying it was sent by the Marquis of Carabas.

At last the Cat happened to hear that the King was going to take a drive on the banks of the river, with his daughter, the most beautiful Princess in the world. He at once went to his master.



"Master," said he, "if you follow my advice, your fortune will be made. Go and bathe in the river at a place I shall show you, and I will do the rest."

"Very well," said the Miller's son, and he did as the Cat told him. When he was in the water, the Cat took away his clothes and hid them, and then ran to the road, just as the King's coach went by,

calling out as loudly as he could—

"Help, help! The Marquis of Carabas will be drowned."

The King looked out of the carriage window, and when he saw the Cat who had brought him so many fine rabbits and partridges, he ordered his bodyguards to fly at once to the rescue of the Marquis of Carabas.

Then the Cat came up to the carriage and told the King that while his master was bathing some robbers had stolen all his clothes. The King immediately ordered one of his own magnificent suits of clothes to be taken

to the Marquis; so when the Miller's son appeared before the monarch and his daughter, he looked so handsome, and was so splendidly attired, that the Princess fell in love with him on the spot.

The King was so struck with his appearance that he insisted upon his getting into the carriage to take a drive with them.

The Cat, delighted with the way his plans were turning out, ran on before. He reached a meadow where some peasants were making hay.

"Good people," said he, "if you do not tell the King, when he comes this way, that the meadow you are mowing belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, you shall all be chopped up into little pieces."

When the King came by, he stopped to ask the haymakers to whom the meadow belonged.

"To the Marquis of Carabas, if it please Your Majesty," answered they, trembling, for the Cat's threat had frightened them terribly.

The Cat, who continued to run before the carriage, now came to some reapers.

"Good people," said he, "if you do not tell the King that all this corn belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, you shall all be chopped up into little pieces."

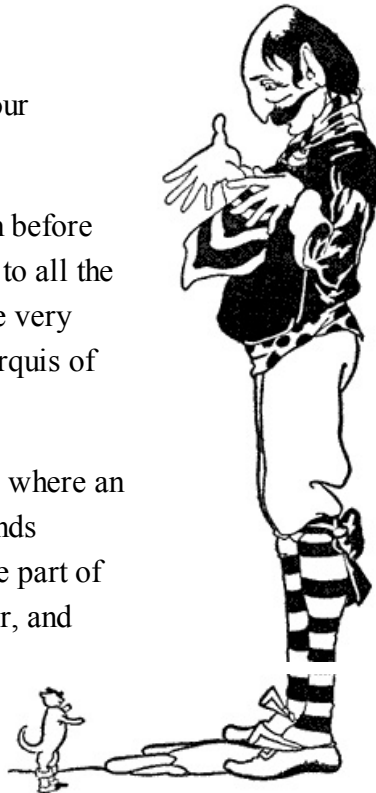
The King again stopped to ask to whom the land belonged, and the reapers, obedient to the Cat's command, answered—

"To the Marquis of Carabas, please Your Majesty."

And all the way the Cat kept running on before the carriage, repeating the same instructions to all the laborers he came to; so that the King became very astonished at the vast possessions of the Marquis of Carabas.

At last the Cat arrived at a great castle, where an Ogre lived who was very rich, for all the lands through which the King had been riding were part of his estate. The Cat knocked at the castle door, and asked to see the Ogre.

The Ogre received him very civilly, and asked him what he wanted.



"If you please, sir," said the Cat, "I have heard that you have the power of changing yourself into any sort of animal you please—and I came to see if it could possibly be true."

"So I have," replied the Ogre, and in a moment he turned himself into a lion. This gave the Cat a great fright, and he scrambled up the curtains to the ceiling.

"Indeed, sir," he said, "I am now quite convinced of your power to turn yourself into such a huge animal as a lion; but I do not suppose you can change yourself into a small one—such as a mouse, for instance?"

"Indeed, I can," cried the Ogre, indignantly; and in a moment the lion had vanished, while a little brown mouse frisked about the floor.

In less than half a second the Cat sprang down from the curtains and, pouncing upon the mouse, ate him all up before the Ogre had time to return to any other shape.

And when the King arrived at the castle gates, there stood the Cat upon the doorstep, bowing and saying—

"Welcome to the castle of the Marquis of Carabas!"

The Marquis helped the King and the Princess to alight, and the Cat led them into a great hall, where a feast had been spread for the Ogre.

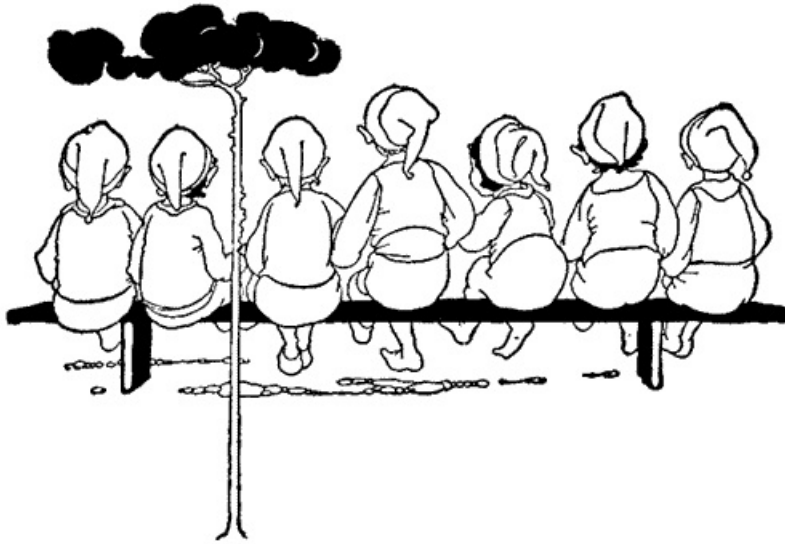
The King was so delighted with the good looks, the charming manners, and the great wealth of the Marquis of Carabas, that he said the Marquis must marry his daughter.

The Marquis, of course, replied that he should be only too happy; and the very next day he and the Princess were married.

As for the Cat, he was given the title of Puss-in-Boots, and ever after only caught mice for his own amusement.



ADVENTURES OF TOM THUMB



A LONG time ago, a woodcutter lived with his wife in a small cottage not far from a great forest. They had seven children—all boys; and the youngest was the smallest little fellow ever seen. He was called Tom Thumb. But though he was so small, he was far cleverer than any of his brothers, and he heard a great deal more than anybody ever imagined.

It happened that just at this time there was a famine in the land, and the woodcutter and his wife became so poor that they could no longer give their boys enough to eat.

One night—after the boys had gone to bed—the husband sighing deeply, said—

"We cannot feed our children any longer, and to see them starve before our eyes is more than I can bear. To-morrow morning, therefore, we will take them into the forest and leave them in the thickest part of it, so that they will not be able to find their way back."



His wife wept bitterly at the thought of leaving their children to perish in the forest; but she, too, thought it better than to see them die before her eyes. So she consented to her husband's plan.

But all this time Tom Thumb had been awake, and he had overheard all the conversation. He lay awake a long while thinking what to do. Then, slipping quietly out of bed, he ran down to the river and filled his pocket with small white pebbles from the river's brink.

In the morning the parents called the children, and, after giving them a crust of bread, they all set out for the wood. Tom Thumb did not say a word to his brothers of what he had overheard; but, lingering behind, he dropped the pebbles from his pocket one by one, as they walked, so that he should be able to find his way home. When they reached a very thick part of the forest, the father and mother told the children to wait while they went a little farther to cut wood, but as soon as they were out of sight they turned and went home by another way.

When darkness fell, the children began to realize that they were deserted, and they began to cry loudly. Tom Thumb, however, did not cry.

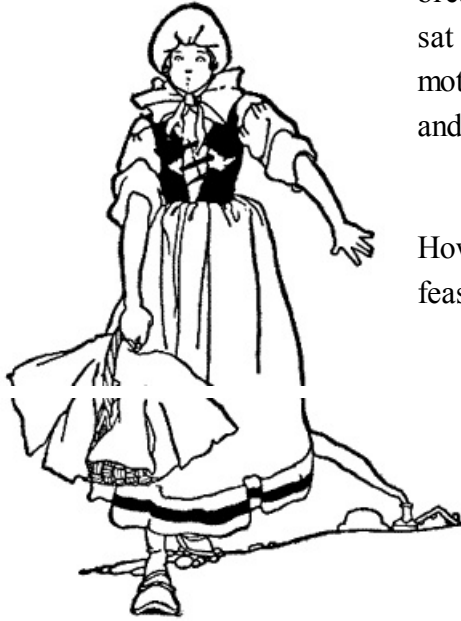
"Do not weep, my brothers," he said encouragingly. "Only wait until the moon rises, and we shall soon be able to find our way home."

When at length the moon rose, it shone down upon the white pebbles which Tom Thumb had scattered; and, following this path, the children soon reached their father's house.

But at first they were afraid to go in, and waited outside the door to hear what their parents were talking about.

Now, it happened that when the father and mother reached home, they found a rich gentleman had sent them ten crowns, in payment for work

which had been done long before. The wife went out at once and bought bread and meat, and she and her husband sat down to make a hearty meal. But the mother could not forget her little ones; and at last she cried to her husband:



"Alas! where are our poor children? How they would have enjoyed this good feast!"

The children, listening at the door, heard this and cried out, "Here we are, mother; here we are!" and, overjoyed, the mother flew to let them in and kissed them all round.

Their parents were delighted to have their little ones with them again; but soon the ten crowns were spent, and they found themselves as badly off as before. Once more they agreed to leave the children in the forest, and once again Tom Thumb overheard them. This time he did not trouble himself very much; he thought it would be easy for him to do as he had done before. He got up very early the next morning to go and get the pebbles; but, to his dismay, he found the house door securely locked. Then, indeed, he did not know what to do, and for a little while he was in great distress. However, at breakfast the mother gave each of the children a slice of bread, and Tom Thumb thought he would manage to make his piece of bread do as well as the pebbles, by breaking it up and dropping the crumbs as he went.

This time the father and mother took the children still deeper and farther into the wood, and then, slipping away, left them alone.

Tom Thumb consoled his brothers as before; but when he came to look for the crumbs of bread, not one of them was left. The birds had eaten them all up, and the poor children were lost in the forest, with no possible means of finding their way home.

Tom Thumb did not lose courage. He climbed to the top of a high tree and looked round to see if there was any way of getting help. In the distance he saw a light burning, and, coming down from the tree, he led his brothers toward the house from which it came.

When they knocked at the door, it was opened by a pleasant-looking woman, and Tom Thumb told her they were poor children who had lost their road, and begged her to give them a night's shelter.



"Alas, my poor children!" said the woman, "you do not know where you have come to. This is the house of an ogre who eats up little boys and girls."

"But, madam," replied Tom Thumb, "what shall we do? If we go back to the forest we are certain to be torn to pieces by the wolves. We had better, I think, stay and be eaten by the ogre."

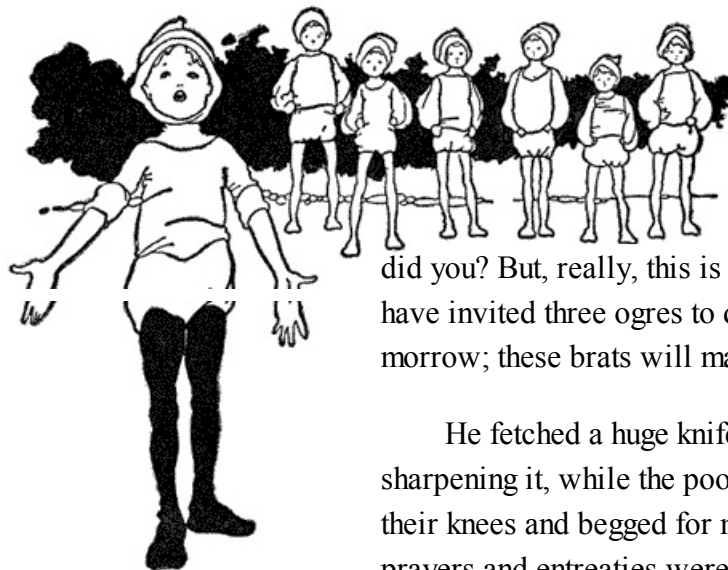
The ogre's wife had pity on the little things, and she thought she would be able to hide them from her husband for one night. She took them in, gave them food, and let them warm themselves by the fire.

Very soon there came a loud knocking at the door. It was the ogre come home. His wife hid the children under the bed, and then hurried to let her husband in.

No sooner had the ogre entered than he began to sniff this way and that. "I smell flesh," he said, looking round the room.

"It must be the calf which has just been killed," said his wife.

"I smell child's flesh, I tell you!" cried the ogre, and he suddenly made a dive under the bed, and drew out the children one by one.



"Oh, ho, madam!" said he; "so you thought to cheat me, did you? But, really, this is very lucky! I have invited three ogres to dinner tomorrow; these brats will make a nice dish."

He fetched a huge knife and began sharpening it, while the poor boys fell on their knees and begged for mercy. But their prayers and entreaties were useless. The ogre seized one of the children and was just about to kill him, when his wife said—

"What in the world makes you take the trouble of killing them to-night? Why don't you leave them till the morning? There will be plenty of time, and they will be much fresher."

"That is very true," said the ogre, throwing down the knife. "Give them a good supper, so that they may not get lean, and send them to bed."



Now, the ogre had seven young daughters, who were all about the same age as Tom Thumb and his brothers. These young ogresses all slept together in one large bed, and every one of them had a crown of gold on her head. There was another bed of the same size in the room, and in this the ogre's wife, having provided them all with nightcaps, put the seven little boys.



But Tom Thumb was afraid that the ogre might change his mind in the night, and kill him and his brothers while they were asleep. So he crept softly out of bed, took off his brothers' nightcaps and his own, and stole over to the bed where the young ogresses lay. He drew off their crowns very gently, and put the nightcaps on their heads instead. Then he put the crowns on his brothers' heads and his own, and got into bed again.



In the middle of the night the ogre woke up, and began to be sorry that he had put off killing the boys until the morning.

"Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," he said; and, jumping out of bed, he got his knife and walked stealthily to the room where the boys were. He walked up to the bed, and they were all asleep except Tom Thumb, who, however, kept his eyes fast shut, and did not show that he was awake. The ogre touched their heads, one after another, and feeling the crowns of gold, he said to himself:

"What a mistake I was going to make!" He then went to bed where his own daughters were sleeping, and, feeling the nightcaps, he said:

"Oh, ho, here you are, my lads!" and in a moment he had killed them all. He then went back to his own room to sleep till morning.



As soon as Tom Thumb heard him snoring, he roused his brothers, and told them to dress quickly and follow him. He led them downstairs and out of the house; and then, stealing on tiptoe through the garden, they jumped down from the wall into the road and ran swiftly away.

In the morning, when the ogre found what a dreadful thing he had done, he was terribly shocked.

"Fetch me my seven-league boots," he cried to his wife. "I will go and catch those young vipers. They shall pay for this piece of work!" And, drawing on the magic boots, the ogre set out.

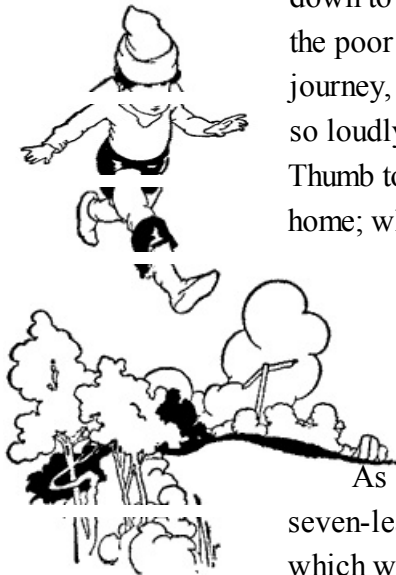


He went striding over the country, stepping from mountain to mountain, and crossing rivers as if they had been streams. The poor children watched him coming in fear and trembling. They had found the way to their father's home, and had very nearly reached it when they saw the ogre racing after them.

Tom Thumb thought for a moment what was to be done. Then he saw a hollow place under a large rock.

"Get in there," he said to his brothers.

When they were all in he crept in himself, but kept his eyes fixed on the ogre, to see what he would do.



The ogre, seeing nothing of the children, sat down to rest himself on the very rock under which the poor boys were hiding. He was tired with his journey, and soon fell fast asleep, and began to snore so loudly that the little fellows were terrified. Tom Thumb told his brothers to creep out softly and run home; which they did. Then he crept up to the ogre, pulled off the seven-league boots very gently and put them on his own feet, for being fairy boots they could fit themselves to any foot, however small.

As soon as Tom Thumb had put on the ogre's seven-league boots, he took ten steps to the Palace, which was seventy miles off, and asked to see the King. He offered to carry news to the King's army, which was then a long way off; and so useful was he with his magic boots, that in a short time he had made money enough to keep himself, his father, his mother and his six brothers without the trouble of working for the rest of their lives.

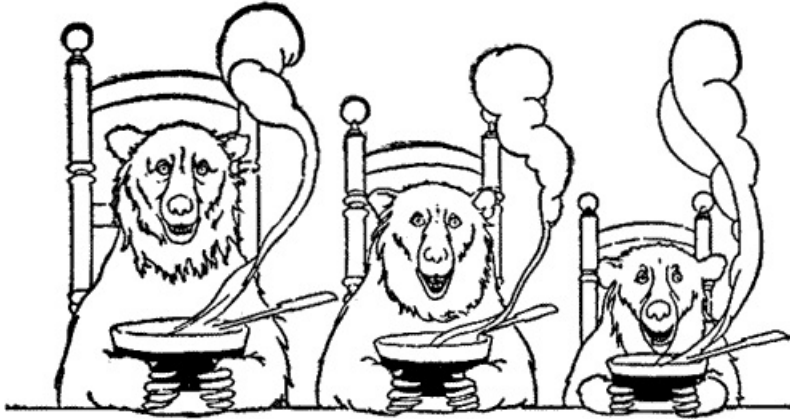
And now let us see what has become of the wicked ogre, whom we left sleeping on the rock.

When he awoke he missed his seven-league boots, and set off for home very angry.

On his way he had to cross a bog; and, forgetting that he was no longer wearing his magic boots, he tried to cross it with one stride. But, instead, he put his foot down in the middle and began to sink. As fast as he tried to pull out one foot, the other sank deeper, until at last he was swallowed up in the black slime—and that was the end of him.

[Back to contents](#)

THE THREE BEARS



THERE were once three bears who lived together in a little house in the middle of a wood. One of them was a Little, Small, Wee Bear; one was a Middle-Sized Bear; and the other was a Great, Huge Bear.

And they each had a pot to eat their porridge from: a little pot for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; a middle-sized pot for the Middle-Sized Bear; and a great big pot for the Great, Huge Bear.

And they each had a chair to sit on: a little chair for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; a middle-sized chair for the Middle-Sized Bear; and a great big chair for the Great, Huge Bear.

And they each had a bed to sleep in: a little bed for the Little, Small, Wee Bear; a middle-sized bed for the Middle-Sized Bear; and a great big bed for the Great, Huge Bear.

One day they made the porridge for their breakfast, and poured it into their porridge-pots, and then went out in the wood for a walk while the porridge for their breakfast was cooling. And while they were out walking, a little Old Woman came to the house in the wood and peeped inside.

First she peeped through the keyhole; then she peeped through the window. Then she lifted the latch and peeped through the doorway; and, seeing nobody in the house, she walked in. And



when she saw the porridge cooling on the table she was very pleased, for she had walked a long way, and was getting hungry.

So first she tasted the porridge of the Great, Huge Bear, but that was too hot. Then she tasted the porridge of the Middle-Sized Bear, but that was too cold. And then she tasted the porridge of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and that was neither too hot nor too cold, but just right. And she liked it so much that she ate it all up!

Then the little Old Woman sat down in the chair of the Great, Huge Bear, but that was too hard. Then she sat down in the chair of the Middle-Sized Bear, but that was too soft. Then she sat down in the chair of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and that was neither too hard nor too soft, but just right. And she liked it so much that she sat in it until suddenly the bottom came out, and she fell down plump upon the ground.

Then the little Old Woman went upstairs into the bedroom, where the three Bears slept. And first she lay down on the bed of the Great, Huge Bear, but that was too high at the head for her. Then she lay down on the bed of the Middle-Sized Bear, but that was too high at the foot for her. So then she lay down on the bed of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, and that was neither too high at the head nor too high at the foot, but just right. And she liked it so much that she covered herself up and lay there till she fell fast asleep!



By and by the three Bears came home to breakfast. Now, the little Old Woman had left the spoon of the Great, Huge Bear standing in his porridge pot.

Somebody has been at my porridge!"

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And when the Middle-Sized Bear looked, she saw that the spoon was standing in her porridge-pot too.

Somebody has been at my porridge!"

said the Middle-Sized Bear in her middle-sized voice.

Then the Little, Small, Wee Bear looked, and there was the spoon in his porridge-pot; but the porridge was all gone.

Somebody has been at my porridge and has eaten it all up!"

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Then the three Bears began to look about them. Now, the little Old Woman had not put the hard cushion straight after she had sat in the chair of the Great, Huge Bear.



"Somebody has been sitting in my chair!"

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little Old Woman had squashed the soft cushion of the Middle-Sized Bear.

"Somebody has been sitting in my chair!"

said the Middle-Sized Bear, in her middle-sized voice.

And you know what the little Old Woman had done to the third chair.

"Somebody has been sitting in my chair and has sat the bottom out!"

said the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

Then the three Bears went upstairs into their bedroom. Now, the little Old Woman had pulled the pillow of the Great, Huge Bear out of its place.

"Somebody has been lying in my bed!"

said the Great, Huge Bear, in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little Old Woman had pulled the bolster of the Middle-Sized Bear out of its place.

"Somebody has been lying in my bed!"

said the Middle-Sized Bear, in her middle-sized voice.

And when the Little, Small, Wee Bear came to look at his bed, there was the bolster in its place, and the pillow in its place upon the bolster; and upon the pillow was the little Old Woman's head, which was not in its place, for she had no business there at all.

"Somebody has been lying in my bed—and here she is!"

cried the Little, Small, Wee Bear, in his little, small, wee voice.

The little Old Woman had heard in her sleep the great, rough, gruff voice of the Great, Huge Bear, but she was so fast asleep that it seemed to her no more than the roaring of the wind, or the rumbling of thunder. And she had heard the middle-sized voice of the Middle-Sized Bear, but it was only as if she had heard some one speaking in a dream. But when she heard

the little, small, wee voice of the Little, Small, Wee Bear, it was so sharp and shrill that it woke her up at once. Up she started, and when she saw the three Bears, on one side of the bed, she tumbled out at the other, jumped out of the window and ran away through the wood to her own home. And the three Bears never saw anything more of her.



[Back to contents](#)

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

IT was dreadfully cold, it was snowing fast, and almost dark; the evening—the last evening of the Old Year—was drawing in. But cold and dark as it was, a poor little girl, with bare head and feet, was still wandering about the streets. When she left her home she had slippers on, but they were much too large for her—indeed, really, they belonged to her mother—and had dropped off her feet while she was running very fast across the road, to get out of the way of two carriages. One of the slippers was not to be found; the other had been snatched up by a little boy, who ran off with it thinking it might serve him as a doll's cradle.



So the little girl now walked on, her bare feet quite red and blue with the cold. She carried a small bundle of matches in her hand, and a good many more in her tattered apron. No one had bought any of them the livelong day—no one had given her a single penny. Trembling with cold and hunger she crept on, the picture of sorrow; poor little child!

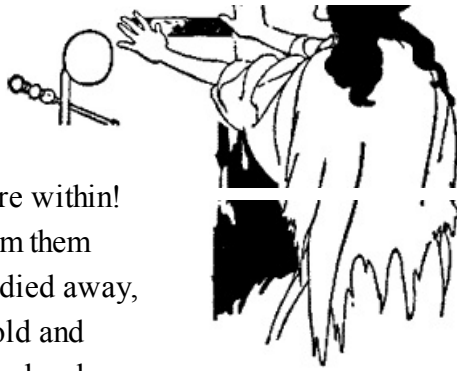
The snowflakes fell on her long fair hair, which curled in such pretty ringlets over her shoulders; but she thought not of her own beauty, nor of the cold. Lights were glimmering through every window, and the savor of roast goose reached her from several houses. It was New Year's Eve, and it was of this that she thought.

In a corner formed by two houses, one of which projected beyond the other, she sat down, drawing her little feet close under her, but in vain—she could not warm them. She dared not go home, she had sold no matches, earned not a single penny, and perhaps her father would beat her. Besides her home was almost as cold as the street—it was an attic; and although the larger of the many chinks in the roof were stopped up with straw and rags, the wind and snow often came through.

Her hands were nearly dead with cold; one little match from her bundle would warm them, perhaps, if she dare light it. She drew one out, and struck it against the wall. Bravo! it was a bright, warm flame, and she held her hands over it. It was quite an illumination for that poor



little girl—nay, call it rather a magic taper—for it seemed to her as though she were sitting before a large iron stove with brass ornaments, so beautifully blazed the fire within! The child stretched out her feet to warm them also. Alas! in an instant the flame had died away, the stove vanished, the little girl sat cold and comfortless, with the burnt match in her hand.



A second match was struck against the wall. It kindled and blazed, and wherever its light fell the wall became transparent as a veil—the little girl could see into the room within. She saw the table spread with a snow-white damask cloth, whereon were ranged shining china dishes; the roast goose, stuffed with apples and dried plums, stood at one end, smoking hot, and—which was pleasantest of all to see—the goose, with knife and fork still in her breast, jumped down from the dish, and waddled along the floor right up to the poor child. Then the match went out, and only the thick, hard wall was beside her.

She kindled a third match. Again up shot the flame. And now she was sitting under a most beautiful Christmas tree, far larger, and far more prettily decked out, than the one she had seen last Christmas Eve through the glass doors of the rich merchant's house. Hundreds of wax tapers lighted up the green branches, and tiny painted figures, such as she had seen in the shop windows, looked down from the tree upon her. The child stretched out her hands towards them in delight, and in that moment the light of the match was quenched. Still, however, the Christmas candles burned higher and higher—she beheld them beaming like stars in heaven. One of them fell, the lights streaming behind it like a long, fiery tail.

"Now someone is dying," said the little girl softly, for she had been told by her old grandmother—the only person who had ever been kind to her, and who was now dead—that whenever a star falls an immortal spirit returns to God who gave it.



She struck yet another match against the wall. It flamed up, and, surrounded by its light, appeared before her that same dear grandmother, gentle and loving as always, but bright and happy as she had never looked during her lifetime.



"Grandmother!" exclaimed the child, "Oh, take me with you! I know you will leave me as soon as the match goes out. You will vanish like the warm fire in the stove, like the splendid New Year's feast, like the beautiful large Christmas tree!" And she hastily lighted all the remaining matches in the bundle, lest her grandmother should disappear. And the matches burned with such a blaze of splendor, that noontide could scarcely have been brighter. Never had the good old grandmother looked so tall and stately, so beautiful and kind. She took the little girl in her arms, and they both flew together—joyfully and gloriously they flew—higher and higher, till they were in that place where neither cold, nor hunger, nor pain is ever known—they were in Paradise.

But in the cold morning hour, crouching in the corner of the wall, the poor little girl was found—her cheeks glowing, her lips smiling—frozen to death on the last night of the Old Year. The New Year's sun shone on the lifeless child. Motionless she sat there with the matches in her lap, one bundle of them quite burnt out.

"She has been trying to warm herself, poor thing!" the people said; but no one knew of the sweet visions she had beheld, or how gloriously she and her grandmother were celebrating their New Year's festival.

[Back to contents](#)

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST



THERE was once a Merchant who had three daughters, the youngest of whom was so beautiful that everybody called her Beauty. This made the two eldest very jealous; and, as they were spiteful and bad-tempered by nature, instead of loving their younger sister they felt nothing but envy and hatred towards her.



After some years there came a terrible storm at sea, and most of the Merchant's ships were sunk, and he became very poor. He and his family were obliged to live in a very small house and do without the servants and fine clothes to which they had been used. The two eldest sisters did nothing but weep and lament for their lost fortune, but Beauty did her best to keep the house bright and cheerful, so that her father might not miss too much all the comfort and luxury to which he was used.

One day the Merchant told his daughters that he was going to take a journey into foreign lands in the hope of recovering some of his property. Then he asked them what they would like him to bring them home in case he should be successful. The eldest daughter asked for fine gowns and beautiful clothing; the second for jewels and gold and silver trinkets.

"And Beauty—what would Beauty like?" asked the father.

Beauty was so happy and contented always that there was scarcely anything for which she longed. She thought for a moment, then she said:

"I should like best of all a red rose!" The other sisters burst out laughing and scoffed at Beauty's simple request; but her father promised to bring her what she wanted. Then he said good-bye to his children and set out on his travels.



He was away for nearly a year, and was so fortunate as to win back a great part of his lost wealth. When the time came for his return, he was easily able to buy the things his eldest daughters wished for; but nowhere could he find a red rose to take home to Beauty, and at last he was obliged to set off without one.

When he was within a few miles journey of his home, he lost himself in a thick wood. Darkness came on, and he began to be afraid that he would have to pass the night under a tree, when suddenly he saw a bright light shining in the distance. He went towards it, and on his approach found it came from a great castle that was set right in the heart of the forest.

The Merchant made up his mind to ask if he might spend the night there; but to his surprise, when he reached the door he found it set wide open, and nobody about. After awhile, finding that no one came in answer to his repeated knocking, he walked inside. There he found a table laid with every delicacy, and, being very hungry, he sat down and made a good repast. After he had finished his supper he laid himself down on a luxurious couch, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

In the morning, after eating a hearty breakfast, which he found prepared for him, he left the mysterious castle, without having set eyes on a single person. As he was passing through the garden he found himself in an avenue of rose-trees, all covered with beautiful red roses.



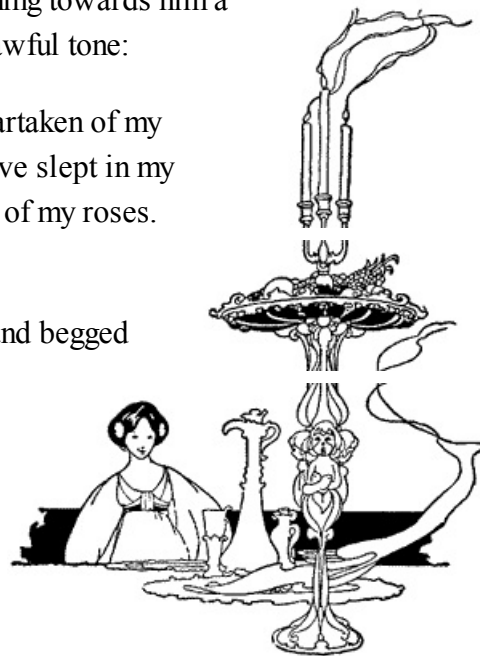
"Here are such thousands of flowers," he said to himself, "that, surely, one bud will not be missed;" and, thinking of Beauty, he broke off a rose from one of the bushes.

Scarcely had he done so when he heard a terrible noise, and, turning round, he saw coming towards him a hideous Beast, who exclaimed in an awful tone:

"Ungrateful wretch! You have partaken of my hospitality, have eaten of my food, have slept in my house, and in return you try to rob me of my roses. For this theft you shall die!"

The Merchant fell on his knees and begged for pardon, but the Beast would not listen to him.

"Either you must die now, or else you must swear to send me in your stead the first living thing that meets you on your return home," he said; and the Merchant, overcome with terror, and thinking that one of his dogs would be sure to be the first creature to greet him, gave his promise.



But to his horror and dismay, it was his youngest daughter, Beauty,

who first ran out to greet him on his return. She had seen him coming from afar, and hastened to welcome him home.

She did not at first understand her father's grief at seeing her; but when he told her the story of the Beast and his promise she did her best to comfort him.

"Do not fear, dear father," she said, "perhaps the Beast will not prove so terrible as he looks. He spared your life; he may spare mine, since I have done him no harm."

Her father shook his head mournfully; but there was no help for it. He had promised to send the Beast the first living creature that met him on his return, so he was obliged to send Beauty herself in his place.

When he left Beauty at the palace of the Beast she found everything prepared for her comfort and convenience. A beautiful bedchamber was ready for her use; the rooms were filled with everything that she could possibly want, and in the great hall of the castle a table was set with every delicacy. And everywhere there were bowls full of red roses. No servants were visible; but there was no lack of service, for invisible hands waited upon her and attended to her every want. She had but to wish, and whatever she wanted was at once placed before her.



Beauty was filled with astonishment at all this luxury and magnificence.

"Surely the Beast does not wish to harm me," she thought, "or he would never have so ordered everything for my comfort." And she waited with a good courage for the coming of the Lord of the Castle.

In the evening the beast appeared. He was certainly very terrible to look at, and Beauty trembled at the sight of the hideous monster. But she forced herself to appear brave, and, indeed, there was no cause for her alarm. The Beast was kindness itself, and so gentle and respectful in his attentions to her that Beauty soon lost all fear. She soon became very fond of him, and would have been quite happy had it not been for the thought of her father and sisters, and the grief which she knew her father would be suffering on her account. The thought of his sorrow made her sorrowful too; and one night, when the Beast came to visit her at his usual hour, she was so

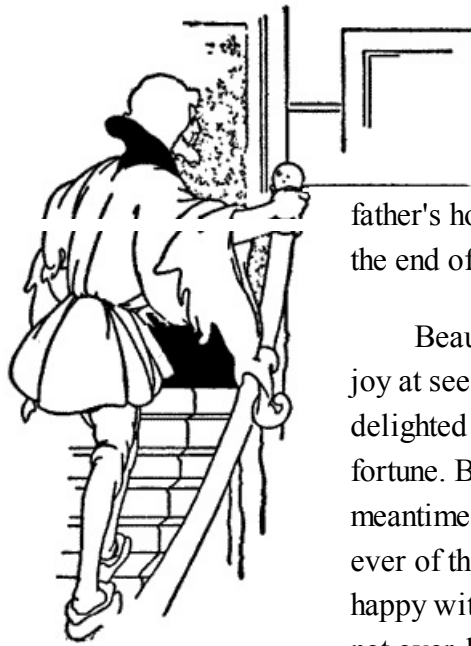
sad that he asked her what was the matter.

Then Beauty begged him to let her go and visit her father. The Beast was very unwilling to grant her request.

"If I let you go, I am afraid you will never come back to me," he said, "and then I shall die of grief."

Beauty promised most earnestly to come back to him if he would only allow her to spend a few days with her family; and at last the Beast yielded to her entreaties.

He gave her a ring, saying:



"Put this on your little finger when you go to bed to-night, and wish; and in the morning you will find yourself at home in your father's house. But if you do not return to me at the end of a week, I shall die of sorrow."

Beauty's father was almost overcome with joy at seeing his daughter again, and he was delighted to hear of her happiness and good fortune. But her two sisters—who in the meantime had married—were more jealous than ever of their beautiful sister. They were not very happy with their husbands, who were poor and not over-lovable; and they were very envious of Beauty's clothes and of all the luxuries with which she told them she was surrounded. They tried to think of a plan by which they could prevent their sister from enjoying her good fortune.

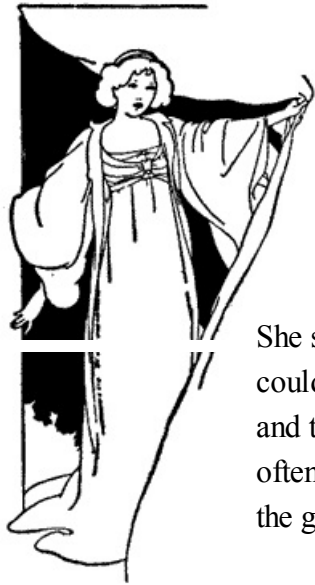
"Let us keep her beyond the week that the Beast has allowed her," they said; "then, doubtless, he will be so angry that he will kill her."

So they pretended to be very fond of Beauty, and when the time came for her return, they overwhelmed her with tears and caresses, begging her not to leave them, and to stay at least one more day with them. Beauty was distressed at their grief, and at last she consented to stay just one more day; though her heart misgave her sorely when she thought of the poor Beast.

That night, as she lay in bed, she had a dream. She dreamt that she saw the Beast dying of sorrow at her forgetfulness; and so real did it seem that she woke up in an agony of dismay.

"How could I have been so cruel and ungrateful," she cried. "I

promised faithfully that I would return at the end of the week. What will he think of me for breaking my promise!"

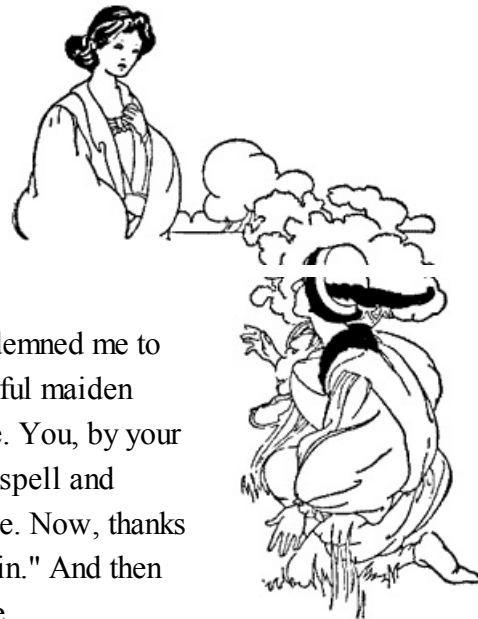


Hastily rising from bed, she searched for the ring the Beast had given her. Then putting it on her little finger she wished to be at the Palace of the Beast again. In a moment she found herself there; and quickly putting on her clothes she hurried out to look for the Beast. She searched through room after room; but nowhere could she find him. At last she ran out into the garden; and there, on a plot of grass, where he and she had often sat together, she found him lying as if dead upon the ground.

With a bitter cry she sank on her knees beside the poor Beast.

"Oh, Beast; my dear, dear Beast!" she cried. "How could I have been so cruel and wicked and unkind? He has died of sorrow as he said he would!" And the tears fell down from her eyes as she spoke. Overcome with grief and remorse, she stooped down and tenderly kissed the ugly Beast.

In a moment there was a sudden noise, and Beauty was startled to find that the ugly Beast had vanished. The Beast was a beast no longer, but a handsome Prince, who knelt at her feet, thanking her for having broken his enchantment.

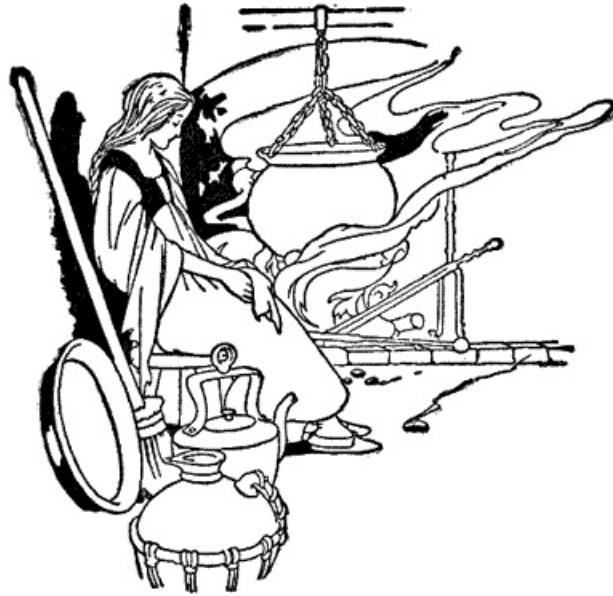


"A wicked fairy," he said, "condemned me to keep the form of a beast until a beautiful maiden should forget my ugliness and kiss me. You, by your love and tenderness, have broken the spell and released me from my horrible disguise. Now, thanks to you, I can take my proper form again." And then he begged Beauty to become his bride.

So Beauty married the Prince who had been a Beast, and they lived together in the castle and ruled over the Prince's country, and were happy ever after.

[Back to contents](#)

THE STORY OF CINDERELLA



THERE was once a rich man, whose wife died, leaving him with one little girl. After some years, hoping to give his child a mother's love and care, he married again, this time a widow, with two grown-up daughters. But his second wife was haughty and proud, and her two daughters were even worse than their mother; and the poor little girl had a very unhappy time with her new relations. Her stepsisters were jealous of her, for she was very beautiful, and they themselves were plain and ugly. They did all they could to make her miserable; and, at length, through their wicked spite and envy, her life became a burden to her. The poor child was sent to live in the kitchen, where she had to do all the rough and dirty work; and because she was always dressed in rags, and sat beside the cinders in the grate, they called her Cinderella.

It happened that the King of the country had an only son. He was very anxious that the Prince should be married; so he gave a great ball, and invited all the grand ladies in the country to come to it. It was to be a very splendid affair, lasting for three nights, and people were very eager to be invited to it, for it was known that the Prince would choose his bride from among the ladies present.

Cinderella's sisters received invitations; and from the day they arrived they talked of nothing but of what they should wear, for each of them secretly hoped that she would be chosen as the Prince's bride.

When the great day came at last, they began to dress for the ball directly after breakfast. Cinderella had to help them; and they kept her busy

all day doing their hair, and running messages, and helping them to lace up their fine dresses.

When Cinderella saw their beautiful clothes she wished that she could go to the ball as well; but when she timidly asked if she might, they laughed in mocking scorn.

"You go to the ball!" they cried. "What would you do at the ball, with your rags and tatters and your dirty face? No, no, Cinderella, go back to your seat amongst the ashes—that is the place for a little kitchen girl like you!"

So the two sisters and their mother drove away in a carriage and pair to the King's palace, and Cinderella was left behind. She sat down on the hearth before the kitchen fire and began to cry softly to herself, because she felt so very lonely and miserable.

As she sat there in the dusk, with the firelight dancing over her, and her face buried in her hands, she heard a voice calling:

"Cinderella, Cinderella!" and with a start she looked up to see who it could be.

There on the hearth in front of her stood an old woman, leaning upon a stick. She was dressed in a long red cloak, and she wore high-heeled shoes and a tall black hat.



Where she had come from Cinderella could not imagine. She certainly had not come in through the door, nor yet through the window for both were

shut.

Cinderella was so surprised to see her that she stopped crying, and stared at her in astonishment.

"What are you crying for?" asked the old woman.

"Because my mother and sisters have gone to the ball, and I am left here all alone," said Cinderella.

"Do you want to go to the ball, too!" said the old lady.

"Yes, but it is no good; I have nothing but rags to wear," sobbed poor Cinderella.

"Well, well, be a good child and don't cry any more," said the old woman, briskly. "I am your Fairy Godmother, and if you do what I tell you, perhaps you shall go after all. Run out into the garden and bring me in a pumpkin!"

Cinderella ran out into the garden and brought in the biggest pumpkin that she could find.

"Now go and fetch the mouse-trap out of the cellar," said her Godmother, and Cinderella hurried to get it. There were six mice in the trap, and the old woman harnessed them to the pumpkin, put a rat on the top to drive them, and two lizards behind, and then waved her wand over them. Immediately the pumpkin turned into a gorgeous coach, the mice into six beautiful horses, the rat into a stately coachman, and the lizards into tall footmen, with powdered hair and silk stockings. "There," said the old woman; "there's a carriage to take you to the ball."



"Alas," said Cinderella, "how can I go to the ball? I have nothing to wear but this!" and she touched her ragged frock.

"Is that all?" said the Fairy Godmother. Once more she waved her wand, and Cinderella's rags turned into the most beautiful dress in the world, all shining with gold and silver threads and covered with costly gems. In her hair was a circlet of pearls, and her feet were shod with the prettiest and daintiest pair of glass slippers that ever were seen.

"Now," said the Fairy Godmother, "now you can go to the ball. But mind you come away before the clock strikes twelve, for should you linger beyond that hour, all your splendor will vanish, and your dress will turn into rags again."

Cinderella promised to obey her Godmother's instructions. Then she got into the beautiful coach. The footman shut the door, the coachman whipped up the horses, and away she went to the ball.

When she arrived there was a great stir in the Palace. So lovely a face and so costly and rich a dress had never before been seen, and everybody thought it must be some great Princess arrived from foreign lands.



All the courtiers and other guests stood back to let her pass, and when the Prince caught sight of her he fell in love with her on the spot. He danced with her the whole of the evening, and people thought there was no doubt as to whom he would choose for his bride.

At a quarter to twelve, Cinderella, remembering her Godmother's instructions, said good-bye to the Prince and came away.

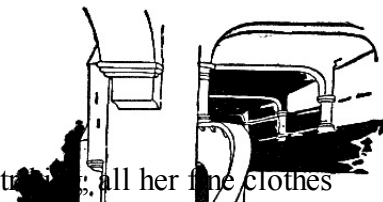
She arrived home just as the clock struck twelve. At once the coachman and footmen turned back into rats and mice, and the coach into a pumpkin; and when the sisters came home a little later, there was Cinderella, dressed in her old shabby frock, sitting in her usual place amongst the cinders.

The two ugly sisters were full of the strange Princess who had come to the ball. They talked about her all the next day, little dreaming that all the while the beautiful lady was their despised sister Cinderella.

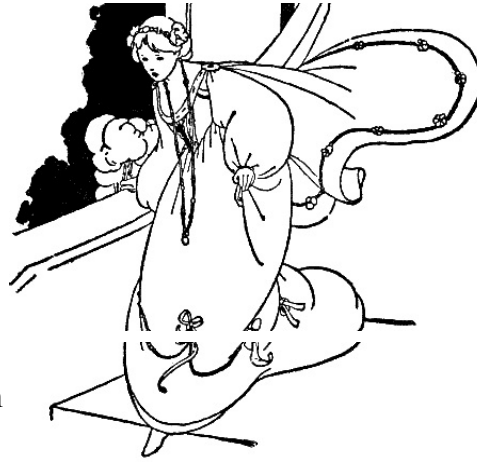
In the evening after they had gone again to the ball, the Fairy Godmother made her appearance. Once more Cinderella drove to the Palace in her coach and six; this time arrayed in a still more gorgeous and beautiful dress; and once more the Prince danced with her all the evening.

But when the third night came Cinderella was enjoying herself so much that she quite forgot what her Fairy Godmother had said, until suddenly she heard the clock begin to strike twelve.

She remembered that as soon as it finished striking, all her fine clothes would turn to rags again; and, jumping up in alarm, she ran out of the room. The Prince ran after her, trying to overtake her; and Cinderella in her fright ran so fast that she left one of her little glass slippers on the floor behind her.



The Prince stopped to pick it up, and this gave Cinderella time to escape; but she was only just in time. Just as she was crossing the Palace yard, the clock finished striking, and immediately all her finery vanished; and there she was, dressed in her old ragged frock again.



When the Prince came out upon the Palace steps, he could see no sign of the lovely Princess. The guards at the gate told him that nobody at all had passed that way, except a little ragged kitchenmaid; and the Prince had to go back to the ball with only a little glass slipper to remind him of the beautiful lady with whom he was so desperately in love.

The next day the King sent out all his heralds and trumpeters with a Proclamation, saying that the Prince would marry the lady whose foot the slipper fitted. But though all the ladies in the land tried on the slipper it would fit none of them—their feet were all too big!

At last the heralds came to the house where Cinderella lived. The eldest stepsister tried the slipper on first, but it was quite impossible for her to get her foot into it, for her great toe was too big. Then her mother, who was watching eagerly, fetched a carving-knife.



"Be careful of the toe off," she said; "what does it matter if you are lame—if you are the Prince's bride you will always ride in a carriage!"

So the eldest sister cut off her big toe, but it was no use, the slipper would not fit, and at last she was obliged to hand it to her sister.

But the other sister had no better luck. She did, indeed, get her toes

inside, but her foot was much too long, and her heel stuck out behind. The mother urged her to cut it off.



"What does it matter?" she said. "If you are the Prince's bride you will never need to walk any more."

But although she cut her heel off, the slipper was still too small; and at length she, too, had to give up the attempt to force her foot into it.

Then Cinderella came shyly out from behind the door where she had been standing out of sight, and asked if she might try on the slipper. Her stepmother and sisters were very angry, and were about to drive her away with blows, but the herald stopped them.

"The Prince wishes every woman in the land to try on this slipper," he said; and asking Cinderella to sit on a chair, he knelt down and tried the slipper on her foot.

And it fitted her exactly!

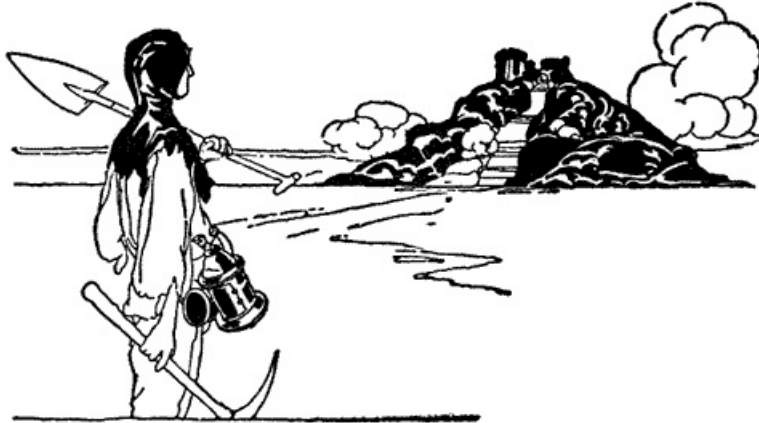
While everyone stood and stared in astonishment, Cinderella drew from her pocket the other slipper and put it on. No sooner had she done so than her ragged frock changed into the beautiful ball dress again, and she stood up before them all—the beautiful lady with whom the Prince had fallen in love at the ball.

The Prince was overjoyed to find her again; and they were married at once with much pomp amid great rejoicings.

As for the wicked sisters they were so jealous that they both turned green with envy. They grew uglier and uglier every day, until at last they grew so dreadfully ugly that nobody could bear to look at them any longer. But Cinderella became more and more beautiful, and lived happily with the Prince for ever afterwards.

[Back to contents](#)

JACK THE GIANT KILLER



IN the reign of King Arthur there lived in the County of Cornwall a worthy farmer, who had an only son, named Jack. Jack was strong and brave and very daring, and was never backward when danger was in the way.

Now, in those days there lived a huge giant in a gloomy cavern on St. Michael's Mount, which rises out of the sea near the shores of Cornwall. The Cornish people had suffered greatly from his thefts and pillaging; for he used to wade through the sea to the mainland, and carry off half a dozen or more of their oxen at a time.

At last Jack made up his mind to destroy this monster. He took a horn, a shovel, a pickaxe, and a dark lantern, and one winter's evening swam over the sea to the Mount. Then he set to work, and before morning had dug a great pit. He covered it carefully over with sticks and straw, and strewed some earth on the top to make it look like solid ground. And then he blew his horn so loudly that the Giant awoke, and came out roaring like thunder:

"You impudent villain—you shall pay dearly for disturbing my rest. I will broil you for my breakfast!"

But almost as he spoke, he tumbled headlong into the pit.

"Oh, ho, Mr. Giant!" said Jack. "How is your appetite now! Will nothing serve you for breakfast but broiling poor Jack?" Then he struck the giant such a blow on the head with a pickaxe that he killed him.

When the Justices of Cornwall heard of this valiant deed, they sent for Jack, and declared that he should always be called Jack the Giant Killer; and they gave him a sword, and a belt upon which was written, in letters of

gold:

"This is the valiant Cornishman
Who slew the giant Cormoran."

There was another giant in England called Blunderbore, who vowed to take revenge on Jack for this exploit. One day, as Jack was passing through a wood on a journey to Wales, he fell asleep by the side of a fountain. The Giant, coming along, found him there; and, seeing by the writing on the belt who Jack was, he lifted him on his shoulder and carried him off to his castle.



When Jack awoke and found himself in the clutches of Blunderbore he was terribly frightened. The giant carried him into a room and locked him up, while he went to fetch another giant who lived close by to help him eat Jack for dinner. While he was gone, Jack heard dreadful shrieks and groans from different parts of the castle, and soon after he heard a mournful voice saying:

"Haste, valiant stranger, haste away,
Lest you become the giant's prey.
On his return he'll bring another,
Still more savage than his brother;
A horrid, cruel monster, who
Before he kills will torture you!"

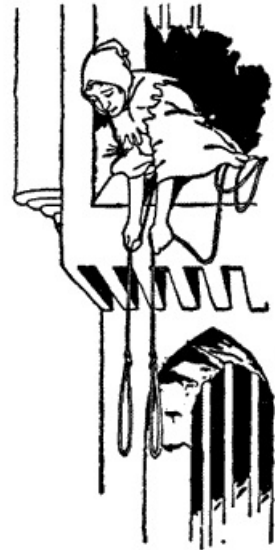
Poor Jack looked out of the window, which was just over the gate of the castle, and saw two giants coming along arm in arm.

"Now," thought he, "death or freedom is at hand." There happened to be two strong cords in the room, and Jack made a large noose with a slip-knot in each of them. Then, just as the giants were coming through the gate he threw the ropes over their heads, and, fastening the other ends to a beam in the ceiling, he pulled the ropes with all his might until he had nearly strangled the giants. Then he drew his sword and slipped down the ropes and killed them both.

Next Jack took the keys from Giant Blunderbore and searched through the castle. In one of the rooms he found three ladies who told him that their husbands had been killed by the giant, who had afterwards condemned them to be starved to death.

Jack gave them the castle and all the riches it contained to make some amends for the dreadful pains they had suffered, and then went on his way.

After traveling some days, he lost himself in a lonely valley; but, when he had wandered about some while, he at length succeeded in finding a large house. He went up to it and knocked loudly at the gate, when, to his great horror, a monstrous giant with two heads came forth. He spoke very civilly, however, and took Jack into the house, leading him to a room where there was a good bed, in which he could pass the night.



Jack took off his clothes; but, though he was very tired, he could not go to sleep. Presently he heard the giant walking about in the bedchamber, which was the next room, saying to himself:

"Though here you lodge with me this night;
You shall not see the morning light;
My club shall dash your brains out quite."

When he heard this, Jack got out of bed, and, taking a large, thick piece of wood, he laid it in his own place in the bed, and hid himself in a dark corner of the room.

In the middle of the night, the giant came with his great club, and struck several heavy blows upon the bed. Then he went off, thinking he had broken all Jack's bones.

Early next morning Jack walked into the giant's room and thanked him for the night's lodging. The giant was terribly startled to see him, and stammered out:

"Oh, dear me! Is it you? Pray, how did you sleep last night? Did you hear or see anything to disturb you?"

"Nothing worth speaking of, thank you," answered Jack, carelessly. "A rat, I believe, gave me three or four slaps with his tail; but that was all."



The giant said nothing; but went and fetched two bowls of hasty pudding for their breakfast.

Jack did not wish the giant to think that he could not eat as much as himself, so he contrived to fasten a leathern bag inside his coat. He then managed to slip the pudding into this bag, while pretending to eat it. When breakfast was done, he said to the giant:

"Now I will show you a fine trick. I can cure all wounds with a touch. You shall see an example." He then took a knife, ripped up the leathern bag, and all the hasty pudding tumbled out upon the floor.

"Ods splutter hur nails!" cried the giant, who was ashamed to be outdone by such a little fellow. "Hur can do that hurself!" and, snatching up the knife, he plunged it into his stomach and fell down dead.



After this, Jack went farther on his journey. In a few days he met King Arthur's only son, who was traveling into Wales to deliver a beautiful lady from the power of a wicked magician. Jack attached himself to the Prince, and they traveled on together.

The Prince was very generous, and soon gave away all the money he possessed.

After having parted with his last penny to an old beggar-woman, he was very uneasy as to where they were to pass the night.

"Sir," said Jack, "two miles farther on there lives a giant with three heads, who can fight five hundred men at once and make them fly. I will go on and visit him—do you wait here until I return."

Jack rode on to the gates of the castle, and gave a loud knock. The giant, with a voice like thunder, roared out:

"Who is there?"

"No one but your poor Cousin Jack."

"Well, what news, Cousin Jack?"

"Dear Uncle, I have bad news for you. Here is the King's son coming with two thousand men to kill you!"

"Cousin Jack, this is bad news indeed! But I have a large cellar underground, where I shall hide myself, and you shall lock, bolt and bar me in until the King's son is gone."

So Jack locked, bolted and barred the giant in the cellar, and then went back and fetched the Prince, and they feasted and made merry, and spent the night very comfortably in the castle.



In the morning Jack gave the Prince gold and silver from the giant's treasury. Then the Prince set forth on his journey, while Jack let the giant out of the cellar.

The giant thanked Jack very much for saving him, and asked what he should give him as a reward?

"Why, good Uncle," said Jack, "I desire nothing but the coat and cap, with the rusty sword and the slippers which are hanging beside the bed."

"Take them," said the giant, "and keep them for my sake. They will be very useful to you. The coat will make you invisible; the cap will give you



knowledge; the sword will cut through anything, no matter what it may be, and the shoes are of vast swiftness."

Jack took the gifts, thanked the giant, and then quickly caught up with the Prince.

After a few day's further journey they reached the dwelling of the beautiful lady whom the Prince had come to rescue.

She received the Prince very graciously and made a feast for him. When it was ended she rose, and, taking her handkerchief, said:

"My lord; to-morrow morning I command you to tell me on whom I have bestowed this handkerchief—or else lose your head."



The Prince went to bed very mournfully; but Jack put on the cap of knowledge, which told him that the lady was forced by the power of enchantment to meet the wicked magician every night in the forest.

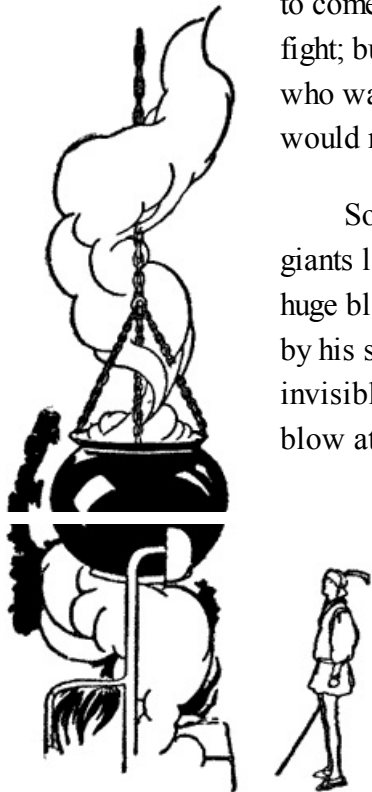
He, therefore, put on his coat of darkness, and his shoes of swiftness, and was there before her. When the lady came, she gave the handkerchief to the magician. Jack with his sword of sharpness cut off his head with one blow; and the enchantment was ended in a minute.

The next day the lady was married to the Prince, and soon after went with her husband to the Court of King Arthur, where Jack was made one of the Knights of the Round Table for his heroism.



Very soon Jack set off in search of new adventures. On the third day of his travel he came to a wide forest. Hardly had he entered it when he heard dreadful shrieks and cries, and soon he saw a monstrous giant dragging along by the hair of their heads a handsome knight and a beautiful lady. Their tears and cries melted Jack's heart. He alighted from his horse, and put on his invisible coat, and immediately attacked the giant. He could not reach up to the giant's body; so, taking a mighty blow, he cut off both the monster's legs just below the garter, so that he fell full length upon the ground. Then Jack set his foot upon his neck and plunged his sword into the giant's body.

The knight and the lady, overjoyed, begged Jack to come to their house to refresh himself after this fight; but Jack, hearing that the giant had a brother who was more cruel and wicked even than himself, would not rest until he had also destroyed him.



Soon he came in sight of the cavern where the giants lived. There was the other giant sitting on a huge block of timber, with a knotted iron club lying by his side. Jack, in his coat of darkness, was quite invisible. He drew close up to the giant and struck a blow at his head with his sword of sharpness; but he missed his aim and only cut off his nose. The giant roared with pain, and his roars were like claps of thunder. He took up his iron club and began to lay about him, but not being able to see Jack, he could not hit him; for Jack slipped nimbly behind, and jumping upon the block of wood, stabbed the giant in the back; and after a few howls, the monster dropped down

dead.

Having thus killed the two monsters Jack entered the cave to search for the treasure. One room contained a great boiling cauldron and a dining table, where the giants feasted. Another part of the cave was barred with iron and was full of miserable men and women whom the giants had imprisoned. Jack set them all free and divided the treasure among them.

Jack cut off the giant's head, and sent it with the head of his brother to the Court of King Arthur; then he returned to the house of the knight and his lady.

He was received with the greatest joy; and the knight gave a grand feast in his honor. When all the company was gathered together, the knight presented Jack with a ring, on which was engraved the picture of the giant dragging the knight and the lady by the hair, with this motto round it—

"Behold, in dire distress were we,
Under a giant's fierce command,
But gained our lives and liberty
From valiant Jack's victorious hand."

But while the merriment was at its height, a herald rushed into the room and told the company that Thundel, a savage giant with two heads, had heard of the death of his two kinsmen, and was come to take his revenge on Jack. The guests trembled with terror and fright; but Jack only drew his sword and said, "Let him come!"



The knight's house was surrounded by a moat over which there was a drawbridge. Jack set men to work to cut the bridge on both sides, nearly to the middle, and then, dressed in his magic coat, went out to meet the giant. As the giant came along, although he could not see Jack, yet he could tell

that someone was near for he cried out:

"Fa, fe, fi, fo, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman
Be he alive, or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to make my bread."

"Say you so, my friend," cried Jack. "You are indeed a monstrous miller!"

"Ah!" cried the giant; "you are the villain that killed my kinsmen! I will tear you with my teeth, and grind your bones to powder!"



"You must catch me first!" said Jack. Then he threw off his coat and put on his shoes of swiftness, and began to run, the giant following him like a walking castle. Jack led him round and round the house, and then he ran over the drawbridge, while the giant rushed after him with his club. But when he came to the middle of the bridge, where it had been cut on both sides, his great weight broke it, and he tumbled into the water.

Jack now got a cart rope and flung it over his two heads, and then, by the help of a team of horses, drew him to the edge of the moat, where he cut off his heads.

Once again, Jack set out in search of new adventures. He went over fields and dales without meeting with any, until he came to the foot of a high mountain. Here was a little, lonely house; and when he knocked at the door it was opened by an old man with a beard as white as snow. This old man was a good hermit, and when Jack had eaten well, he said:

"My son, I know that you are the famous conqueror of giants. I know, at the top of this mountain there is an enchanted castle, kept by a giant named Galligantes, who, by the help of a magician, gets many knights into his power—whom he changes into beasts. Above all, I lament the hard fate of a duke's daughter, whom they have changed into a deer. Many knights have

tried to destroy the enchantment, yet none have been able to do so, because of two fiery griffins who guard the gates of the castle. But as you, my son, have an invisible coat, you may pass them by without being seen. On the gates of the castle you will find engraved the means by which the enchantment may be broken."

Jack promised that in the morning he would risk his life in an endeavor to break the enchantment; and, after a sound sleep, he arose early and set out on his attempt.

He passed by the fiery griffins without the least fear of danger; for they could not see him, because of his invisible coat.

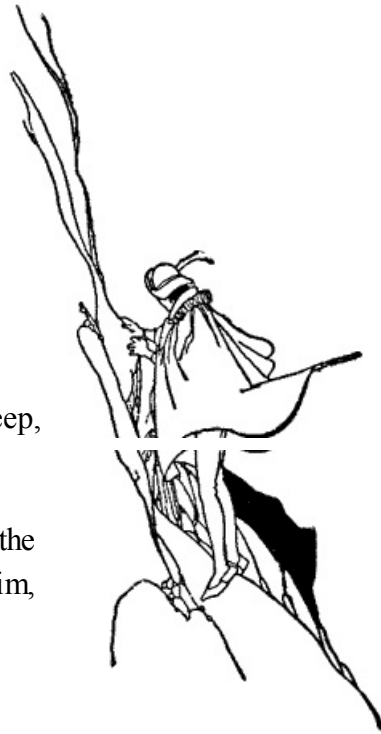
On the castle gate he found a golden trumpet hanging, under which were written these words—

"Whoever can this trumpet blow,
Shall cause the giant's overthrow."

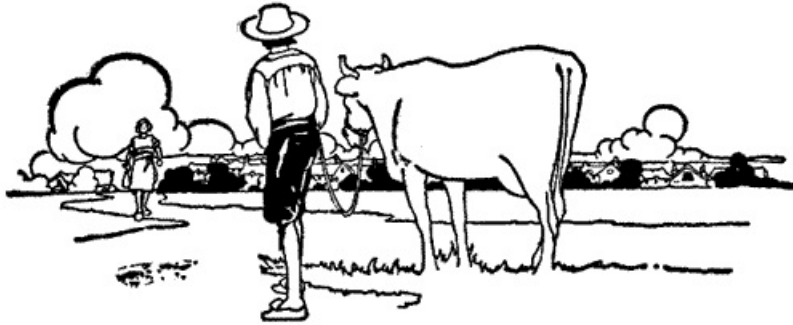
Jack seized the golden trumpet and blew a mighty blast, which made the gates fly open and shook the castle to its foundations. The giant and the magician, knowing that their end was now near, stood biting their thumbs and shaking with terror. Jack, with his magic sword, soon killed the giant, and the magician was carried off by a whirlwind. The castle vanished away like smoke, and the duke's daughter and all the knights and lovely ladies who had been turned into birds and beasts returned to their proper shape.

Jack's fame rang through the whole country, and the King gave him a large estate to reward him for all his brave and knightly deeds. And Jack married the duke's daughter, and lived in joy and contentment for the rest of his days.

[Back to contents](#)



JACK AND THE BEANSTALK



JACK was an idle, lazy boy who would do no work to support his widowed mother; and at last they both came to such poverty that the poor woman had to sell her cow to buy food to keep them from starving. She sent Jack to market with the cow, telling him to be sure and sell it for a good price.

As Jack was going along the road to market he met a butcher. The butcher offered to buy the cow in exchange for a hatful of colored beans. Jack thought the beans looked very pretty, and he was glad to be saved the long hot walk to market; so he struck the bargain on the spot and went back to his mother with the beans, while the butcher went off with the cow.



But the poor widow was very disappointed. She scolded her son for an idle, lazy, good-for-nothing boy, and flung the beans out of the window in a passion.

Now the beans were magic beans, and the next morning, when Jack awoke, he found some of them had taken root in the night and had grown so tall, that they reached right up into the sky.

Jack was full of wonder and curiosity; and, being fond of adventure and excitement, he set out at once to climb the beanstalk, to see what was up at the top of it.



And he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed—until at last he climbed right up to the very tiptop of the beanstalk.

Then he found himself standing in a strange country. In the distance he could see a big castle; and, as he was hot and tired with his long climb, he thought he would go and ask for something to eat and drink.

He had not gone very far before he met a fairy, who told him that the castle belonged to a wicked ogre, who had killed and eaten a great number of people.

"It was he who killed your father," she said. "And it is your duty to do your utmost to destroy the wicked monster. Go now, and see what you can do. If you can carry off any of his treasures you are at liberty to do so—for none of them really belongs to him. He has taken them all by force from the people whom he has robbed and killed."



Jack was delighted at the idea of this adventure, and set off in high spirits towards the castle.

The castle was farther off than he had thought, and by the time he reached the gates, it was so late that he made up his mind to ask for a night's lodging. There was a woman standing in the doorway; but when Jack made his request, she was very frightened, and said—



"Indeed, I dare not take you in and give you food and lodging. My husband is an ogre who lives on human flesh. If he were to find you here, he would think nothing of eating you up in three mouthfuls. I advise you to go away at once, before he comes home."

But when she saw how tired and hungry Jack really was, she took him into the house and gave him plenty to eat and drink. While Jack was eating his food in the kitchen there came a loud knocking at the door. The ogre's wife, in a great flurry, hid Jack in the oven, and then hurried to let her husband in. Jack peeped through the oven door, and saw a terrible-looking ogre, who came stamping into the kitchen, and said in a voice like thunder

"Wife, I smell fresh meat!"

"It is only the people you are fattening in the dungeon," said the wife.

So the ogre sat down and ate his supper. After supper, he commanded his wife to bring him his money-bags. He then began to count his money—thousands and thousands of pieces of gold and silver.

Jack wished he could take some of this money home to his mother; and, presently, when the ogre fell asleep, he crept out of his hiding-place, and hoisting the bags upon his shoulder, slipped quietly away with them. The ogre was snoring so loudly that it sounded like the wind in the chimney on a stormy night. So he never heard the little noise Jack made, and Jack got safely away and escaped down the beanstalk.

His mother was overjoyed to see him, for she had been very anxious about him when he did not come home the night before; and she was delighted with the bags of money, which were enough to keep them in comfort and luxury for some time.

For many months Jack and his mother lived happily together; but after a while the money came to an end, and Jack made up his mind to climb the beanstalk again, and carry off some more of the ogre's treasures. So one morning he got up early, put on a different suit of clothes, so that the ogre's wife should not recognize him, and set out to climb the beanstalk.





Jack and the Beanstalk
Down Came the Beanstalk, Down Came the Ogre

And he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed—until at last he climbed to the very top and found himself in the ogre's country again.

When he reached the castle the ogre's wife was again standing in the doorway. But when Jack asked for a night's lodging, she said she dared not give him one, for only a few months before she had taken in a poor boy who seemed half dead with fatigue and hunger, and in return for her kindness, he had stolen some of her husband's money and run away in the night.

But Jack begged so hard that at last she relented. She gave him a good supper and hid him in a closet before her husband came home.

Presently there was a great noise outside and heavy footsteps that shook the castle to its foundations. It was the ogre come home. As soon as he entered the kitchen, he sniffed suspiciously, and said:

"I smell fresh meat!"

"It is only the crows on the housetops," said his wife. "They have

brought home a piece of carrion for their young."

After supper, the ogre told his wife to fetch his hen. This hen was a very wonderful bird. Whenever the ogre said "Lay" she laid an egg of solid gold. Jack thought that if he could only get this wonderful hen to take home to his mother, they would never want any more. So when the ogre fell asleep—as he did after a little while—he came out of the closet, and, seizing the hen in his arms, made off with her. The hen squawked, but the ogre's snoring was like the roaring of the sea when the tide is coming in, and Jack got safely down the beanstalk.

The hen laid so many golden eggs that Jack and his mother became quite rich and prosperous; and there was really no need for Jack to go again to the ogre's country. But he liked the danger and excitement, and he remembered that the fairy had told him to take as many of the ogre's treasures as he could; and at last, without saying a word to anybody, he started off once more to climb the magic beanstalk.

And he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed, and he climbed—until at last he reached the very tiptop, and stood in the ogre's country.

This time when he reached the castle he began to be afraid that the ogre's wife really would not let him in.

"Indeed and indeed, I dare not," she said. "Twice lately have I given shelter to a wayfaring youth, and each time he stole some of my husband's treasures, and made off with them. Now my husband has forbidden me, on pain of instant death, to give food or lodging to any traveler."

But Jack pleaded and pleaded, and at last the good-natured woman, moved to pity by his travel-stained appearance, gave way and let him into the castle.



When the ogre came home, the wife hid Jack in the copper. As usual, the ogre's first words were:



"Wife, wife, I smell fresh meat!"

And, in spite of all his wife could say, he insisted upon searching all round the room. Jack was in a terrible fright whilst he was hunting: but fortunately, he forgot to look in the copper, and after a time he sat down to his supper.

When supper was over, the ogre told his wife to fetch his harp. Jack peeped out of the copper and saw the harp brought in and set down before the ogre. It was marvelously made; and when the ogre said "Play!" it played the finest music without being touched. Jack was enchanted, for he had never before heard such wonderful music, and he felt that he must have the harp for his own.

The ogre was soon lulled to sleep by the sweet sound of the harp; and when he was snoring heavily, Jack crept out of the copper, and taking up the harp was about to make off with it. But the harp was a fairy harp, and it called out loudly: "Master, master, master;" and, although the ogre was snoring so noisily that it was like the sound of a hundred dragons roaring at once, yet to Jack's dismay and horror he heard the voice of his harp, and, starting to his feet with a bellow of anger, rushed after the daring thief.

Jack ran faster than he had ever run in his life before—still carrying the precious harp—while the ogre ran after him, shouting and roaring and making such a noise that it sounded like a thousand thunder storms all going at once. If he had not drunk so much wine for supper, the ogre must very soon have caught Jack; but as it was, the wine had got into his head, and so he could not run nearly so fast as usual, and Jack reached the beanstalk just in front of him.

It was a very close shave. Jack slid down the beanstalk at his top speed, calling at the top of his voice for his mother to fetch him an axe. The ogre came tumbling down the beanstalk after him; but Jack seized the axe and chopped the beanstalk off close to the root. Down came the beanstalk, down came the ogre, and falling headlong into the garden he was killed on the spot.

After this, Jack quite gave up his lazy, idle ways, and he and his mother, with the magic hen and the wonderful harp, lived in happiness and prosperity the rest of their lives.



[Back to contents](#)

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT



IN the reign of King Edward the Third there was a poor orphan boy, named Dick Whittington, living in a country village a long way from London. He was a sharp little lad, and the stories that he heard of London being paved with gold made him long to visit that city.

One day, a large wagon and eight horses, with bells at their heads, drove through the village. Dick thought it must be going to London, so he asked the driver to let him walk by the side of the wagon. As soon as the driver heard that poor Dick had neither father nor mother, and saw by his ragged clothes that he could not be worse off than he was, he told him he might go if he would; so they set off together.

Dick got safely to London, and was in such a hurry to see the fine streets paved with gold, that he ran through many of them, thinking every moment to come to those that were paved with gold; for Dick had seen a guinea three times in his own little village, and remembered what a lot of money it brought in change; so he thought he had nothing to do but to take up some little bits of pavement, and he would then have as much money as he could wish for. Poor Dick ran till he was tired, and had quite forgotten his friend the driver. At last, finding it grow dark, and that every way he turned he saw nothing but dirt instead of gold, he sat down in a dark corner, and cried himself to sleep. Next morning, being very hungry, he got up and walked about, and asked everybody he met to give him a halfpenny to keep him from starving. At last, a good-natured-looking gentleman saw how hungry he looked.

"Why don't you go to work, my lad?" said he.

"I would," answered Dick, "but I do not know how to get any."

"If you are willing," said the gentleman, "come with me;" and so saying, he took him to a hayfield, where Dick worked briskly, and lived merrily till the hay was all made. After this, he found himself as badly off as before; and being almost starved again, he laid himself down at the door of

Mr. Fitzwarren, a rich merchant. Here the cook, an ill-tempered woman, called out to poor Dick:

"What business have you there, you lazy rogue? If you do not take yourself away, we will see how you like a sousing of some dish-water I have here, that is hot enough to make you jump."

At this time Mr. Fitzwarren himself came home to dinner; and when he saw a dirty ragged boy lying at the door, he said, in a kind and gentle voice:

"Why do you lie there, my lad? you seem old enough to work; I am afraid you are lazy."

"No, sir," said Dick to him. "I would work with all my heart; but I do not know anybody, and I am sick for want of food."

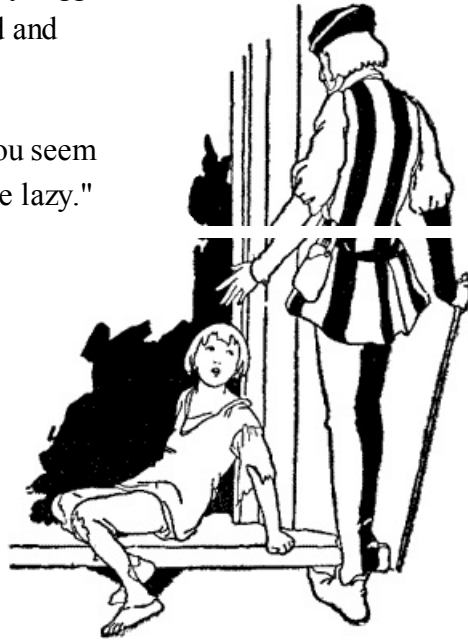
"Poor fellow!" answered Mr. Fitzwarren; "get up, and let me see what ails you."

Dick tried to rise, but was too weak to stand, for he had not eaten anything for three days. So the kind merchant ordered him to be taken into the house, and have a good dinner given to him; and to be kept to do what dirty work he could for the cook.

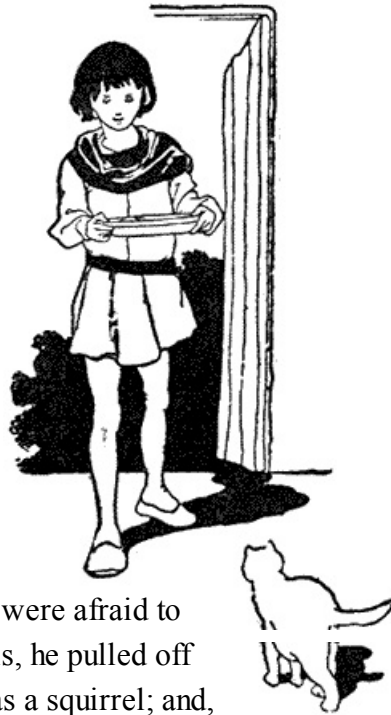
Dick would have lived happily in this good family, if it had not been for the ill-natured cook, who was finding fault and scolding him from morning till night; and, besides, she was so fond of basting, that, when she had no roast meat to baste, she would be basting poor Dick.

But though the cook was so ill-tempered, the footman was quite different. He had lived in the family many years, and was an elderly man, and very kind-hearted. He had once a little son of his own, who died when about the age of Dick; so he could not help feeling pity for the poor boy, and sometimes gave him a halfpenny to buy gingerbread or a top. The footman was fond of reading, and used often in the evening to entertain the other servants with some amusing book. Little Dick took pleasure in hearing this good man, which made him wish very much to learn to read too; so the next time the footman gave him a halfpenny, he bought a little book with it; and with the footman's help, Dick soon learnt his letters, and afterwards to read.

About this time, Miss Alice, Mr. Fitzwarren's daughter, was going out



one morning for a walk, and Dick was told to put on a suit of good clothes that Mr. Fitzwarren gave him, and walk behind her. As they went, Miss Alice saw a poor woman with one child in her arms and another on her back. She pulled out her purse and gave the woman some money; but as she was putting it into her pocket again, she dropped it on the ground and walked on. It was lucky that Dick was behind, and saw what she had done, for he picked up the purse and gave it to her again. Another time, when Miss Alice was sitting with the window open and amusing herself with a favorite parrot, it suddenly flew away to the branch of a high tree, where all the servants were afraid to venture after it. As soon as Dick heard of this, he pulled off his coat, and climbed up the tree as nimbly as a squirrel; and, after a great deal of trouble, caught her and brought her down safely to his mistress. Miss Alice thanked him, and liked him ever after for this.



The ill-humored cook was now a little kinder; but, besides this, Dick had another hardship to get over. His bed stood in a garret, where there were so many holes in the floor and the walls, that every night he was waked in his sleep by the rats and mice, which ran over his face, and made such a noise that he sometimes thought the walls were tumbling down about him. One day, a gentleman who came to see Mr. Fitzwarren wanted his shoes polished; Dick took great pains to make them shine, and the gentleman gave him a penny. With this he thought he would buy a cat; so the next day, seeing a little girl with a cat under her arm, he went up to her, and asked if she would let him have it for a penny. The girl said she would, and that it was a very good mouser. Dick hid the cat in the garret, and always took care to carry a part of his dinner to her; and in a short time he had no more trouble from the rats and mice.

Soon after, his master had a ship ready to sail; and as he thought it right all his servants should have some chance for good fortune as well as himself, he called them into the parlor, and asked them if they wanted to take a share in the trading trip. They all had some money that they were willing to venture, except poor Dick, who had neither money nor goods. For this reason he did not come into the parlor with the rest; but Miss Alice guessed what was the matter, and ordered him to be called in. She then said she would put in money for him from her own purse; but her father told her this would not do, for Dick must send something of his own. When poor

Dick heard this, he said he had nothing but a cat.

"Fetch your cat then, my good boy," said Mr. Fitzwarren, "and let her go."

Dick went upstairs and brought down poor puss, and gave her to the captain with tears in his eyes. All the company laughed at Dick's odd venture; and Miss Alice, who felt pity for the poor boy, gave him some halfpence to buy another cat.

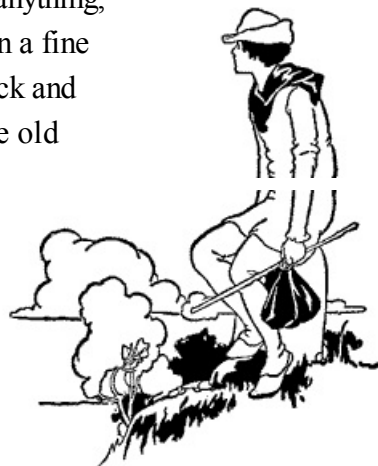
This, and other marks of kindness shown him by Miss Alice, made the ill-tempered cook jealous of poor Dick; and she began to use him more cruelly than ever, and always made fun of him for sending his cat to sea. She asked him if he thought his cat would sell for as much money as would buy a stick to beat him. At last, poor Dick could not bear this any longer, and thought he would run away from his place; so he packed up his few things, and set out very early in the morning on the first of November. He walked as far as Highgate, and there sat down on a stone, which to this day is called Whittington's stone, and began to think which road he should take farther. While he was thinking what he should do, the bells of Bow Church began to ring, and he fancied their sounds seemed to say:

"Turn again, Whittington,
Lord Mayor of London."

"Lord Mayor of London!" said he to himself. "Why, to be sure I would put up with almost anything, now, to be Lord Mayor of London, and ride in a fine coach, when I grow to be a man! I will go back and think nothing of the cuffing and scolding of the old cook, if I am to be Lord Mayor of London at last."

Dick went back, and was lucky enough to get into the house and set about his work before the cook came down.

The ship, with the cat on board, was a long time at sea; and was at last driven by the winds on a part of the coast of



Barbary. The people came in great numbers to see the sailors, and treated them very civilly; and, when they became better acquainted, were eager to buy the fine things with which the ship was laden. When the captain saw this, he sent patterns of the best things he had to the King of the country; who was so much pleased with them, that he sent for the captain and the chief mate to the palace. Here they were placed, as is the custom of the country, on rich carpets, marked with gold and silver flowers. The King and Queen were seated at the upper end of the room; and a number of dishes, of the greatest rarities, were brought in for dinner; but, before they had been on the table a minute, a vast number of rats and mice rushed in, and helped themselves from every dish. The captain wondered at this, and asked if these vermin were not very unpleasant.

"Oh, yes!" they said, "and the King would give half of his riches to get rid of them; for they not only waste his dinner, as you see, but disturb him in his bedroom, so that he is obliged to be watched while he is asleep."

The captain was ready to jump for joy when he heard of this. He thought of poor Dick's cat, and told the King he had a creature on board his ship that would kill all the rats and mice. The King was still more glad than the captain.

"Bring this creature to me," said he, "and if it can do what you say, I will give you your ship full of gold for her."

The captain, to make quite sure of his good luck, answered, that she was such a clever cat for catching rats and mice, that he could hardly bear to part with her; but that to oblige His Majesty he would fetch her.

"Run, run!" said the Queen, "for I long to see the creature that will do such service." Away went the captain to the ship while another dinner was got ready. He came back to the palace soon enough to see the table full of rats and mice again, and the second dinner likely to be lost in the same way as the first. The cat did not wait for bidding, but jumped out of the captain's arm, and in a few moments laid almost all the rats and mice dead at her feet. The rest, in a fright, scampered away to their holes.

The King and Queen were delighted to get rid of such a plague so easily. They desired that the creature might be brought for them to look at. On this, the captain called out: "Puss, puss!" and the cat ran and jumped upon his knee. He then held her out to the Queen, who was afraid to touch an animal that was able to kill so many rats and mice; but when she saw how gentle the cat seemed, and how glad she was at being stroked by the captain, she ventured to touch her too, saying all the time: "Poot, poot," for she could not speak English. At last the Queen took puss on her lap, and by degrees became quite free with her, till puss purred herself to sleep. When

the King had seen the actions of mistress puss, and was told that she would soon have young ones, which might in time kill all the rats and mice in his country, he bought the captain's whole ship's cargo; and afterwards gave him a great deal of gold besides, which was worth still more, for the cat. The captain then took leave, and set sail with a fair wind, and arrived safe at London.



One morning, when Mr. Fitzwarren had come into the counting house, and seated himself at the desk, somebody came tap, tap, tap, at the door.

"Who is there?" asked Mr. Fitzwarren.

"A friend," answered someone; and who should it be but the captain, followed by several men carrying vast lumps of gold, that had been paid him by the King of Barbary for the ship's cargo. They then told the story of the cat, and showed the rich present that the King had sent to Dick for her; upon which the merchantman called out to his servants:

"Go fetch him, we will tell him of the same;
Pray call him Mr. Whittington by name."

Mr. Fitzwarren now showed himself a really good man, for while some of his clerks said so great a treasure was too much for such a boy as Dick, he answered:

"I will not keep the value of a single penny from him! It is all his own, and he shall have every farthing's worth of it."

He sent for Dick, who happened to be scouring the cook's kettles, and was quite dirty; so that he wanted to excuse himself from going to his master. Mr. Fitzwarren, however, made him come in, and ordered a chair to be set for him, so that poor Dick thought they were making fun of him, and began to beg his master not to play tricks with a poor boy, but to let him go again to his work.

"Indeed, Mr. Whittington," said the merchant, "we are all in earnest with you; and I heartily rejoice in the news these gentlemen have brought you; for the captain has sold your cat to the King of Barbary, and brought you, in return for her, more riches than I possess; and I wish you may long enjoy them!"

Mr. Fitzwarren then told the men to open the great treasure they had brought with them, and said, "Mr. Whittington has now nothing to do but to

put it in some place of safety."

Poor Dick hardly knew how to behave himself for joy. He begged his master to take what part of it he pleased, since he owed it all to his kindness.

"No, no," answered Mr. Fitzwarren, "this is all your own; and I have no doubt you will use it well."

Dick next asked his mistress, and then Miss Alice, to accept a part of his good fortune; but they would not, and at the same time told him that his success afforded them great pleasure. But the poor fellow was too kind-hearted to keep it all to himself; so he made a handsome present to the captain, the mate, and every one of the sailors, and afterwards to his good friend the footman, and the rest of Mr. Fitzwarren's servants; and even to the ill-natured cook. After this, Mr.

Fitzwarren advised him to get himself dressed like a gentleman; and told him he was welcome to live in his house till he could provide himself with a better.



When Whittington's face was washed, his hair curled, his hat cocked, and he was dressed in a nice suit of clothes, he was as handsome as any young man who visited at Mr. Fitzwarren's; so that Miss Alice, who had been so kind to him, and thought of him with pity, now looked upon him as fit to be her sweetheart; and the more so, no doubt, because Whittington was now always thinking what he could do to oblige her, and making her the prettiest presents that could be. Mr. Fitzwarren soon saw their love for each other, and proposed to join them in marriage; and to this they both readily agreed. A day for the wedding was soon fixed; and they were attended to church by the Lord Mayor, the Court of Aldermen, the Sheriffs, and a great number of the richest merchants in London, whom they afterwards treated with a fine feast.

History tells us that Mr. Whittington and his lady lived in great splendor, and were very happy. They had several children. He was Sheriff of London in the year 1360, and several times afterwards Lord Mayor; the last time, he entertained King Henry the Fifth, on his Majesty's return from the famous Battle of Agincourt. In this company, the King, on account of Whittington's gallantry, said:

"Never had prince such a subject;" and when Whittington was told this at the table, he answered:

"Never had subject such a king."

Going with an address from the city, on one of the King's victories, he received the honor of knighthood. Sir Richard Whittington supported many poor; he built a church, and also a college, with a yearly allowance to poor scholars, and near it raised a hospital. The figure of Sir Richard Whittington, with his cat in his arms, carved in stone, was to be seen till the year 1780, over the archway of the old prison of Newgate, that stood across Newgate Street.

[Back to contents](#)

THE STORY OF BLUE BEARD



MANY years ago there was a rich man who had a singular blue beard, which made him very ugly. Being left a widower, he wished to marry one of the two beautiful daughters of a neighboring lady, and at last the younger of these girls consented to be his wife.

About a month after the marriage, Blue Beard told his bride that he must leave her for a time, as he had some business to attend to at a distance. He gave her his keys, and told her to make free of everything and entertain her friends while he was absent, but ending by drawing one key from the bunch and saying:

"This small key belongs to the room at the end of the long gallery—and that, my dear, is the one room you must not enter, nor even put the key into the lock. Should you disobey, your punishment would be dreadful."

Blue Beard set out on his journey, and for a time his wife found pleasure in showing her friends all her magnificence; but again and again she wondered what could be the reason why she was not to visit the room at the end of the long gallery. At last her curiosity became such that she could not resist the temptation to take just one peep within the forbidden door. When she reached the door she stopped for a few moments to think of her husband's warning, that he would not fail to keep his word should she disobey him. But she was so very curious to know what was inside, that she determined to venture in spite of everything.

So, with a trembling hand, she put the key into the lock, and the door immediately opened. The window shutters being closed, she at first saw nothing; but in a short time she noticed that the floor was covered with

clotted blood, on which the bodies of several dead women were lying. (These were all the wives whom Blue Beard had married, and murdered one after another!) She was ready to sink with fear, and the key of the door, which she held in her hand, fell on the floor. When she had somewhat recovered from her fright, she took it up, locked the door and hurried to her own room, terrified by what she had seen.

As she observed that the key had got stained with blood in falling on the floor, she wiped it two or three times to clean it; but the blood still remained; she next washed it; but the blood did not go; she then scoured it with brickdust, and afterwards with sand. But notwithstanding all she could do, the blood was still there, for the key was a fairy, who was Blue Beard's friend, so that as fast as she got the stain off one side it appeared again on the other. Early in the evening Blue Beard returned, saying he had not proceeded far before he was met by a messenger, who told him that the business was concluded without his presence being necessary. His wife said everything she could think of to make him believe that she was delighted at his unexpected return.



The next morning, he asked for the keys. She gave them, but, as she could not help showing her fright, Blue Beard easily guessed what had happened.

"How is it," said he, "that the key of the closet upon the ground floor is not here."

"Is it not?" said the wife. "I must have left it on my dressing table."

"Be sure you give it me by and by," replied Blue Beard.

After going several times backwards and forwards, pretending to look for the key, she was at last obliged to give it to Blue Beard. He looked at it attentively, and then said:

"How came this blood upon the key?"

"I am sure I do not know," replied the lady, turning as pale as death.

"You do not know?" said Blue Beard sternly. "But I know well enough. You have been in the closet on the ground floor. Very well, madam; since you are so mightily fond of this closet, you shall certainly take your place among the ladies you saw there."



His wife, almost dead with fear, fell upon her knees, asked his pardon a thousand times for her disobedience, and begged him to forgive her, looking all the time so sorrowful and lovely that she would have melted any heart that was not harder than a rock.

But Blue Beard answered:

"No, no, madam; you shall die this very minute."

"Alas," said the poor creature, "if I must die, allow me, at least, a little time to say my prayers!"

"I give you," replied the cruel Blue Beard, "half a quarter of an hour—not one moment longer."

When Bluebeard had left her to herself, she called her sister; and, after telling her that she had but half a quarter of an hour to live:

"Please," said she, "Sister Ann" (this was her sister's name), "run up to the tower, and see if my brothers are in sight; they promised to come and visit me to-day; and if you see them, make a sign for them to gallop on as fast as possible."

Her sister instantly did as she was desired, and the terrified lady every minute called out:

"Sister Ann, do you see anyone coming?"

And her sister answered:

"I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green."

In the meanwhile, Blue Beard, with a great simitar in his hand, bawled as loud as he could:

"Come down instantly, or I will fetch you."

"One moment longer, I beseech you," replied she, and again called softly to her sister:

"Sister Ann, do you see anyone coming?"

To which she answered:

"I see nothing but the sun, which makes a dust, and the grass, which looks green."

Blue Beard again bawled out:

"Come down, I say, this very moment, or I shall come and fetch you."

"I am coming; indeed I will come in one minute," sobbed his unhappy wife. Then she once more cried out:

"Sister Ann, do you see anyone coming?"

"I see," said her sister, "a cloud of dust a little to the left."

"Do you think it is my brothers?" continued the wife.

"Alas, no, dear sister," replied she, "it is only a flock of sheep!"

"Will you come down or not, madam?" said Blue Beard, in the greatest rage imaginable.



"Only one moment more," answered she. And then she called out for the last time:

"Sister Ann! do you see no one coming?"

"I see," replied her sister, "two men on horseback coming to the house; but they are still at a great distance."

"God be praised!" cried she; "it is my brothers. Give them a sign to make what haste they can."

At the same moment Blue Beard cried out so loud for her to come down, that his voice shook the whole house. The poor lady, with her hair loose and her eyes swimming in tears, came down,

and fell on her knees before Blue Beard, and was going to beg him to spare her life, but he interrupted her, saying: "All this is of no use, for you shall die;" then, seizing her with one hand by the hair, and raising the simitar he held in the other, he was going with one blow to strike off her head.

The unfortunate woman, turning toward him, desired to have a single moment allowed her to compose herself.

"No, no," said Blue Beard; "I will give you no more time, I am determined. You have had too much already."

Again he raised his arm. Just at this instant a loud knocking was heard at the gates, which made Blue Beard wait for a moment to see who it was. The gates were opened, and two officers entered with their swords in their hands. Blue Beard, seeing they were his wife's brothers, endeavored to escape, but they pursued and seized him before he had got twenty steps, and, plunging their swords into his body, laid him dead at their feet.

The poor wife, who was almost as dead as her husband, was unable at first to rise and embrace her brothers, but she soon recovered.

As Blue Beard had no heirs, she found herself the possessor of his great riches. She used part of her vast fortune in giving a marriage dowry to her sister Ann, who soon after was married. With another part she bought captains' commissions for her two brothers; and the rest she presented to a most worthy gentleman whom she married soon after, and whose kind treatment soon made her forget Blue Beard's cruelty.

[Back to contents](#)

LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD



ONCE upon a time there lived a little girl, who was so sweet and pretty and good that everybody loved her. Her old grandmother, who was very fond of her, made her a little red cloak and hood, which suited her so well that everyone called her "Little Red Riding-Hood."

One day, Little Red Riding-Hood's mother told her to take a basket with some butter and eggs and fresh-baked cake to her grandmother, who was ill. The little girl, who was always willing and obliging, ran at once to fetch her red cloak, and, taking her basket, set out on her journey.

On her way she met a wolf, who wished very much to eat her up; but who dared not do so because some wood-cutters were working close by. So he only said:

"Good-morning, Little Red Riding-Hood; where are you off to so early?"

Little Red Riding-Hood, who did not know how dangerous it was to talk to a wolf, replied:

"I am going to see my grandmother, who is ill in bed, to take her some butter and eggs and a fresh-baked cake that my mother has made for her!"

"Where does your grandmother live?" asked the wolf.

"In the little white cottage at the other side of the wood," answered

Red Riding-Hood.

"Well," said the wolf, "I am going that way, too. If you will let me, I will walk part of the way with you." So Little Red Riding-Hood, who suspected no harm, set off with the wolf for her companion.

Presently Red Riding-Hood stopped to gather a nosegay of wild flowers for her grandmother, and the wolf, who had thought of a plan to get the little girl for his dinner, said "Good morning," and trotted away.



As soon as he was out of sight, he began to run as fast as he could. In a short time he reached the grandmother's cottage and knocked at the door.

"Who is there?" asked the old grandmother, as she lay in bed.

"It is Little Red Riding-Hood," answered the wolf. "I have brought you some butter and eggs and a fresh-baked cake which mother has made for you."

"Pull the bobbin and the latch will go up," said the old grandmother. So the wolf pulled the bobbin and opened the door, and sprang upon the poor old grandmother and ate her all up in a twinkling.

Then he put on her night-cap and got into bed, and lay down to wait for Red Riding-Hood.

Very soon there came a little soft tap at the door.

"Who is there?" called out the wolf.

"It is Little Red Riding-Hood, grandmother dear. I have brought you some butter and eggs and a fresh-baked cake which mother has made for

you."

Then the wolf called out, disguising his voice as much as he could:

"Pull the bobbin and the latch will go up." So Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the bobbin and went inside.



"Good morning, dear grandmother," she said. "How are you feeling today?"

"Very bad indeed, my dear," answered the wolf, trying to hide himself under the bedclothes.

"How strange and hoarse your voice sounds, grandmother," said the little girl.

"I have got a bad cold, my dear," said the wicked wolf.

"Grandmother, what very bright eyes you have!" went on Red Riding-Hood, surprised to see how strange her grandmother looked in her nightclothes.

"The better to see you with, my dear," said the wolf.

"Grandmother, what very big ears you have!"

"The better to hear you with, my child."

"Grandmother, what very long arms you have!"

"The better to hug you with, my dear."

"But, grandmother, what great big teeth you have," said Red Riding-Hood, who was beginning to get frightened.

"The better to eat you with," roared the wolf, suddenly jumping out of bed. He seized hold of poor Little Red Riding-Hood, and was just about to eat her up, when there was a great noise outside, and the door burst open and in rushed the wood-cutters, who had seen the wolf talking to the little girl in the wood, and came to see what mischief he was up to.

They killed the wicked wolf quite dead; and so Little Red Riding-Hood was saved, and ran home to tell her mother all about her terrible adventure.



[Back to contents](#)

SINDBAD THE SAILOR



SINDBAD THE SAILOR, after all his adventures and wanderings, settled down in happiness and prosperity in Bagdad. Here are the stories which he told to his friends of his seven marvelous voyages.

THE FIRST VOYAGE

My father died while I was young and left me a fortune. Having no one to restrain me, I fell into bad ways, by which I not only wasted my time, but injured my health, and destroyed my property.

When I recovered, I collected together what was left of my fortune, and bought merchandise, which I loaded on board a vessel for the port of Balsora.



During the voyage we touched at several islands, where we sold or exchanged our goods. We were one day becalmed near a small island. As its appearance was inviting, we determined to dine upon it. But while we were laughing and preparing for dinner, the island began to move, and at the same moment the people in the ship called out that we were on the back of a

monstrous whale. Some jumped into the boat, and others swam to the ship; but before I could get off the animal dived into the sea, and I had only time to catch hold of a piece of wood that had been brought from the ship to serve as a table. Upon this piece of timber I was carried away by the current. The others reached the vessel, but a gale sprang up and the ship sailed without me. I floated during that and the next night, but the following morning was thrown on a small island.

I found fresh water and fruit. I looked about for some house, but found none. There were a number of colts grazing together, but no traces of other animals. When evening approached I took some more fruit and climbed in a tree to sleep. About midnight the sound of trumpets and drums seemed to pass around the island, which continued until morning, when again it seemed to be uninhabited. On the next day I found that the island was small, and that no other land was in sight. I therefore gave myself up as lost. Nor were my fears lessened when I found that the shore abounded with enormous serpents and other sea monsters. I found, however, that they were timid, and that the rattling of sticks would make them dive into the water.



Sindbad the Sailor
We Rowed as Fast as we Could

I climbed the tree next night, and the drums and trumpets returned as

before. On the third day, I had the satisfaction of seeing a body of men, who, on landing, were astonished to see me there. Having related to them how I came hither, they told me they were grooms of King Mihrage; that the island belonged to genii, who visited it every night with drums and trumpets; that the genii had allowed their sovereign to train his colts upon the island; and that they, being sent every six months to select some, had arrived for that purpose.

The grooms carried me to King Mihrage, who allowed me apartments in his palace.

One day I saw men unloading a ship in the harbor, and saw that some of the bales were those which I had sent to Balsora. Going up to the captain, I said:

"Captain, I am Sindbad."

"Surely," said he, "I and the passengers saw Sindbad swallowed in the waves many hundred miles away."

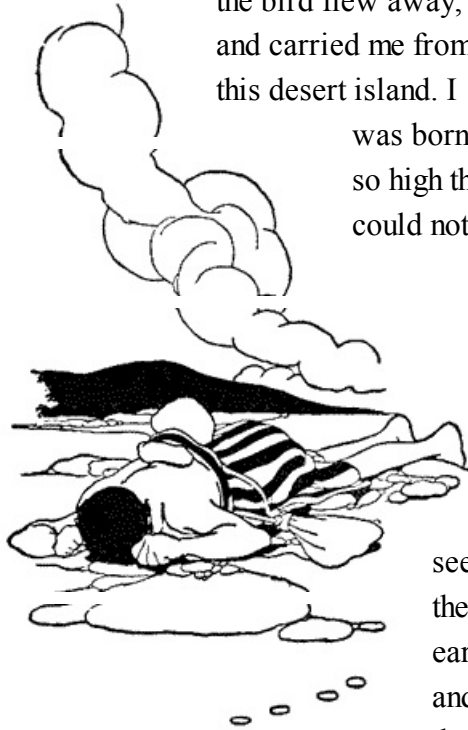
Some others, however, coming up, I was recognized; and the captain then restored me the bales, with many congratulations. I made a valuable present to King Mihrage, who bestowed a rich gift on me in return; and, having made some advantageous purchases, I arrived at Balsora, where, after I had sold my goods, I found myself possessed of a hundred thousand sequins.

THE SECOND VOYAGE

Becoming weary of a quiet life in Balsora, and having bought trading goods, I again went to sea with some merchants. After touching at several places, we landed at an uninhabited island. We amused ourselves in different ways, but I, having taken my wine and provisions, sat down and fell asleep. When I awoke, I found that my companions were gone, and that the ship had sailed. I climbed to the top of a very high tree, and perceived at a distance an object that was very large and white. I descended to the ground, and ran toward this strange-looking object. When I approached it I found it was about fifty paces in circumference, quite round, and as smooth as ivory, but had no sort of opening. It was now almost sunset, and suddenly the sky became darkened. I looked up and beheld a bird of enormous size, moving like a prodigious cloud toward me. I recollected that I had heard of a bird called the roc, so large that it could carry away young elephants, and I therefore conjectured that the large object I had been looking at was the egg of this bird.

As the bird approached I crept close to the egg, so that I had one of the legs of this winged animal before me when it alighted. This limb being as large as the trunk of a tree, I tied myself firmly to it with my turban.

The next morning
the bird flew away,
and carried me from
this desert island. I
was borne
so high that I
could not



see
the
earth,

and then carried downward so swiftly
that I lost my senses. When I recovered, I
was on the ground. I quickly untied the

cloth that bound me, and scarcely was I free when the bird, having taken up a large serpent, again flew away. I found myself in a deep valley, the sides of which were too steep to be climbed. As I walked up and down in despair I noticed that the valley was covered with diamonds of enormous size. But I soon saw other objects of much less agreeable appearance. Immense serpents were peeping out of holes on every side. When night came, I took shelter in a cave, the entrance of which I guarded with the largest stones I could find, but the hissing of the serpents entirely deprived me of sleep. When day returned, the serpents retired to their holes; and I came out of my cave, but with extreme fear. I walked heedless of the serpents until I became weary, and then sat down and fell asleep. I was awakened by something which fell near me. It was a large piece of fresh meat, and presently I saw several other pieces.

I was now convinced that I must be in the famous valley of diamonds, and that the pieces of meat were thrown in by merchants, who expected eagles to pounce upon the flesh, to which diamonds were almost sure to adhere. I hastened to pick up some of the largest diamonds I could find, which I put into a little bag, and fastened it to my girdle. I then selected the

largest piece of flesh in the valley, which I tied to my waist with the cloth of my turban, and then lay down upon my face to wait for the eagles. Very soon one of the strongest pounced upon the meat on my back, and flew with me to its nest on the top of the mountain. The merchants began shouting to frighten the eagles, and when they had forced the birds to quit their prey, one of them came to the nest where I was. At first the man was frightened when he saw me there, but after recovering himself, asked me how I got there. I told him and the rest of the merchants my story. I then opened my bag, and they declared that they had never seen diamonds of equal luster and size with mine. The merchants having gathered their diamonds together, we left the place the next morning, and crossed the mountains until we reached a port. We there took ship and proceeded to the island of Roha. At that place I exchanged some of my diamonds for other merchandise, and we went on to Balsora. From Balsora I reached my native city, Bagdad, in which I lived easily upon the vast riches I had won.



THE THIRD VOYAGE

I soon resolved upon a third voyage, and once more took ship at Balsora. After we had been at sea a few weeks, we were overtaken by a dreadful storm, and were obliged to cast anchor near an island which the captain had endeavored to avoid; for he assured us that it was inhabited by pigmy savages, covered with hair, who would speedily attack us in great numbers. Soon an innumerable multitude of frightful savages, about two feet

high, boarded the ship. Resistance was useless. They took down our sails, cut our cable, towed the ship to land, and made us all go on shore. We went towards the interior of the island and discovered a large building. It was a lofty palace, having a gate of ebony, which we pushed open, and soon discovered a room in which were human bones and roasting spits. Presently there appeared a hideous black man, who was as tall as a palm tree. He had but one eye, his teeth were long and sharp, and his nails like the talons of a bird. He took me up as I would a kitten, but finding I was little better than skin and bone, put me down with contempt. The captain, being the fattest of the party, was sacrificed to his appetite. When the monster had finished his meal he stretched himself upon a great stone bench in the portico, and fell asleep, snoring louder than thunder. In this manner he slept till morning. In the morning he went out. I said to my companions:

"Do not waste time in useless sorrow; let us hurry to look for timber to make rafts."



We found some timber on the seashore, and labored hard; but having no tools, it was evening before we had finished; and while we were on the point of pushing the raft off the beach, our hideous tyrant returned and drove us to his palace, as if we had been a flock of sheep. We saw another of our companions sacrificed, and the giant lay down to sleep as before. Our desperate condition gave us courage; nine of us got up very softly, and held the points of the roasting spits in the fire until we made them red-hot; we then thrust them at once into the monster's eye. He uttered a frightful scream, and having tried in vain to find us, opened the ebony gate and left the palace. We did not stay long behind him, but ran to the seashore, got our rafts ready, and waited for daylight to embark. But at dawn we beheld our monstrous enemy, led by two giants of equal size, and followed by many others. We jumped upon our rafts, and pushed them from the shore, the tide helping us. The giants seeing us likely to escape, tore great pieces of rock, and wading in the water up to their waists, hurled them at us with all their might. They sank every one of the rafts but that on which I was; thus all my companions, except two, were

drowned. We rowed as fast as we could, and got out of the reach of these monsters. We were at sea two days, but at last found a pleasant island. After eating some fruit, we lay down to sleep, but were soon awakened by the hissing of an enormous serpent. One of my comrades was instantly devoured by this terrific creature. I climbed up a tree as fast as I could, and reached the topmost branches; my remaining companion was following me, but the dreadful reptile entwined itself round the tree and caught him. The

serpent then went down and glided away. I waited until late the next day before I ventured to descend. Evening again approached, and I gathered together a great quantity of small wood, brambles, and thorns. Having made them into fagots, I formed a circle round the tree, and fastened the uppermost to the branches of the tree. I then climbed up to the highest branches. At night the serpent came again, but could not reach the tree; and crawling vainly round and round my little fortification until daylight, he went away. The next day I spied a ship in full sail a long way off. With the linen of my turban I made a signal, which was perceived. I was taken on board the ship and there told my adventures. The captain was very kind to me. He said that he had some bales of goods which had belonged to a merchant who had unintentionally left him some time ago on an uninhabited island. As this man was undoubtedly dead, he intended to sell the goods for the benefit of his relatives, and I should have the profit of selling them. I now recollected this was the captain with whom I sailed on my second voyage. I soon convinced him that I was really Sindbad, whom he supposed to have been lost. He was delighted at the discovery, and eagerly acknowledged that the property was mine. I continued my voyage, sold my goods to great advantage, and returned to Bagdad.

MY FOURTH VOYAGE



My desire of seeing foreign countries rendered my pleasures at home unsatisfactory. I therefore arranged my affairs, commenced a voyage to Persia, and having bought a large stock of goods loaded a ship and again embarked. The ship struck upon a rock, and the cargo was lost. A few others and myself were borne by the current to an island, on which we were surrounded by black savages, and carried to their huts. The savages offered us herbs; my companions eagerly took them, for they were hungry. Grief would not allow me to eat; and presently I

saw that the herbs had made my comrades senseless. Rice, mixed with oil of cocoanuts, was then offered to us, which my companions ate greedily and grew fat. My unhappy friends were then devoured one after another, having become appetizing to the cannibals. But I languished so much that they did

not think me fit to eat. They left me to the care of an old man, from whom I managed to escape; and taking care to go a contrary way from that which the savages had taken I never stopped till night. At the end of seven days, on the seashore I found a number of white persons gathering pepper. They asked me in Arabic who I was, and whence I came; and I gave them an account of the shipwreck, and of my escape. They treated me kindly and presented me to their King, who treated me with great liberality. During my stay with them, I observed that when the King and his nobles went hunting, they rode their horses without bridle or saddle. With the assistance of some workmen I made a bridle and saddle, and having put them upon one of the King's horses, presented the animal, thus equipped, to His Majesty. He was so delighted that he instantly mounted and rode about the grounds almost the whole day. All the ministers of state and the nobility induced me to make saddles and bridles for them, for which they made me such magnificent presents that I soon became very rich. The King at last requested that I would marry, and become one of his nation. From a variety of circumstances I could not refuse, and he therefore gave me one of the ladies of his Court, who was young, rich, beautiful, and virtuous. We lived in the greatest harmony in a palace belonging to my wife. I had made a good friend of a very worthy man who lived in this place. Hearing one day that his wife had just died, I went to condole with him on this unexpected calamity. We were alone together, and he appeared to be in the deepest grief. After I had talked with him some time on the uselessness of so much sorrow, he told me that it was an established law that the living husband should be buried with the deceased wife, and that within an hour he must submit. I shuddered at the dreadful custom. In a short time the woman was attired in her most costly dress and jewels, and placed in an open coffin. The procession then began, the husband following the corpse. They ascended to the top of an exceedingly high mountain, and a great stone was removed, which covered the mouth of a deep pit. The corpse was let down, and the husband, having taken leave of his friends, was put into another open coffin, with a pot of water and seven small loaves, and he was let down. The stone was replaced and they all returned. The horror of this was still fresh upon my mind, when my wife fell sick and died. The King and the whole Court, out of respect to me, instantly prepared to assist at a similar ceremony with me. I restrained the feeling of despair until we arrived at the top of the mountain, when I fell at the feet of the King and begged him to spare my life. All I said was ineffectual, and after my wife was let down, I also was put into the deep pit, everyone being totally indifferent to my cries and lamentations. I made the cave echo with my vain complaints. I lived some days on the bread and water which had been put into my coffin, but this supply was at length exhausted. I then wandered to a remote part of this frightful cave and lay down to prepare for death. I was thus wishing only for a speedy termination of my misery, when I heard something walking and

panting. I started up, upon which the thing panted still more, and then ran away. I pursued it, and sometimes it seemed to stop, but on my approach continued to go on before me. I pursued it, until at last I saw a glimmering light like a star. This redoubled my eagerness, until at last I discovered a hole large enough to allow my escape. I crept through the aperture, and found myself on the seashore, and discovered that the creature was a sea monster which had been accustomed to enter at that hole to feed upon the dead bodies. Having eaten some shellfish, I returned to the cave, where I collected all the jewels I could find in the dark. These I carried to the seashore, and tied them up very neatly into bales with the cords that let down the coffins. I laid them on the beach, waiting till some ship should pass. In two days a ship came out of the harbor, and passed by that part of the coast. I made a signal, and a boat took me on board. I was obliged to say that I had been wrecked; for, had they known my real story, I should have been carried back, as the captain was a native of this country. We touched at several islands, and at the port of Kela, where I found a ship ready to sail for Balsora; and having presented some jewels to the captain who had brought me to Kela, I sailed, and at last arrived at Bagdad.



THE FIFTH VOYAGE

Having forgotten my former perils, I built a ship at my own expense, loaded it with a rich cargo, and, taking with me other merchants, once more set sail. We were much driven about by a storm, and at length landed upon a desert island to search for fresh water. There we found a roc's egg, equal in size to the one I had seen before. The merchants and sailors gathered round it, and though I advised them not to meddle with it, they nevertheless made a hole in it with their hatchets, and picked out the young roc, piece after

piece, and roasted it. They had scarcely finished when two of the old birds



appeared in the air. We hurried on board ship and set sail, but had not gone far before we saw the immense birds approaching us, and soon after they hovered over the ship. One of them let fall an enormous fragment of stone, which fell into the sea close beside the ship, but the other let fall a piece which split our ship. I caught hold of a bit of the wreck, on which I was borne by the wind and tide to an island, the shore of which was very steep. I reached the dry land, and found the most delicious fruits and excellent water, which refreshed me. Farther in the island I saw a feeble old man sitting near a rivulet. When I enquired of him how he came there, he only answered by signs for me to carry him

over the rivulet, that he might eat some fruit. I took him on my back, and crossed the brook, but instead of getting down, he clasped his legs so firmly round my throat that I thought he would strangle me. I soon fainted with pain and fright. When I recovered, the old fellow was still sitting on my neck, and he quickly made me rise up and walk under the trees, while he gathered the fruit at his ease. This lasted a long time. One day, while carrying him about, I picked up a large gourd called a calabash, and, having cleared out the inside, I pressed into it the juice of grapes. Having filled it, I left it for several days, and at length found that it became excellent wine. I drank of this, and for a while forgot my sorrows, so that I began to sing with cheerfulness. The old man made me give him the calabash, and liking the flavor of the wine, he drank it off, soon became intoxicated, fell from my shoulders, and, died in convulsions. I hastened to the seaside, and presently found the crew of a ship. They told me I had fallen into the hands of the Old Man of the Sea, and was the first person that had ever escaped. I sailed with them, and the captain, when we landed, took me to some persons whose employment was to gather cocoanuts. We all took up stones and pelted the monkeys that were at the very top of the cocoanut trees, and these animals in return pelted us with cocoanuts. When we had obtained as many as we could carry, we returned to the town. I soon obtained a considerable sum by the cocoanuts I thus gathered, and at length sailed for my native land.

THE SIXTH VOYAGE

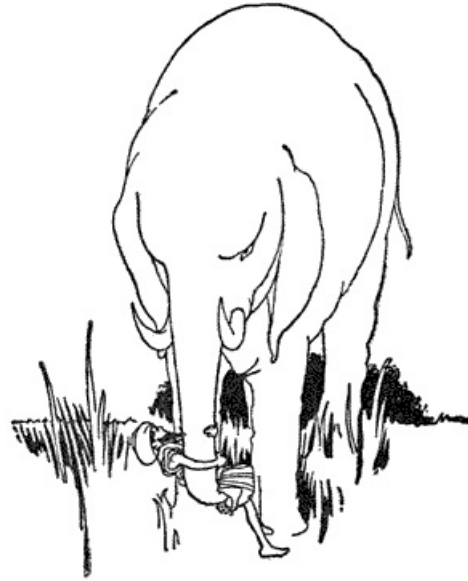


At the expiration of another year, I prepared for a sixth voyage. This proved very long and unfortunate, for the pilot lost his course and knew not where to steer. At length he told us we must inevitably be dashed to pieces against a rock, which we were fast approaching. In a few moments the vessel was a complete wreck. We saved our lives, our provisions, and our goods.

The shore on which we were cast was at the foot of a mountain which it was impossible to climb, so that I shortly beheld my companions die one after another. There was a frightful cavern in the rock, through which flowed a river. To this, in a fit of desperation, I resolved to trust myself. I went to work and made a long raft. I loaded it with bales of rich stuffs, and large pieces of rock crystal, of which the mountain was in a great measure formed. I went on board the raft, and the current carried me along. I was carried in darkness during many days, and at last fell asleep. When I awoke, I found myself in a pleasant country. My raft was tied up and some blacks, who were near me, said that they had found me floating in the river which waters their land. They took me to their King, and carefully conducted my cargo with me. When we came to the city of Serindib, I related my story to the monarch, who ordered it to be written in letters of gold. I presented the King with some of the most beautiful pieces of rock crystal, and entreated him to let me return to my own country, which he readily agreed to, and even gave me a letter and a present to my sovereign, the Caliph Haroun Alrashid. The present consisted of a ruby made into a cup, and decorated with pearls; the skin of a serpent, which appeared like burnished gold, and which could repel disease; some aloe-wood, camphire, and a beautiful female slave. I returned to my native country, delivered the present to the Caliph, and received his thanks, with a reward.

THE SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE

The Caliph Haroun Alrashid one day sent for me, and told me I must bear a present to the King of Serindib. I ventured to protest on account of my age, but I could not persuade him to give up his plan. I arrived at Serindib, and prayed an audience with the King. I was conducted to the palace with great respect, and delivered to the monarch the Caliph's letter and present. The present consisted of the most ingenious and valuable works of art, with which the King was exceedingly delighted, and he



was also pleased to acknowledge how much he esteemed my services. When I departed, the monarch bestowed on me some rich gifts; but the ship had not long been at sea, before it was attacked by pirates, who seized the vessel, and carried us away as slaves. I was sold to a merchant. When my master found that I could use the bow and arrow with skill, he took me upon an elephant, and carried me to a vast forest in the country. My master ordered me to climb a high tree, and wait there until I saw a troop of elephants pass by. I was then to shoot at them, and if one of them fell, I was to go to the city and give the merchant notice. Having given me these directions, and a bag of provisions, he left me. On the morning of the second day, I saw a great number of elephants. I succeeded in shooting one of them, upon which the others went away, and I returned to the city and told my employer, who praised my work. We went back to the forest and dug a hole, in which the elephant was to remain until it decayed and left the teeth free. I continued this trade nearly two months, and killed an elephant almost every day. One morning all the elephants came up to the tree in which I was and trumpeted dreadfully. One of them fastened his trunk round the tree and tore it up by the roots. I fell with the tree; the animal took me up with his trunk, and placed me on his back, and then, at the head of his troop, he brought me to a place where he gently laid me on the ground, and they all went away. I discovered that I was upon a large broad hill, covered all over with the bones and teeth of elephants, and was soon convinced that this was their burying-place. I reached the city once more; my master thought I was lost, for he had seen the torn tree, and found my bow and arrows. I told him what had happened, and led him to the hill. We loaded the elephant on which we had come, and thus collected more teeth than a man could have obtained in his whole life. The merchant told me that not only he himself, but the whole city, was indebted to me, and that I should return to my own country with sufficient wealth to make me happy. My patron loaded a ship with ivory,

and the other merchants made me valuable presents. I reached Balsora and landed my ivory, which I found to be more valuable than I had expected. I set out with caravans to travel overland, and at last reached Bagdad, where I presented myself to the Caliph, and gave an account of my embassy. He was so astonished at my adventure with the elephants that he ordered the narrative of it to be written in letters of gold and to be deposited in his treasury.



[Back to contents](#)

HANSEL AND GRETEL



ONCE upon a time there dwelt near a large wood a poor wood-cutter, with his wife and two children by his former marriage, a little boy called Hansel and a girl named Gretel. He had little enough to eat; and once, when there was a great famine in the land, he could not get even his daily bread. As he lay thinking in his bed one evening, rolling about for trouble, he sighed, and said to his wife, "What will become of us? How can we feed our children, when we have no more than we can eat ourselves?"

"Well, then, my husband," answered she, "we will lead them away, quite early in the morning, into the thickest part of the wood, and there make them a fire, and give them each a little piece of bread. Then we will go to our work and leave them alone, so they will not find the way home again, and we shall be freed from them."

"No, wife," replied he; "that I can never do. How can you bring your heart to leave my children all alone in the wood; for the wild beasts will soon come and tear them to pieces?"

"Oh, you simpleton!" said she. "Then we must all four die of hunger."

But she gave him no peace until he consented, saying, "Ah, but I shall regret the poor children."

The two children, however, had not gone to sleep for very hunger, and so they overheard what the stepmother said to their father. Gretel wept bitterly, and said to Hansel, "What will become of us?"

"Be quiet, Gretel," said he. "Do not cry—I



will soon help you." And as soon as their parents had fallen asleep he got up, put on his coat, and, unbarring the back door, slipped out. The moon shone brightly, and the white pebbles which lay before the door seemed like silver pieces, they glittered so brightly. Hansel stooped down, and put as many into his pocket as it would hold; and then, going back, he said to Gretel, "Be comforted, dear sister, and sleep in peace; God will not forsake us." And so saying, he went to bed again.

The next morning, before the sun arose, the wife went and awoke the two children. "Get up, you lazy things; we are going into the forest to chop wood." Then she gave them each a piece of bread, saying, "There is something for your dinner; do not eat it before the time, for you will get nothing else."

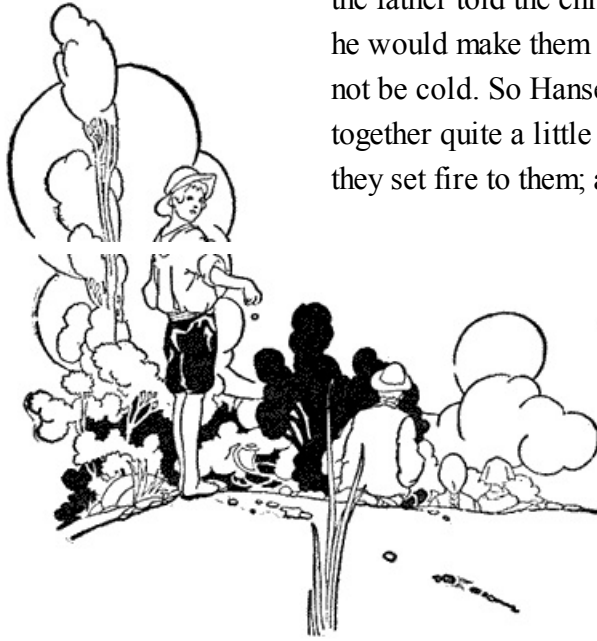
Gretel took the bread in her apron, for Hansel's pocket was full of pebbles; and so they all set out upon their way. When they had gone a little distance, Hansel stood still, and peeped back at the house; and this he repeated several times, till his father said, "Hansel, what are you peeping at, and why do you lag behind? Take care, and remember your legs."



"Ah, father," said Hansel, "I am looking at my white cat sitting upon the roof of the house, and trying to say good-bye."

"You simpleton!" said the wife, "that is not a cat; it is only the sun shining on the white chimney."

But in reality Hansel was not looking at a cat; but every time he stopped he dropped a pebble out of his pocket upon the path.



When they came to the middle of the wood the father told the children to collect wood, and he would make them a fire, so that they should not be cold. So Hansel and Gretel gathered together quite a little mountain of twigs. Then they set fire to them; and as the flame burnt up high, the wife said, "Now, you children, lie down near the fire, and rest yourselves, while we go into the forest and chop wood. When we are ready I will come and call you."

Hansel and Gretel sat down by the fire, and when it was noon each ate the piece of bread; and because they could hear the blows of an axe, they thought their father was near; but it was not an axe, but a branch which he had bound to a withered tree, so as to be blown to and fro by the wind.

They waited so long, that at last their eyes closed from weariness, and they fell fast asleep. When they awoke it was quite dark, and Gretel began to cry, "How shall we get out of the wood?" But Hansel tried to comfort her, saying, "Wait a little while till the moon rises, and then we will quickly find the way."

The moon soon shone forth, and Hansel, taking his sister's hand, followed the pebbles, which glittered like new-coined silver pieces, and showed them the path. All night long they walked on, and as day broke they came to their father's house. They knocked at the door, and when the wife opened it and saw Hansel and Gretel, she exclaimed, "You wicked children! why did you sleep so long in the wood? We thought you were never coming home again." But their father was very glad, for it had grieved his heart to leave them all alone.

Not long afterwards there was again great scarcity in every corner of the land; and one night the children overheard their mother saying to their father, "Everything is again eaten. We have only half a loaf left, and then we must starve. The children must be sent away. We will take them deeper into the wood, so that they may not find the way out again; it is the only means of escape for us."

But her husband felt heavy at heart, and thought. "It were better to share the last crust with the children." His wife, however, would listen to nothing that he said, and scolded and reproached him without end.

Now the children had heard what had been said as they lay awake, and as soon as the old people went to sleep Hansel got up, intending to pick up some pebbles as before; but the wife had locked the door, so that he could not get out. Nevertheless he comforted Gretel, saying, "Do not cry; sleep in peace; the good God will not forsake us."

Early in the morning the stepmother came and pulled them out of bed, and gave them each a slice of bread, which was still smaller than the one they had last time. On the way Hansel broke his in his pocket, and, stooping every now and then, dropped a crumb upon the path.

"Hansel, why do you stop and look about?" said the father. "Keep in the path."

"I am looking at my little dove," answered Hansel, "nodding a good-bye to me."

"Simpleton!" said the wife, "that is no dove, but only the sun shining on the chimney."

But Hansel kept still dropping crumbs as he went along.

The mother led the children deep into the wood, where they had never been before, and there, making an immense fire, she said to them, "Sit down here and rest, and when you feel tired you can sleep for a little while. We are going into the forest to hew wood, and in the evening, when we are ready, we will come and fetch you."

When noon came Gretel shared her bread with Hansel, who had strewn his on the path. They then went to sleep; but the evening arrived and no one came to visit the poor children, and in the dark night they awoke, and Hansel comforted his sister by saying, "Only wait, Gretel, till the moon comes out, then we shall see the crumbs of bread which I have dropped, and they will show us the way home."

When the moon shone they got up, but they could not see any crumbs,

for the thousands of birds which had been flying about in the woods and fields had picked them all up. Hansel kept saying to Gretel, "We will soon find the way." But they did not. They walked the whole night long and the next day, but still they did not come out of the wood; and they got very hungry, for they had nothing to eat but the berries which they found upon the bushes. Soon they got so tired that they could not drag themselves along, so they lay down under a tree and went to sleep.

It was now the third morning since they had left their father's house, and they still walked on; but they only got deeper and deeper into the wood, and Hansel saw that if help did not come very soon they would die of hunger. About the middle of the day they saw a beautiful snow-white bird sitting on a bough, which sang so sweetly that they stood still and listened to it. It soon left off and, spreading its wings, flew away. They followed it until it arrived at a cottage, upon the roof of which it perched; and when they went close up to it they saw that the cottage was made of bread and cakes, and the window-panes were of clear sugar.

"We will go in there," said Hansel, "and have a glorious feast. I will eat a piece of the roof, and you can eat the window. Will they not be sweet?"

So Hansel reached up and broke a piece off the roof, in order to see how it tasted; while Gretel stepped up to the window and began to bite it. Then a sweet voice called out in the room, "Tip-tap, tip-tap, who raps at my door?" and the children answered, "The wind, the wind, the child of heaven;" and they went on eating.

Hansel thought the roof tasted very nice, and so he tore off a great piece; while Gretel broke a large round pane out of the window and sat down quite contentedly. Just then the door opened, and a very old woman, walking upon crutches, came out. Hansel and Gretel were so frightened that they let fall what they had in their hands; but the old woman, nodding her head, said, "Ah, you dear children, what has brought you here? Come in and stay with me, and no harm shall befall you." And so saying, she took them both by the hand and led them into her cottage.



A good meal of milk and pancakes, with sugar, apples and nuts, was spread on the table, and in the back room were two nice little beds, covered with white, where Hansel and Gretel laid themselves down, and rested happily after all their hardships. The old woman was very kind to them, but in reality she was a wicked witch who waylaid children, and built the bread-house in order to entice them in; then as soon as they were in her power she killed them, cooked and ate them, and made a great festival of the day.

Witches have red eyes and cannot see very far; but they have a fine sense of smell, like wild beasts, so that they know when children approach them. When Hansel and Gretel came near the witch's house she laughed wickedly, saying, "Here come two who shall not escape me." And early in the morning, before they awoke, she went up to them, and saw how lovingly they lay sleeping, with their chubby red cheeks; and she mumbled to herself, "That will be a good bite." Then she took up Hansel with her rough hand, and shut him up in a little cage with a lattice-door; and although he screamed loudly it was of no use. Gretel came next, and, shaking her till she awoke, she said, "Get up, you lazy thing, and fetch some water to cook something good for your brother, who must remain in that stall and get fat; when he is fat enough I shall eat him."

Gretel began to cry, but it was all useless, for the old witch made her do as she wished. So a nice meal was cooked for Hansel, but Gretel got

nothing but a crab's claw.

Every morning the old witch came to the cage and said, "Hansel, stretch out your finger that I may feel whether you are getting fat." But Hansel used to stretch out a bone, and the old woman, having very bad sight, thought that it was his finger, and wondered very much that he did not get fatter.

When four weeks had passed, and Hansel was still quite lean, she lost all her patience, and would not wait any longer. "Gretel," she called out in a passion, "get some water quickly; be Hansel fat or lean, this morning I will kill and cook him."

Oh, how the poor little sister grieved, as she was forced to fetch the water, and fast the tears ran down her cheeks! "Dear good God, help us now!" she exclaimed. "Had we only been eaten by the wild beasts in the wood, then we should have died together."



But the old witch called out, "Stop that noise; it will not help you a bit."

So, early in the morning, Gretel was forced to go out and fill the kettle, and make a fire.

"First, we will bake, however," said the old woman; "I have already heated the oven and kneaded the dough;" and so saying, she pushed poor Gretel up to the oven, out of which the flames were burning fiercely. "Creep in," said the witch, "and see if it is hot enough, and then we will put in the bread." But she intended when Gretel got in to shut up the oven and let her bake, so that she might eat her as well as Hansel.

Gretel saw what her thoughts were and said, "I do not know how to do it; how shall I get in?"

"You stupid goose," said she, "the opening is big enough. See, I could even get in myself!" And she got up, and put her head into the oven.

Then Gretel gave her a push, so that she fell right in, and then, shutting the iron door, she bolted it. Oh! how horribly she howled; but Gretel ran away, and left the wicked witch to burn to ashes.

Now she ran to Hansel, and, opening his door, called out, "Hansel we are saved; the old witch is dead!" So he sprang out, like a bird out of his cage when the door is opened; and they were so glad that they fell upon each other's neck, and kissed each other over and over again.

And now, as there was nothing to fear, they went into the witch's house, where, in every corner, were caskets full of pearls and precious stones. "These are better than pebbles," said Hansel, putting as many into his pocket as it would hold; while Gretel thought, "I will take some home too," and filled her apron full. "We must be off now," said Hansel, "and get out of this enchanted forest."

When they had walked for two hours they came to a large piece of water. "We cannot get over," said Hansel. "I can see no bridge at all."

"And there is no boat, either," said Gretel; "but there swims a white duck—I will ask her to help us over," and she sang:

"Little Duck so blithe and merry,
Hansel, Gretel, here we stand;
There is neither bridge nor ferry,
Row us on your back to land."

So the Duck came to them, and Hansel sat himself on her back, and bade his sister sit behind him.

"No," answered Gretel, "that will be too much for the Duck; she shall take us over one at a time."

This the good little bird did, and when both were happily arrived on the other side, and had gone a little way, they came to a wood, which they knew the better every step they went, and at last they saw their father's house. Then they began to run, and, bursting into the house, they fell on their father's neck.

He had not had one happy hour since he had left the children in the forest; and his wife was dead. Gretel shook her apron, and the pearls and precious stones rolled out on the floor, and Hansel threw down one handful after another out of his pocket. Then all their sorrows were ended, and they lived together in great happiness.

[Back to contents](#)

THE GOOSE GIRL

ONCE upon a time there lived an old Queen, whose husband had been dead some years, and left her with one child, a beautiful daughter. When this daughter grew up she was to be married to a King's son, who lived far away.

Now when the time came for her to leave, the mother gave her daughter a lock of hair, saying, "Dear child, preserve this well, and it will help you out of trouble."

Afterwards the mother and daughter took a sorrowful leave of each other, and the princess placed the lock of hair in her bosom, mounted her horse Falada, and rode away to her intended bridegroom. Now this horse could speak. After she had ridden for about an hour she became very thirsty, and said to her servant, "Dismount, and bring me some water from yonder stream in the cup which you carry with you, for I am very thirsty."



"If you are thirsty," replied the servant, "dismount yourself, and stoop down to drink the water, for I will not be your maid!"

The Princess, on account of her great thirst, did as she was bid, and bending over the brook she drank of its water without daring to use her golden cup. While she did so the lock of hair said, "Ah! if thy mother knew this, her heart would break."

As she leaned over the water, the lock of hair fell out of her bosom and floated down the stream without her noticing it, because of her great anguish. But her servant had seen what happened, and she was glad, for now she had power over her mistress, because with the loss of the lock of hair, she became weak and helpless. When, then, the Princess was going to mount her horse again, the maid said, "No, Falada belongs to me; you must get upon this horse:" and she was forced to yield. Then the servant bade her take off her royal clothes, and put on her common ones instead; and, lastly, she made the Princess promise and swear by the open sky that she would say nought of what had passed at the King's palace; for if she had not sworn she would have been murdered. But Falada, the horse, observed all that passed with great attention.



Then the servant mounted upon Falada, and the rightful Princess upon a sorry hack; and in that way they traveled on till they came to the King's palace. On their arrival there were great rejoicings, and the young Prince, running towards them, lifted the servant off her horse, supposing that she was the true bride; and she was led up the steps in state, while the real Princess had to stop below. Just then the old King chanced to look out of his window and saw her standing in the court, and he remarked how delicate and beautiful she was; and, going to the royal apartments, he inquired there of the bride who it was she had brought with her and left below in the courtyard.

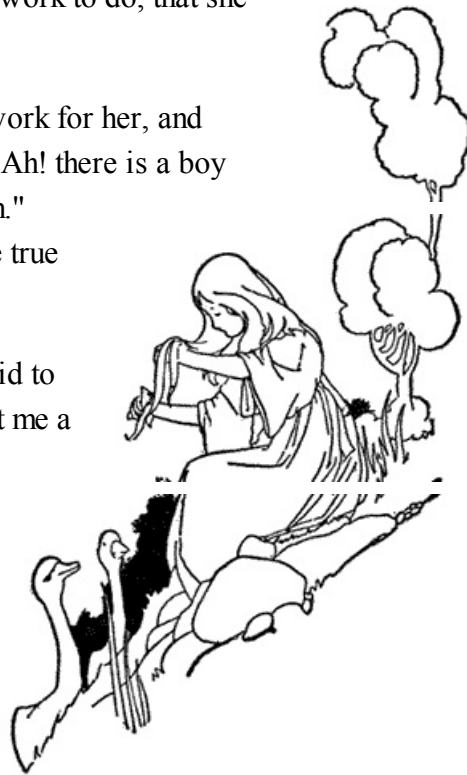
"Only a girl whom I brought with me for company," said the bride. "Give the wench some work to do, that she may not grow idle."

The old King, however, had no work for her, and knew of nothing; until at last he said, "Ah! there is a boy who keeps the geese: she can help him." This youth was called Conrad, and the true bride was set to keep geese with him.

Soon after this, the false bride said to her betrothed, "Dearest, will you grant me a favor?"

"Yes," said he; "with the greatest pleasure."

"Then let the butcher be summoned, that he may cut off the head of the horse on which I rode hither, for it has angered me on the way." In reality she feared lest the horse might tell how she had used the rightful Princess, and she was glad when it was decided that Falada should die.



This came to the ears of the Princess, and she promised secretly to the

butcher to give him a piece of gold if he would show her a kindness, which was, that he would nail the head of Falada over a certain large and gloomy arch, through which she had to pass daily with the geese, so that then she might still see her old steed as she had been accustomed. The butcher promised, and, after killing the horse, nailed the head in the place which the Princess pointed out, over the door of the arch.

Early in the morning, when she and Conrad drove the geese through the arch, she said in passing:

"Ah, Falada, that you hang so high!"

and the head replied:

"Ah Princess, that you go humbly by!
Thy mother's heart would surely break
Were she to know of your heart-ache!"



Then she drove on through the town to a field. When they arrived in the meadow, she sat down and unloosened her hair, which was of pure gold. Its shining appearance so charmed Conrad that he tried to pull out a couple of locks. So she sang:

Blow, blow, thou wind,
Blow Conrad's hat away."

Immediately there came a strong wind, which snatched Conrad's hat off his head, and led him a rare chase; and when he returned what with combing and

curling, the Princess had rearranged her hair, so that he could not catch a loose lock. This made Conrad very angry, and he would not speak to her; so all day long they tended their geese in silence.

After they returned home Conrad went to the old King and declared he would no longer keep geese with the servant.

"Why not?" asked the old King.

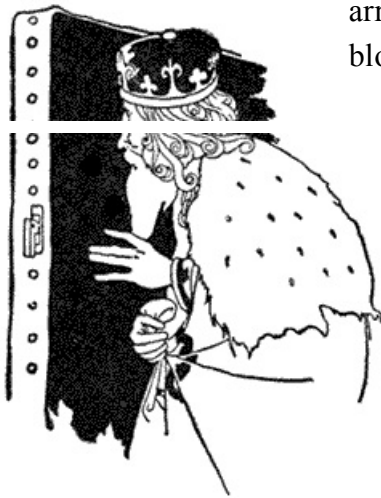
"Oh! she vexes me the whole day long," said Conrad; and then the King bade him tell all that had happened. So Conrad did, and told how, in the morning, when they passed through a certain archway, she spoke to a

horse's head, which was nailed up over the door, and said:

"Ah, Falada, that you hang
so high!"

and it replied:

"Ah, Princess, that you go
humbly by!
Thy mother's heart would
surely break
Were she to know of your
heart-ache!"



And, further, he told how when they arrived in the meadow, she caused the wind to blow his hat off, so that he had to run after it ever so far. When he had finished his tale, the old King ordered him to drive the geese out again the next morning; and he himself, when morning came, stationed himself behind the gloomy archway, and heard the servant talk to the head of Falada. Then he followed them also into the fields. There he saw with his own eyes the Goose Girl and boy drive in the geese; and after a while she sat down and, unloosening her hair, which shone

like gold, began to sing the old rhyme:

"Blow, blow, thou wind,
Blow Conrad's hat away."

Then the King felt a breeze come, which took off Conrad's hat, so that he had to run a long way after it; while the Goose Girl combed out her hair and put it back in proper trim before his return. All this the King observed, and then went home unnoticed; and when the Goose Girl returned at evening, he called her aside, and asked her what it all meant.

"That I dare not tell you, nor any other man," replied she; "for I have sworn by the free sky not to speak of my griefs, else lose my life."

The King pressed her to say what it was, and left her no peace about it; but still she refused. So at last he said, "If you will not tell me, tell your griefs to this fireplace;" and he went away.

Then she crept into the fireplace and began to weep and groan; and

soon she relieved her heart by telling her tale. "Here sit I," she said "forsaken by all the world, and yet I am a King's daughter; and a false servant has exercised some charm over me, whereby I was compelled to lay aside my royal clothes; and she has also taken my place at the bridegroom's side, and I am forced to perform the common duties of a Goose Girl. Oh, if my mother knew this, her heart would break with grief!"

The old King, meanwhile, stood outside by the chimney and listened to what she said; and when she had finished he came in, and called her away from the fireplace. Then her royal clothes were put on, and the old King, calling his son, showed him that he had taken a false bride, who was only a servant-girl, and that the true bride stood there as a Goose Girl.

The prince was glad indeed at heart when he saw her beauty and virtue. Then there was a great feast, at which the bridegroom sat, with the Princess on one side and the servant-girl on the other. But the latter was dazzled, and recognized her mistress no longer in her shining dress.

When they had finished their feasting, and were beginning to be gay, the old King set a riddle to the real servant-girl: What such an one were worthy of who had, in such and such a manner, deceived her masters; and he related all that had happened to the true bride. The servant-girl replied, "Such an one deserves nothing better than to be put into a cask, lined with sharp nails, and then to be dragged by two horses through the streets till the wretch be killed."

"You are the woman then!" exclaimed the King; "You have proclaimed your own punishment, and it shall be strictly fulfilled."

The sentence was at once carried out, and afterwards the Prince married his rightful bride, and they lived long in peace and happiness.

[Back to contents](#)

FAVORITE FAIRY TALES

This is a collection of the fairy tales that children love best, told in simple language and lavishly illustrated. They are written by various authors, a selection of the best and most popular fairy stories, culled from many sources and here collected and presented in most attractive form, printed in large clear type, with many pictures, some of them colored.



THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

BOOKS EVERY CHILD SHOULD OWN

Wonder Book of Myths and Legends
The Wonder Book of Bible Stories
Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes
Dickens' Stories About Children
King Arthur and His Knights
The Man Without a Country
The Boy's Story of Lindbergh
Folk Tales from the Far East
Fairy Tales of Many Lands
The Wings of the Morning
Tales From Shakespeare
The Story of a Bad Boy
Swiss Family Robinson
An Old-Fashioned Girl
Andersen's Fairy Tales
Alice in Wonderland
Favorite Fairy Tales
Grimm's Fairy Tales
Robinson Crusoe
Treasure Island
Arabian Nights
Hans Brinker
Water Babies
Little Women
Black Beauty
Robin Hood
Little Men
Kidnapped
Pinocchio
Heidi

Each volume is bound in cloth, with colored inlay on front cover, also with an attractive jacket in full colors. This Children's Bookshelf series is made up of titles taken from the most popular children's books. Each volume contains 262 to 320 pages. Size, $6\frac{3}{4}$ x $8\frac{3}{4}$ inches. $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick.

PRICE \$1.25

THE JOHN C. WINSTON CO.

Publishers

PHILADELPHIA

Transcriber's Note:

Variations between stories in the spelling of today and to-day, woodcutter and wood-cutter, and toward and towards, have been retained.

[The end of *Favorite Fairy Tales* by Logan Marshall]