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THE BLUE
FAIRY BOOK

Andrew Lang
The Blue Fairy Book

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THE BRONZE RING

Once upon a time in a certain country there lived a king whose palace was surrounded by a spacious garden. But, though the gardeners were many and the soil was good, this garden yielded neither flowers nor fruits, not even grass or shady trees.

The King was in despair about it, when a wise old man said to him:

“Your gardeners do not understand their business: but what can you expect of men whose fathers were cobblers and carpenters? How should they have learned to cultivate your garden?”

“You are quite right,” cried the King.

“Therefore,” continued the old man, “you should send for a gardener whose father and grandfather have been gardeners before him, and very soon your garden will be full of green grass and gay flowers, and you will enjoy its delicious fruit.”

So the King sent messengers to every town, village, and hamlet in his dominions, to look for a gardener whose forefathers had been gardeners also, and after forty days one was found.

“Come with us and be gardener to the King,” they said to him.

“How can I go to the King,” said the gardener, “a poor wretch like me?”

“That is of no consequence,” they answered. “Here are new clothes for you and your family.”

“But I owe money to several people.”

“We will pay your debts,” they said.

So the gardener allowed himself to be persuaded, and went away with the messengers, taking his wife and his son with him; and the King, delighted to have found a real gardener, entrusted him with the care of his garden. The man found no difficulty in making the royal garden produce flowers and fruit, and at the end of a year the park was not like the same place, and the King showered gifts upon his new servant.

The gardener, as you have heard already, had a son, who was a very handsome young man, with most agreeable manners, and every day he carried the best fruit of the garden to the King, and all the prettiest flowers to his daughter. Now this princess was wonderfully pretty and was just sixteen years old, and the King was beginning to think it was time that she should be married.

“My dear child,” said he, “you are of an age to take a husband, therefore I am thinking of marrying you to the son of my prime minister.

“Father,” replied the Princess, “I will never marry the son of the minister.”

“Why not?” asked the King.

“Because I love the gardener’s son,” answered the Princess.

On hearing this the King was at first very angry, and then he wept and sighed, and declared that such a husband was not worthy of his daughter; but the young Princess was not to be turned from her resolution to marry the gardener’s son.

Then the King consulted his ministers. “This is what you must do,” they said. “To get rid of the gardener you must send both suitors to a very distant country, and the one who returns first shall marry your daughter.”

The King followed this advice, and the minister’s son was presented with a splendid horse and a purse full of gold pieces, while the gardener’s son had only an old lame horse and a purse full of copper money, and every one thought he would never come back from his journey.

The day before they started the Princess met her lover and said to him:

“Be brave, and remember always that I love you. Take this purse full of jewels and make the best use you can of them for love of me, and come back quickly and demand my hand.”

The two suitors left the town together, but the minister’s son went off at a gallop on his good horse, and very soon was lost to sight behind the most distant hills. He traveled on for some days, and presently reached a fountain beside which an old woman all in rags sat upon a stone.

“Good-day to you, young traveler,” said she.

But the minister’s son made no reply.

“Have pity upon me, traveler,” she said again. “I am dying of hunger, as you see, and three days have I been here and no one has given me anything.”

“Let me alone, old witch,” cried the young man; “I can do nothing for you,” and so saying he went on his way.

That same evening the gardener’s son rode up to the fountain upon his lame gray horse.

“Good-day to you, young traveler,” said the beggar-woman.

“Good-day, good woman,” answered he.

“Young traveler, have pity upon me.”

“Take my purse, good woman,” said he, “and mount behind me, for your legs can’t be very strong.”

The old woman didn’t wait to be asked twice, but mounted behind him, and in this style they reached the chief city of a powerful kingdom. The minister’s son was lodged in a grand inn, the gardener’s son and the old woman dismounted at the inn for beggars.

The next day the gardener’s son heard a great noise in the street, and the King’s heralds passed, blowing all kinds of instruments, and crying:

“The King, our master, is old and infirm. He will give a great reward to whoever will cure him and give him back the strength of his youth.”

Then the old beggar-woman said to her benefactor:

“This is what you must do to obtain the reward which the King promises. Go out of the town by the south gate, and there you will find three little dogs of different colors; the first will be white, the second black, the third red. You must kill them and then burn them separately, and gather up the ashes. Put the ashes of each dog into a bag of its own color, then go before the door of the palace and cry out, ‘A celebrated physician has come from Janina in Albania. He alone can cure the King and give him back the strength of his youth.’ The King’s physicians will say, This is an impostor, and not a learned man,’ and they will make all sorts of difficulties, but you will overcome them all at last, and will present yourself before the sick King. You must then demand as much wood as three mules can carry, and a great cauldron, and must shut yourself up in a room with the Sultan, and when the cauldron boils you must throw him into it, and there leave him until his flesh is completely separated from his bones. Then arrange the bones in their proper places, and throw over them the ashes out of the three bags. The King will come back to life, and will be just as he was when he was twenty years old. For your reward you must demand the bronze ring which has the power to grant you everything you desire. Go, my son, and do not forget any of my instructions.”

The young man followed the old beggar-woman’s directions. On going out of the town he found the white, red, and black dogs, and killed and burnt them, gathering the ashes in three bags. Then he ran to the palace and cried:

“A celebrated physician has just come from Janina in Albania. He alone can cure the King and give him back the strength of his youth.”

The King’s physicians at first laughed at the unknown wayfarer, but the Sultan ordered that the stranger should be admitted. They brought the cauldron and the loads of wood, and very soon the King was boiling away. Toward mid-day the gardener’s son arranged the bones in their places, and he had hardly scattered the ashes over them before the old King revived, to find himself once more young and hearty.

“How can I reward you, my benefactor?” he cried. “Will you take half my treasures?”

“No,” said the gardener’s son.

“My daughter’s hand?”

“No.”

“Take half my kingdom.”

“No. Give me only the bronze ring which can instantly grant me anything I wish for.”

“Alas!” said the King, “I set great store by that marvelous ring; nevertheless, you shall have it.” And he gave it to him.

The gardener’s son went back to say good-by to the old beggar-woman; then he said to the bronze ring:

“Prepare a splendid ship in which I may continue my journey. Let the hull be of fine gold, the masts of silver, the sails of brocade; let the crew consist of twelve young men of noble appearance, dressed like kings. St. Nicholas will be at the helm. As to the cargo, let it be diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and carbuncles.”

And immediately a ship appeared upon the sea which resembled in every particular the description given by the gardener’s son, and, stepping on board, he continued his journey. Presently he arrived at a great town and established himself in a wonderful palace. After several days he met his rival, the minister’s son, who had spent all his money and was reduced to the disagreeable employment of a carrier of dust and rubbish. The gardener’s son said to him:

“What is your name, what is your family, and from what country do you come?”

“I am the son of the prime minister of a great nation, and yet see what a degrading occupation I am reduced to.”

“Listen to me; though I don’t know anything more about you, I am willing to help you. I will give you a ship to take you back to your own country upon one condition.”

“Whatever it may be, I accept it willingly.”

“Follow me to my palace.”

The minister’s son followed the rich stranger, whom he had not recognized. When they reached the palace the gardener’s son made a sign to his slaves, who completely undressed the new-comer.

“Make this ring red-hot,” commanded the master, “and mark the man with it upon his back.”

The slaves obeyed him.

“Now, young man,” said the rich stranger, “I am going to give you a vessel which will take you back to your own country.”

And, going out, he took the bronze ring and said:

“Bronze ring, obey thy master. Prepare me a ship of which the half-rotten timbers shall be painted black, let the sails be in rags, and the sailors infirm and sickly. One shall have lost a leg, another an arm, the third shall be a hunchback, another lame or club-footed or blind, and most of them shall be ugly and covered with scars. Go, and let my orders be executed.”

The minister’s son embarked in this old vessel, and thanks to favorable winds, at length reached his own country. In spite of the pitiable condition in which he returned they received him joyfully.

“I am the first to come back,” said he to the King; now fulfil your promise, and give me the princess in marriage.

So they at once began to prepare for the wedding festivities. As to the poor princess, she was sorrowful and angry enough about it.

The next morning, at daybreak, a wonderful ship with every sail set came to anchor before the town. The King happened at that moment to be at the palace window.

“What strange ship is this,” he cried, “that has a golden hull, silver masts, and silken sails, and who are the young men like princes who man it? And do I not see St. Nicholas at the helm? Go at once and invite the captain of the ship to come to the palace.”

His servants obeyed him, and very soon in came an enchantingly handsome young prince, dressed in rich silk, ornamented with pearls and diamonds.

“Young man,” said the King, “you are welcome, whoever you may be. Do me the favor to be my guest as long as you remain in my capital.”

“Many thanks, sire,” replied the captain, “I accept your offer.”

“My daughter is about to be married,” said the King; “will you give her away?”

“I shall be charmed, sire.”

Soon after came the Princess and her betrothed.

“Why, how is this?” cried the young captain; “would you marry this charming princess to such a man as that?”

“But he is my prime minister’s son!”

“What does that matter? I cannot give your daughter away. The man she is betrothed to is one of my servants.”

“Your servant?”

“Without doubt. I met him in a distant town reduced to carrying away dust and rubbish from the houses. I had pity on him and engaged him as one of my servants.”

“It is impossible!” cried the King.

“Do you wish me to prove what I say? This young man returned in a vessel which I fitted out for him, an unseaworthy ship with a black battered hull, and the sailors were infirm and crippled.”

“It is quite true,” said the King.

“It is false,” cried the minister’s son. “I do not know this man!”

“Sire,” said the young captain, “order your daughter’s betrothed to be stripped, and see if the mark of my ring is not branded upon his back.”

The King was about to give this order, when the minister’s son, to save himself from such an indignity, admitted that the story was true.

“And now, sire,” said the young captain, “do you not recognize me?”

“I recognize you,” said the Princess; “you are the gardener’s son whom I have always loved, and it is you I wish to marry.”

“Young man, you shall be my son-in-law,” cried the King. “The marriage festivities are already begun, so you shall marry my daughter this very day.”

And so that very day the gardener’s son married the beautiful Princess.

Several months passed. The young couple were as happy as the day was long, and the King was more and more pleased with himself for having secured such a son-in-law.

But, presently, the captain of the golden ship found it necessary to take a long voyage, and after embracing his wife tenderly he embarked.

Now in the outskirts of the capital there lived an old man, who had spent his life in studying black arts – alchemy, astrology, magic, and enchantment. This man found out that the gardener’s son had only succeeded in marrying the Princess by the help of the genii who obeyed the bronze ring.

“I will have that ring,” said he to himself. So he went down to the sea-shore and caught some little red fishes. Really, they were quite wonderfully pretty. Then he came back, and, passing before the Princess’s window, he began to cry out:

“Who wants some pretty little red fishes?”

The Princess heard him, and sent out one of her slaves, who said to the old peddler:

“What will you take for your fish?”

“A bronze ring.”

“A bronze ring, old simpleton! And where shall I find one?”

“Under the cushion in the Princess’s room.”

The slave went back to her mistress.

“The old madman will take neither gold nor silver,” said she.

“What does he want then?”

“A bronze ring that is hidden under a cushion.”

“Find the ring and give it to him,” said the Princess.

And at last the slave found the bronze ring, which the captain of the golden ship had accidentally left behind and carried it to the man, who made off with it instantly.

Hardly had he reached his own house when, taking the ring, he said, “Bronze ring, obey thy master. I desire that the golden ship shall turn to black wood, and the crew to hideous negroes; that St. Nicholas shall leave the helm and that the only cargo shall be black cats.”

And the genii of the bronze ring obeyed him.

Finding himself upon the sea in this miserable condition, the young captain understood that some one must have stolen the bronze ring from him, and he lamented his misfortune loudly; but that did him no good.

“Alas!” he said to himself, “whoever has taken my ring has probably taken my dear wife also. What good will it do me to go back to my own country?” And he sailed about from island to island, and from shore to shore, believing that wherever he went everybody was laughing at him, and very soon his poverty was so great that he and his crew and the poor black cats had nothing to eat but herbs and roots. After wandering about a long time he reached an island inhabited by mice. The captain landed upon the shore and began to explore the country. There were mice everywhere, and nothing but mice. Some of the black cats had followed him, and, not having been fed for several days, they were fearfully hungry, and made terrible havoc among the mice.

Then the queen of the mice held a council.

“These cats will eat every one of us,” she said, “if the captain of the ship does not shut the ferocious animals up. Let us send a deputation to him of the bravest among us.”

Several mice offered themselves for this mission and set out to find the young captain.

“Captain,” said they, “go away quickly from our island, or we shall perish, every mouse of us.”

“Willingly,” replied the young captain, “upon one condition. That is that you shall first bring me back a bronze ring which some clever magician has stolen from me. If you do not do this I will land all my cats upon your island, and you shall be exterminated.”

The mice withdrew in great dismay. “What is to be done?” said the Queen. “How can we find this bronze ring?” She held a new council, calling in mice from every quarter of the globe, but nobody knew where the bronze ring was. Suddenly three mice arrived from a very distant country. One was blind, the second lame, and the third had her ears cropped.

“Ho, ho, ho!” said the new-comers. “We come from a far distant country.”

“Do you know where the bronze ring is which the genii obey?”

“Ho, ho, ho! we know; an old sorcerer has taken possession of it, and now he keeps it in his pocket by day and in his mouth by night.”

“Go and take it from him, and come back as soon as possible.”

So the three mice made themselves a boat and set sail for the magician’s country. When they reached the capital they landed and ran to the palace, leaving only the blind mouse on the shore to take care of the boat. Then they waited till it was night. The wicked old man lay down in bed and put the bronze ring into his mouth, and very soon he was asleep.

“Now, what shall we do?” said the two little animals to each other.

The mouse with the cropped ears found a lamp full of oil and a bottle full of pepper. So she dipped her tail first in the oil and then in the pepper, and held it to the sorcerer’s nose.

“Atisha! atisha!” sneezed the old man, but he did not wake, and the shock made the bronze ring jump out of his mouth. Quick as thought the lame mouse snatched up the precious talisman and carried it off to the boat.

Imagine the despair of the magician when he awoke and the bronze ring was nowhere to be found!

But by that time our three mice had set sail with their prize. A favoring breeze was carrying them toward the island where the queen of the mice was awaiting them. Naturally they began to talk about the bronze ring.

“Which of us deserves the most credit?” they cried all at once.

“I do,” said the blind mouse, “for without my watchfulness our boat would have drifted away to the open sea.”

“No, indeed,” cried the mouse with the cropped ears; “the credit is mine. Did I not cause the ring to jump out of the man’s mouth?”

“No, it is mine,” cried the lame one, “for I ran off with the ring.”

And from high words they soon came to blows, and, alas! when the quarrel was fiercest the bronze ring fell into the sea.

“How are we to face our queen,” said the three mice “when by our folly we have lost the talisman and condemned our people to be utterly exterminated? We cannot go back to our country; let us land on this desert island and there end our miserable lives.” No sooner said than done. The boat reached the island, and the mice landed.

The blind mouse was speedily deserted by her two sisters, who went off to hunt flies, but as she wandered sadly along the shore she found a dead fish, and was eating it, when she felt something very hard. At her cries the other two mice ran up.

“It is the bronze ring! It is the talisman!” they cried joyfully, and, getting into their boat again, they soon reached the mouse island. It was time they did, for the captain was just going to land his cargo of cats, when a deputation of mice brought him the precious bronze ring.

“Bronze ring,” commanded the young man, “obey thy master. Let my ship appear as it was before.”

Immediately the genii of the ring set to work, and the old black vessel became once more the wonderful golden ship with sails of brocade; the handsome sailors ran to the silver masts and the silken ropes, and very soon they set sail for the capital.

Ah! how merrily the sailors sang as they flew over the glassy sea!

At last the port was reached.

The captain landed and ran to the palace, where he found the wicked old man asleep. The Princess clasped her husband in a long embrace. The magician tried to escape, but he was seized and bound with strong cords.

The next day the sorcerer, tied to the tail of a savage mule loaded with nuts, was broken into as many pieces as there were nuts upon the mule’s back.(1)

(1) Traditions Populaires de l’Asie Mineure. Carnoy et Nicolaides. Paris: Maisonneuve, 1889.

PRINCE HYACINTH AND THE DEAR LITTLE PRINCESS

Once upon a time there lived a king who was deeply in love with a princess, but she could not marry anyone, because she was under an enchantment. So the King set out to seek a fairy, and asked what he could do to win the Princess's love. The Fairy said to him:

“You know that the Princess has a great cat which she is very fond of. Whoever is clever enough to tread on that cat's tail is the man she is destined to marry.”

The King said to himself that this would not be very difficult, and he left the Fairy, determined to grind the cat's tail to powder rather than not tread on it at all.

You may imagine that it was not long before he went to see the Princess, and puss, as usual, marched in before him, arching his back. The King took a long step, and quite thought he had the tail under his foot, but the cat turned round so sharply that he only trod on air. And so it went on for eight days, till the King began to think that this fatal tail must be full of quicksilver – it was never still for a moment.

At last, however, he was lucky enough to come upon puss fast asleep and with his tail conveniently spread out. So the King, without losing a moment, set his foot upon it heavily.

With one terrific yell the cat sprang up and instantly changed into a tall man, who, fixing his angry eyes upon the King, said:

“You shall marry the Princess because you have been able to break the enchantment, but I will have my revenge. You shall have a son, who will never be happy until he finds out that his nose is too long, and if you ever tell anyone what I have just said to you, you shall vanish away instantly, and no one shall ever see you or hear of you again.”

Though the King was horribly afraid of the enchanter, he could not help laughing at this threat.

“If my son has such a long nose as that,” he said to himself, “he must always see it or feel it; at least, if he is not blind or without hands.”

But, as the enchanter had vanished, he did not waste any more time in thinking, but went to seek the Princess, who very soon consented to marry him. But after all, they had not been married very long when the King died, and the Queen had nothing left to care for but her little son, who was called Hyacinth. The little Prince had large blue eyes, the prettiest eyes in the world, and a sweet little mouth, but, alas! his nose was so enormous that it covered half his face. The Queen was inconsolable when she saw this great nose, but her ladies assured her that it was not really as large as it looked; that it was a Roman nose, and you had only to open any history to see that every hero has a large nose. The Queen, who was devoted to her baby, was pleased with what they told her, and when she looked at Hyacinth again, his nose certainly did not seem to her *quite* so large.

The Prince was brought up with great care; and, as soon as he could speak, they told him all sorts of dreadful stories about people who had short noses. No one was allowed to come near him whose nose did not more or less resemble his own, and the courtiers, to get into favor with the Queen, took to pulling their babies' noses several times every day to make them grow long. But, do what they would, they were nothing by comparison with the Prince's.

When he grew sensible he learned history; and whenever any great prince or beautiful princess was spoken of, his teachers took care to tell him that they had long noses.

His room was hung with pictures, all of people with very large noses; and the Prince grew up so convinced that a long nose was a great beauty, that he would not on any account have had his own a single inch shorter!

When his twentieth birthday was passed the Queen thought it was time that he should be married, so she commanded that the portraits of several princesses should be brought for him to see, and among the others was a picture of the Dear Little Princess!

Now, she was the daughter of a great king, and would some day possess several kingdoms herself; but Prince Hyacinth had not a thought to spare for anything of that sort, he was so much struck with her beauty. The Princess, whom he thought quite charming, had, however, a little saucy nose, which, in her face, was the prettiest thing possible, but it was a cause of great embarrassment to the courtiers, who had got into such a habit of laughing at little noses that they sometimes found themselves laughing at hers before they had time to think; but this did not do at all before the Prince, who quite failed to see the joke, and actually banished two of his courtiers who had dared to mention disrespectfully the Dear Little Princess's tiny nose!

The others, taking warning from this, learned to think twice before they spoke, and one even went so far as to tell the Prince that, though it was quite true that no man could be worth anything unless he had a long nose, still, a woman's beauty was a different thing; and he knew a learned man who understood Greek and had read in some old manuscripts that the beautiful Cleopatra herself had a "tip-tilted" nose!

The Prince made him a splendid present as a reward for this good news, and at once sent ambassadors to ask the Dear Little Princess in marriage. The King, her father, gave his consent; and Prince Hyacinth, who, in his anxiety to see the Princess, had gone three leagues to meet her was just advancing to kiss her hand when, to the horror of all who stood by, the enchanter appeared as suddenly as a flash of lightning, and, snatching up the Dear Little Princess, whirled her away out of their sight!

The Prince was left quite inconsolable, and declared that nothing should induce him to go back to his kingdom until he had found her again, and refusing to allow any of his courtiers to follow him, he mounted his horse and rode sadly away, letting the animal choose his own path.

So it happened that he came presently to a great plain, across which he rode all day long without seeing a single house, and horse and rider were terribly hungry, when, as the night fell, the Prince caught sight of a light, which seemed to shine from a cavern.

He rode up to it, and saw a little old woman, who appeared to be at least a hundred years old.

She put on her spectacles to look at Prince Hyacinth, but it was quite a long time before she could fix them securely because her nose was so very short.

The Prince and the Fairy (for that was who she was) had no sooner looked at one another than they went into fits of laughter, and cried at the same moment, "Oh, what a funny nose!"

"Not so funny as your own," said Prince Hyacinth to the Fairy; "but, madam, I beg you to leave the consideration of our noses – such as they are – and to be good enough to give me something to eat, for I am starving, and so is my poor horse."

"With all my heart," said the Fairy. "Though your nose is so ridiculous you are, nevertheless, the son of my best friend. I loved your father as if he had been my brother. Now *he* had a very handsome nose!"

"And pray what does mine lack?" said the Prince.

"Oh! it doesn't *lack* anything," replied the Fairy. "On the contrary quite, there is only too much of it. But never mind, one may be a very worthy man though his nose is too long. I was telling you that I was your father's friend; he often came to see me in the old times, and you must know that I was very pretty in those days; at least, he used to say so. I should like to tell you of a conversation we had the last time I ever saw him."

"Indeed," said the Prince, "when I have supped it will give me the greatest pleasure to hear it; but consider, madam, I beg of you, that I have had nothing to eat to-day."

"The poor boy is right," said the Fairy; "I was forgetting. Come in, then, and I will give you some supper, and while you are eating I can tell you my story in a very few words – for I don't like endless tales myself. Too long a tongue is worse than too long a nose, and I remember when I was young that

I was so much admired for not being a great chatterer. They used to tell the Queen, my mother, that it was so. For though you see what I am now, I was the daughter of a great king. My father – ”

“Your father, I dare say, got something to eat when he was hungry!” interrupted the Prince.

“Oh! certainly,” answered the Fairy, “and you also shall have supper directly. I only just wanted to tell you – ”

“But I really cannot listen to anything until I have had something to eat,” cried the Prince, who was getting quite angry; but then, remembering that he had better be polite as he much needed the Fairy’s help, he added:

“I know that in the pleasure of listening to you I should quite forget my own hunger; but my horse, who cannot hear you, must really be fed!”

The Fairy was very much flattered by this compliment, and said, calling to her servants:

“You shall not wait another minute, you are so polite, and in spite of the enormous size of your nose you are really very agreeable.”

“Plague take the old lady! How she does go on about my nose!” said the Prince to himself. “One would almost think that mine had taken all the extra length that hers lacks! If I were not so hungry I would soon have done with this chatterpie who thinks she talks very little! How stupid people are not to see their own faults! That comes of being a princess: she has been spoiled by flatterers, who have made her believe that she is quite a moderate talker!”

Meanwhile the servants were putting the supper on the table, and the prince was much amused to hear the Fairy who asked them a thousand questions simply for the pleasure of hearing herself speak; especially he noticed one maid who, no matter what was being said, always contrived to praise her mistress’s wisdom.

“Well!” he thought, as he ate his supper, “I’m very glad I came here. This just shows me how sensible I have been in never listening to flatterers. People of that sort praise us to our faces without shame, and hide our faults or change them into virtues. For my part I never will be taken in by them. I know my own defects, I hope.”

Poor Prince Hyacinth! He really believed what he said, and hadn’t an idea that the people who had praised his nose were laughing at him, just as the Fairy’s maid was laughing at her; for the Prince had seen her laugh slyly when she could do so without the Fairy’s noticing her.

However, he said nothing, and presently, when his hunger began to be appeased, the Fairy said:

“My dear Prince, might I beg you to move a little more that way, for your nose casts such a shadow that I really cannot see what I have on my plate. Ah! thanks. Now let us speak of your father. When I went to his Court he was only a little boy, but that is forty years ago, and I have been in this desolate place ever since. Tell me what goes on nowadays; are the ladies as fond of amusement as ever? In my time one saw them at parties, theatres, balls, and promenades every day. Dear me! *what* a long nose you have! I cannot get used to it!”

“Really, madam,” said the Prince, “I wish you would leave off mentioning my nose. It cannot matter to you what it is like. I am quite satisfied with it, and have no wish to have it shorter. One must take what is given one.”

“Now you are angry with me, my poor Hyacinth,” said the Fairy, “and I assure you that I didn’t mean to vex you; on the contrary, I wished to do you a service. However, though I really cannot help your nose being a shock to me, I will try not to say anything about it. I will even try to think that you have an ordinary nose. To tell the truth, it would make three reasonable ones.”

The Prince, who was no longer hungry, grew so impatient at the Fairy’s continual remarks about his nose that at last he threw himself upon his horse and rode hastily away. But wherever he came in his journeyings he thought the people were mad, for they all talked of his nose, and yet he could not bring himself to admit that it was too long, he had been so used all his life to hear it called handsome.

The old Fairy, who wished to make him happy, at last hit upon a plan. She shut the Dear Little Princess up in a palace of crystal, and put this palace down where the Prince would not fail to find it.

His joy at seeing the Princess again was extreme, and he set to work with all his might to try to break her prison; but in spite of all his efforts he failed utterly. In despair he thought at least that he would try to get near enough to speak to the Dear Little Princess, who, on her part, stretched out her hand that he might kiss it; but turn which way he might, he never could raise it to his lips, for his long nose always prevented it. For the first time he realized how long it really was, and exclaimed:

“Well, it must be admitted that my nose *is* too long!”

In an instant the crystal prison flew into a thousand splinters, and the old Fairy, taking the Dear Little Princess by the hand, said to the Prince:

“Now, say if you are not very much obliged to me. Much good it was for me to talk to you about your nose! You would never have found out how extraordinary it was if it hadn’t hindered you from doing what you wanted to. You see how self-love keeps us from knowing our own defects of mind and body. Our reason tries in vain to show them to us; we refuse to see them till we find them in the way of our interests.”

Prince Hyacinth, whose nose was now just like anyone’s else, did not fail to profit by the lesson he had received. He married the Dear Little Princess, and they lived happily ever after.(1)

(1) *Le Prince Desir et la Princesse Mignonne*. Par Madame Leprince de Beaumont.

EAST OF THE SUN AND WEST OF THE MOON

Once upon a time there was a poor husbandman who had many children and little to give them in the way either of food or clothing. They were all pretty, but the prettiest of all was the youngest daughter, who was so beautiful that there were no bounds to her beauty.

So once – it was late on a Thursday evening in autumn, and wild weather outside, terribly dark, and raining so heavily and blowing so hard that the walls of the cottage shook again – they were all sitting together by the fireside, each of them busy with something or other, when suddenly some one rapped three times against the window-pane. The man went out to see what could be the matter, and when he got out there stood a great big white bear.

“Good-evening to you,” said the White Bear.

“Good-evening,” said the man.

“Will you give me your youngest daughter?” said the White Bear; “if you will, you shall be as rich as you are now poor.”

Truly the man would have had no objection to be rich, but he thought to himself: “I must first ask my daughter about this,” so he went in and told them that there was a great white bear outside who had faithfully promised to make them all rich if he might but have the youngest daughter.

She said no, and would not hear of it; so the man went out again, and settled with the White Bear that he should come again next Thursday evening, and get her answer. Then the man persuaded her, and talked so much to her about the wealth that they would have, and what a good thing it would be for herself, that at last she made up her mind to go, and washed and mended all her rags, made herself as smart as she could, and held herself in readiness to set out. Little enough had she to take away with her.

Next Thursday evening the White Bear came to fetch her. She seated herself on his back with her bundle, and thus they departed. When they had gone a great part of the way, the White Bear said: “Are you afraid?”

“No, that I am not,” said she.

“Keep tight hold of my fur, and then there is no danger,” said he.

And thus she rode far, far away, until they came to a great mountain. Then the White Bear knocked on it, and a door opened, and they went into a castle where there were many brilliantly lighted rooms which shone with gold and silver, likewise a large hall in which there was a well-spread table, and it was so magnificent that it would be hard to make anyone understand how splendid it was. The White Bear gave her a silver bell, and told her that when she needed anything she had but to ring this bell, and what she wanted would appear. So after she had eaten, and night was drawing near, she grew sleepy after her journey, and thought she would like to go to bed. She rang the bell, and scarcely had she touched it before she found herself in a chamber where a bed stood ready made for her, which was as pretty as anyone could wish to sleep in. It had pillows of silk, and curtains of silk fringed with gold, and everything that was in the room was of gold or silver, but when she had lain down and put out the light a man came and lay down beside her, and behold it was the White Bear, who cast off the form of a beast during the night. She never saw him, however, for he always came after she had put out her light, and went away before daylight appeared.

So all went well and happily for a time, but then she began to be very sad and sorrowful, for all day long she had to go about alone; and she did so wish to go home to her father and mother and brothers and sisters. Then the White Bear asked what it was that she wanted, and she told him that it was so dull there in the mountain, and that she had to go about all alone, and that in her parents’ house at home there were all her brothers and sisters, and it was because she could not go to them that she was so sorrowful.

“There might be a cure for that,” said the White Bear, “if you would but promise me never to talk with your mother alone, but only when the others are there too; for she will take hold of your hand,” he said, “and will want to lead you into a room to talk with you alone; but that you must by no means do, or you will bring great misery on both of us.”

So one Sunday the White Bear came and said that they could now set out to see her father and mother, and they journeyed thither, she sitting on his back, and they went a long, long way, and it took a long, long time; but at last they came to a large white farmhouse, and her brothers and sisters were running about outside it, playing, and it was so pretty that it was a pleasure to look at it.

“Your parents dwell here now,” said the White Bear; “but do not forget what I said to you, or you will do much harm both to yourself and me.”

“No, indeed,” said she, “I shall never forget;” and as soon as she was at home the White Bear turned round and went back again.

There were such rejoicings when she went in to her parents that it seemed as if they would never come to an end. Everyone thought that he could never be sufficiently grateful to her for all she had done for them all. Now they had everything that they wanted, and everything was as good as it could be. They all asked her how she was getting on where she was. All was well with her too, she said; and she had everything that she could want. What other answers she gave I cannot say, but I am pretty sure that they did not learn much from her. But in the afternoon, after they had dined at midday, all happened just as the White Bear had said. Her mother wanted to talk with her alone in her own chamber. But she remembered what the White Bear had said, and would on no account go. “What we have to say can be said at any time,” she answered. But somehow or other her mother at last persuaded her, and she was forced to tell the whole story. So she told how every night a man came and lay down beside her when the lights were all put out, and how she never saw him, because he always went away before it grew light in the morning, and how she continually went about in sadness, thinking how happy she would be if she could but see him, and how all day long she had to go about alone, and it was so dull and solitary. “Oh!” cried the mother, in horror, “you are very likely sleeping with a troll! But I will teach you a way to see him. You shall have a bit of one of my candles, which you can take away with you hidden in your breast. Look at him with that when he is asleep, but take care not to let any tallow drop upon him.”

So she took the candle, and hid it in her breast, and when evening drew near the White Bear came to fetch her away. When they had gone some distance on their way, the White Bear asked her if everything had not happened just as he had foretold, and she could not but own that it had. “Then, if you have done what your mother wished,” said he, “you have brought great misery on both of us.” “No,” she said, “I have not done anything at all.” So when she had reached home and had gone to bed it was just the same as it had been before, and a man came and lay down beside her, and late at night, when she could hear that he was sleeping, she got up and kindled a light, lit her candle, let her light shine on him, and saw him, and he was the handsomest prince that eyes had ever beheld, and she loved him so much that it seemed to her that she must die if she did not kiss him that very moment. So she did kiss him; but while she was doing it she let three drops of hot tallow fall upon his shirt, and he awoke. “What have you done now?” said he; “you have brought misery on both of us. If you had but held out for the space of one year I should have been free. I have a step-mother who has bewitched me so that I am a white bear by day and a man by night; but now all is at an end between you and me, and I must leave you, and go to her. She lives in a castle which lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and there too is a princess with a nose which is three ells long, and she now is the one whom I must marry.”

She wept and lamented, but all in vain, for go he must. Then she asked him if she could not go with him. But no, that could not be. “Can you tell me the way then, and I will seek you – that I may surely be allowed to do!”

“Yes, you may do that,” said he; “but there is no way thither. It lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and never would you find your way there.”

When she awoke in the morning both the Prince and the castle were gone, and she was lying on a small green patch in the midst of a dark, thick wood. By her side lay the self-same bundle of rags which she had brought with her from her own home. So when she had rubbed the sleep out of her eyes, and wept till she was weary, she set out on her way, and thus she walked for many and many a long day, until at last she came to a great mountain. Outside it an aged woman was sitting, playing with a golden apple. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the Prince who lived with his stepmother in the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon, and who was to marry a princess with a nose which was three ells long. “How do you happen to know about him?” inquired the old woman; “maybe you are she who ought to have had him.” “Yes, indeed, I am,” she said. “So it is you, then?” said the old woman; “I know nothing about him but that he dwells in a castle which is east of the sun and west of the moon. You will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse, and then you can ride on it to an old woman who is a neighbor of mine: perhaps she can tell you about him. When you have got there you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again; but you may take the golden apple with you.”

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode for a long, long way, and at last she came to the mountain, where an aged woman was sitting outside with a gold carding-comb. The girl asked her if she knew the way to the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon; but she said what the first old woman had said: “I know nothing about it, but that it is east of the sun and west of the moon, and that you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get there at all; but you shall have the loan of my horse to an old woman who lives the nearest to me: perhaps she may know where the castle is, and when you have got to her you may just strike the horse beneath the left ear and bid it go home again.” Then she gave her the gold carding-comb, for it might, perhaps, be of use to her, she said.

So the girl seated herself on the horse, and rode a wearisome long way onward again, and after a very long time she came to a great mountain, where an aged woman was sitting, spinning at a golden spinning-wheel. Of this woman, too, she inquired if she knew the way to the Prince, and where to find the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon. But it was only the same thing once again. “Maybe it was you who should have had the Prince,” said the old woman. “Yes, indeed, I should have been the one,” said the girl. But this old crone knew the way no better than the others – it was east of the sun and west of the moon, she knew that, “and you will be a long time in getting to it, if ever you get to it at all,” she said; “but you may have the loan of my horse, and I think you had better ride to the East Wind, and ask him: perhaps he may know where the castle is, and will blow you thither. But when you have got to him you must just strike the horse beneath the left ear, and he will come home again.” And then she gave her the golden spinning-wheel, saying: “Perhaps you may find that you have a use for it.”

The girl had to ride for a great many days, and for a long and wearisome time, before she got there; but at last she did arrive, and then she asked the East Wind if he could tell her the way to the Prince who dwelt east of the sun and west of the moon. “Well,” said the East Wind, “I have heard tell of the Prince, and of his castle, but I do not know the way to it, for I have never blown so far; but, if you like, I will go with you to my brother the West Wind: he may know that, for he is much stronger than I am. You may sit on my back, and then I can carry you there.” So she seated herself on his back, and they did go so swiftly! When they got there, the East Wind went in and said that the girl whom he had brought was the one who ought to have had the Prince up at the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon, and that now she was traveling about to find him again, so he had come there with her, and would like to hear if the West Wind knew whereabouts the castle was. “No,” said the West Wind; “so far as that have I never blown; but if you like I will go with you to the South Wind, for he is much stronger than either of us, and he has roamed far and wide, and perhaps he can tell you what you want to know. You may seat yourself on my back, and then I will carry you to him.”

So she did this, and journeyed to the South Wind, neither was she very long on the way. When they had got there, the West Wind asked him if he could tell her the way to the castle that lay east of the sun and west of the moon, for she was the girl who ought to marry the Prince who lived there. "Oh, indeed!" said the South Wind, "is that she? Well," said he, "I have wandered about a great deal in my time, and in all kinds of places, but I have never blown so far as that. If you like, however, I will go with you to my brother, the North Wind; he is the oldest and strongest of all of us, and if he does not know where it is no one in the whole world will be able to tell you. You may sit upon my back, and then I will carry you there." So she seated herself on his back, and off he went from his house in great haste, and they were not long on the way. When they came near the North Wind's dwelling, he was so wild and frantic that they felt cold gusts a long while before they got there. "What do you want?" he roared out from afar, and they froze as they heard. Said the South Wind: "It is I, and this is she who should have had the Prince who lives in the castle which lies east of the sun and west of the moon. And now she wishes to ask you if you have ever been there, and can tell her the way, for she would gladly find him again."

"Yes," said the North Wind, "I know where it is. I once blew an aspen leaf there, but I was so tired that for many days afterward I was not able to blow at all. However, if you really are anxious to go there, and are not afraid to go with me, I will take you on my back, and try if I can blow you there."

"Get there I must," said she; "and if there is any way of going I will; and I have no fear, no matter how fast you go."

"Very well then," said the North Wind; "but you must sleep here to-night, for if we are ever to get there we must have the day before us."

The North Wind woke her betimes next morning, and puffed himself up, and made himself so big and so strong that it was frightful to see him, and away they went, high up through the air, as if they would not stop until they had reached the very end of the world. Down below there was such a storm! It blew down woods and houses, and when they were above the sea the ships were wrecked by hundreds. And thus they tore on and on, and a long time went by, and then yet more time passed, and still they were above the sea, and the North Wind grew tired, and more tired, and at last so utterly weary that he was scarcely able to blow any longer, and he sank and sank, lower and lower, until at last he went so low that the waves dashed against the heels of the poor girl he was carrying. "Art thou afraid?" said the North Wind. "I have no fear," said she; and it was true. But they were not very, very far from land, and there was just enough strength left in the North Wind to enable him to throw her on to the shore, immediately under the windows of a castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon; but then he was so weary and worn out that he was forced to rest for several days before he could go to his own home again.

Next morning she sat down beneath the walls of the castle to play with the golden apple, and the first person she saw was the maiden with the long nose, who was to have the Prince. "How much do you want for that gold apple of yours, girl?" said she, opening the window. "It can't be bought either for gold or money," answered the girl. "If it cannot be bought either for gold or money, what will buy it? You may say what you please," said the Princess.

"Well, if I may go to the Prince who is here, and be with him to-night, you shall have it," said the girl who had come with the North Wind. "You may do that," said the Princess, for she had made up her mind what she would do. So the Princess got the golden apple, but when the girl went up to the Prince's apartment that night he was asleep, for the Princess had so contrived it. The poor girl called to him, and shook him, and between whiles she wept; but she could not wake him. In the morning, as soon as day dawned, in came the Princess with the long nose, and drove her out again. In the daytime she sat down once more beneath the windows of the castle, and began to card with her golden carding-comb; and then all happened as it had happened before. The Princess asked her what she wanted for it, and she replied that it was not for sale, either for gold or money, but that if she could get leave to go to the Prince, and be with him during the night, she should have it. But

when she went up to the Prince's room he was again asleep, and, let her call him, or shake him, or weep as she would, he still slept on, and she could not put any life in him. When daylight came in the morning, the Princess with the long nose came too, and once more drove her away. When day had quite come, the girl seated herself under the castle windows, to spin with her golden spinning-wheel, and the Princess with the long nose wanted to have that also. So she opened the window, and asked what she would take for it. The girl said what she had said on each of the former occasions – that it was not for sale either for gold or for money, but if she could get leave to go to the Prince who lived there, and be with him during the night, she should have it.

“Yes,” said the Princess, “I will gladly consent to that.”

But in that place there were some Christian folk who had been carried off, and they had been sitting in the chamber which was next to that of the Prince, and had heard how a woman had been in there who had wept and called on him two nights running, and they told the Prince of this. So that evening, when the Princess came once more with her sleeping-drink, he pretended to drink, but threw it away behind him, for he suspected that it was a sleeping-drink. So, when the girl went into the Prince's room this time he was awake, and she had to tell him how she had come there. “You have come just in time,” said the Prince, “for I should have been married to-morrow; but I will not have the long-nosed Princess, and you alone can save me. I will say that I want to see what my bride can do, and bid her wash the shirt which has the three drops of tallow on it. This she will consent to do, for she does not know that it is you who let them fall on it; but no one can wash them out but one born of Christian folk: it cannot be done by one of a pack of trolls; and then I will say that no one shall ever be my bride but the woman who can do this, and I know that you can.” There was great joy and gladness between them all that night, but the next day, when the wedding was to take place, the Prince said, “I must see what my bride can do.” “That you may do,” said the stepmother.

“I have a fine shirt which I want to wear as my wedding shirt, but three drops of tallow have got upon it which I want to have washed off, and I have vowed to marry no one but the woman who is able to do it. If she cannot do that, she is not worth having.”

Well, that was a very small matter, they thought, and agreed to do it. The Princess with the long nose began to wash as well as she could, but, the more she washed and rubbed, the larger the spots grew. “Ah! you can't wash at all,” said the old troll-hag, who was her mother. “Give it to me.” But she too had not had the shirt very long in her hands before it looked worse still, and, the more she washed it and rubbed it, the larger and blacker grew the spots.

So the other trolls had to come and wash, but, the more they did, the blacker and uglier grew the shirt, until at length it was as black as if it had been up the chimney. “Oh,” cried the Prince, “not one of you is good for anything at all! There is a beggar-girl sitting outside the window, and I'll be bound that she can wash better than any of you! Come in, you girl there!” he cried. So she came in. “Can you wash this shirt clean?” he cried. “Oh! I don't know,” she said; “but I will try.” And no sooner had she taken the shirt and dipped it in the water than it was white as driven snow, and even whiter than that. “I will marry you,” said the Prince.

Then the old troll-hag flew into such a rage that she burst, and the Princess with the long nose and all the little trolls must have burst too, for they have never been heard of since. The Prince and his bride set free all the Christian folk who were imprisoned there, and took away with them all the gold and silver that they could carry, and moved far away from the castle which lay east of the sun and west of the moon.¹

¹ Asbjornsen and Moe.

THE YELLOW DWARF

Once upon a time there lived a queen who had been the mother of a great many children, and of them all only one daughter was left. But then *she* was worth at least a thousand.

Her mother, who, since the death of the King, her father, had nothing in the world she cared for so much as this little Princess, was so terribly afraid of losing her that she quite spoiled her, and never tried to correct any of her faults. The consequence was that this little person, who was as pretty as possible, and was one day to wear a crown, grew up so proud and so much in love with her own beauty that she despised everyone else in the world.

The Queen, her mother, by her caresses and flatteries, helped to make her believe that there was nothing too good for her. She was dressed almost always in the prettiest frocks, as a fairy, or as a queen going out to hunt, and the ladies of the Court followed her dressed as forest fairies.

And to make her more vain than ever the Queen caused her portrait to be taken by the cleverest painters and sent it to several neighboring kings with whom she was very friendly.

When they saw this portrait they fell in love with the Princess – every one of them, but upon each it had a different effect. One fell ill, one went quite crazy, and a few of the luckiest set off to see her as soon as possible, but these poor princes became her slaves the moment they set eyes on her.

Never has there been a gayer Court. Twenty delightful kings did everything they could think of to make themselves agreeable, and after having spent ever so much money in giving a single entertainment thought themselves very lucky if the Princess said “That’s pretty.”

All this admiration vastly pleased the Queen. Not a day passed but she received seven or eight thousand sonnets, and as many elegies, madrigals, and songs, which were sent her by all the poets in the world. All the prose and the poetry that was written just then was about *Bellissima* – for that was the Princess’s name – and all the bonfires that they had were made of these verses, which crackled and sparkled better than any other sort of wood.

Bellissima was already fifteen years old, and every one of the Princes wished to marry her, but not one dared to say so. How could they when they knew that any of them might have cut off his head five or six times a day just to please her, and she would have thought it a mere trifle, so little did she care? You may imagine how hard-hearted her lovers thought her; and the Queen, who wished to see her married, did not know how to persuade her to think of it seriously.

“*Bellissima*,” she said, “I do wish you would not be so proud. What makes you despise all these nice kings? I wish you to marry one of them, and you do not try to please me.”

“I am so happy,” *Bellissima* answered: “do leave me in peace, madam. I don’t want to care for anyone.”

“But you would be very happy with any of these Princes,” said the Queen, “and I shall be very angry if you fall in love with anyone who is not worthy of you.”

But the Princess thought so much of herself that she did not consider any one of her lovers clever or handsome enough for her; and her mother, who was getting really angry at her determination not to be married, began to wish that she had not allowed her to have her own way so much.

At last, not knowing what else to do, she resolved to consult a certain witch who was called “The Fairy of the Desert.” Now this was very difficult to do, as she was guarded by some terrible lions; but happily the Queen had heard a long time before that whoever wanted to pass these lions safely must throw to them a cake made of millet flour, sugar-candy, and crocodile’s eggs. This cake she prepared with her own hands, and putting it in a little basket, she set out to seek the Fairy. But as she was not used to walking far, she soon felt very tired and sat down at the foot of a tree to rest, and presently fell fast asleep. When she awoke she was dismayed to find her basket empty. The cake was all gone! and, to make matters worse, at that moment she heard the roaring of the great lions, who had found out that she was near and were coming to look for her.

“What shall I do?” she cried; “I shall be eaten up,” and being too frightened to run a single step, she began to cry, and leaned against the tree under which she had been asleep.

Just then she heard some one say: “H’m, h’m!”

She looked all round her, and then up the tree, and there she saw a little tiny man, who was eating oranges.

“Oh! Queen,” said he, “I know you very well, and I know how much afraid you are of the lions; and you are quite right too, for they have eaten many other people: and what can you expect, as you have not any cake to give them?”

“I must make up my mind to die,” said the poor Queen. “Alas! I should not care so much if only my dear daughter were married.”

“Oh! you have a daughter,” cried the Yellow Dwarf (who was so called because he *was* a dwarf and had such a yellow face, and lived in the orange tree). “I’m really glad to hear that, for I’ve been looking for a wife all over the world. Now, if you will promise that she shall marry me, not one of the lions, tigers, or bears shall touch you.”

The Queen looked at him and was almost as much afraid of his ugly little face as she had been of the lions before, so that she could not speak a word.

“What! you hesitate, madam,” cried the Dwarf. “You must be very fond of being eaten up alive.”

And, as he spoke, the Queen saw the lions, which were running down a hill toward them.

Each one had two heads, eight feet, and four rows of teeth, and their skins were as hard as turtle shells, and were bright red.

At this dreadful sight, the poor Queen, who was trembling like a dove when it sees a hawk, cried out as loud as she could, “Oh! dear Mr. Dwarf, Bellissima shall marry you.”

“Oh, indeed!” said he disdainfully. “Bellissima is pretty enough, but I don’t particularly want to marry her – you can keep her.”

“Oh! noble sir,” said the Queen in great distress, “do not refuse her. She is the most charming Princess in the world.”

“Oh! well,” he replied, “out of charity I will take her; but be sure and don’t forget that she is mine.”

As he spoke a little door opened in the trunk of the orange tree, in rushed the Queen, only just in time, and the door shut with a bang in the faces of the lions.

The Queen was so confused that at first she did not notice another little door in the orange tree, but presently it opened and she found herself in a field of thistles and nettles. It was encircled by a muddy ditch, and a little further on was a tiny thatched cottage, out of which came the Yellow Dwarf with a very jaunty air. He wore wooden shoes and a little yellow coat, and as he had no hair and very long ears he looked altogether a shocking little object.

“I am delighted,” said he to the Queen, “that, as you are to be my mother-in-law, you should see the little house in which your Bellissima will live with me. With these thistles and nettles she can feed a donkey which she can ride whenever she likes; under this humble roof no weather can hurt her; she will drink the water of this brook and eat frogs – which grow very fat about here; and then she will have me always with her, handsome, agreeable, and gay as you see me now. For if her shadow stays by her more closely than I do I shall be surprised.”

The unhappy Queen, seeing all at once what a miserable life her daughter would have with this Dwarf could not bear the idea, and fell down insensible without saying a word.

When she revived she found to her great surprise that she was lying in her own bed at home, and, what was more, that she had on the loveliest lace night cap that she had ever seen in her life. At first she thought that all her adventures, the terrible lions, and her promise to the Yellow Dwarf that he should marry Bellissima, must have been a dream, but there was the new cap with its beautiful

ribbon and lace to remind her that it was all true, which made her so unhappy that she could neither eat, drink, nor sleep for thinking of it.

The Princess, who, in spite of her wilfulness, really loved her mother with all her heart, was much grieved when she saw her looking so sad, and often asked her what was the matter; but the Queen, who didn't want her to find out the truth, only said that she was ill, or that one of her neighbors was threatening to make war against her. Bellissima knew quite well that something was being hidden from her – and that neither of these was the real reason of the Queen's uneasiness. So she made up her mind that she would go and consult the Fairy of the Desert about it, especially as she had often heard how wise she was, and she thought that at the same time she might ask her advice as to whether it would be as well to be married, or not.

So, with great care, she made some of the proper cake to pacify the lions, and one night went up to her room very early, pretending that she was going to bed; but instead of that, she wrapped herself in a long white veil, and went down a secret staircase, and set off all by herself to find the Witch.

But when she got as far as the same fatal orange tree, and saw it covered with flowers and fruit, she stopped and began to gather some of the oranges – and then, putting down her basket, she sat down to eat them. But when it was time to go on again the basket had disappeared and, though she looked everywhere, not a trace of it could she find. The more she hunted for it, the more frightened she got, and at last she began to cry. Then all at once she saw before her the Yellow Dwarf.

“What's the matter with you, my pretty one?” said he. “What are you crying about?”

“Alas!” she answered; “no wonder that I am crying, seeing that I have lost the basket of cake that was to help me to get safely to the cave of the Fairy of the Desert.”

“And what do you want with her, pretty one?” said the little monster, “for I am a friend of hers, and, for the matter of that, I am quite as clever as she is.”

“The Queen, my mother,” replied the Princess, “has lately fallen into such deep sadness that I fear that she will die; and I am afraid that perhaps I am the cause of it, for she very much wishes me to be married, and I must tell you truly that as yet I have not found anyone I consider worthy to be my husband. So for all these reasons I wished to talk to the Fairy.”

“Do not give yourself any further trouble, Princess,” answered the Dwarf. “I can tell you all you want to know better than she could. The Queen, your mother, has promised you in marriage – ”

“Has promised *me!*” interrupted the Princess. “Oh! no. I'm sure she has not. She would have told me if she had. I am too much interested in the matter for her to promise anything without my consent – you must be mistaken.”

“Beautiful Princess,” cried the Dwarf suddenly, throwing himself on his knees before her, “I flatter myself that you will not be displeased at her choice when I tell you that it is to *me* she has promised the happiness of marrying you.”

“You!” cried Bellissima, starting back. “My mother wishes me to marry you! How can you be so silly as to think of such a thing?”

“Oh! it isn't that I care much to have that honor,” cried the Dwarf angrily; “but here are the lions coming; they'll eat you up in three mouthfuls, and there will be an end of you and your pride.”

And, indeed, at that moment the poor Princess heard their dreadful howls coming nearer and nearer.

“What shall I do?” she cried. “Must all my happy days come to an end like this?”

The malicious Dwarf looked at her and began to laugh spitefully. “At least,” said he, “you have the satisfaction of dying unmarried. A lovely Princess like you must surely prefer to die rather than be the wife of a poor little dwarf like myself.”

“Oh, don't be angry with me,” cried the Princess, clasping her hands. “I'd rather marry all the dwarfs in the world than die in this horrible way.”

“Look at me well, Princess, before you give me your word,” said he. “I don't want you to promise me in a hurry.”

“Oh!” cried she, “the lions are coming. I have looked at you enough. I am so frightened. Save me this minute, or I shall die of terror.”

Indeed, as she spoke she fell down insensible, and when she recovered she found herself in her own little bed at home; how she got there she could not tell, but she was dressed in the most beautiful lace and ribbons, and on her finger was a little ring, made of a single red hair, which fitted so tightly that, try as she might, she could not get it off.

When the Princess saw all these things, and remembered what had happened, she, too, fell into the deepest sadness, which surprised and alarmed the whole Court, and the Queen more than anyone else. A hundred times she asked Bellissima if anything was the matter with her; but she always said that there was nothing.

At last the chief men of the kingdom, anxious to see their Princess married, sent to the Queen to beg her to choose a husband for her as soon as possible. She replied that nothing would please her better, but that her daughter seemed so unwilling to marry, and she recommended them to go and talk to the Princess about it themselves so this they at once did. Now Bellissima was much less proud since her adventure with the Yellow Dwarf, and she could not think of a better way of getting rid of the little monster than to marry some powerful king, therefore she replied to their request much more favorably than they had hoped, saying that, though she was very happy as she was, still, to please them, she would consent to marry the King of the Gold Mines. Now he was a very handsome and powerful Prince, who had been in love with the Princess for years, but had not thought that she would ever care about him at all. You can easily imagine how delighted he was when he heard the news, and how angry it made all the other kings to lose for ever the hope of marrying the Princess; but, after all, Bellissima could not have married twenty kings – indeed, she had found it quite difficult enough to choose one, for her vanity made her believe that there was nobody in the world who was worthy of her.

Preparations were begun at once for the grandest wedding that had ever been held at the palace. The King of the Gold Mines sent such immense sums of money that the whole sea was covered with the ships that brought it. Messengers were sent to all the gayest and most refined Courts, particularly to the Court of France, to seek out everything rare and precious to adorn the Princess, although her beauty was so perfect that nothing she wore could make her look prettier. At least that is what the King of the Gold Mines thought, and he was never happy unless he was with her.

As for the Princess, the more she saw of the King the more she liked him; he was so generous, so handsome and clever, that at last she was almost as much in love with him as he was with her. How happy they were as they wandered about in the beautiful gardens together, sometimes listening to sweet music! And the King used to write songs for Bellissima. This is one that she liked very much:

In the forest all is gay
When my Princess walks that way.
All the blossoms then are found
Downward fluttering to the ground,
Hoping she may tread on them.
And bright flowers on slender stem
Gaze up at her as she passes
Brushing lightly through the grasses.
Oh! my Princess, birds above
Echo back our songs of love,
As through this enchanted land
Blithe we wander, hand in hand.

They really were as happy as the day was long. All the King’s unsuccessful rivals had gone home in despair. They said good-by to the Princess so sadly that she could not help being sorry for them.

“Ah! madam,” the King of the Gold Mines said to her “how is this? Why do you waste your pity on these princes, who love you so much that all their trouble would be well repaid by a single smile from you?”

“I should be sorry,” answered Bellissima, “if you had not noticed how much I pitied these princes who were leaving me for ever; but for you, sire, it is very different: you have every reason to be pleased with me, but they are going sorrowfully away, so you must not grudge them my compassion.”

The King of the Gold Mines was quite overcome by the Princess’s good-natured way of taking his interference, and, throwing himself at her feet, he kissed her hand a thousand times and begged her to forgive him.

At last the happy day came. Everything was ready for Bellissima’s wedding. The trumpets sounded, all the streets of the town were hung with flags and strewn with flowers, and the people ran in crowds to the great square before the palace. The Queen was so overjoyed that she had hardly been able to sleep at all, and she got up before it was light to give the necessary orders and to choose the jewels that the Princess was to wear. These were nothing less than diamonds, even to her shoes, which were covered with them, and her dress of silver brocade was embroidered with a dozen of the sun’s rays. You may imagine how much these had cost; but then nothing could have been more brilliant, except the beauty of the Princess! Upon her head she wore a splendid crown, her lovely hair waved nearly to her feet, and her stately figure could easily be distinguished among all the ladies who attended her.

The King of the Gold Mines was not less noble and splendid; it was easy to see by his face how happy he was, and everyone who went near him returned loaded with presents, for all round the great banqueting hall had been arranged a thousand barrels full of gold, and numberless bags made of velvet embroidered with pearls and filled with money, each one containing at least a hundred thousand gold pieces, which were given away to everyone who liked to hold out his hand, which numbers of people hastened to do, you may be sure – indeed, some found this by far the most amusing part of the wedding festivities.

The Queen and the Princess were just ready to set out with the King when they saw, advancing toward them from the end of the long gallery, two great basilisks, dragging after them a very badly made box; behind them came a tall old woman, whose ugliness was even more surprising than her extreme old age. She wore a ruff of black taffeta, a red velvet hood, and a farthingale all in rags, and she leaned heavily upon a crutch. This strange old woman, without saying a single word, hobbled three times round the gallery, followed by the basilisks, then stopping in the middle, and brandishing her crutch threateningly, she cried:

“Ho, ho, Queen! Ho, ho, Princess! Do you think you are going to break with impunity the promise that you made to my friend the Yellow Dwarf? I am the Fairy of the Desert; without the Yellow Dwarf and his orange tree my great lions would soon have eaten you up, I can tell you, and in Fairyland we do not suffer ourselves to be insulted like this. Make up your minds at once what you will do, for I vow that you shall marry the Yellow Dwarf. If you don’t, may I burn my crutch!”

“Ah! Princess,” said the Queen, weeping, “what is this that I hear? What have you promised?”

“Ah! my mother,” replied Bellissima sadly, “what did *you* promise, yourself?”

The King of the Gold Mines, indignant at being kept from his happiness by this wicked old woman, went up to her, and threatening her with his sword, said:

“Get away out of my country at once, and for ever, miserable creature, lest I take your life, and so rid myself of your malice.”

He had hardly spoken these words when the lid of the box fell back on the floor with a terrible noise, and to their horror out sprang the Yellow Dwarf, mounted upon a great Spanish cat. “Rash youth!” he cried, rushing between the Fairy of the Desert and the King. “Dare to lay a finger upon this illustrious Fairy! Your quarrel is with me only. I am your enemy and your rival. That faithless Princess

who would have married you is promised to me. See if she has not upon her finger a ring made of one of my hairs. Just try to take it off, and you will soon find out that I am more powerful than you are!”

“Wretched little monster!” said the King; “do you dare to call yourself the Princess’s lover, and to lay claim to such a treasure? Do you know that you are a dwarf – that you are so ugly that one cannot bear to look at you – and that I should have killed you myself long before this if you had been worthy of such a glorious death?”

The Yellow Dwarf, deeply enraged at these words, set spurs to his cat, which yelled horribly, and leaped hither and thither – terrifying everybody except the brave King, who pursued the Dwarf closely, till he, drawing a great knife with which he was armed, challenged the King to meet him in single combat, and rushed down into the courtyard of the palace with a terrible clatter. The King, quite provoked, followed him hastily, but they had hardly taken their places facing one another, and the whole Court had only just had time to rush out upon the balconies to watch what was going on, when suddenly the sun became as red as blood, and it was so dark that they could scarcely see at all. The thunder crashed, and the lightning seemed as if it must burn up everything; the two basilisks appeared, one on each side of the bad Dwarf, like giants, mountains high, and fire flew from their mouths and ears, until they looked like flaming furnaces. None of these things could terrify the noble young King, and the boldness of his looks and actions reassured those who were looking on, and perhaps even embarrassed the Yellow Dwarf himself; but even *his* courage gave way when he saw what was happening to his beloved Princess. For the Fairy of the Desert, looking more terrible than before, mounted upon a winged griffin, and with long snakes coiled round her neck, had given her such a blow with the lance she carried that Bellissima fell into the Queen’s arms bleeding and senseless. Her fond mother, feeling as much hurt by the blow as the Princess herself, uttered such piercing cries and lamentations that the King, hearing them, entirely lost his courage and presence of mind. Giving up the combat, he flew toward the Princess, to rescue or to die with her; but the Yellow Dwarf was too quick for him. Leaping with his Spanish cat upon the balcony, he snatched Bellissima from the Queen’s arms, and before any of the ladies of the Court could stop him he had sprung upon the roof of the palace and disappeared with his prize.

The King, motionless with horror, looked on despairingly at this dreadful occurrence, which he was quite powerless to prevent, and to make matters worse his sight failed him, everything became dark, and he felt himself carried along through the air by a strong hand.

This new misfortune was the work of the wicked Fairy of the Desert, who had come with the Yellow Dwarf to help him carry off the Princess, and had fallen in love with the handsome young King of the Gold Mines directly she saw him. She thought that if she carried him off to some frightful cavern and chained him to a rock, then the fear of death would make him forget Bellissima and become her slave. So, as soon as they reached the place, she gave him back his sight, but without releasing him from his chains, and by her magic power she appeared before him as a young and beautiful fairy, and pretended to have come there quite by chance.

“What do I see?” she cried. “Is it *you*, dear Prince? What misfortune has brought you to this dismal place?”

The King, who was quite deceived by her altered appearance, replied:

“Alas! beautiful Fairy, the fairy who brought me here first took away my sight, but by her voice I recognized her as the Fairy of the Desert, though what she should have carried me off for I cannot tell you.”

“Ah!” cried the pretended Fairy, “if you have fallen into *her* hands, you won’t get away until you have married her. She has carried off more than one Prince like this, and she will certainly have anything she takes a fancy to.” While she was thus pretending to be sorry for the King, he suddenly noticed her feet, which were like those of a griffin, and knew in a moment that this must be the Fairy of the Desert, for her feet were the one thing she could not change, however pretty she might make her face.

Without seeming to have noticed anything, he said, in a confidential way:

“Not that I have any dislike to the Fairy of the Desert, but I really cannot endure the way in which she protects the Yellow Dwarf and keeps me chained here like a criminal. It is true that I love a charming princess, but if the Fairy should set me free my gratitude would oblige me to love her only.”

“Do you really mean what you say, Prince?” said the Fairy, quite deceived.

“Surely,” replied the Prince; “how could I deceive you? You see it is so much more flattering to my vanity to be loved by a fairy than by a simple princess. But, even if I am dying of love for her, I shall pretend to hate her until I am set free.”

The Fairy of the Desert, quite taken in by these words, resolved at once to transport the Prince to a pleasanter place. So, making him mount her chariot, to which she had harnessed swans instead of the bats which generally drew it, away she flew with him. But imagine the distress of the Prince when, from the giddy height at which they were rushing through the air, he saw his beloved Princess in a castle built of polished steel, the walls of which reflected the sun’s rays so hotly that no one could approach it without being burnt to a cinder! Bellissima was sitting in a little thicket by a brook, leaning her head upon her hand and weeping bitterly, but just as they passed she looked up and saw the King and the Fairy of the Desert. Now, the Fairy was so clever that she could not only seem beautiful to the King, but even the poor Princess thought her the most lovely being she had ever seen.

“What!” she cried; “was I not unhappy enough in this lonely castle to which that frightful Yellow Dwarf brought me? Must I also be made to know that the King of the Gold Mines ceased to love me as soon as he lost sight of me? But who can my rival be, whose fatal beauty is greater than mine?”

While she was saying this, the King, who really loved her as much as ever, was feeling terribly sad at being so rapidly torn away from his beloved Princess, but he knew too well how powerful the Fairy was to have any hope of escaping from her except by great patience and cunning.

The Fairy of the Desert had also seen Bellissima, and she tried to read in the King’s eyes the effect that this unexpected sight had had upon him.

“No one can tell you what you wish to know better than I can,” said he. “This chance meeting with an unhappy princess for whom I once had a passing fancy, before I was lucky enough to meet you, has affected me a little, I admit, but you are so much more to me than she is that I would rather die than leave you.”

“Ah, Prince,” she said, “can I believe that you really love me so much?”

“Time will show, madam,” replied the King; “but if you wish to convince me that you have some regard for me, do not, I beg of you, refuse to aid Bellissima.”

“Do you know what you are asking?” said the Fairy of the Desert, frowning, and looking at him suspiciously. “Do you want me to employ my art against the Yellow Dwarf, who is my best friend, and take away from him a proud princess whom I can but look upon as my rival?”

The King sighed, but made no answer – indeed, what was there to be said to such a clear-sighted person? At last they reached a vast meadow, gay with all sorts of flowers; a deep river surrounded it, and many little brooks murmured softly under the shady trees, where it was always cool and fresh. A little way off stood a splendid palace, the walls of which were of transparent emeralds. As soon as the swans which drew the Fairy’s chariot had alighted under a porch, which was paved with diamonds and had arches of rubies, they were greeted on all sides by thousands of beautiful beings, who came to meet them joyfully, singing these words:

“When Love within a heart would reign,
Useless to strive against him ‘tis.
The proud but feel a sharper pain,
And make a greater triumph his.”

The Fairy of the Desert was delighted to hear them sing of her triumphs; she led the King into the most splendid room that can be imagined, and left him alone for a little while, just that he might not feel that he was a prisoner; but he felt sure that she had not really gone quite away, but was watching him from some hiding-place. So walking up to a great mirror, he said to it, "Trusty counsellor, let me see what I can do to make myself agreeable to the charming Fairy of the Desert; for I can think of nothing but how to please her."

And he at once set to work to curl his hair, and, seeing upon a table a grander coat than his own, he put it on carefully. The Fairy came back so delighted that she could not conceal her joy.

"I am quite aware of the trouble you have taken to please me," said she, "and I must tell you that you have succeeded perfectly already. You see it is not difficult to do if you really care for me."

The King, who had his own reasons for wishing to keep the old Fairy in a good humor, did not spare pretty speeches, and after a time he was allowed to walk by himself upon the sea-shore. The Fairy of the Desert had by her enchantments raised such a terrible storm that the boldest pilot would not venture out in it, so she was not afraid of her prisoner's being able to escape; and he found it some relief to think sadly over his terrible situation without being interrupted by his cruel captor.

Presently, after walking wildly up and down, he wrote these verses upon the sand with his stick:

"At last may I upon this shore
Lighten my sorrow with soft tears.
Alas! alas! I see no more
My Love, who yet my sadness cheers.

"And thou, O raging, stormy Sea,
Stirred by wild winds, from depth to height,
Thou hold'st my loved one far from me,
And I am captive to thy might.

"My heart is still more wild than thine,
For Fate is cruel unto me.
Why must I thus in exile pine?
Why is my Princess snatched from me?"

"O! lovely Nymphs, from ocean caves,
Who know how sweet true love may be,
Come up and calm the furious waves
And set a desperate lover free!"

While he was still writing he heard a voice which attracted his attention in spite of himself. Seeing that the waves were rolling in higher than ever, he looked all round, and presently saw a lovely lady floating gently toward him upon the crest of a huge billow, her long hair spread all about her; in one hand she held a mirror, and in the other a comb, and instead of feet she had a beautiful tail like a fish, with which she swam.

The King was struck dumb with astonishment at this unexpected sight; but as soon as she came within speaking distance, she said to him, "I know how sad you are at losing your Princess and being kept a prisoner by the Fairy of the Desert; if you like I will help you to escape from this fatal place, where you may otherwise have to drag on a weary existence for thirty years or more."

The King of the Gold Mines hardly knew what answer to make to this proposal. Not because he did not wish very much to escape, but he was afraid that this might be only another device by

which the Fairy of the Desert was trying to deceive him. As he hesitated the Mermaid, who guessed his thoughts, said to him:

“You may trust me: I am not trying to entrap you. I am so angry with the Yellow Dwarf and the Fairy of the Desert that I am not likely to wish to help them, especially since I constantly see your poor Princess, whose beauty and goodness make me pity her so much; and I tell you that if you will have confidence in me I will help you to escape.”

“I trust you absolutely,” cried the King, “and I will do whatever you tell me; but if you have seen my Princess I beg of you to tell me how she is and what is happening to her.

“We must not waste time in talking,” said she. “Come with me and I will carry you to the Castle of Steel, and we will leave upon this shore a figure so like you that even the Fairy herself will be deceived by it.”

So saying, she quickly collected a bundle of sea-weed, and, blowing it three times, she said:

“My friendly sea-weeds, I order you to stay here stretched upon the sand until the Fairy of the Desert comes to take you away.” And at once the sea-weeds became like the King, who stood looking at them in great astonishment, for they were even dressed in a coat like his, but they lay there pale and still as the King himself might have lain if one of the great waves had overtaken him and thrown him senseless upon the shore. And then the Mermaid caught up the King, and away they swam joyfully together.

“Now,” said she, “I have time to tell you about the Princess. In spite of the blow which the Fairy of the Desert gave her, the Yellow Dwarf compelled her to mount behind him upon his terrible Spanish cat; but she soon fainted away with pain and terror, and did not recover till they were within the walls of his frightful Castle of Steel. Here she was received by the prettiest girls it was possible to find, who had been carried there by the Yellow Dwarf, who hastened to wait upon her and showed her every possible attention. She was laid upon a couch covered with cloth of gold, embroidered with pearls as big as nuts.”

“Ah!” interrupted the King of the Gold Mines, “if Bellissima forgets me, and consents to marry him, I shall break my heart.”

“You need not be afraid of that,” answered the Mermaid, “the Princess thinks of no one but you, and the frightful Dwarf cannot persuade her to look at him.”

“Pray go on with your story,” said the King.

“What more is there to tell you?” replied the Mermaid. “Bellissima was sitting in the wood when you passed, and saw you with the Fairy of the Desert, who was so cleverly disguised that the Princess took her to be prettier than herself; you may imagine her despair, for she thought that you had fallen in love with her.”

“She believes that I love her!” cried the King. “What a fatal mistake! What is to be done to undeceive her?”

“You know best,” answered the Mermaid, smiling kindly at him. “When people are as much in love with one another as you two are, they don’t need advice from anyone else.”

As she spoke they reached the Castle of Steel, the side next the sea being the only one which the Yellow Dwarf had left unprotected by the dreadful burning walls.

“I know quite well,” said the Mermaid, “that the Princess is sitting by the brook-side, just where you saw her as you passed, but as you will have many enemies to fight with before you can reach her, take this sword; armed with it you may dare any danger, and overcome the greatest difficulties, only beware of one thing – that is, never to let it fall from your hand. Farewell; now I will wait by that rock, and if you need my help in carrying off your beloved Princess I will not fail you, for the Queen, her mother, is my best friend, and it was for her sake that I went to rescue you.”

So saying, she gave to the King a sword made from a single diamond, which was more brilliant than the sun. He could not find words to express his gratitude, but he begged her to believe that he fully appreciated the importance of her gift, and would never forget her help and kindness.

We must now go back to the Fairy of the Desert. When she found that the King did not return, she hastened out to look for him, and reached the shore, with a hundred of the ladies of her train, loaded with splendid presents for him. Some carried baskets full of diamonds, others golden cups of wonderful workmanship, and amber, coral, and pearls, others, again, balanced upon their heads bales of the richest and most beautiful stuffs, while the rest brought fruit and flowers, and even birds. But what was the horror of the Fairy, who followed this gay troop, when she saw, stretched upon the sands, the image of the King which the Mermaid had made with the sea-weeds. Struck with astonishment and sorrow, she uttered a terrible cry, and threw herself down beside the pretended King, weeping, and howling, and calling upon her eleven sisters, who were also fairies, and who came to her assistance. But they were all taken in by the image of the King, for, clever as they were, the Mermaid was still cleverer, and all they could do was to help the Fairy of the Desert to make a wonderful monument over what they thought was the grave of the King of the Gold Mines. But while they were collecting jasper and porphyry, agate and marble, gold and bronze, statues and devices, to immortalize the King's memory, he was thanking the good Mermaid and begging her still to help him, which she graciously promised to do as she disappeared; and then he set out for the Castle of Steel. He walked fast, looking anxiously round him, and longing once more to see his darling Bellissima, but he had not gone far before he was surrounded by four terrible sphinxes who would very soon have torn him to pieces with their sharp talons if it had not been for the Mermaid's diamond sword. For, no sooner had he flashed it before their eyes than down they fell at his feet quite helpless, and he killed them with one blow. But he had hardly turned to continue his search when he met six dragons covered with scales that were harder than iron. Frightful as this encounter was the King's courage was unshaken, and by the aid of his wonderful sword he cut them in pieces one after the other. Now he hoped his difficulties were over, but at the next turning he was met by one which he did not know how to overcome. Four-and-twenty pretty and graceful nymphs advanced toward him, holding garlands of flowers, with which they barred the way.

"Where are you going, Prince?" they said; "it is our duty to guard this place, and if we let you pass great misfortunes will happen to you and to us. We beg you not to insist upon going on. Do you want to kill four-and-twenty girls who have never displeased you in any way?"

The King did not know what to do or to say. It went against all his ideas as a knight to do anything a lady begged him not to do; but, as he hesitated, a voice in his ear said:

"Strike! strike! and do not spare, or your Princess is lost for ever!"

So, without reply to the nymphs, he rushed forward instantly, breaking their garlands, and scattering them in all directions; and then went on without further hindrance to the little wood where he had seen Bellissima. She was seated by the brook looking pale and weary when he reached her, and he would have thrown himself down at her feet, but she drew herself away from him with as much indignation as if he had been the Yellow Dwarf.

"Ah! Princess," he cried, "do not be angry with me. Let me explain everything. I am not faithless or to blame for what has happened. I am a miserable wretch who has displeased you without being able to help himself."

"Ah!" cried Bellissima, "did I not see you flying through the air with the loveliest being imaginable? Was that against your will?"

"Indeed it was, Princess," he answered; "the wicked Fairy of the Desert, not content with chaining me to a rock, carried me off in her chariot to the other end of the earth, where I should even now be a captive but for the unexpected help of a friendly mermaid, who brought me here to rescue you, my Princess, from the unworthy hands that hold you. Do not refuse the aid of your most faithful lover." So saying, he threw himself at her feet and held her by her robe. But, alas! in so doing he let fall the magic sword, and the Yellow Dwarf, who was crouching behind a lettuce, no sooner saw it than he sprang out and seized it, well knowing its wonderful power.

The Princess gave a cry of terror on seeing the Dwarf, but this only irritated the little monster; muttering a few magical words he summoned two giants, who bound the King with great chains of iron.

“Now,” said the Dwarf, “I am master of my rival’s fate, but I will give him his life and permission to depart unharmed if you, Princess, will consent to marry me.”

“Let me die a thousand times rather,” cried the unhappy King.

“Alas!” cried the Princess, “must you die? Could anything be more terrible?”

“That you should marry that little wretch would be far more terrible,” answered the King.

“At least,” continued she, “let us die together.”

“Let me have the satisfaction of dying for you, my Princess,” said he.

“Oh, no, no!” she cried, turning to the Dwarf; “rather than that I will do as you wish.”

“Cruel Princess!” said the King, “would you make my life horrible to me by marrying another before my eyes?”

“Not so,” replied the Yellow Dwarf; “you are a rival of whom I am too much afraid; you shall not see our marriage.” So saying, in spite of Bellissima’s tears and cries, he stabbed the King to the heart with the diamond sword.

The poor Princess, seeing her lover lying dead at her feet, could no longer live without him; she sank down by him and died of a broken heart.

So ended these unfortunate lovers, whom not even the Mermaid could help, because all the magic power had been lost with the diamond sword.

As to the wicked Dwarf, he preferred to see the Princess dead rather than married to the King of the Gold Mines; and the Fairy of the Desert, when she heard of the King’s adventures, pulled down the grand monument which she had built, and was so angry at the trick that had been played her that she hated him as much as she had loved him before.

The kind Mermaid, grieved at the sad fate of the lovers, caused them to be changed into two tall palm trees, which stand always side by side, whispering together of their faithful love and caressing one another with their interlacing branches.²

² Madame d’Aulnoy.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Once upon a time there lived in a certain village a little country girl, the prettiest creature was ever seen. Her mother was excessively fond of her; and her grandmother doted on her still more. This good woman had made for her a little red riding-hood; which became the girl so extremely well that everybody called her Little Red Riding-Hood.

One day her mother, having made some custards, said to her:

“Go, my dear, and see how thy grandmamma does, for I hear she has been very ill; carry her a custard, and this little pot of butter.”

Little Red Riding-Hood set out immediately to go to her grandmother, who lived in another village.

As she was going through the wood, she met with Gaffer Wolf, who had a very great mind to eat her up, but he dared not, because of some faggot-makers hard by in the forest. He asked her whither she was going. The poor child, who did not know that it was dangerous to stay and hear a wolf talk, said to him:

“I am going to see my grandmamma and carry her a custard and a little pot of butter from my mamma.”

“Does she live far off?” said the Wolf.

“Oh! ay,” answered Little Red Riding-Hood; “it is beyond that mill you see there, at the first house in the village.”

“Well,” said the Wolf, “and I’ll go and see her too. I’ll go this way and you go that, and we shall see who will be there soonest.”

The Wolf began to run as fast as he could, taking the nearest way, and the little girl went by that farthest about, diverting herself in gathering nuts, running after butterflies, and making nosegays of such little flowers as she met with. The Wolf was not long before he got to the old woman’s house. He knocked at the door – tap, tap.

“Who’s there?”

“Your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood,” replied the Wolf, counterfeiting her voice; “who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter sent you by mamma.”

The good grandmother, who was in bed, because she was somewhat ill, cried out:

“Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.”

The Wolf pulled the bobbin, and the door opened, and then presently he fell upon the good woman and ate her up in a moment, for it was above three days that he had not touched a bit. He then shut the door and went into the grandmother’s bed, expecting Little Red Riding-Hood, who came some time afterward and knocked at the door – tap, tap.

“Who’s there?”

Little Red Riding-Hood, hearing the big voice of the Wolf, was at first afraid; but believing her grandmother had got a cold and was hoarse, answered:

“‘Tis your grandchild, Little Red Riding-Hood, who has brought you a custard and a little pot of butter mamma sends you.”

The Wolf cried out to her, softening his voice as much as he could:

“Pull the bobbin, and the latch will go up.”

Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the bobbin, and the door opened.

The Wolf, seeing her come in, said to her, hiding himself under the bed-clothes:

“Put the custard and the little pot of butter upon the stool, and come and lie down with me.”

Little Red Riding-Hood undressed herself and went into bed, where, being greatly amazed to see how her grandmother looked in her night-clothes, she said to her:

“Grandmamma, what great arms you have got!”

“That is the better to hug thee, my dear.”

“Grandmamma, what great legs you have got!”

“That is to run the better, my child.”

“Grandmamma, what great ears you have got!”

“That is to hear the better, my child.”

“Grandmamma, what great eyes you have got!”

“It is to see the better, my child.”

“Grandmamma, what great teeth you have got!”

“That is to eat thee up.”

And, saying these words, this wicked wolf fell upon Little Red Riding-Hood, and ate her all up.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD

There were formerly a king and a queen, who were so sorry that they had no children; so sorry that it cannot be expressed. They went to all the waters in the world; vows, pilgrimages, all ways were tried, and all to no purpose.

At last, however, the Queen had a daughter. There was a very fine christening; and the Princess had for her god-mothers all the fairies they could find in the whole kingdom (they found seven), that every one of them might give her a gift, as was the custom of fairies in those days. By this means the Princess had all the perfections imaginable.

After the ceremonies of the christening were over, all the company returned to the King's palace, where was prepared a great feast for the fairies. There was placed before every one of them a magnificent cover with a case of massive gold, wherein were a spoon, knife, and fork, all of pure gold set with diamonds and rubies. But as they were all sitting down at table they saw come into the hall a very old fairy, whom they had not invited, because it was above fifty years since she had been out of a certain tower, and she was believed to be either dead or enchanted.

The King ordered her a cover, but could not furnish her with a case of gold as the others, because they had only seven made for the seven fairies. The old Fairy fancied she was slighted, and muttered some threats between her teeth. One of the young fairies who sat by her overheard how she grumbled; and, judging that she might give the little Princess some unlucky gift, went, as soon as they rose from table, and hid herself behind the hangings, that she might speak last, and repair, as much as she could, the evil which the old Fairy might intend.

In the meanwhile all the fairies began to give their gifts to the Princess. The youngest gave her for gift that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next, that she should have the wit of an angel; the third, that she should have a wonderful grace in everything she did; the fourth, that she should dance perfectly well; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; and the sixth, that she should play all kinds of music to the utmost perfection.

The old Fairy's turn coming next, with a head shaking more with spite than age, she said that the Princess should have her hand pierced with a spindle and die of the wound. This terrible gift made the whole company tremble, and everybody fell a-crying.

At this very instant the young Fairy came out from behind the hangings, and spake these words aloud:

“Assure yourselves, O King and Queen, that your daughter shall not die of this disaster. It is true, I have no power to undo entirely what my elder has done. The Princess shall indeed pierce her hand with a spindle; but, instead of dying, she shall only fall into a profound sleep, which shall last a hundred years, at the expiration of which a king's son shall come and awake her.”

The King, to avoid the misfortune foretold by the old Fairy, caused immediately proclamation to be made, whereby everybody was forbidden, on pain of death, to spin with a distaff and spindle, or to have so much as any spindle in their houses. About fifteen or sixteen years after, the King and Queen being gone to one of their houses of pleasure, the young Princess happened one day to divert herself in running up and down the palace; when going up from one apartment to another, she came into a little room on the top of the tower, where a good old woman, alone, was spinning with her spindle. This good woman had never heard of the King's proclamation against spindles.

“What are you doing there, goody?” said the Princess.

“I am spinning, my pretty child,” said the old woman, who did not know who she was.

“Ha!” said the Princess, “this is very pretty; how do you do it? Give it to me, that I may see if I can do so.”

She had no sooner taken it into her hand than, whether being very hasty at it, somewhat unhandy, or that the decree of the Fairy had so ordained it, it ran into her hand, and she fell down in a swoon.

The good old woman, not knowing very well what to do in this affair, cried out for help. People came in from every quarter in great numbers; they threw water upon the Princess's face, unlaced her, struck her on the palms of her hands, and rubbed her temples with Hungary-water; but nothing would bring her to herself.

And now the King, who came up at the noise, bethought himself of the prediction of the fairies, and, judging very well that this must necessarily come to pass, since the fairies had said it, caused the Princess to be carried into the finest apartment in his palace, and to be laid upon a bed all embroidered with gold and silver.

One would have taken her for a little angel, she was so very beautiful; for her swooning away had not diminished one bit of her complexion; her cheeks were carnation, and her lips were coral; indeed, her eyes were shut, but she was heard to breathe softly, which satisfied those about her that she was not dead. The King commanded that they should not disturb her, but let her sleep quietly till her hour of awaking was come.

The good Fairy who had saved her life by condemning her to sleep a hundred years was in the kingdom of Matakín, twelve thousand leagues off, when this accident befell the Princess; but she was instantly informed of it by a little dwarf, who had boots of seven leagues, that is, boots with which he could tread over seven leagues of ground in one stride. The Fairy came away immediately, and she arrived, about an hour after, in a fiery chariot drawn by dragons.

The King handed her out of the chariot, and she approved everything he had done, but as she had very great foresight, she thought when the Princess should awake she might not know what to do with herself, being all alone in this old palace; and this was what she did: she touched with her wand everything in the palace (except the King and Queen) – governesses, maids of honor, ladies of the bedchamber, gentlemen, officers, stewards, cooks, undercooks, scullions, guards, with their beefeaters, pages, footmen; she likewise touched all the horses which were in the stables, pads as well as others, the great dogs in the outward court and pretty little Mopsey too, the Princess's little spaniel, which lay by her on the bed.

Immediately upon her touching them they all fell asleep, that they might not awake before their mistress and that they might be ready to wait upon her when she wanted them. The very spits at the fire, as full as they could hold of partridges and pheasants, did fall asleep also. All this was done in a moment. Fairies are not long in doing their business.

And now the King and the Queen, having kissed their dear child without waking her, went out of the palace and put forth a proclamation that nobody should dare to come near it.

This, however, was not necessary, for in a quarter of an hour's time there grew up all round about the park such a vast number of trees, great and small, bushes and brambles, twining one within another, that neither man nor beast could pass through; so that nothing could be seen but the very top of the towers of the palace; and that, too, not unless it was a good way off. Nobody; doubted but the Fairy gave herein a very extraordinary sample of her art, that the Princess, while she continued sleeping, might have nothing to fear from any curious people.

When a hundred years were gone and passed the son of the King then reigning, and who was of another family from that of the sleeping Princess, being gone a-hunting on that side of the country, asked:

What those towers were which he saw in the middle of a great thick wood?

Everyone answered according as they had heard. Some said:

That it was a ruinous old castle, haunted by spirits.

Others, That all the sorcerers and witches of the country kept there their sabbath or night's meeting.

The common opinion was: That an ogre lived there, and that he carried thither all the little children he could catch, that he might eat them up at his leisure, without anybody being able to follow him, as having himself only the power to pass through the wood.

The Prince was at a stand, not knowing what to believe, when a very good countryman spake to him thus:

“May it please your royal highness, it is now about fifty years since I heard from my father, who heard my grandfather say, that there was then in this castle a princess, the most beautiful was ever seen; that she must sleep there a hundred years, and should be waked by a king’s son, for whom she was reserved.”

The young Prince was all on fire at these words, believing, without weighing the matter, that he could put an end to this rare adventure; and, pushed on by love and honor, resolved that moment to look into it.

Scarce had he advanced toward the wood when all the great trees, the bushes, and brambles gave way of themselves to let him pass through; he walked up to the castle which he saw at the end of a large avenue which he went into; and what a little surprised him was that he saw none of his people could follow him, because the trees closed again as soon as he had passed through them. However, he did not cease from continuing his way; a young and amorous prince is always valiant.

He came into a spacious outward court, where everything he saw might have frozen the most fearless person with horror. There reigned all over a most frightful silence; the image of death everywhere showed itself, and there was nothing to be seen but stretched-out bodies of men and animals, all seeming to be dead. He, however, very well knew, by the ruby faces and pimpled noses of the beefeaters, that they were only asleep; and their goblets, wherein still remained some drops of wine, showed plainly that they fell asleep in their cups.

He then crossed a court paved with marble, went up the stairs and came into the guard chamber, where guards were standing in their ranks, with their muskets upon their shoulders, and snoring as loud as they could. After that he went through several rooms full of gentlemen and ladies, all asleep, some standing, others sitting. At last he came into a chamber all gilded with gold, where he saw upon a bed, the curtains of which were all open, the finest sight was ever beheld – a princess, who appeared to be about fifteen or sixteen years of age, and whose bright and, in a manner, resplendent beauty, had somewhat in it divine. He approached with trembling and admiration, and fell down before her upon his knees.

And now, as the enchantment was at an end, the Princess awaked, and looking on him with eyes more tender than the first view might seem to admit of:

“Is it you, my Prince?” said she to him. “You have waited a long while.”

The Prince, charmed with these words, and much more with the manner in which they were spoken, knew not how to show his joy and gratitude; he assured her that he loved her better than he did himself; their discourse was not well connected, they did weep more than talk – little eloquence, a great deal of love. He was more at a loss than she, and we need not wonder at it; she had time to think on what to say to him; for it is very probable (though history mentions nothing of it) that the good Fairy, during so long a sleep, had given her very agreeable dreams. In short, they talked four hours together, and yet they said not half what they had to say.

In the meanwhile all the palace awaked; everyone thought upon their particular business, and as all of them were not in love they were ready to die for hunger. The chief lady of honor, being as sharp set as other folks, grew very impatient, and told the Princess aloud that supper was served up. The Prince helped the Princess to rise; she was entirely dressed, and very magnificently, but his royal highness took care not to tell her that she was dressed like his great-grandmother, and had a point band peeping over a high collar; she looked not a bit less charming and beautiful for all that.

They went into the great hall of looking-glasses, where they supped, and were served by the Princess’s officers, the violins and hautboys played old tunes, but very excellent, though it was now above a hundred years since they had played; and after supper, without losing any time, the lord almoner married them in the chapel of the castle, and the chief lady of honor drew the curtains. They

had but very little sleep – the Princess had no occasion; and the Prince left her next morning to return to the city, where his father must needs have been in pain for him. The Prince told him:

That he lost his way in the forest as he was hunting, and that he had lain in the cottage of a charcoal-burner, who gave him cheese and brown bread.

The King, his father, who was a good man, believed him; but his mother could not be persuaded it was true; and seeing that he went almost every day a-hunting, and that he always had some excuse ready for so doing, though he had lain out three or four nights together, she began to suspect that he was married, for he lived with the Princess above two whole years, and had by her two children, the eldest of which, who was a daughter, was named Morning, and the youngest, who was a son, they called Day, because he was a great deal handsomer and more beautiful than his sister.

The Queen spoke several times to her son, to inform herself after what manner he did pass his time, and that in this he ought in duty to satisfy her. But he never dared to trust her with his secret; he feared her, though he loved her, for she was of the race of the Ogres, and the King would never have married her had it not been for her vast riches; it was even whispered about the Court that she had Ogreish inclinations, and that, whenever she saw little children passing by, she had all the difficulty in the world to avoid falling upon them. And so the Prince would never tell her one word.

But when the King was dead, which happened about two years afterward, and he saw himself lord and master, he openly declared his marriage; and he went in great ceremony to conduct his Queen to the palace. They made a magnificent entry into the capital city, she riding between her two children.

Soon after the King went to make war with the Emperor Contalabutte, his neighbor. He left the government of the kingdom to the Queen his mother, and earnestly recommended to her care his wife and children. He was obliged to continue his expedition all the summer, and as soon as he departed the Queen-mother sent her daughter-in-law to a country house among the woods, that she might with the more ease gratify her horrible longing.

Some few days afterward she went thither herself, and said to her clerk of the kitchen:

“I have a mind to eat little Morning for my dinner to-morrow.”

“Ah! madam,” cried the clerk of the kitchen.

“I will have it so,” replied the Queen (and this she spoke in the tone of an Ogress who had a strong desire to eat fresh meat), “and will eat her with a sauce Robert.”

The poor man, knowing very well that he must not play tricks with Ogresses, took his great knife and went up into little Morning’s chamber. She was then four years old, and came up to him jumping and laughing, to take him about the neck, and ask him for some sugar-candy. Upon which he began to weep, the great knife fell out of his hand, and he went into the back yard, and killed a little lamb, and dressed it with such good sauce that his mistress assured him that she had never eaten anything so good in her life. He had at the same time taken up little Morning, and carried her to his wife, to conceal her in the lodging he had at the bottom of the courtyard.

About eight days afterward the wicked Queen said to the clerk of the kitchen, “I will sup on little Day.”

He answered not a word, being resolved to cheat her as he had done before. He went to find out little Day, and saw him with a little foil in his hand, with which he was fencing with a great monkey, the child being then only three years of age. He took him up in his arms and carried him to his wife, that she might conceal him in her chamber along with his sister, and in the room of little Day cooked up a young kid, very tender, which the Ogress found to be wonderfully good.

This was hitherto all mighty well; but one evening this wicked Queen said to her clerk of the kitchen:

“I will eat the Queen with the same sauce I had with her children.”

It was now that the poor clerk of the kitchen despaired of being able to deceive her. The young Queen was turned of twenty, not reckoning the hundred years she had been asleep; and how to find in the yard a beast so firm was what puzzled him. He took then a resolution, that he might save his

own life, to cut the Queen's throat; and going up into her chamber, with intent to do it at once, he put himself into as great fury as he could possibly, and came into the young Queen's room with his dagger in his hand. He would not, however, surprise her, but told her, with a great deal of respect, the orders he had received from the Queen-mother.

"Do it; do it" (said she, stretching out her neck). "Execute your orders, and then I shall go and see my children, my poor children, whom I so much and so tenderly loved."

For she thought them dead ever since they had been taken away without her knowledge.

"No, no, madam" (cried the poor clerk of the kitchen, all in tears); "you shall not die, and yet you shall see your children again; but then you must go home with me to my lodgings, where I have concealed them, and I shall deceive the Queen once more, by giving her in your stead a young hind."

Upon this he forthwith conducted her to his chamber, where, leaving her to embrace her children, and cry along with them, he went and dressed a young hind, which the Queen had for her supper, and devoured it with the same appetite as if it had been the young Queen. Exceedingly was she delighted with her cruelty, and she had invented a story to tell the King, at his return, how the mad wolves had eaten up the Queen his wife and her two children.

One evening, as she was, according to her custom, rambling round about the courts and yards of the palace to see if she could smell any fresh meat, she heard, in a ground room, little Day crying, for his mamma was going to whip him, because he had been naughty; and she heard, at the same time, little Morning begging pardon for her brother.

The Ogress presently knew the voice of the Queen and her children, and being quite mad that she had been thus deceived, she commanded next morning, by break of day (with a most horrible voice, which made everybody tremble), that they should bring into the middle of the great court a large tub, which she caused to be filled with toads, vipers, snakes, and all sorts of serpents, in order to have thrown into it the Queen and her children, the clerk of the kitchen, his wife and maid; all whom she had given orders should be brought thither with their hands tied behind them.

They were brought out accordingly, and the executioners were just going to throw them into the tub, when the King (who was not so soon expected) entered the court on horseback (for he came post) and asked, with the utmost astonishment, what was the meaning of that horrible spectacle.

No one dared to tell him, when the Ogress, all enraged to see what had happened, threw herself head foremost into the tub, and was instantly devoured by the ugly creatures she had ordered to be thrown into it for others. The King could not but be very sorry, for she was his mother; but he soon comforted himself with his beautiful wife and his pretty children.

CINDERELLA, OR THE LITTLE GLASS SLIPPER

Once there was a gentleman who married, for his second wife, the proudest and most haughty woman that was ever seen. She had, by a former husband, two daughters of her own humor, who were, indeed, exactly like her in all things. He had likewise, by another wife, a young daughter, but of unparalleled goodness and sweetness of temper, which she took from her mother, who was the best creature in the world.

No sooner were the ceremonies of the wedding over but the mother-in-law began to show herself in her true colors. She could not bear the good qualities of this pretty girl, and the less because they made her own daughters appear the more odious. She employed her in the meanest work of the house: she scoured the dishes, tables, etc., and scrubbed madam's chamber, and those of misses, her daughters; she lay up in a sorry garret, upon a wretched straw bed, while her sisters lay in fine rooms, with floors all inlaid, upon beds of the very newest fashion, and where they had looking-glasses so large that they might see themselves at their full length from head to foot.

The poor girl bore all patiently, and dared not tell her father, who would have rattled her off; for his wife governed him entirely. When she had done her work, she used to go into the chimney-corner, and sit down among cinders and ashes, which made her commonly be called Cinderwench; but the youngest, who was not so rude and uncivil as the eldest, called her Cinderella. However, Cinderella, notwithstanding her mean apparel, was a hundred times handsomer than her sisters, though they were always dressed very richly.

It happened that the King's son gave a ball, and invited all persons of fashion to it. Our young misses were also invited, for they cut a very grand figure among the quality. They were mightily delighted at this invitation, and wonderfully busy in choosing out such gowns, petticoats, and head-clothes as might become them. This was a new trouble to Cinderella; for it was she who ironed her sisters' linen, and plaited their ruffles; they talked all day long of nothing but how they should be dressed.

"For my part," said the eldest, "I will wear my red velvet suit with French trimming."

"And I," said the youngest, "shall have my usual petticoat; but then, to make amends for that, I will put on my gold-flowered manteau, and my diamond stomacher, which is far from being the most ordinary one in the world."

They sent for the best tire-woman they could get to make up their head-dresses and adjust their double pinnars, and they had their red brushes and patches from Mademoiselle de la Poche.

Cinderella was likewise called up to them to be consulted in all these matters, for she had excellent notions, and advised them always for the best, nay, and offered her services to dress their heads, which they were very willing she should do. As she was doing this, they said to her:

"Cinderella, would you not be glad to go to the ball?"

"Alas!" said she, "you only jeer me; it is not for such as I am to go thither."

"Thou art in the right of it," replied they; "it would make the people laugh to see a Cinderwench at a ball."

Anyone but Cinderella would have dressed their heads awry, but she was very good, and dressed them perfectly well. They were almost two days without eating, so much were they transported with joy. They broke above a dozen laces in trying to be laced up close, that they might have a fine slender shape, and they were continually at their looking-glass. At last the happy day came; they went to Court, and Cinderella followed them with her eyes as long as she could, and when she had lost sight of them, she fell a-crying.

Her godmother, who saw her all in tears, asked her what was the matter.

"I wish I could – I wish I could –"; she was not able to speak the rest, being interrupted by her tears and sobbing.

This godmother of hers, who was a fairy, said to her, "Thou wishest thou couldst go to the ball; is it not so?"

"Y – es," cried Cinderella, with a great sigh.

"Well," said her godmother, "be but a good girl, and I will contrive that thou shalt go." Then she took her into her chamber, and said to her, "Run into the garden, and bring me a pumpkin."

Cinderella went immediately to gather the finest she could get, and brought it to her godmother, not being able to imagine how this pumpkin could make her go to the ball. Her godmother scooped out all the inside of it, having left nothing but the rind; which done, she struck it with her wand, and the pumpkin was instantly turned into a fine coach, gilded all over with gold.

She then went to look into her mouse-trap, where she found six mice, all alive, and ordered Cinderella to lift up a little the trapdoor, when, giving each mouse, as it went out, a little tap with her wand, the mouse was that moment turned into a fine horse, which altogether made a very fine set of six horses of a beautiful mouse-colored dapple-gray. Being at a loss for a coachman,

"I will go and see," says Cinderella, "if there is never a rat in the rat-trap – we may make a coachman of him."

"Thou art in the right," replied her godmother; "go and look."

Cinderella brought the trap to her, and in it there were three huge rats. The fairy made choice of one of the three which had the largest beard, and, having touched him with her wand, he was turned into a fat, jolly coachman, who had the smartest whiskers eyes ever beheld. After that, she said to her:

"Go again into the garden, and you will find six lizards behind the watering-pot, bring them to me."

She had no sooner done so but her godmother turned them into six footmen, who skipped up immediately behind the coach, with their liveries all bedaubed with gold and silver, and clung as close behind each other as if they had done nothing else their whole lives. The Fairy then said to Cinderella:

"Well, you see here an equipage fit to go to the ball with; are you not pleased with it?"

"Oh! yes," cried she; "but must I go thither as I am, in these nasty rags?"

Her godmother only just touched her with her wand, and, at the same instant, her clothes were turned into cloth of gold and silver, all beset with jewels. This done, she gave her a pair of glass slippers, the prettiest in the whole world. Being thus decked out, she got up into her coach; but her godmother, above all things, commanded her not to stay till after midnight, telling her, at the same time, that if she stayed one moment longer, the coach would be a pumpkin again, her horses mice, her coachman a rat, her footmen lizards, and her clothes become just as they were before.

She promised her godmother she would not fail of leaving the ball before midnight; and then away she drives, scarce able to contain herself for joy. The King's son who was told that a great princess, whom nobody knew, was come, ran out to receive her; he gave her his hand as she alighted out of the coach, and led her into the ball, among all the company. There was immediately a profound silence, they left off dancing, and the violins ceased to play, so attentive was everyone to contemplate the singular beauties of the unknown new-comer. Nothing was then heard but a confused noise of:

"Ha! how handsome she is! Ha! how handsome she is!"

The King himself, old as he was, could not help watching her, and telling the Queen softly that it was a long time since he had seen so beautiful and lovely a creature.

All the ladies were busied in considering her clothes and headdress, that they might have some made next day after the same pattern, provided they could meet with such fine material and as able hands to make them.

The King's son conducted her to the most honorable seat, and afterward took her out to dance with him; she danced so very gracefully that they all more and more admired her. A fine collation was served up, whereof the young prince ate not a morsel, so intently was he busied in gazing on her.

She went and sat down by her sisters, showing them a thousand civilities, giving them part of the oranges and citrons which the Prince had presented her with, which very much surprised them,

for they did not know her. While Cinderella was thus amusing her sisters, she heard the clock strike eleven and three-quarters, whereupon she immediately made a courtesy to the company and hasted away as fast as she could.

When she got home she ran to seek out her godmother, and, after having thanked her, she said she could not but heartily wish she might go next day to the ball, because the King's son had desired her.

As she was eagerly telling her godmother whatever had passed at the ball, her two sisters knocked at the door, which Cinderella ran and opened.

"How long you have stayed!" cried she, gaping, rubbing her eyes and stretching herself as if she had been just waked out of her sleep; she had not, however, any manner of inclination to sleep since they went from home.

"If thou hadst been at the ball," said one of her sisters, "thou wouldst not have been tired with it. There came thither the finest princess, the most beautiful ever was seen with mortal eyes; she showed us a thousand civilities, and gave us oranges and citrons."

Cinderella seemed very indifferent in the matter; indeed, she asked them the name of that princess; but they told her they did not know it, and that the King's son was very uneasy on her account and would give all the world to know who she was. At this Cinderella, smiling, replied:

"She must, then, be very beautiful indeed; how happy you have been! Could not I see her? Ah! dear Miss Charlotte, do lend me your yellow suit of clothes which you wear every day."

"Ay, to be sure!" cried Miss Charlotte; "lend my clothes to such a dirty Cinderwench as thou art! I should be a fool."

Cinderella, indeed, expected well such answer, and was very glad of the refusal; for she would have been sadly put to it if her sister had lent her what she asked for jestingly.

The next day the two sisters were at the ball, and so was Cinderella, but dressed more magnificently than before. The King's son was always by her, and never ceased his compliments and kind speeches to her; to whom all this was so far from being tiresome that she quite forgot what her godmother had recommended to her; so that she, at last, counted the clock striking twelve when she took it to be no more than eleven; she then rose up and fled, as nimble as a deer. The Prince followed, but could not overtake her. She left behind one of her glass slippers, which the Prince took up most carefully. She got home but quite out of breath, and in her nasty old clothes, having nothing left her of all her finery but one of the little slippers, fellow to that she dropped. The guards at the palace gate were asked:

If they had not seen a princess go out.

Who said: They had seen nobody go out but a young girl, very meanly dressed, and who had more the air of a poor country wench than a gentlewoman.

When the two sisters returned from the ball Cinderella asked them: If they had been well diverted, and if the fine lady had been there.

They told her: Yes, but that she hurried away immediately when it struck twelve, and with so much haste that she dropped one of her little glass slippers, the prettiest in the world, which the King's son had taken up; that he had done nothing but look at her all the time at the ball, and that most certainly he was very much in love with the beautiful person who owned the glass slipper.

What they said was very true; for a few days after the King's son caused it to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he would marry her whose foot the slipper would just fit. They whom he employed began to try it upon the princesses, then the duchesses and all the Court, but in vain; it was brought to the two sisters, who did all they possibly could to thrust their foot into the slipper, but they could not effect it. Cinderella, who saw all this, and knew her slipper, said to them, laughing:

"Let me see if it will not fit me."

Her sisters burst out a-laughing, and began to banter her. The gentleman who was sent to try the slipper looked earnestly at Cinderella, and, finding her very handsome, said:

It was but just that she should try, and that he had orders to let everyone make trial.

He obliged Cinderella to sit down, and, putting the slipper to her foot, he found it went on very easily, and fitted her as if it had been made of wax. The astonishment her two sisters were in was excessively great, but still abundantly greater when Cinderella pulled out of her pocket the other slipper, and put it on her foot. Thereupon, in came her godmother, who, having touched with her wand Cinderella's clothes, made them richer and more magnificent than any of those she had before.

And now her two sisters found her to be that fine, beautiful lady whom they had seen at the ball. They threw themselves at her feet to beg pardon for all the ill-treatment they had made her undergo. Cinderella took them up, and, as she embraced them, cried:

That she forgave them with all her heart, and desired them always to love her.

She was conducted to the young prince, dressed as she was; he thought her more charming than ever, and, a few days after, married her. Cinderella, who was no less good than beautiful, gave her two sisters lodgings in the palace, and that very same day matched them with two great lords of the Court.³

³ Charles Perrault.

ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP

There once lived a poor tailor, who had a son called Aladdin, a careless, idle boy who would do nothing but play ball all day long in the streets with little idle boys like himself. This so grieved the father that he died; yet, in spite of his mother's tears and prayers, Aladdin did not mend his ways. One day, when he was playing in the streets as usual, a stranger asked him his age, and if he was not the son of Mustapha the tailor. "I am, sir," replied Aladdin; "but he died a long while ago." On this the stranger, who was a famous African magician, fell on his neck and kissed him, saying, "I am your uncle, and knew you from your likeness to my brother. Go to your mother and tell her I am coming." Aladdin ran home and told his mother of his newly found uncle. "Indeed, child," she said, "your father had a brother, but I always thought he was dead." However, she prepared supper, and bade Aladdin seek his uncle, who came laden with wine and fruit. He presently fell down and kissed the place where Mustapha used to sit, bidding Aladdin's mother not to be surprised at not having seen him before, as he had been forty years out of the country. He then turned to Aladdin, and asked him his trade, at which the boy hung his head, while his mother burst into tears. On learning that Aladdin was idle and would learn no trade, he offered to take a shop for him and stock it with merchandise. Next day he bought Aladdin a fine suit of clothes and took him all over the city, showing him the sights, and brought him home at nightfall to his mother, who was overjoyed to see her son so fine.

The next day the magician led Aladdin into some beautiful gardens a long way outside the city gates. They sat down by a fountain and the magician pulled a cake from his girdle, which he divided between them. They then journeyed onward till they almost reached the mountains. Aladdin was so tired that he begged to go back, but the magician beguiled him with pleasant stories, and led him on in spite of himself. At last they came to two mountains divided by a narrow valley. "We will go no farther," said the false uncle. "I will show you something wonderful; only do you gather up sticks while I kindle a fire." When it was lit the magician threw on it a powder he had about him, at the same time saying some magical words. The earth trembled a little and opened in front of them, disclosing a square flat stone with a brass ring in the middle to raise it by. Aladdin tried to run away, but the magician caught him and gave him a blow that knocked him down. "What have I done, uncle?" he said piteously; whereupon the magician said more kindly: "Fear nothing, but obey me. Beneath this stone lies a treasure which is to be yours, and no one else may touch it, so you must do exactly as I tell you." At the word treasure Aladdin forgot his fears, and grasped the ring as he was told, saying the names of his father and grandfather. The stone came up quite easily, and some steps appeared. "Go down," said the magician; "at the foot of those steps you will find an open door leading into three large halls. Tuck up your gown and go through them without touching anything, or you will die instantly. These halls lead into a garden of fine fruit trees. Walk on until you come to a niche in a terrace where stands a lighted lamp. Pour out the oil it contains, and bring it to me." He drew a ring from his finger and gave it to Aladdin, bidding him prosper.

Aladdin found everything as the magician had said, gathered some fruit off the trees, and, having got the lamp, arrived at the mouth of the cave. The magician cried out in a great hurry: "Make haste and give me the lamp." This Aladdin refused to do until he was out of the cave. The magician flew into a terrible passion, and throwing some more powder on to the fire, he said something, and the stone rolled back into its place.

The magician left Persia for ever, which plainly showed that he was no uncle of Aladdin's, but a cunning magician, who had read in his magic books of a wonderful lamp, which would make him the most powerful man in the world. Though he alone knew where to find it, he could only receive it from the hand of another. He had picked out the foolish Aladdin for this purpose, intending to get the lamp and kill him afterward.

For two days Aladdin remained in the dark, crying and lamenting. At last he clasped his hands in prayer, and in so doing rubbed the ring, which the magician had forgotten to take from him. Immediately an enormous and frightful genie rose out of the earth, saying: "What wouldst thou with me? I am the Slave of the Ring, and will obey thee in all things." Aladdin fearlessly replied: "Deliver me from this place!" whereupon the earth opened, and he found himself outside. As soon as his eyes could bear the light he went home, but fainted on the threshold. When he came to himself he told his mother what had passed, and showed her the lamp and the fruits he had gathered in the garden, which were, in reality, precious stones. He then asked for some food. "Alas! child," she said, "I have nothing in the house, but I have spun a little cotton and will go and sell it." Aladdin bade her keep her cotton, for he would sell the lamp instead. As it was very dirty she began to rub it, that it might fetch a higher price. Instantly a hideous genie appeared, and asked what she would have. She fainted away, but Aladdin, snatching the lamp, said boldly: "Fetch me something to eat!" The genie returned with a silver bowl, twelve silver plates containing rich meats, two silver cups, and two bottles of wine. Aladdin's mother, when she came to herself, said: "Whence comes this splendid feast?" "Ask not, but eat," replied Aladdin. So they sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and Aladdin told his mother about the lamp. She begged him to sell it, and have nothing to do with devils. "No," said Aladdin, "since chance hath made us aware of its virtues, we will use it, and the ring likewise, which I shall always wear on my finger." When they had eaten all the genie had brought, Aladdin sold one of the silver plates, and so on until none were left. He then had recourse to the genie, who gave him another set of plates, and thus they lived for many years.

One day Aladdin heard an order from the Sultan proclaimed that everyone was to stay at home and close his shutters while the Princess, his daughter, went to and from the bath. Aladdin was seized by a desire to see her face, which was very difficult, as she always went veiled. He hid himself behind the door of the bath, and peeped through a chink. The Princess lifted her veil as she went in, and looked so beautiful that Aladdin fell in love with her at first sight. He went home so changed that his mother was frightened. He told her he loved the Princess so deeply that he could not live without her, and meant to ask her in marriage of her father. His mother, on hearing this, burst out laughing, but Aladdin at last prevailed upon her to go before the Sultan and carry his request. She fetched a napkin and laid in it the magic fruits from the enchanted garden, which sparkled and shone like the most beautiful jewels. She took these with her to please the Sultan, and set out, trusting in the lamp. The Grand Vizier and the lords of council had just gone in as she entered the hall and placed herself in front of the Sultan. He, however, took no notice of her. She went every day for a week, and stood in the same place. When the council broke up on the sixth day the Sultan said to his Vizier: "I see a certain woman in the audience-chamber every day carrying something in a napkin. Call her next time, that I may find out what she wants." Next day, at a sign from the Vizier, she went up to the foot of the throne and remained kneeling till the Sultan said to her: "Rise, good woman, and tell me what you want." She hesitated, so the Sultan sent away all but the Vizier, and bade her speak frankly, promising to forgive her beforehand for anything she might say. She then told him of her son's violent love for the Princess. "I prayed him to forget her," she said, "but in vain; he threatened to do some desperate deed if I refused to go and ask your Majesty for the hand of the Princess. Now I pray you to forgive not me alone, but my son Aladdin." The Sultan asked her kindly what she had in the napkin, whereupon she unfolded the jewels and presented them. He was thunderstruck, and turning to the Vizier said: "What sayest thou? Ought I not to bestow the Princess on one who values her at such a price?" The Vizier, who wanted her for his own son, begged the Sultan to withhold her for three months, in the course of which he hoped his son would contrive to make him a richer present. The Sultan granted this, and told Aladdin's mother that, though he consented to the marriage, she must not appear before him again for three months.

Aladdin waited patiently for nearly three months, but after two had elapsed his mother, going into the city to buy oil, found every one rejoicing, and asked what was going on. "Do you not

know,” was the answer, “that the son of the Grand Vizier is to marry the Sultan’s daughter to-night?” Breathless, she ran and told Aladdin, who was overwhelmed at first, but presently bethought him of the lamp. He rubbed it, and the genie appeared, saying, “What is thy will?” Aladdin replied: “The Sultan, as thou knowest, has broken his promise to me, and the Vizier’s son is to have the Princess. My command is that to-night you bring hither the bride and bridegroom.” “Master, I obey,” said the genie. Aladdin then went to his chamber, where, sure enough, at midnight the genie transported the bed containing the Vizier’s son and the Princess. “Take this new-married man,” he said, “and put him outside in the cold, and return at daybreak.” Whereupon the genie took the Vizier’s son out of bed, leaving Aladdin with the Princess. “Fear nothing,” Aladdin said to her; “you are my wife, promised to me by your unjust father, and no harm shall come to you.” The Princess was too frightened to speak, and passed the most miserable night of her life, while Aladdin lay down beside her and slept soundly. At the appointed hour the genie fetched in the shivering bridegroom, laid him in his place, and transported the bed back to the palace.

Presently the Sultan came to wish his daughter good-morning. The unhappy Vizier’s son jumped up and hid himself, while the Princess would not say a word, and was very sorrowful. The Sultan sent her mother to her, who said: “How comes it, child, that you will not speak to your father? What has happened?” The Princess sighed deeply, and at last told her mother how, during the night, the bed had been carried into some strange house, and what had passed there. Her mother did not believe her in the least, but bade her rise and consider it an idle dream.

The following night exactly the same thing happened, and next morning, on the Princess’s refusal to speak, the Sultan threatened to cut off her head. She then confessed all, bidding him to ask the Vizier’s son if it were not so. The Sultan told the Vizier to ask his son, who owned the truth, adding that, dearly as he loved the Princess, he had rather die than go through another such fearful night, and wished to be separated from her. His wish was granted, and there was an end to feasting and rejoicing.

When the three months were over, Aladdin sent his mother to remind the Sultan of his promise. She stood in the same place as before, and the Sultan, who had forgotten Aladdin, at once remembered him, and sent for her. On seeing her poverty the Sultan felt less inclined than ever to keep his word, and asked his Vizier’s advice, who counselled him to set so high a value on the Princess that no man living could come up to it. The Sultan then turned to Aladdin’s mother, saying: “Good woman, a Sultan must remember his promises, and I will remember mine, but your son must first send me forty basins of gold brimful of jewels, carried by forty black slaves, led by as many white ones, splendidly dressed. Tell him that I await his answer.” The mother of Aladdin bowed low and went home, thinking all was lost. She gave Aladdin the message, adding: “He may wait long enough for your answer!” “Not so long, mother, as you think,” her son replied. “I would do a great deal more than that for the Princess.” He summoned the genie, and in a few moments the eighty slaves arrived, and filled up the small house and garden. Aladdin made them set out to the palace, two and two, followed by his mother. They were so richly dressed, with such splendid jewels in their girdles, that everyone crowded to see them and the basins of gold they carried on their heads. They entered the palace, and, after kneeling before the Sultan, stood in a half-circle round the throne with their arms crossed, while Aladdin’s mother presented them to the Sultan. He hesitated no longer, but said: “Good woman, return and tell your son that I wait for him with open arms.” She lost no time in telling Aladdin, bidding him make haste. But Aladdin first called the genie. “I want a scented bath,” he said, “a richly embroidered habit, a horse surpassing the Sultan’s, and twenty slaves to attend me. Besides this, six slaves, beautifully dressed, to wait on my mother; and lastly, ten thousand pieces of gold in ten purses.” No sooner said than done. Aladdin mounted his horse and passed through the streets, the slaves strewing gold as they went. Those who had played with him in his childhood knew him not, he had grown so handsome. When the Sultan saw him he came down from his throne, embraced him, and led him into a hall where a feast was spread, intending to marry him to the Princess that very day. But Aladdin refused, saying, “I must build a palace fit for her,” and took his leave. Once home, he said to the genie: “Build me a

palace of the finest marble, set with jasper, agate, and other precious stones. In the middle you shall build me a large hall with a dome, its four walls of massy gold and silver, each having six windows, whose lattices, all except one which is to be left unfinished, must be set with diamonds and rubies. There must be stables and horses and grooms and slaves; go and see about it!”

The palace was finished by the next day, and the genie carried him there and showed him all his orders faithfully carried out, even to the laying of a velvet carpet from Aladdin’s palace to the Sultan’s. Aladdin’s mother then dressed herself carefully, and walked to the palace with her slaves, while he followed her on horseback. The Sultan sent musicians with trumpets and cymbals to meet them, so that the air resounded with music and cheers. She was taken to the Princess, who saluted her and treated her with great honor. At night the Princess said good-by to her father, and set out on the carpet for Aladdin’s palace, with his mother at her side, and followed by the hundred slaves. She was charmed at the sight of Aladdin, who ran to receive her. “Princess,” he said, “blame your beauty for my boldness if I have displeased you.” She told him that, having seen him, she willingly obeyed her father in this matter. After the wedding had taken place Aladdin led her into the hall, where a feast was spread, and she supped with him, after which they danced till midnight. Next day Aladdin invited the Sultan to see the palace. On entering the hall with the four-and-twenty windows, with their rubies, diamonds, and emeralds, he cried: “It is a world’s wonder! There is only one thing that surprises me. Was it by accident that one window was left unfinished?” “No, sir, by design,” returned Aladdin. “I wished your Majesty to have the glory of finishing this palace.” The Sultan was pleased, and sent for the best jewelers in the city. He showed them the unfinished window, and bade them fit it up like the others. “Sir,” replied their spokesman, “we cannot find jewels enough.” The Sultan had his own fetched, which they soon used, but to no purpose, for in a month’s time the work was not half done. Aladdin, knowing that their task was vain, bade them undo their work and carry the jewels back, and the genie finished the window at his command. The Sultan was surprised to receive his jewels again, and visited Aladdin, who showed him the window finished. The Sultan embraced him, the envious Vizier meanwhile hinting that it was the work of enchantment.

Aladdin had won the hearts of the people by his gentle bearing. He was made captain of the Sultan’s armies, and won several battles for him, but remained modest and courteous as before, and lived thus in peace and content for several years.

But far away in Africa the magician remembered Aladdin, and by his magic arts discovered that Aladdin, instead of perishing miserably in the cave, had escaped, and had married a princess, with whom he was living in great honor and wealth. He knew that the poor tailor’s son could only have accomplished this by means of the lamp, and traveled night and day until he reached the capital of China, bent on Aladdin’s ruin. As he passed through the town he heard people talking everywhere about a marvellous palace. “Forgive my ignorance,” he asked, “what is this palace you speak of?” “Have you not heard of Prince Aladdin’s palace,” was the reply, “the greatest wonder of the world? I will direct you if you have a mind to see it.” The magician thanked him who spoke, and having seen the palace, knew that it had been raised by the Genie of the Lamp, and became half mad with rage. He determined to get hold of the lamp, and again plunge Aladdin into the deepest poverty.

Unluckily, Aladdin had gone a-hunting for eight days, which gave the magician plenty of time. He bought a dozen copper lamps, put them into a basket, and went to the palace, crying: “New lamps for old!” followed by a jeering crowd. The Princess, sitting in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, sent a slave to find out what the noise was about, who came back laughing, so that the Princess scolded her. “Madam,” replied the slave, “who can help laughing to see an old fool offering to exchange fine new lamps for old ones?” Another slave, hearing this, said: “There is an old one on the cornice there which he can have.” Now this was the magic lamp, which Aladdin had left there, as he could not take it out hunting with him. The Princess, not knowing its value, laughingly bade the slave take it and make the exchange. She went and said to the magician: “Give me a new lamp for this.” He snatched it and bade the slave take her choice, amid the jeers of the crowd. Little he cared, but left off crying

his lamps, and went out of the city gates to a lonely place, where he remained till nightfall, when he pulled out the lamp and rubbed it. The genie appeared, and at the magician's command carried him, together with the palace and the Princess in it, to a lonely place in Africa.

Next morning the Sultan looked out of the window toward Aladdin's palace and rubbed his eyes, for it was gone. He sent for the Vizier and asked what had become of the palace. The Vizier looked out too, and was lost in astonishment. He again put it down to enchantment, and this time the Sultan believed him, and sent thirty men on horseback to fetch Aladdin in chains. They met him riding home, bound him, and forced him to go with them on foot. The people, however, who loved him, followed, armed, to see that he came to no harm. He was carried before the Sultan, who ordered the executioner to cut off his head. The executioner made Aladdin kneel down, bandaged his eyes, and raised his scimitar to strike. At that instant the Vizier, who saw that the crowd had forced their way into the courtyard and were scaling the walls to rescue Aladdin, called to the executioner to stay his hand. The people, indeed, looked so threatening that the Sultan gave way and ordered Aladdin to be unbound, and pardoned him in the sight of the crowd. Aladdin now begged to know what he had done. "False wretch!" said the Sultan, "come thither," and showed him from the window the place where his palace had stood. Aladdin was so amazed that he could not say a word. "Where is my palace and my daughter?" demanded the Sultan. "For the first I am not so deeply concerned, but my daughter I must have, and you must find her or lose your head." Aladdin begged for forty days in which to find her, promising, if he failed, to return and suffer death at the Sultan's pleasure. His prayer was granted, and he went forth sadly from the Sultan's presence. For three days he wandered about like a madman, asking everyone what had become of his palace, but they only laughed and pitied him. He came to the banks of a river, and knelt down to say his prayers before throwing himself in. In so doing he rubbed the magic ring he still wore. The genie he had seen in the cave appeared, and asked his will. "Save my life, genie," said Aladdin, "bring my palace back." "That is not in my power," said the genie; "I am only the Slave of the Ring; you must ask him of the lamp." "Even so," said Aladdin, "but thou canst take me to the palace, and set me down under my dear wife's window." He at once found himself in Africa, under the window of the Princess, and fell asleep out of sheer weariness.

He was awakened by the singing of the birds, and his heart was lighter. He saw plainly that all his misfortunes were owing to the loss of the lamp, and vainly wondered who had robbed him of it.

That morning the Princess rose earlier than she had done since she had been carried into Africa by the magician, whose company she was forced to endure once a day. She, however, treated him so harshly that he dared not live there altogether. As she was dressing, one of her women looked out and saw Aladdin. The Princess ran and opened the window, and at the noise she made Aladdin looked up. She called to him to come to her, and great was the joy of these lovers at seeing each other again. After he had kissed her Aladdin said: "I beg of you, Princess, in God's name, before we speak of anything else, for your own sake and mine, tell me that has become of an old lamp I left on the cornice in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, when I went a-hunting." "Alas!" she said, "I am the innocent cause of our sorrows," and told him of the exchange of the lamp. "Now I know," cried Aladdin, "that we have to thank the African magician for this! Where is the lamp?" "He carries it about with him," said the Princess. "I know, for he pulled it out of his breast to show me. He wishes me to break my faith with you and marry him, saying that you were beheaded by my father's command. He is for ever speaking ill of you but I only reply by my tears. If I persist, I doubt not but he will use violence." Aladdin comforted her, and left her for a while. He changed clothes with the first person he met in the town, and having bought a certain powder, returned to the Princess, who let him in by a little side door. "Put on your most beautiful dress," he said to her "and receive the magician with smiles, leading him to believe that you have forgotten me. Invite him to sup with you, and say you wish to taste the wine of his country. He will go for some and while he is gone I will tell you what to do." She listened carefully to Aladdin and when he left she arrayed herself gaily for the first time since she left China. She put on a girdle and head-dress of diamonds, and, seeing in a glass that she was more

beautiful than ever, received the magician, saying, to his great amazement: "I have made up my mind that Aladdin is dead, and that all my tears will not bring him back to me, so I am resolved to mourn no more, and have therefore invited you to sup with me; but I am tired of the wines of China, and would fain taste those of Africa." The magician flew to his cellar, and the Princess put the powder Aladdin had given her in her cup. When he returned she asked him to drink her health in the wine of Africa, handing him her cup in exchange for his, as a sign she was reconciled to him. Before drinking the magician made her a speech in praise of her beauty, but the Princess cut him short, saying: "Let us drink first, and you shall say what you will afterward." She set her cup to her lips and kept it there, while the magician drained his to the dregs and fell back lifeless. The Princess then opened the door to Aladdin, and flung her arms round his neck; but Aladdin put her away, bidding her leave him, as he had more to do. He then went to the dead magician, took the lamp out of his vest, and bade the genie carry the palace and all in it back to China. This was done, and the Princess in her chamber only felt two little shocks, and little thought she was at home again.

The Sultan, who was sitting in his closet, mourning for his lost daughter, happened to look up, and rubbed his eyes, for there stood the palace as before! He hastened thither, and Aladdin received him in the hall of the four-and-twenty windows, with the Princess at his side. Aladdin told him what had happened, and showed him the dead body of the magician, that he might believe. A ten days' feast was proclaimed, and it seemed as if Aladdin might now live the rest of his life in peace; but it was not to be.

The African magician had a younger brother, who was, if possible, more wicked and more cunning than himself. He traveled to China to avenge his brother's death, and went to visit a pious woman called Fatima, thinking she might be of use to him. He entered her cell and clapped a dagger to her breast, telling her to rise and do his bidding on pain of death. He changed clothes with her, colored his face like hers, put on her veil, and murdered her, that she might tell no tales. Then he went toward the palace of Aladdin, and all the people, thinking he was the holy woman, gathered round him, kissing his hands and begging his blessing. When he got to the palace there was such a noise going on round him that the Princess bade her slave look out of the window and ask what was the matter. The slave said it was the holy woman, curing people by her touch of their ailments, whereupon the Princess, who had long desired to see Fatima, sent for her. On coming to the Princess the magician offered up a prayer for her health and prosperity. When he had done the Princess made him sit by her, and begged him to stay with her always. The false Fatima, who wished for nothing better, consented, but kept his veil down for fear of discovery. The Princess showed him the hall, and asked him what he thought of it. "It is truly beautiful," said the false Fatima. "In my mind it wants but one thing." "And what is that?" said the Princess. "If only a roc's egg," replied he, "were hung up from the middle of this dome, it would be the wonder of the world."

After this the Princess could think of nothing but the roc's egg, and when Aladdin returned from hunting he found her in a very ill humor. He begged to know what was amiss, and she told him that all her pleasure in the hall was spoiled for the want of a roc's egg hanging from the dome. "If that is all," replied Aladdin, "you shall soon be happy." He left her and rubbed the lamp, and when the genie appeared commanded him to bring a roc's egg. The genie gave such a loud and terrible shriek that the hall shook. "Wretch!" he cried, "is it not enough that I have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? You and your wife and your palace deserve to be burnt to ashes, but that this request does not come from you, but from the brother of the African magician, whom you destroyed. He is now in your palace disguised as the holy woman – whom he murdered. He it was who put that wish into your wife's head. Take care of yourself, for he means to kill you." So saying, the genie disappeared.

Aladdin went back to the Princess, saying his head ached, and requesting that the holy Fatima should be fetched to lay her hands on it. But when the magician came near, Aladdin, seizing his dagger, pierced him to the heart. "What have you done?" cried the Princess. "You have killed the

holy woman!” “Not so,” replied Aladdin, “but a wicked magician,” and told her of how she had been deceived.

After this Aladdin and his wife lived in peace. He succeeded the Sultan when he died, and reigned for many years, leaving behind him a long line of kings.⁴

⁴ Arabian Nights.

THE TALE OF A YOUTH WHO SET OUT TO LEARN WHAT FEAR WAS

A father had two sons, of whom the eldest was clever and bright, and always knew what he was about; but the youngest was stupid, and couldn't learn or understand anything. So much so that those who saw him exclaimed: "What a burden he'll be to his father!" Now when there was anything to be done, the eldest had always to do it; but if something was required later or in the night-time, and the way led through the churchyard or some such ghostly place, he always replied: "Oh! no, father: nothing will induce me to go there, it makes me shudder!" for he was afraid. Or, when they sat of an evening around the fire telling stories which made one's flesh creep, the listeners sometimes said: "Oh! it makes one shudder," the youngest sat in a corner, heard the exclamation, and could not understand what it meant. "They are always saying it makes one shudder! it makes one shudder! Nothing makes me shudder. It's probably an art quite beyond me."

Now it happened that his father said to him one day: "Hearken, you there in the corner; you are growing big and strong, and you must learn to earn your own bread. Look at your brother, what pains he takes; but all the money I've spent on your education is thrown away." "My dear father," he replied, "I will gladly learn – in fact, if it were possible I should like to learn to shudder; I don't understand that a bit yet." The eldest laughed when he heard this, and thought to himself: "Good heavens! what a ninny my brother is! he'll never come to any good; as the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined." The father sighed, and answered him: "You'll soon learn to shudder; but that won't help you to make a living."

Shortly after this, when the sexton came to pay them a visit, the father broke out to him, and told him what a bad hand his youngest son was at everything: he knew nothing and learned nothing. "Only think! when I asked him how he purposed gaining a livelihood, he actually asked to be taught to shudder." "If that's all he wants," said the sexton, "I can teach him that; just you send him to me, I'll soon polish him up." The father was quite pleased with the proposal, because he thought: "It will be a good discipline for the youth." And so the sexton took him into his house, and his duty was to toll the bell. After a few days he woke him at midnight, and bade him rise and climb into the tower and toll. "Now, my friend, I'll teach you to shudder," thought he. He stole forth secretly in front, and when the youth was up above, and had turned round to grasp the bell-rope, he saw, standing opposite the hole of the belfry, a white figure. "Who's there?" he called out, but the figure gave no answer, and neither stirred nor moved. "Answer," cried the youth, "or begone; you have no business here at this hour of the night." But the sexton remained motionless, so that the youth might think that it was a ghost. The youth called out the second time: "What do you want here? Speak if you are an honest fellow, or I'll knock you down the stairs." The sexton thought: "He can't mean that in earnest," so gave forth no sound, and stood as though he were made of stone. Then the youth shouted out to him the third time, and as that too had no effect, he made a dash at the spectre and knocked it down the stairs, so that it fell about ten steps and remained lying in a corner. Thereupon he tolled the bell, went home to bed without saying a word, and fell asleep. The sexton's wife waited a long time for her husband, but he never appeared. At last she became anxious, and woke the youth, and asked: "Don't you know where my husband is? He went up to the tower in front of you." "No," answered the youth; "but someone stood on the stairs up there just opposite the trap-door in the belfry, and because he wouldn't answer me, or go away, I took him for a rogue and knocked him down. You'd better go and see if it was he; I should be much distressed if it were." The wife ran and found her husband who was lying groaning in a corner, with his leg broken.

She carried him down, and then hurried with loud protestations to the youth's father. "Your son has been the cause of a pretty misfortune," she cried; "he threw my husband downstairs so that he

broke his leg. Take the good-for-nothing wretch out of our house.” The father was horrified, hurried to the youth, and gave him a scolding.

“What unholy pranks are these? The evil one must have put them into your head.” “Father,” he replied, “only listen to me; I am quite guiltless. He stood there in the night, like one who meant harm. I didn’t know who it was, and warned him three times to speak or begone.” “Oh!” groaned the father, “you’ll bring me nothing but misfortune; get out of my sight, I won’t have anything more to do with you.” “Yes, father, willingly; only wait till daylight, then I’ll set out and learn to shudder, and in that way I shall be master of an art which will gain me a living.” “Learn what you will,” said the father, “it’s all one to me. Here are fifty dollars for you, set forth into the wide world with them; but see you tell no one where you come from or who your father is, for I am ashamed of you.” “Yes, father, whatever you wish; and if that’s all you ask, I can easily keep it in mind.”

When day broke the youth put the fifty dollars into his pocket, set out on the hard high road, and kept muttering to himself: “If I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” Just at this moment a man came by who heard the youth speaking to himself, and when they had gone on a bit and were in sight of the gallows the man said to him: “Look! there is the tree where seven people have been hanged, and are now learning to fly; sit down under it and wait till nightfall, and then you’ll pretty soon learn to shudder.” “If that’s all I have to do,” answered the youth, “it’s easily done; but if I learn to shudder so quickly, then you shall have my fifty dollars. Just come back to me to-morrow morning early.” Then the youth went to the gallows-tree and sat down underneath it, and waited for the evening; and because he felt cold he lit himself a fire. But at midnight it got so chill that in spite of the fire he couldn’t keep warm. And as the wind blew the corpses one against the other, tossing them to and fro, he thought to himself: “If you are perishing down here by the fire, how those poor things up there must be shaking and shivering!” And because he had a tender heart, he put up a ladder, which he climbed unhooked one body after the other, and took down all the seven. Then he stirred the fire, blew it up, and placed them all round in a circle, that they might warm themselves. But they sat there and did not move, and the fire caught their clothes. Then he spoke: “Take care, or I’ll hang you up again.” But the dead men did not hear and let their rags go on burning. Then he got angry, and said: “If you aren’t careful yourselves, then I can’t help you, and I don’t mean to burn with you”; and he hung them up again in a row. Then he sat down at his fire and fell asleep. On the following morning the man came to him, and, wishing to get his fifty dollars, said: “Now you know what it is to shudder.” “No,” he answered, “how should I? Those fellows up there never opened their mouths, and were so stupid that they let those few old tatters they have on their bodies burn.” Then the man saw he wouldn’t get his fifty dollars that day, and went off, saying: “Well, I’m blessed if I ever met such a person in my life before.”

The youth went too on his way, and began to murmur to himself: “Oh! if I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” A carrier who was walking behind him heard these words, and asked him: “Who are you?” “I don’t know,” said the youth. “Where do you hail from?” “I don’t know.” “Who’s your father?” “I mayn’t say.” “What are you constantly muttering to yourself?” “Oh!” said the youth, “I would give worlds to shudder, but no one can teach me.” “Stuff and nonsense!” spoke the carrier; “come along with me, and I’ll soon put that right.” The youth went with the carrier, and in the evening they reached an inn, where they were to spend the night. Then, just as he was entering the room, he said again, quite aloud: “Oh! if I could only shudder! if I could only shudder!” The landlord, who heard this, laughed and said: “If that’s what you’re sighing for, you shall be given every opportunity here.” “Oh! hold your tongue!” said the landlord’s wife; “so many people have paid for their curiosity with their lives, it were a thousand pities if those beautiful eyes were never again to behold daylight.” But the youth said: “No matter how difficult, I insist on learning it; why, that’s what I’ve set out to do.” He left the landlord no peace till he told him that in the neighborhood stood a haunted castle, where one could easily learn to shudder if one only kept watch in it for three nights. The King had promised the man who dared to do this thing his daughter as wife, and she was the most beautiful

maiden under the sun. There was also much treasure hid in the castle, guarded by evil spirits, which would then be free, and was sufficient to make a poor man more than rich. Many had already gone in, but so far none had ever come out again. So the youth went to the King and spoke: "If I were allowed, I should much like to watch for three nights in the castle." The King looked at him, and because he pleased him, he said: "You can ask for three things, none of them living, and those you may take with you into the castle." Then he answered: "Well, I shall beg for a fire, a turning lathe, and a carving bench with the knife attached."

On the following day the King had everything put into the castle; and when night drew on the youth took up his position there, lit a bright fire in one of the rooms, placed the carving bench with the knife close to it, and sat himself down on the turning lathe. "Oh! if I could only shudder!" he said: "but I sha'n't learn it here either." Toward midnight he wanted to make up the fire, and as he was blowing up a blaze he heard a shriek from a corner. "Ou, miou! how cold we are!" "You fools!" he cried; "why do you scream? If you are cold, come and sit at the fire and warm yourselves." And as he spoke two huge black cats sprang fiercely forward and sat down, one on each side of him, and gazed wildly at him with their fiery eyes. After a time, when they had warmed themselves, they said: "Friend, shall we play a little game of cards?" "Why not?" he replied; "but first let me see your paws." Then they stretched out their claws. "Ha!" said he; "what long nails you've got! Wait a minute: I must first cut them off." Thereupon he seized them by the scruff of their necks, lifted them on to the carving bench, and screwed down their paws firmly. "After watching you narrowly," said he, "I no longer feel any desire to play cards with you"; and with these words he struck them dead and threw them out into the water. But when he had thus sent the two of them to their final rest, and was again about to sit down at the fire, out of every nook and corner came forth black cats and black dogs with fiery chains in such swarms that he couldn't possibly get away from them. They yelled in the most ghastly manner, jumped upon his fire, scattered it all, and tried to put it out. He looked on quietly for a time, but when it got beyond a joke he seized his carving-knife and called out: "Be off, you rabble rout!" and let fly at them. Some of them fled away, and the others he struck dead and threw them out into the pond below. When he returned he blew up the sparks of the fire once more, and warmed himself. And as he sat thus his eyes refused to keep open any longer, and a desire to sleep stole over him. Then he looked around him and beheld in the corner a large bed. "The very thing," he said, and laid himself down in it. But when he wished to close his eyes the bed began to move by itself, and ran all round the castle. "Capital," he said, "only a little quicker." Then the bed sped on as if drawn by six horses, over thresholds and stairs, up this way and down that. All of a sudden – crash, crash! with a bound it turned over, upside down, and lay like a mountain on the top of him. But he tossed the blankets and pillows in the air, emerged from underneath, and said: "Now anyone who has the fancy for it may go a drive," lay down at his fire, and slept till daylight. In the morning the King came, and when he beheld him lying on the ground he imagined the ghosts had been too much for him, and that he was dead. Then he said: "What a pity! and such a fine fellow he was." The youth heard this, got up, and said: "It's not come to that yet." Then the King was astonished, but very glad, and asked how it had fared with him. "First-rate," he answered; "and now I've survived the one night, I shall get through the other two also." The landlord, when he went to him, opened his eyes wide, and said: "Well, I never thought to see you alive again. Have you learned now what shuddering is?" "No," he replied, "it's quite hopeless; if someone could only tell me how to!"

The second night he went up again to the old castle, sat down at the fire, and began his old refrain: "If I could only shudder!" As midnight approached, a noise and din broke out, at first gentle, but gradually increasing; then all was quiet for a minute, and at length, with a loud scream, half of a man dropped down the chimney and fell before him. "Hi, up there!" shouted he; "there's another half wanted down here, that's not enough"; then the din commenced once more, there was a shrieking and a yelling, and then the other half fell down. "Wait a bit," he said; "I'll stir up the fire for you." When he had done this and again looked around, the two pieces had united, and a horrible-looking

man sat on his seat. "Come," said the youth, "I didn't bargain for that, the seat is mine." The man tried to shove him away, but the youth wouldn't allow it for a moment, and, pushing him off by force, sat down in his place again. Then more men dropped down, one after the other, who fetching nine skeleton legs and two skulls, put them up and played ninepins with them. The youth thought he would like to play too, and said: "Look here; do you mind my joining the game?" "No, not if you have money." "I've money enough," he replied, "but your balls aren't round enough." Then he took the skulls, placed them on his lathe, and turned them till they were round. "Now they'll roll along better," said he, "and houp-la! now the fun begins." He played with them and lost some of his money, but when twelve struck everything vanished before his eyes. He lay down and slept peacefully. The next morning the King came, anxious for news. "How have you got on this time?" he asked. "I played ninepins," he answered, "and lost a few pence." "Didn't you shudder then?" "No such luck," said he; "I made myself merry. Oh! if I only knew what it was to shudder!"

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