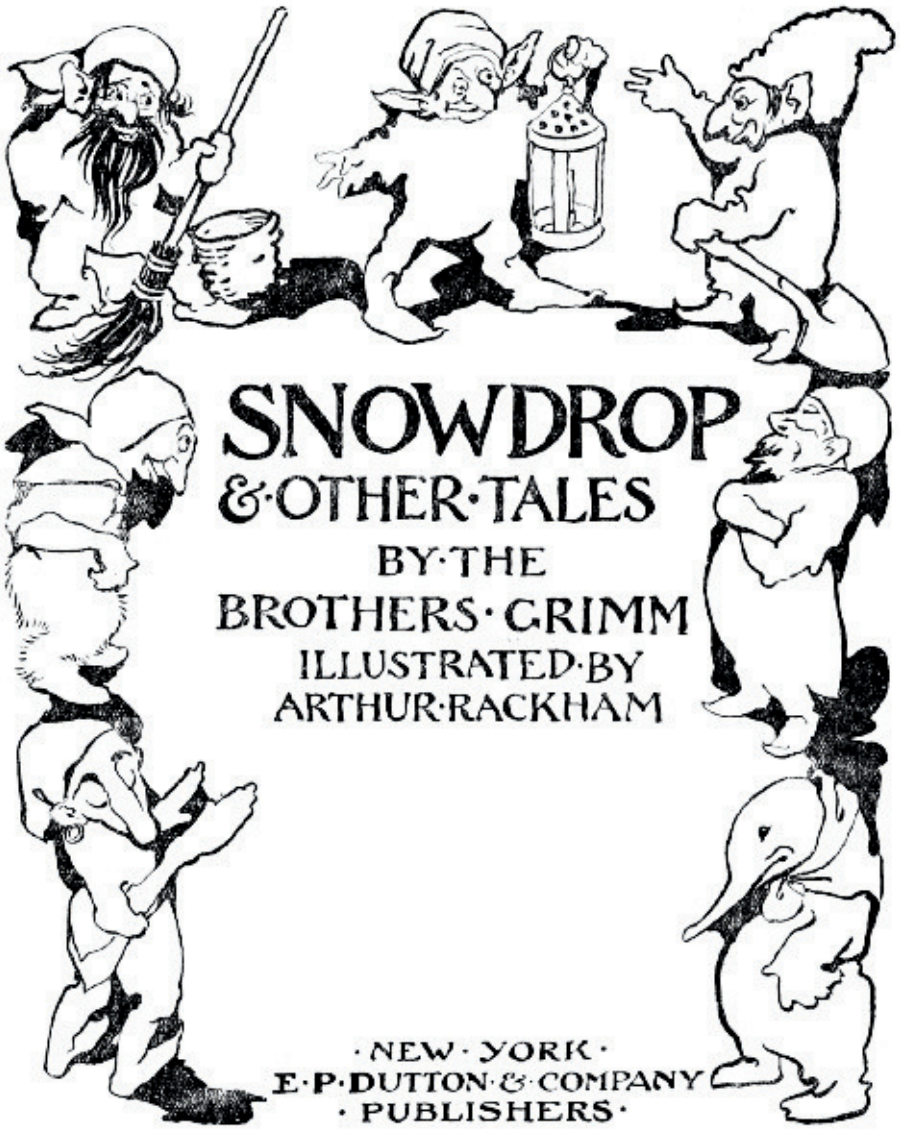
# SNOWDROP

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR RACKHAM




# SNOWDROP
# & OTHER TALES

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# Snowdrop

IT was the middle of winter, and the snowflakes were falling from the sky like feathers. Now, a Queen sat sewing at a window framed in black ebony, and as she sewed she looked out upon the snow. Suddenly she pricked her finger and three drops of blood fell on to the snow. And the red looked so lovely on the white that she thought to herself: 'If only I had a child as white as snow and as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window frame!' Soon after, she had a daughter, whose hair was black as ebony, while her cheeks were red as blood, and her skin as white as snow; so she was called Snowdrop. But when the child was born the Queen died. A year after the King took another wife. She was a handsome woman, but proud and overbearing, and could not endure that any one should surpass her in beauty. She had a magic looking-glass, and when she stood before it and looked at herself she used to say:

'Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

Who is fairest of us all?'

then the Glass answered,

'Queen, thou'rt fairest of them all.'

Then she was content, for she knew that the Looking-glass spoke the truth.

But Snowdrop grew up and became more and more beautiful, so that when she was seven years old she was as beautiful as the day, and far surpassed the Queen. Once, when she asked her Glass,

'Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

Who is fairest of us all?'

it answered—

'Queen, thou art fairest here, I hold,

But Snowdrop is fairer a thousandfold.'

Then the Queen was horror-struck, and turned green and yellow with jealousy. From the hour that she saw Snowdrop her heart sank, and she hated the little girl.

**‘Mirror, Mirror on the wall,**
**Who is fairest of us all?’**

The pride and envy of her heart grew like a weed, so that she had no rest day nor night. At last she called a Huntsman, and said: ‘Take the child out into the wood; I will not set eyes on her again; you must kill her and bring me her lungs and liver as tokens.’

The Huntsman obeyed, and took Snowdrop out into the forest, but when he drew his hunting-knife and was preparing to plunge it into her innocent heart, she began to cry: ‘Alas! dear Huntsman, spare my life, and I will run away into the wild forest and never come back again.’

And because of her beauty the Huntsman had pity on her and said, ‘Well, run away, poor child.’ Wild beasts will soon devour you, he thought, but still he felt as though a weight were lifted from his heart because he had not been obliged to kill her. And as just at that moment a young fawn came leaping by, he pierced it and took the lungs and liver as tokens to the Queen. The Cook was ordered to serve them up in pickle, and the wicked Queen ate them thinking that they were Snowdrop’s.

Now the poor child was alone in the great wood, with no living soul near, and she was so frightened that she knew not what to do. Then she began to run, and ran over the sharp stones and through the brambles, while the animals passed her by without harming her. She ran as far as her feet could carry her till it was nearly evening, when she saw a little

house and went in to rest. Inside, everything was small, but as neat and clean as could be. A small table covered with a white cloth stood ready with seven small plates, and by every plate was a spoon, knife, fork, and cup. Seven little beds were ranged against the walls, covered with snow-white coverlets. As Snowdrop was very hungry and thirsty she ate a little bread and vegetable from each plate, and drank a little wine from each cup, for she did not want to eat up the whole of one portion. Then, being very tired, she lay down in one of the beds. She tried them all but none suited her; one was too short, another too long, all except the seventh, which was just right. She remained in it, said her prayers, and fell asleep.

When it was quite dark the masters of the house came in. They were seven Dwarfs, who used to dig in the mountains for ore. They kindled their lights, and as soon as they could see they noticed that some one had been there, for everything was not in the order in which they had left it.

The first said, 'Who has been sitting in my chair?'

The second said, 'Who has been eating off my plate?'

The third said, 'Who has been nibbling my bread?'

The fourth said, 'Who has been eating my vegetables?'

The fifth said, 'Who has been using my fork?'

The sixth said, 'Who has been cutting with my knife?'

The seventh said, 'Who has been drinking out of my cup?'

**In the evening the seven Dwarfs came back.**

Then the first looked and saw a slight impression on his bed, and said, 'Who has been treading on my bed?' The others came running up and said, 'And mine, and mine.' But the seventh, when he looked into his bed, saw Snowdrop, who lay there asleep. He called the others, who came up and cried out with astonishment, as they held their lights and gazed at Snowdrop. 'Heavens! what a beautiful child,' they said, and they were so delighted that they did not wake her up but left her asleep in bed. And the seventh Dwarf slept with his comrades, an hour with each all through the night.

When morning came Snowdrop woke up, and when she saw the seven Dwarfs she was frightened.

But they were very kind and asked her name.

'I am called Snowdrop,' she answered.

'How did you get into our house?' they asked.

Then she told them how her stepmother had wished to get rid of her, how the Huntsman had spared her life, and how she had run all day till she had found the house.

Then the Dwarfs said, 'Will you look after our household, cook, make the beds, wash, sew and knit, and keep everything neat and clean? If so you shall stay with us and want for nothing.'

'Yes,' said Snowdrop, 'with all my heart'; and she stayed with them and kept the house in order.

In the morning they went to the mountain and searched for copper and gold, and in the evening they came back and then their meal had to be ready. All day the maiden was alone, and the good Dwarfs warned her and said, 'Beware of your stepmother, who will soon learn that you are here. Don't let any one in.'

But the Queen, having, as she imagined, eaten Snowdrop's liver and lungs, and feeling certain that she was the fairest of all, stepped in front of her Glass, and asked—

'Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

Who is fairest of us all?'

the Glass answered as usual—

'Queen, thou art fairest here, I hold,

But Snowdrop over the fells,

Who with the seven Dwarfs dwells,

Is fairer still a thousandfold.'

She was dismayed, for she knew that the Glass told no lies, and she saw that the Hunter had deceived her and that Snowdrop still lived. Accordingly she began to wonder afresh how she might compass her death; for as long as she was not the fairest in the land her jealous heart left her no rest. At last she thought of a plan. She dyed her face and dressed up like an old Pedlar, so that she was quite unrecognisable. In this guise she crossed over the seven mountains to the home of the seven Dwarfs and called out, 'Wares for sale.'

Snowdrop peeped out of the window and said, 'Good-day, mother, what have you got to sell?'

'Good wares, fine wares,' she answered, 'laces of every colour'; and she held out one which was made of gay plaited silk.

'I may let the honest woman in,' thought Snowdrop, and she unbolted the door and bought the pretty lace.

'Child,' said the Old Woman, 'what a sight you are, I will lace you properly for once.'

Snowdrop made no objection, and placed herself before the Old Woman to let her lace her with the new lace. But the Old Woman laced so quickly and tightly that she took away Snowdrop's breath and she fell down as though dead.

‘Now I am the fairest,’ she said to herself, and hurried away. Not long after the seven Dwarfs came home, and were horror-struck when they saw their dear little Snowdrop lying on the floor without stirring, like one dead. When they saw she was laced too tight they cut the lace, whereupon she began to breathe and soon came back to life again. When the Dwarfs heard what had happened, they said that the old Pedlar was no other than the wicked Queen. ‘Take care not to let any one in when we are not here,’ they said.

Now the wicked Queen, as soon as she got home, went to the Glass and asked—

‘Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

Who is fairest of us all?’

and it answered as usual—

‘Queen, thou art fairest here, I hold,

But Snowdrop over the fells,

Who with the seven Dwarfs dwells,

Is fairer still a thousandfold.’

When she heard it all her blood flew to her heart, so enraged was she, for she knew that Snowdrop had come back to life again. Then she thought to herself, ‘I must plan something which will put an end to her.’ By means of witchcraft, in which she was skilled, she made a poisoned comb. Next she disguised herself and took the form of a different Old Woman. She crossed the mountains and came to the home of the seven Dwarfs, and knocked at the door calling out, ‘Good wares to sell.’

Snowdrop looked out of the window and said, ‘Go away, I must not let any one in.’

‘At least you may look,’ answered the Old Woman, and she took the poisoned comb and held it up.

The child was so pleased with it that she let herself be beguiled, and opened the door.

When she had made a bargain the Old Woman said, ‘Now I will comb your hair properly for once.’

Poor Snowdrop, suspecting no evil, let the Old Woman have her way, but scarcely was the poisoned comb fixed in her hair than the poison took effect, and the maiden fell down unconscious. ‘You paragon of beauty,’ said the wicked woman, ‘now it is all over with you,’ and she went away.

Happily it was near the time when the seven Dwarfs came home. When they saw Snowdrop lying on the ground as though dead, they immediately suspected her stepmother, and

searched till they found the poisoned comb. No sooner had they removed it than Snowdrop came to herself again and related what had happened. They warned her again to be on her guard, and to open the door to no one.

When she got home the Queen stood before her Glass and said—

'Mirror, Mirror on the wall,

Who is fairest of us all?'

and it answered as usual—

'Queen, thou art fairest here, I hold,

But Snowdrop over the fells,

Who with the seven Dwarfs dwells,

Is fairer still a thousandfold.'

When she heard the Glass speak these words she trembled and quivered with rage.
'Snowdrop shall die,' she said, 'even if it cost me my own life.' Thereupon she went into a secret room, which no one ever entered but herself, and made a poisonous apple.
Outwardly it was beautiful to look upon, with rosy cheeks, and every one who saw it longed for it, but whoever ate of it was certain to die. When the apple was ready she dyed her face and dressed herself like an old Peasant Woman and so crossed the seven hills to the Dwarfs' home. There she knocked. Snowdrop put her head out of the window and said, 'I must not let any one in, the seven
Dwarfs have forbidden me.'
'It is all the same to me,' said the Peasant Woman. 'I shall soon get rid of my apples. There, I will give you one.'
'No; I must not take anything.'

'Are you afraid of poison?' said the woman. 'See, I will cut the apple in half: you eat the red side and I will keep the other.'

Now the apple was so cunningly painted that the red half alone was poisoned. Snowdrop longed for the apple, and when she saw the Peasant Woman eating she could hold out no longer, stretched out her hand and took the poisoned half. Scarcely had she put a bit into her mouth than she fell dead to the ground.
The Queen looked with a fiendish glance, and laughed aloud and said, 'White as snow, red as blood, and black as ebony, this time the Dwarfs cannot wake you up again.' And when she got home and asked the Looking-glass— 'Mirror, Mirror on the wall, Who is fairest of us all?'

it answered at last— ‘Queen, thou’rt fairest of them all.’ Then her jealous heart was at rest, as much at rest as a jealous heart can be. The Dwarfs, when they came at evening, found Snowdrop lying on the ground and not a breath escaped her lips, and she was quite dead. They lifted her up and looked to see whether any poison was to be found, unlaced her dress, combed her hair, washed her with wine and water, but it was no use; their dear child was dead. They laid her on a bier, and all seven sat down and bewailed her and lamented over her for three whole days. Then they prepared to bury her, but she looked so fresh and living, and still had such beautiful rosy cheeks, that they said, ‘We cannot bury her in the dark earth.’ And so they had a transparent glass coffin made, so that she could be seen from every side, laid her inside and wrote on it in letters of gold her name and how she was a King’s daughter. Then they set the coffin out on the mountain, and one of them always stayed by and watched it. And the birds came too and mourned for Snowdrop, first an owl, then a raven, and lastly a dove.

Now Snowdrop lay a long, long time in her coffin, looking as though she were asleep. It happened that a Prince was wandering in the wood, and came to the home of the seven Dwarfs to pass the night. He saw the coffin on the mountain and lovely Snowdrop inside, and read what was written in golden letters. Then he said to the Dwarfs, ‘Let me have the coffin; I will give you whatever you like for it.’ But they said, ‘We will not give it up for all the gold of the world.’ Then he said, ‘Then give it to me as a gift, for I cannot live without Snowdrop to gaze upon; and I will honour and reverence it as my dearest treasure.’

When he had said these words the good Dwarfs pitied him and gave him the coffin.

The Prince bade his servants carry it on their shoulders. Now it happened that they stumbled over some brushwood, and the shock dislodged the piece of apple from Snowdrop’s throat. In a short time she opened her eyes, lifted the lid of the coffin, sat up and came back to life again completely.

‘O Heaven! where am I?’ she asked.

The Prince, full of joy, said, ‘You are with me,’ and he related what had happened, and then said, ‘I love you better than all the world; come with me to my father’s castle and be my wife.’

Snowdrop agreed and went with him, and their wedding was celebrated with great magnificence. Snowdrop’s wicked stepmother was invited to the feast; and when she had put on her fine clothes she stepped to her Glass and asked— ‘Mirror, Mirror on the wall, Who is fairest of us all?’

The Glass answered— ‘Queen, thou art fairest here, I hold, The young Queen fairer a thousandfold.’ Then the wicked woman uttered a curse, and was so terribly frightened that she didn’t
know what to do. Yet she had no rest: she felt obliged to go and see the young Queen. And when she came in she recognised Snowdrop, and stood stock still with fear and terror. But iron slippers were heated over the fire, and were soon brought in with tongs and put before her. And she had to step into the red-hot shoes and dance till she fell down dead.

# The Pink

THERE was once a Queen, who had not been blessed with children. As she walked in her garden, she prayed every morning that a son or daughter might be given to her. Then one day an Angel came, and said to her: 'Be content: you shall have a son, and he shall be endowed with the power of wishing, so that whatsoever he wishes for shall be granted to him.' She hurried to the King, and told him the joyful news; and when the time came a son was born to them, and they were filled with delight.

Every morning the Queen used to take her little son into the gardens, where the wild animals were kept, to bathe him in a clear, sparkling fountain. It happened one day, when the child was a little older, that as she sat with him on her lap she fell asleep.

The old Cook, who knew that the child had the power of wishing, came by and stole it; he also killed a Chicken, and dropped some of its blood on the Queen's garments. Then he took the child away to a secret place, where he placed it out to be nursed. Then he ran back to the King, and accused the Queen of having allowed her child to be carried off by a wild animal.

When the King saw the blood on the Queen's garments he believed the story, and was overwhelmed with anger. He caused a high tower to be built, into which neither the sun nor the moon could penetrate. Then he ordered his wife to be shut up in it, and the door walled up. She was to stay there for seven years, without eating or drinking, so as gradually to pine away. But two Angels from heaven, in the shape of white doves, came to her, bringing food twice a day till the seven years were ended.

Meanwhile the Cook thought, 'If the child really has the power of wishing, and I stay here, I might easily fall into disgrace.' So he left the palace, and went to the boy, who was then old enough to talk, and said to him, 'Wish for a beautiful castle, with a garden, and everything belonging to it.' Hardly had the words passed the boy's lips than all that he had asked for was there.

After a time the Cook said, 'It is not good for you to be so much alone; wish for a beautiful Maiden to be your companion.'

The Prince uttered the wish, and immediately a Maiden stood before them, more beautiful than any painter could paint. So they grew very fond of each other, and played together, while the old Cook went out hunting like any grand gentleman. But the idea came to him one day that the Prince might wish to go to his father some time, and he would thereby be placed in a very awkward position. So he took the Maiden aside, and said to her, 'To-night, when the boy is asleep, go and drive this knife into his heart. Then bring me his heart and his tongue. If you fail to do it, you will lose your own life.'

Then he went away; but when the next day came the Maiden had not yet obeyed his command, and she said, 'Why should I shed his innocent blood, when he has never done harm to any creature in his life?'

The Cook again said, 'If you do not obey me, you will lose your own life.'

When he had gone away, she ordered a young hind to be brought and killed; then she cut out its heart and its tongue, and put them on a dish. When she saw the old man coming she said to the boy, 'Get into bed, and cover yourself right over.'

The old scoundrel came in and said, 'Where are the tongue and the heart of the boy?'

**The scullions brought live coals, which he had to eat till the flames poured out of his mouth.**

The Maiden gave him the dish; but the Prince threw off the coverings, and said, 'You old sinner, why did you want to kill me? Now hear your sentence. You shall be turned into a black Poodle, with a gold chain round your neck, and you shall be made to eat live coals, so that flames of fire may come out of your mouth.'

As he said the words, the old man was changed into a black Poodle, with a gold chain round his neck; and the scullions brought live coals, which he had to eat till the flames poured out of his mouth. The Prince stayed on at the castle for a time, thinking of his mother, and wondering if she were still alive. At last he said to the Maiden, 'I am going into my own country. If you like you can go with me; I will take you.'

She answered: ‘Alas! it is so far off, and what should I do in a strange country where I know no one?’

As she did not wish to go, and yet they could not bear to be parted, he changed her into a beautiful Pink, which he took with him.

Then he set out on his journey, and the Poodle was made to run alongside till the Prince reached his own country.

Arrived there, he went straight to the tower where his mother was imprisoned, and as the tower was so high he wished for a ladder to reach the top. Then he climbed up, looked in, and cried, ‘Dearest mother, lady Queen, are you still alive?’ She, thinking it was the Angels who brought her food come back, said, ‘I have just eaten; I do not want anything more.’

Then he said, ‘I am your own dear son whom the wild animals were supposed to have devoured; but I am still alive, and I shall soon come and rescue you.’

Then he got down and went to his father. He had himself announced as a strange Huntsman, anxious to take service with the King, who said, ‘Yes; if he was skilled in game preserving, and could procure plenty of venison, he would engage him. But there had never before been any game in the whole district.’

The Huntsman promised to procure as much game as the King could possibly require for the royal table.

Then he called the whole Hunt together, and ordered them all to come into the forest with him. He caused a great circle to be enclosed, with only one outlet; then he took his place in the middle, and began to wish as hard as he could. Immediately over two hundred head of game came running into the enclosure; these the Huntsmen had to shoot, and then they were piled on to sixty country wagons, and driven home to the King. So for once he was able to load his board with game, after having had none for many years.

The King was much pleased, and commanded his whole court to a banquet on the following day. When they were all assembled, he said to the Huntsman, ‘You shall sit by me as you are so clever.’ He answered, ‘My lord and King, may it please your Majesty, I am only a poor Huntsman!’ The King, however, insisted, and said, ‘I command you to sit by me.’ As he sat there, his thoughts wandered to his dear mother, and he wished one of the courtiers would speak of her. Hardly had he wished it than the Lord High Marshal said—

‘Your Majesty, we are all rejoicing here, how fares it with Her Majesty the Queen? Is she still alive in the tower, or has she perished?’

But the King answered, ‘She allowed my beloved son to be devoured by wild animals, and I do not wish to hear anything about her.’

Then the Huntsman stood up and said— 'Gracious father, she is still alive, and I am her son.

He was not devoured by wild animals;
he was taken away by the scoundrel of a Cook. He stole me while my mother was asleep, and sprinkled her garments with the blood of a chicken.' Then he brought up the black Poodle with the golden chain, and said, 'This is the villain.'

He ordered some live coals to be brought, which he made the dog eat in the sight of all the people till the flames poured out of his mouth. Then he asked the King if he would like to see the Cook in his true shape, and wished him back, and there he stood in his white apron, with his knife at his side.

The King was furious when he saw him, and ordered him to be thrown into the deepest dungeon. Then the Huntsman said further—

'My father would you like to see the Maiden who so tenderly saved my life when she was ordered to kill me, although by so doing she might have lost her own life?'

The King answered, 'Yes, I will gladly see her.'

Then his son said, 'Gracious father, I will show her to you first in the guise of a beautiful flower.'

He put his hand into his pocket, and brought out the Pink. It was a finer one than the King had ever seen before. Then his son said, 'Now, I will show her to you in her true form.'

The moment his wish was uttered, she stood before them in all her beauty, which was greater than any artist could paint.

The King sent ladies and gentlemen-in-waiting to the tower to bring the Queen back to his royal table. But when they reached the tower they found that she would no longer eat or drink, and she said, 'The merciful God, who has preserved my life so long, will soon release me now.'

Three days after she died. At her burial the two white Doves which had brought her food during her captivity, followed and hovered over her grave.

The old King caused the wicked Cook to be torn into four quarters; but his own heart was filled with grief and remorse, and he died soon after.

His son married the beautiful Maiden he had brought home with him as a Flower, and, for all I know, they may be living still.

# Briar Rose

ALONG time ago there lived a King and Queen, who said every day, ‘If only we had a child’; but for a long time they had none.

It fell out once, as the Queen was bathing, that a frog crept out of the water on to the land, and said to her: ‘Your wish shall be fulfilled; before a year has passed you shall bring a daughter into the world.’

The frog’s words came true. The Queen had a little girl who was so beautiful that the King could not contain himself for joy, and prepared a great feast. He invited not only his relations, friends, and acquaintances, but the fairies, in order that they might be favourably and kindly disposed towards the child. There were thirteen of them in the kingdom, but as the King had only twelve golden plates for them to eat from, one of the fairies had to stay at home.

The feast was held with all splendour, and when it came to an end the fairies all presented the child with a magic gift. One gave her virtue, another beauty, a third riches, and so on, with everything in the world that she could wish for.

When eleven of the fairies had said their say, the thirteenth suddenly appeared. She wanted to revenge herself for not having been invited. Without greeting any one, or even glancing at the company, she called out in a loud voice: ‘The Princess shall prick herself with a distaff in her fifteenth year and shall fall down dead’; and without another word she turned and left the hall.

Every one was terror-struck, but the twelfth fairy, whose wish was still unspoken, stepped forward. She could not cancel the curse, but could only soften it, so she said: ‘It shall not be death, but a deep sleep lasting a hundred years, into which your daughter shall fall.’

**'The Thirteenth Fairy.'**

The King was so anxious to guard his dear child from the misfortune, that he sent out a command that all the distaffs in the whole kingdom should be burned.

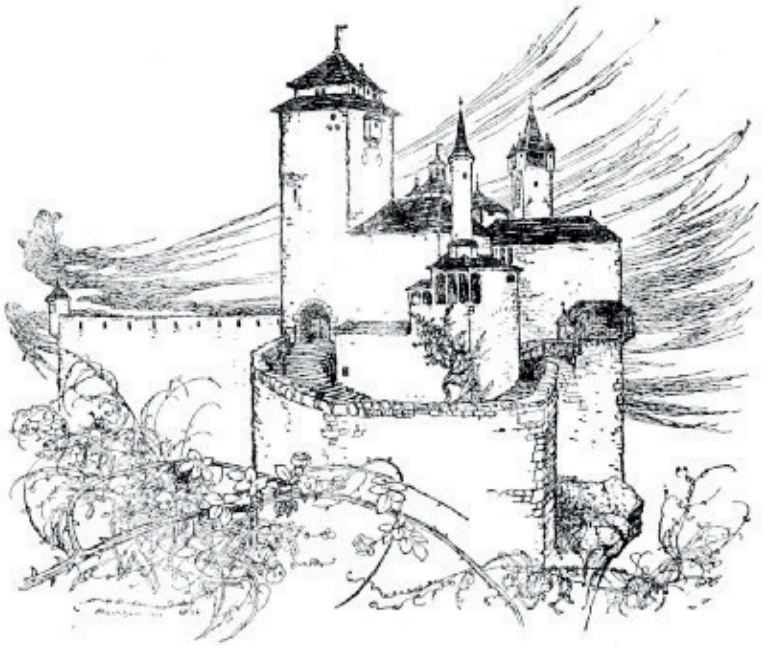
As time went on all the promises of the fairies came true. The Princess grew up so beautiful, modest, kind, and clever that every one who saw her could not but love her. Now it happened that on the very day when she was fifteen years old the King and Queen were away from home, and the Princess was left quite alone in the castle. She wandered about over the whole place, looking at rooms and halls as she pleased, and at last she came to an old tower. She ascended a narrow, winding staircase and reached a little door. A rusty key was sticking in the lock, and when she turned it the door flew open. In a little room sat an old woman with a spindle, spinning her flax busily.

'Good day, Granny,' said the Princess; 'what are you doing?'

‘I am spinning,’ said the old woman, and nodded her head. ‘What is the thing that whirls round so merrily?’ asked the Princess; and she took the spindle and tried to spin too.

But she had scarcely touched it before the curse was fulfilled, and she pricked her finger with the spindle. The instant she felt the prick she fell upon the bed which was standing near, and lay still in a deep sleep which spread over the whole castle. The King and Queen, who had just come home and had stepped into the hall, went to sleep, and all their courtiers with them. The horses went to sleep in the stable, the dogs in the yard, the doves on the roof, the flies on the wall; yes, even the fire flickering on the hearth grew still and went to sleep, and the roast meat stopped crackling; the cook, who was pulling the scullion’s hair because he had made some mistake, let him go and went to sleep. The wind dropped, and on the trees in front of the castle not a leaf stirred.

But round the castle a hedge of briar roses began to grow up; every year it grew higher, till at last it surrounded the whole castle so that nothing could be seen of it, not even the flags on the roof. But there was a legend in the land about the lovely sleeping Briar Rose, as the King’s daughter was called, and from time to time princes came and tried to force a way through the hedge into the castle. They found it impossible, for the thorns, as though they had hands, held them fast, and the princes remained caught in them without being able to free themselves, and so died a miserable death.



**But round the castle a hedge of briar roses began to grow up.**

After many, many years a Prince came again to the country and heard an old man tell of the castle which stood behind the briar hedge, in which a most beautiful maiden called Briar Rose had been asleep for the last hundred years, and with her slept the King, Queen, and all her courtiers. He knew also, from his grandfather, that many princes had already come and sought to pierce through the briar hedge, and had remained caught in it and died a sad death.

Then the young Prince said, 'I am not afraid; I am determined to go and look upon the lovely Briar Rose.'

The good old man did all in his power to dissuade him, but the Prince would not listen to his words.

Now, however, the hundred years were just ended, and the day had come when Briar Rose was to wake up again. When the Prince approached the briar hedge it was in blossom, and was covered with beautiful large flowers which made way for him of their own accord and let him pass unharmed, and then closed up again into a hedge behind him.

In the courtyard he saw the horses and brindled hounds lying asleep, on the roof sat the doves with their heads under their wings: and when he went into the house the flies were asleep on the walls, and near the throne lay the King and Queen; in the kitchen was the

cook, with his hand raised as though about to strike the scullion, and the maid sat with the black fowl in her lap which she was about to pluck.

He went on further, and all was so still that he could hear his own breathing. At last he reached the tower, and opened the door into the little room where Briar Rose was asleep. There she lay, looking so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her; he bent down and gave her a kiss. As he touched her, Briar Rose opened her eyes and looked lovingly at him. Then they went down together; and the King woke up, and the Queen, and all the courtiers, and looked at each other with astonished eyes. The horses in the stable stood up and shook themselves, the hounds leaped about and wagged their tails, the doves on the roof lifted their heads from under their wings, looked round, and flew into the fields; the flies on the walls began to crawl again, the fire in the kitchen roused itself and blazed up and cooked the food, the meat began to crackle, and the cook boxed the scullion's ears so soundly that he screamed aloud, while the maid finished plucking the fowl. Then the wedding of the Prince and Briar Rose was celebrated with all splendour, and they lived happily till they died.

# The Jew among the Thorns

THERE was once a rich Man, and he had a Servant who served him well and faithfully. He was first up in the morning, and last to go to bed at night. If there was any hard work to be done which no one else would do, he was always ready to undertake it. He never made any complaint, but was always merry and content.

When his year of service was over, his Master did not give him any wages, thinking: 'This is my wisest plan. I save by it, and he is not likely to run away.'

The Servant said nothing, and served the second year like the first. And when at the end of the second he again received no wages, he still appeared contented, and stayed on. When the third year had passed, the Master bethought himself, and put his hand into his pocket, but he brought it out empty.

At last the Servant said: 'Master, I have served you well and truly for three years; please pay me my wages. I want to go away and look about the world a bit.'

The Miser answered: 'Yes, my good fellow, you have served me honestly, and you shall be liberally rewarded.'

Again he put his hand into his pocket, and counted three farthings, one by one, into the Servant's hand, and said: 'There, you have a farthing for every year; that is better wages than you would get from most masters.' The good Servant, who knew little about money, put away his fortune, and thought: 'Now my pocket is well filled, I need no longer trouble myself about work.' Then he left and went singing down the hill, and dancing, in the lightness of his heart.

Now it so happened that as he was passing a thicket, that a little Mannikin came out and cried: 'Whither away, my merry fellow? I see your troubles are not too heavy to be borne.'

'Why should I be sad?' answered the Servant. 'I have three years' wages in my pocket.'

'And how much is your treasure?' asked the Mannikin.

'How much? Why, three good farthings.'

'Listen!' said the Mannikin. 'I am a poor needy fellow; give me your three farthings. I can't work any more; but you are young, and can easily earn your bread.'

Now the Servant had a good heart, and he was sorry for the poor little man, so he gave him his three farthings, and said:

'Take them, in the name of heaven! I shall not miss them.'

‘Then,’ said the Mannikin, ‘I see what a good heart you have. I will give you three wishes, one for each farthing; and every wish shall be fulfilled.’

‘Aha!’ said the Servant, ‘you are a wonder-worker I see. Very well, then. First, I wish for a gun which will hit everything I aim at; secondly, for a fiddle which will make every one dance when I play; and, thirdly, if I ask anything of any one, that he shall not be able to refuse my request.’

‘You shall have them all,’ said the Mannikin, diving into the bushes, where, wonderful to relate, lay the gun and the fiddle ready, just as if they had been ordered beforehand. He gave them to the Servant, and said: ‘No one will be able to refuse anything you ask.’ ‘Heart alive! what more can one desire,’ said the Servant to himself, as he went merrily on. Soon after, he met a Jew with a long goat’s beard, who was standing still listening to the song of a bird sitting on the top of a tree. ‘Good heavens!’ he was saying, ‘what a tremendous noise such a tiny creature makes. If only it were mine! If one could but put some salt upon its tail!’

‘If that is all,’ said the Servant, ‘the bird shall soon come down.’

He took aim, and down fell the bird into a quickset hedge.

‘Go, you rogue,’ he said to the Jew, ‘and pick up the bird.’

‘Leave out the “rogue,” young man. I will get the bird sure enough, as you have killed it for me,’ said the Jew.

He lay down on the ground and began to creep into the hedge.

**The Jew was forced to spring up and begin to dance.**

When he had got well among the thorns, a spirit of mischief seized the Servant, and he began to play his fiddle with all his might. The Jew was forced to spring up and begin to dance, and the more the Servant played, the faster he had to dance. The thorns tore his shabby coat, combed his goat's beard, and scratched him all over.

'Merciful Heavens!' cried the Jew. 'Leave off that fiddling! I don't want to dance, my good fellow.'

But the Servant paid no attention to him, but thought: 'You have fleeced plenty of people in your time, my man, and the thorns shan't spare you now!' And he played on and on, so that the Jew had to jump higher and higher, till his coat hung in ribbons about him. 'I cry "enough!"' screamed the Jew. 'I will give you anything you like if you will only stop. Take the purse, it is full of gold.'

'Oh, well, if you are so open-handed,' said the Servant, 'I am quite ready to stop my music, but I must say in praise of your dancing, that it has quite a style of its own.' Then he took the purse and went on his way. The Jew stood still looking after him till he was a good way off, then he screamed with all his might: 'You miserable fiddler! Just you wait till I find you alone! I will chase you till the soles of your shoes drop off—you rascal!' And he went on pouring out a stream of abuse. Having relieved himself by so doing, he hurried off to the Judge in the nearest town.

'Just look here, your worship,' he said, 'look how I have been attacked, and ill-treated, and robbed on the high road by a wretch. My condition might melt the heart of a stone; my clothes and my body torn and scratched, and my purse with all my poor little savings taken away from me. All my beautiful ducats, each one prettier than the other. Oh dear! Oh dear! For heaven's sake, put the wretch in prison.' The Judge said: 'Was it a soldier who punished you so with his sword?' 'Heaven preserve us!' cried the Jew, 'he had no sword, but he had a gun on his shoulder and a fiddle round his neck. The villain is easily to be recognised.'

So the Judge sent out men in pursuit of the honest Servant, who had walked on slowly. They soon overtook him, and the purse of gold was found on him. When he was brought before the Judge, he said— 'I never touched the Jew, nor did I take his money away; he offered it to me of his own free will if I would only stop playing, because he could not bear my music.'

'Heaven defend us!' screamed the Jew, 'his lies are as thick as flies on the wall.'

And the Judge did not believe him either, and said:

'That is a very lame excuse; no Jew ever did such a thing.' So he sentenced the honest Servant to the gallows for having committed a robbery upon the king's highway.

When he was being led away, the Jew screamed after him; ‘You vagabond, you dog of a fiddler, now you will get your deserts!’

The Servant mounted the ladder to the gallows quite quietly, with the halter round his neck; but at the last rung he turned round and said to the Judge: ‘Grant me one favour before I die.’ ‘Certainly,’ said the Judge, ‘as long as you don’t ask for your life.’ ‘Not my life,’ answered the Servant. ‘I only ask to play my fiddle once more.’

**Dancing as hard as he could.**

The Jew raised a tremendous cry. ‘Don’t allow it, your worship, for heaven’s sake, don’t allow it!’

But the Judge said: ‘Why should I deny him that short pleasure? His wish is granted, and there’s an end of the matter!’

He could not have refused even if he had wished, because of the Mannikin’s gift to the Servant.

The Jew screamed, ‘Oh dear! Oh dear! Tie me tight, tie me tight!’

The good Servant took his fiddle from his neck, and put it into position, and at the first chord everybody began to wag their heads, the Judge, his Clerk, and all the Officers of Justice, and the rope fell out of the hand of the man about to bind the Jew.

At the second scrape, they all lifted their legs, and the Hangman let go his hold of the honest Servant, to make ready to dance.

At the third scrape they one and all leapt into the air, and began to caper about, the Judge and the Jew at the head, and they all leapt their best.

Soon, every one who had come to the market-place out of curiosity, old and young, fat and lean, were dancing as hard as they could; even the dogs got upon their hind legs, and pranced about with the rest. The longer he played, the higher they jumped, till they knocked their heads together, and made each other cry out.

At last the Judge, quite out of breath, cried: 'I will give you your life, if only you will stop playing.'

The honest Servant allowed himself to be prevailed upon, laid his fiddle aside, and came down the ladder. Then he went up to the Jew, who lay upon the ground gasping, and said to him: 'You rascal, confess where you got the money, or I will begin to play again.' 'I stole it! I stole it!' he screamed; 'but you have honestly earned it.' The Judge then ordered the Jew to the gallows to be hanged as a thief.

# Ashenputtel

THE wife of a rich man fell ill, and when she felt that she was nearing her end, she called her only daughter to her bedside, and said:

'Dear child, continue devout and good, then God will always help you, and I will look down upon you from heaven, and watch over you.'

Thereupon she closed her eyes, and breathed her last.

The maiden went to her mother's grave every day and wept, and she continued to be devout and good. When the winter came, the snow spread a white covering on the grave, and when the sun of spring had unveiled it again, the husband took another wife. The new wife brought home with her two daughters, who were fair and beautiful to look upon, but base and black at heart.

Then began a sad time for the unfortunate step-child.

'Is this stupid goose to sit with us in the parlour?' they said.

'Whoever wants to eat bread must earn it; go and sit with the kitchenmaid.'

They took away her pretty clothes, and made her put on an old grey frock, and gave her wooden clogs.

'Just look at the proud Princess, how well she's dressed,' they laughed, as they led her to the kitchen. There, the girl was obliged to do hard work from morning till night, to get up at daybreak, carry water, light the fire, cook, and wash. Not content with that, the sisters inflicted on her every vexation they could think of; they made fun of her, and tossed the peas and lentils among the ashes, so that she had to sit down and pick them out again. In the evening, when she was worn out with work, she had no bed to go to, but had to lie on the hearth among the cinders. And because, on account of that, she always looked dusty and dirty, they called her Ashenputtel.

It happened one day that the Father had a mind to go to the Fair. So he asked both his step-daughters what he should bring home for them.

'Fine clothes,' said one.

'Pearls and jewels,' said the other.

'But you, Ashenputtel?' said he, 'what will you have?'

'Father, break off for me the first twig which brushes against your hat on your way home.'

Well, for his two step-daughters he brought beautiful clothes, pearls and jewels, and on his way home, as he was riding through a green copse, a hazel twig grazed against him and knocked his hat off. Then he broke off the branch and took it with him.

When he got home he gave his step-daughters what they had asked for, and to Ashenputtel he gave the twig from the hazel bush.

Ashenputtel thanked him, and went to her mother's grave and planted the twig upon it; she wept so much that her tears fell and watered it. And it took root and became a fine tree.

Ashenputtel went to the grave three times every day, wept and prayed, and every time a little white bird came and perched upon the tree, and when she uttered a wish, the little bird threw down to her what she had wished for. Now it happened that the King proclaimed a festival, which was to last three days, and to which all the beautiful maidens in the country were invited, in order that his son might choose a bride. When the two step-daughters heard that they were also to be present, they were in high spirits, called Ashenputtel, and said:

'Brush our hair and clean our shoes, and fasten our buckles, for we are going to the feast at the King's palace.'

Ashenputtel obeyed, but wept, for she also would gladly have gone to the ball with them, and begged her Step-mother to give her leave to go.

'You, Ashenputtel!' she said. 'Why, you are covered with dust and dirt. You go to the festival! Besides you have no clothes or shoes, and yet you want to go to the ball.'

As she, however, went on asking, her Step-mother said:

'Well, I have thrown a dishful of lentils into the cinders, if you have picked them all out in two hours you shall go with us.'

The girl went through the back door into the garden, and cried, 'Ye gentle doves, ye turtle doves, and all ye little birds under heaven, come and help me,

'The good into a dish to throw,

The bad into your crops can go.'

Then two white doves came in by the kitchen window, and were followed by the turtle doves, and finally all the little birds under heaven flocked in, chirping, and settled down among the ashes. And the doves gave a nod with their little heads, peck, peck, peck; and then the rest began also, peck, peck, peck, and collected all the good beans into the dish. Scarcely had an hour passed before they had finished, and all flown out again. Then the girl brought the dish to her Step-mother, and was delighted to think that now she would be able to go to the feast with them.

But she said, ‘No, Ashenputtel, you have no clothes, and cannot dance; you will only be laughed at.’

But when she began to cry, the Step-mother said:

‘If you can pick out two whole dishes of lentils from the ashes in an hour, you shall go with us.’

And she thought, ‘She will never be able to do that.’

When her Step-mother had thrown the dishes of lentils among the ashes, the girl went out through the back door, and cried, 'Ye gentle doves, ye turtle doves, and all ye little birds under heaven, come and help me,

'The good into a dish to throw,

The bad into your crops can go.'

Then two white doves came in by the kitchen window, and were followed by the turtle doves, and all the other little birds under heaven, and in less than an hour the whole had been picked up, and they had all flown away. Then the girl carried the dish to her Step-mother, and was delighted to think that she would now be able to go to the ball.

But she said, 'It's not a bit of good. You can't go with us, for you've got no clothes, and you can't dance. We should be quite ashamed of you.'

Thereupon she turned her back upon her, and hurried off with her two proud daughters.

As soon as every one had left the house, Ashenputtel went out to her mother's grave under the hazel-tree, and cried:

'Shiver and shake, dear little tree,

Gold and silver shower on me.'

Then the bird threw down to her a gold and silver robe, and a pair of slippers embroidered with silk and silver. With all speed she put on the robe and went to the feast. But her step-sisters and their mother did not recognise her, and supposed that she was some foreign Princess, so beautiful did she appear in her golden dress. They never gave a thought to Ashenputtel, but imagined that she was sitting at home in the dirt picking the lentils out of the cinders.

The Prince came up to the stranger, took her by the hand, and danced with her. In fact, he would not dance with any one else, and never left go of her hand. If any one came up to ask her to dance, he said, 'This is my partner.' She danced until nightfall, and then wanted to go home; but the Prince said, 'I will go with you and escort you.'

For he wanted to see to whom the beautiful maiden belonged. But she slipped out of his way and sprang into the pigeon-house.

Then the Prince waited till her Father came, and told him that the unknown maiden had vanished into the pigeon-house.

The old man thought, 'Could it be Ashenputtel?' And he had an axe brought to him, so that he might break down the pigeon-house, but there was no one inside.

When they went home, there lay Ashenputtel in her dirty clothes among the cinders, and a dismal oil lamp was burning in the chimney corner. For Ashenputtel had quietly jumped down out of the pigeon-house and ran back to the hazel-tree. There she had taken off her beautiful clothes and laid them on the grave, and the bird had taken them away again. Then she had settled herself among the ashes on the hearth in her old grey frock.

On the second day, when the festival was renewed, and her parents and step-sisters had started forth again, Ashenputtel went to the hazel-tree, and said:

'Shiver and shake, dear little tree,

Gold and silver shower on me.'

Then the bird threw down a still more gorgeous robe than on the previous day. And when she appeared at the festival in this robe, every one was astounded by her beauty.

The King's son had waited till she came, and at once took her hand, and she danced with no one but him. When others came forward and invited her to dance, he said, 'This is my partner.' At nightfall she wished to leave; but the Prince went after her, hoping to see into what house she went, but she sprang out into the garden behind the house. There stood a fine big tree on which the most delicious pears hung. She climbed up among the branches as nimbly as a squirrel, and the Prince could not make out what had become of her.

But he waited till her Father came, and then said to him, 'The unknown maiden has slipped away from me, and I think that she has jumped into the pear-tree.'

The Father thought, 'Can it be Ashenputtel?' And he had the axe brought to cut down the tree, but there was no one on it. When they went home and looked into the kitchen, there lay Ashenputtel among the cinders as usual; for she had jumped down on the other side of the tree, taken back the beautiful clothes to the bird on the hazel-tree, and put on her old grey frock. On the third day, when her parents and sisters had started, Ashenputtel went again to her mother's grave, and said:

'Shiver and shake, dear little tree,

Gold and silver shower on me.'

Then the bird threw down a dress which was so magnificent that no one had ever seen the like before, and the slippers were entirely of gold. When she appeared at the festival in this attire, they were all speechless with astonishment. The Prince danced only with her, and if any one else asked her to dance, he said, 'This is my partner.'

When night fell and she wanted to leave, the Prince was more desirous than ever to accompany her, but she darted away from him so quickly that he could not keep up with her. But the Prince had used a stratagem, and had caused the steps to be covered with

cobbler's wax. The consequence was, that as the maiden sprang down them, her left slipper remained sticking there. The Prince took it up. It was small and dainty, and entirely made of gold.

The next morning he went with it to Ashenputtel's Father, and said to him, 'No other shall become my wife but she whose foot this golden slipper fits.'

The two sisters were delighted at that, for they both had beautiful feet. The eldest went into the room intending to try on the slipper, and her Mother stood beside her. But her great toe prevented her getting it on, her foot was too long. Then her Mother handed her a knife, and said, 'Cut off the toe; when you are Queen you won't have to walk any more.'

The girl cut off her toe, forced her foot into the slipper, stifled her pain, and went out to the Prince. Then he took her up on his horse as his Bride, and rode away with her.

However, they had to pass the grave on the way, and there sat the two Doves on the hazel-tree, and cried:

'Prithee, look back, prithee, look back,

There's blood on the track,

The shoe is too small,

At home the true Bride is waiting thy call.'

Then he looked at her foot and saw how the blood was streaming from it. So he turned his horse round and carried the false Bride back to her home, and said that she was not the right one; the second sister must try the shoe. Then she went into the room, and succeeded in getting her toes into the shoe, but her heel was too big.

Then her Mother handed her a knife, and said, 'Cut a bit off your heel; when you are Queen you won't have to walk any more.'

The maiden cut a bit off her heel, forced her foot into the shoe, stifled her pain, and went out to the Prince.

Then he took her up on his horse as his Bride, and rode off with her.

As they passed the grave, the two Doves were sitting on the hazel-tree, and crying:

'Prithee, look back, prithee, look back,

There's blood on the track,

The shoe is too small,

At home the true Bride is waiting thy call.'

He looked down at her foot and saw that it was streaming with blood, and there were deep red spots on her stockings. Then he turned his horse and brought the false Bride back to her home.

'This is not the right one either,' he said. 'Have you no other daughter?'

'No,' said the man. 'There is only a daughter of my late wife's, a puny, stunted drudge, but she cannot possibly be the Bride.'

The Prince said that she must be sent for.

But the Mother answered, 'Oh no, she is much too dirty; she mustn't be seen on any account.'

He was, however, absolutely determined to have his way, and they were obliged to summon Ashenputtel.

When she had washed her hands and face, she went up and curtsied to the Prince, who handed her the golden slipper.

Then she sat down on a bench, pulled off her wooden clog and put on the slipper, which fitted to a nicety.

And when she stood up and the Prince looked into her face, he recognised the beautiful maiden that he had danced with, and cried: 'This is the true Bride!'

The Step-mother and the two sisters were dismayed and turned white with rage; but he took Ashenputtel on his horse and rode off with her.

As they rode past the hazel-tree the two White Doves cried:

'Prithee, look back, prithee, look back,

No blood's on the track,

The shoe's *not* too small,

You carry the true Bride home to your hall.'

And when they had said this they both came flying down, and settled on Ashenputtel's shoulders, one on the right, and one on the left, and remained perched there.

When the wedding was going to take place, the two false sisters came and wanted to curry favour with her, and take part in her good fortune. As the bridal party was going to the church, the eldest was on the right side, the youngest on the left, and the Doves picked out one of the eyes of each of them.

Afterwards, when they were coming out of the church, the elder was on the left, the younger on the right, and the Doves picked out the other eye of each of them. And so for their wickedness and falseness they were punished with blindness for the rest of their days.

# The White Snake

A LONG time ago there lived a King whose wisdom was celebrated far and wide. Nothing was unknown to him, and news of the most secret transactions seemed to reach him through the air.

Now he had one very odd habit. Every day at dinner, when the courtiers had withdrawn, and he was quite alone, a trusted Servant had to bring in another dish. It was always covered, and even the Servant did not know what it contained, nor any one else, for the King never uncovered it till he was alone. This had gone on for a long time, when one day the Servant who carried the dish was overcome by his curiosity, and took the dish to his own room.

When he had carefully locked the door, he took the dish-cover off, and saw a White Snake lying on the dish.

At the sight of it, he could not resist tasting it; so he cut a piece off, and put it into his mouth.

Hardly had he tasted it, however, when he heard a wonderful whispering of delicate voices.

He went to the window and listened, and he noticed that the whispers came from the sparrows outside. They were chattering away, and telling each other all kinds of things that they had heard in the woods and fields. Eating the Snake had given him the power of understanding the language of birds and animals.

Now it happened on this day that the Queen lost her most precious ring, and suspicion fell upon this trusted Servant who went about everywhere.

The King sent for him, and threatened that if it was not found by the next day, he would be sent to prison.

In vain he protested his innocence; he was not believed.

In his grief and anxiety he went down into the courtyard and wondered how he should get out of his difficulty.

A number of Ducks were lying peaceably together by a stream, stroking down their feathers with their bills, while they chattered gaily.

The Servant stood still to listen to them. They were telling each other of their morning's walks and experiences.

Then one of them said somewhat fretfully: 'I have something lying heavy on my stomach. In my haste I swallowed the Queen's ring this morning.'

The Servant quickly seized it by the neck, carried it off into the kitchen, and said to the Cook: 'Here's a fine fat Duck. You had better kill it at once.'

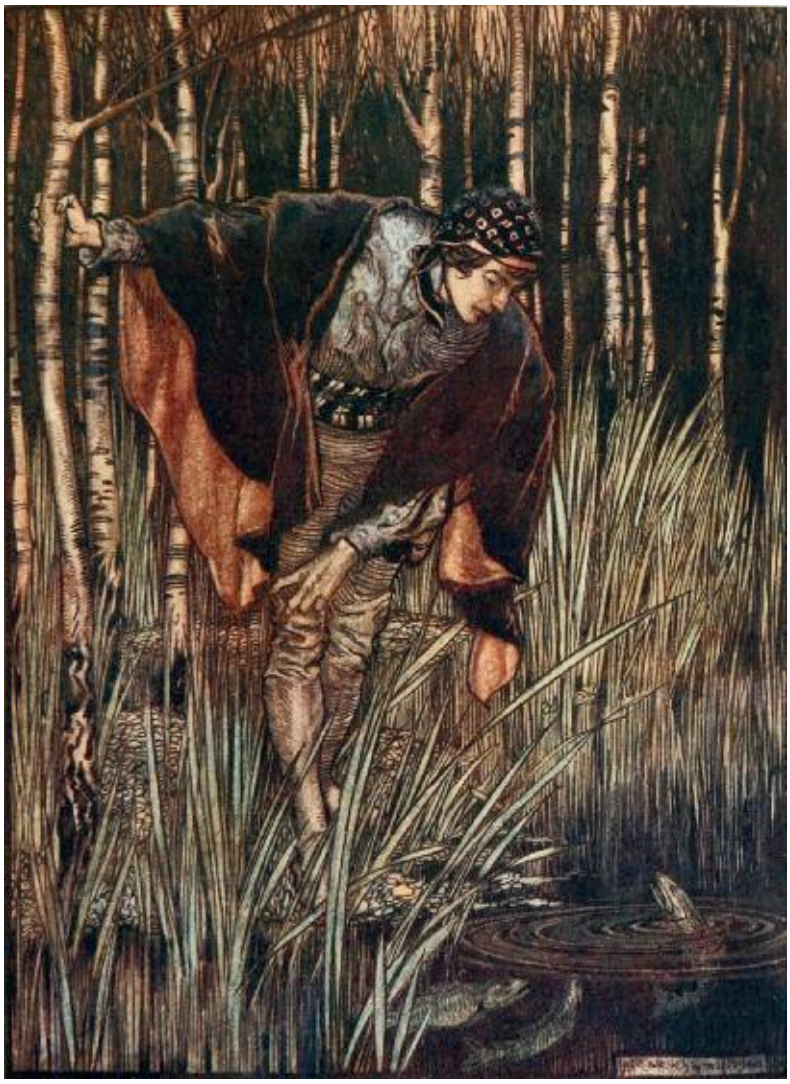
‘Yes, indeed,’ said the Cook, weighing it in her hand. ‘It has spared no pains in stuffing itself; it should have been roasted long ago.’

So she killed it, and cut it open, and there, sure enough, was the Queen’s ring.

The Servant had now no difficulty in proving his innocence, and the King, to make up for his injustice, gave the Servant leave to ask any favour he liked, and promised him the highest post about the Court which he might desire.

The Servant, however, declined everything but a horse, and some money to travel with, as he wanted to wander about for a while, to see the world.

His request being granted, he set off on his travels, and one day came to a pond, where he saw three Fishes caught among the reeds, and gasping for breath. Although it is said that fishes are dumb, he understood their complaint at perishing thus miserably. As he had a compassionate heart, he got off his horse and put the three captives back into the water. They wriggled in their joy, stretched up their heads above the water, and cried— ‘We will remember that you saved us, and reward you for it.’



He rode on again, and after a time he seemed to hear a voice in the sand at his feet. He listened, and heard an Ant-King complain: 'I wish these human beings and their animals would keep out of our way. A clumsy horse has just put his hoof down upon a number of my people in the most heartless way.'

He turned his horse into a side path, and the Ant-King cried: 'We will remember and reward you.'

The road now ran through a forest, and he saw a pair of Ravens standing by their nest throwing out their young.

'Away with you, you gallows birds,' they were saying. 'We can't feed you any longer. You are old enough to look after yourselves.'

The poor little nestlings lay on the ground, fluttering and flapping their wings, and crying: 'We, poor helpless children, to feed ourselves, and we can't even fly! We shall die of hunger, there is nothing else for it.'

The good Youth dismounted, killed his horse with his sword, and left the carcase as food for the young Ravens. They hopped along to it, and cried: 'We will remember and reward you.'

Now he had to depend upon his own legs, and after going a long way he came to a large town.

There was much noise and bustle in the streets, where a man on horseback was making a proclamation.

'The King's daughter seeks a husband, but any one who wishes to sue for her hand must accomplish a hard task; and if he does not bring it to a successful issue, he will forfeit his life.' Many had already attempted the task, but they had risked their lives in vain. When the Youth saw the Princess, he was so dazzled by her beauty that he forgot all danger, at once sought an audience of the King, and announced himself as a suitor.

He was immediately led out to the seashore, and a golden ring was thrown into the water before his eyes. Then the King ordered him to fetch it out from the depths of the sea, and added— 'If you come to land without it, you will be thrown back every time till you perish in the waves.'

Every one pitied the handsome Youth, but they had to go and leave him standing solitary on the seashore.

He was pondering over what he should do, when, all at once, he saw three Fishes swimming towards him. They were no others than the very ones whose lives he had saved.

The middle one carried a mussel-shell in its mouth, which it laid on the sand at the feet of the Youth. When he picked it up, and opened it, there lay the ring.

Full of joy, he took it to the King, expecting that he would give him the promised reward.

The proud Princess, however, when she heard that he was not her equal, despised him, and demanded that he should perform yet another task.

So she went into the garden herself, and strewed ten sacks of millet seeds among the grass.

'He must pick up every one of those before the sun rises to-morrow morning,' said she. 'Not a grain must be missing.'

The Youth sat miserably in the garden, wondering how it could possibly be done. But as he could not think of a plan, he remained sadly waiting for the dawn which would bring death to him.

But when the first sunbeams fell on the garden, he saw the ten sacks full to the top, and not a grain was missing. The Ant-King had come in the night with thousands and thousands of his Ants, and the grateful creatures had picked up the millet and filled the sacks.

The Princess came into the garden herself, and saw with amazement that the Youth had completed the task.

But still she could not control her proud heart, and she said: 'Even if he has accomplished these two tasks, he shall not become my husband till he brings me an apple from the tree of life.'

The Youth had no idea where to find the tree of life. However, he started off, meaning to walk as far as his legs would carry him; but he had no hope of finding it.

When he had travelled through three kingdoms, he was one night passing through a great forest, and he lay down under a tree to sleep.

He heard a rustling among the branches, and a golden apple fell into his hand. At the same time three Ravens flew down and perched on his knee, and said:

'We are the young Ravens you saved from death. When we grew big, and heard that you were looking for the golden apple, we flew across the sea to the end of the world, where the tree of life stands, and brought you the apple.' The Youth, delighted, started on his homeward journey, and took the golden apple to the
beautiful Princess, who had now no further excuse to offer.

They divided the apple of life, and ate it together, and then her heart was filled with love for him, and they lived happily to a great age.

# The Wolf and the Seven Kids

THERE was once an old Nanny-goat who had seven Kids, and she was just as fond of them as a mother of her children. One day she was going into the woods to fetch some food for them, so she called them all up to her, and said—

'My dear children, I am going out into the woods. Beware of the Wolf! If once he gets into the house, he will eat you up, skin, and hair, and all. The rascal often disguises himself, but you will know him by his rough voice and his black feet.' The Kids said, 'Oh, we will be very careful, dear mother. You may be quite happy about us.' Bleating tenderly, the old Goat went off to her work. Before long, some one knocked at the door, and cried—

'Open the door, dear children! Your mother has come back and brought something for each of you.'

But the Kids knew quite well by the voice that it was the Wolf.

'We won't open the door,' they cried. 'You are not our mother. She has a soft gentle voice; but yours is rough, and we are quite sure that you are the Wolf.'

So he went away to a shop and bought a lump of chalk, which he ate, and it made his voice quite soft. He went back, knocked at the door again, and cried—

'Open the door, dear children. Your mother has come back and brought something for each of you.'

But the Wolf had put one of his paws on the window sill, where the Kids saw it, and cried—

'We won't open the door. Our mother has not got a black foot as you have; you are the Wolf.'

Then the Wolf ran to a Baker, and said, 'I have bruised my foot; please put some dough on it.' And when the Baker had put some dough on his foot, he ran to the Miller and said, 'Strew some flour on my foot.' The Miller thought, 'The old Wolf is going to take somebody in,' and refused. But the Wolf said, 'If you don't do it, I will eat you up.' So the Miller was frightened, and whitened his paws. People are like that, you know. Now the wretch went for the third time to the door, and knocked, and said— 'Open the door, children. Your dear mother has come home, and has brought something for each of you out of the wood.'

The Kids cried, 'Show us your feet first, that we may be sure you are our mother.' He put his paws on the window sill, and when they saw that they were white, they believed all he said, and opened the door.

Alas! It was the Wolf who walked in. They were terrified, and tried to hide themselves. One ran under the table, the second jumped into bed, the third into the oven, the fourth ran into the kitchen, the fifth got into the cupboard, the sixth into the wash-tub, and the seventh hid in the tall clock-case. But the Wolf found them all but one, and made short work of them. He swallowed one after the other, except the youngest one in the clock-case, whom he did not find. When he had satisfied his appetite, he took himself off, and lay down in a meadow outside, where he soon fell asleep. Not long after the old Nanny-goat came back from the woods. Oh! what a terrible sight met her eyes! The house door was wide open, table, chairs, and benches were overturned, the washing bowl was smashed to atoms, the covers and pillows torn from the bed. She searched all over the house for her children, but nowhere were they to be found. She called them by name, one by one, but no one answered. At last, when she came to the youngest, a tiny voice cried:

'I am here, dear mother, hidden in the clock-case.'

She brought him out, and he told her that the Wolf had come and devoured all the others.

You may imagine how she wept over her children.

At last, in her grief, she went out, and the youngest Kid ran by her side. When they went into the meadow, there lay the Wolf under a tree, making the branches shake with his snores. They examined him from every side, and they could plainly see movements within his distended body.

'Ah, heavens!' thought the Goat, 'is it possible that my poor children whom he ate for his supper, should be still alive?'

She sent the Kid running to the house to fetch scissors, needles, and thread. Then she cut a hole in the monster's side, and, hardly had she begun, when a Kid popped out its head, and as soon as the hole was big enough, all six jumped out, one after the other, all alive, and without having suffered the least injury, for, in his greed, the monster had swallowed them whole. You may imagine the mother's joy. She hugged them, and skipped about like a tailor on his wedding day. At last she said:

'Go and fetch some big stones, children, and we will fill up the brute's body while he is asleep.'

Then the seven Kids brought a lot of stones, as fast as they could carry them, and stuffed the Wolf with them till he could hold no more. The old mother quickly sewed him up, without his having noticed anything, or even moved.

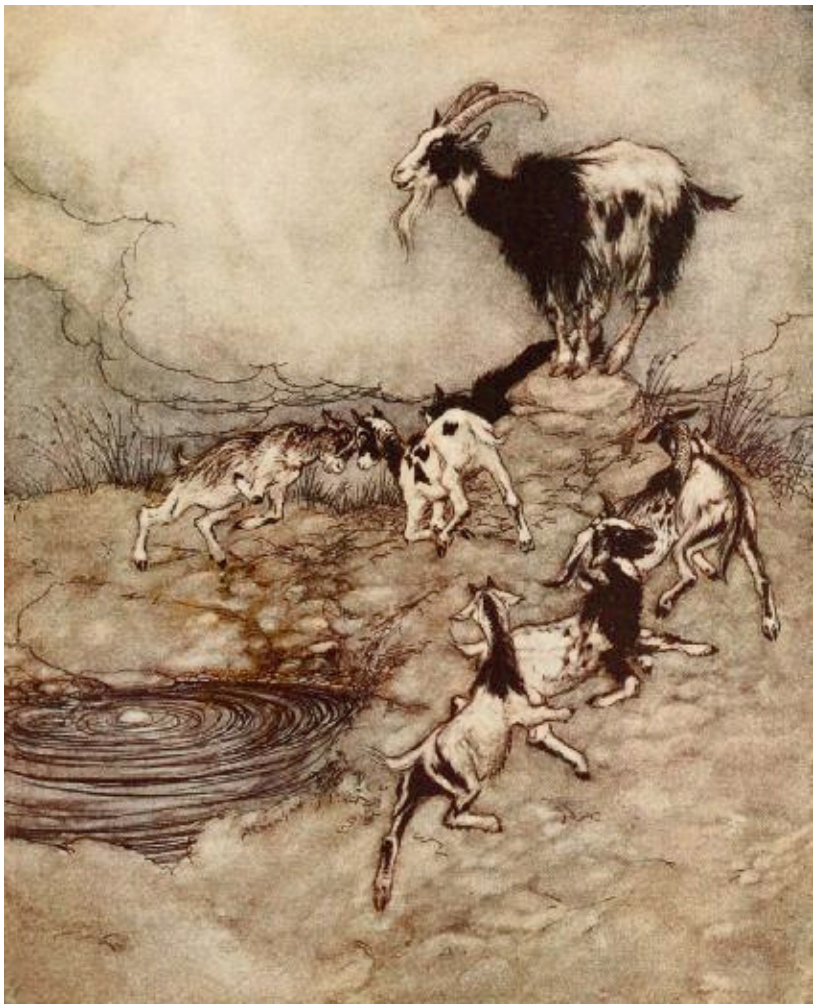
At last, when the Wolf had had his sleep out, he got up, and, as the stones made him feel very thirsty, he wanted to go to a spring to drink. But as soon as he moved the stones began to roll about and rattle inside him. Then he cried—

'What's the rumbling and tumbling

That sets my stomach grumbling?

I thought 'twas six Kids, flesh and bones,

Now find it's nought but rolling stones.'



When he reached the spring, and stooped over the water to drink, the heavy stones dragged him down, and he was drowned miserably.

When the seven Kids saw what had happened, they came running up, and cried aloud—'The Wolf is dead, the Wolf is dead!' and they and their mother capered and danced round the spring in their joy.

# The Queen Bee

ONCE upon a time two Princes started off in search of adventure, and, falling into a wild, free mode of life, did not come home again.

The third Brother, who was called the Blockhead, set out to look for the other two.

But when at last he found them, they mocked him for thinking of making his way in the world with his simplicity, while they, who were so much cleverer, could not get on.

They all three went on together till they came to an ant-heap. The two elder Princes wanted to disturb it, to see how the little ants crept away, carrying their eggs.

But the Blockhead said: 'Leave the little creatures alone; I will not allow you to disturb them.'

Then they went on further till they came to a lake, in which a great many ducks were swimming about. The two wanted to catch and roast a pair.

But the Blockhead would not allow it, and said: 'Leave the creatures alone. You shall not kill them.'

At last they came to a bee's nest, containing such a quantity of honey that it flowed round the trunk of the tree.

The two Princes wanted to set fire to the tree, and suffocate the bees, so as to remove the honey.

But the Blockhead stopped them again, and said: 'Leave the creatures alone. I will not let you burn them.'

At last the three Brothers came to a castle, where the stables were full of stone horses, but not a soul was to be seen. They went through all the rooms till they came to a door quite at the end, fastened with three bolts. In the middle of the door was a lattice, through which one could see into the room.

There they saw a little grey Man sitting at a table. They called to him once—twice—but he did not hear them. Finally, when they had called him the third time, he stood up and opened the door, and came out. He said not a word, but led them to a richly-spread table, and when they had eaten and drunk, he took them each to a bedroom.

The next morning the little grey Man came to the eldest Prince, beckoned, and led him to a stone tablet whereon were inscribed three tasks by means of which the castle should be freed from enchantment. This was the first task: In the wood, under the moss, lay the Princesses' pearls, a thousand
in number. These had all to be found, and if at sunset a single one were missing, the seeker was turned to stone.

The eldest went away, and searched all day, but when evening came, he had only found the first hundred, and it happened as the inscription foretold. He was turned to stone.

The next day the second Brother undertook the quest; but he fared no better than the first, for he only found two hundred pearls, and he too was turned to stone.

At last came the Blockhead's turn; he searched in the moss, but the pearls were hard to find, and he got on but slowly.

Then he sat down on a rock and cried, and as he was sitting there, the Ant-King, whose life he had saved, came up with five thousand ants, and it was not long before the little creatures had found all the pearls and laid them in a heap. Now the second task was to get the key of the Princesses' room out of the lake. When the Blockhead came to the lake, the ducks he had once saved, swam up, dived, and brought up the key from the depths.

But the third task was the hardest. The Prince had to find out which was the youngest and most charming of the Princesses while they were asleep.

They were exactly alike, and could not be distinguished in any way, except that before going to sleep each had eaten a different kind of sweet. The eldest a piece of sugar, the second a little syrup, and the third a spoonful of honey. Then the Queen of the Bees, whom the Blockhead had saved from burning, came and tried the lips of all three. Finally, she settled on the mouth of the one who had eaten the honey, and so the Prince recognised the right one. Then the charm was broken and everything in the castle was set free, and those who had been turned to stone took human form again.

And the Blockhead married the youngest and sweetest Princess, and became King after her father's death, while his two Brothers married the other sisters.

# The Elves and the Shoemaker

THERE was once a Shoemaker who, through no fault of his own, had become so poor that at last he had only leather enough left for one pair of shoes. At evening he cut out the shoes which he intended to begin upon the next morning, and since he had a good conscience, he lay down quietly, said his prayers, and fell asleep.

In the morning when he had said his prayers, and was preparing to sit down to work, he found the pair of shoes standing finished on his table. He was amazed, and could not understand it in the least. He took the shoes in his hand to examine them more closely. They were so neatly sewn that not a stitch was out of place, and were as good as the work of a master-hand.

Soon after a purchaser came in, and as he was much pleased with the shoes, he paid more than the ordinary price for them, so that the Shoemaker was able to buy leather for two pairs of shoes with the money. He cut them out in the evening, and next day, with fresh courage, was about to go to work; but he had no need to, for when he got up, the shoes were finished, and buyers were not lacking. These gave him so much money that he was able to buy leather for four pairs of shoes.

Early next morning he found the four pairs finished, and so it went on; what he cut out at evening was finished in the morning, so that he was soon again in comfortable circumstances, and became a well-to-do man. Now it happened one evening, not long before Christmas, when he had cut out some shoes as usual, that he said to his Wife: 'How would it be if we were to sit up to-night to see who it is that lends us such a helping hand?' The Wife agreed, lighted a candle, and they hid themselves in the corner of the room behind the clothes which were hanging there.

At midnight came two little naked men who sat down at the Shoemaker's table, took up the cut-out work, and began with their tiny fingers to stitch, sew, and hammer so neatly and quickly, that the Shoemaker could not believe his eyes. They did not stop till everything was quite finished, and stood complete on the table; then they ran swiftly away.

The next day the Wife said: 'The little men have made us rich, and we ought to show our gratitude. They were running about with nothing on, and must freeze with cold. Now I will make them little shirts, coats, waistcoats, and hose, and will even knit them a pair of stockings, and you shall make them each a pair of shoes.'

The Husband agreed, and at evening, when they had everything ready, they laid out the presents on the table, and hid themselves to see how the little men would behave.

At midnight they came skipping in, and were about to set to work; but, instead of the leather ready cut out, they found the charming little clothes.

At first they were surprised, then excessively delighted. With the greatest speed they put on and smoothed down the pretty clothes, singing:

‘Now we’re boys so fine and neat,

Why cobble more for other’s feet?’

Then they hopped and danced about, and leapt over chairs and tables and out at the door.

Henceforward, they came back no more, but the Shoemaker fared well as long as he lived, and had good luck in all his undertakings.

# The Wolf and the Man

A FOX was one day talking to a Wolf about the strength of man.

> 'No animals,' he said, 'could withstand man, and they were obliged to use cunning to hold their own against him.'

The Wolf answered, 'If ever I happened to see a man, I should attack him all the same.'

'Well, I can help you to that,' said the Fox. 'Come to me early to-morrow, and I will show you one!'

The Wolf was early astir, and the Fox took him out to a road in the forest, traversed daily by a Huntsman.

First came an old discharged soldier.

'Is that a Man?' asked the Wolf.

'No,' answered the Fox. 'He has been a Man.'

After that, a little boy appeared on his way to school.

'Is that a Man?'

'No; he is going to be a Man.'

At last the Huntsman made his appearance, his gun on his back, and his hunting-knife at his side. The Fox said to the Wolf,—

'Look! There comes a Man. You may attack him, but I will make off to my hole!'

The Wolf set on the Man, who said to himself when he saw him, 'What a pity my gun isn't loaded with ball,' and fired a charge of shot in the Wolf's face. The Wolf made a wry face, but he was not to be so easily frightened, and attacked him again. Then the Huntsman gave him the second charge. The Wolf swallowed the pain, and rushed at the Huntsman; but he drew his bright hunting-knife, and hit out right and left with it, so that, streaming with blood, the Wolf ran back to the Fox.

'Well, brother Wolf,' said the Fox, 'and how did you get on with the Man?'

'Alas!' said the Wolf. 'I never thought the strength of man would be what it is. First, he took a stick from his shoulder, and blew into it, and something flew into my face, which tickled frightfully. Then he blew into it again, and it flew into my eyes and nose like lightning and hail. Then he drew a shining rib out of his body, and struck at me with it till I was more dead than alive.'

‘Now, you see,’ said the Fox, ‘what a braggart you are. You throw your hatchet so far that you can’t get it back again.’

# The Turnip

THERE were once two Brothers who both served as soldiers, and one was rich and the other was poor.

The poor one, wishing to better himself, discarded his uniform and worked like a Peasant. Then he dug and hoed his little field and sowed Turnips.

The seed came up, and one of the Turnips grew to such an enormous size, that it seemed as though it would never have finished; and it might have been called the Queen of Turnips, for its like had never been seen before, nor ever will be again. At last it was so big that it filled a cart, and needed two oxen to draw it; and the Peasant could not imagine what would come of it, whether it would bring good luck or bad.

At last he said to himself: 'If I sell it what shall I gain? I might eat it, but the little Turnips would do as well for that. The best thing will be to take it to the King and offer it to him.'

So he loaded a cart, harnessed two oxen, and took it to the Court to present it to the King.

'What is that extraordinary object?' said the King. 'I have seen many marvels in my time, but never anything so remarkable as this. What seed did it spring from? Perhaps it belongs to you, especially if you are a child of good luck?'

'Oh no,' said the Peasant, 'lucky I certainly am not, for I am a poor Soldier, who, since he could keep himself no longer, has hung up his uniform on a nail, and tills the earth. Further, I have a Brother who is rich, and well known to you, my Lord King; but I, because I have nothing, am forgotten by all the world.'

Then the King pitied him and said: 'Your poverty shall be at an end, and you shall receive such rich presents from me that your wealth will equal that of your Brother.'

Thereupon he gave him plenty of gold, lands, fields, and flocks, and enriched him with precious stones, so that the other Brother's wealth could not be compared with his.

Now, when the rich Brother heard what his Brother with the single Turnip had acquired, he envied him, and pondered how he might gain a like treasure for himself.

**So the rich Brother had to put his Brother's Turnip into a cart, and have it taken home.**

But he wanted to show himself much cleverer, so he took gold and horses and presented them to the King, feeling certain that he would give him a far handsomer gift; for if his Brother got so much for a Turnip, what would not he get for his beautiful things.

The King took the present, saying that he could give him in return nothing rarer or better than the huge Turnip.

So the rich Brother had to put his Brother's Turnip into a cart, and have it taken home.

Then he did not know on whom to expend his wrath and bitterness, till evil thoughts came to him, and he determined to kill his Brother.

He hired Murderers, who were to place themselves in ambush, and then he went to his Brother, and said: 'Dear Brother, I know of a secret treasure which we will carry off and divide.' The other agreed, and went without suspicion. But when they got out, the Murderers sprang upon him, bound him, and prepared to hang him on a tree.

While they were about it, they heard in the distance the clatter of hoofs and the sound of singing, which frightened them so much that they stuck their Prisoner into a sack, head foremost, slung it up on a branch, and took to flight. But the Man up in the sack worked a hole in it, and stuck his head through. Now the traveller turned out to be nothing more than a Student, a young fellow who was
riding through the wood, singing cheerily.

When the Man up in the sack saw some one down below, he called out: 'Good-day. You come in the nick of time.'

The Student looked all round, but could not make out where the voice came from.

At last he said: ‘Who calls?’ A voice from above answered: ‘Raise your eyes, I am sitting up here in the Sack of Wisdom,
and in a short time I have learnt so much that the wisdom of the schools is as air compared to mine. Soon I shall be quite perfect, and shall come down and be the wisest of all mankind. I understand the stars and signs of the heavens, the blowing of the winds, the sand of the sea, the healing of sickness, the power of herbs, birds, and stones. If you were once inside, you would feel what wonders flow from the Sack of Knowledge.’

When the Student heard this he was astonished, and said: ‘Blessed be the hour when I met you, if only I too might get into the sack for a little.’

The other answered, as though unwillingly: ‘I will let you in for a little while for payment and kind words, but you must wait an hour, as there is something rather difficult which I must learn first.’

But when the Student had waited a little, he grew impatient and entreated permission to get in, so great was his thirst for knowledge. Then the Man in the sack pretended to give in, and said: ‘In order that I may get out of the sack you must let it down, then you can get in.’

So the Student let it down, undid the sack and released the Prisoner, and said: ‘Now pull me up as fast as possible’; and he tried to get into the sack and stand upright in it.

‘Stop,’ said the other. ‘That won’t do.’ And he packed him in head first, tied it up, and slung up the Disciple of Wisdom, dangling him in the air, and said: ‘How are you, my dear fellow? You will soon feel wisdom coming upon you, and will have a most interesting experience. Sit still till you are wiser.’

Thereupon he mounted the Student’s horse, and rode off, but sent some one in an hour to let him down again.

# Clever Hans

WHERE are you going, Hans?' asked his Mother.

'To see Grettel,' answered Hans.

'Behave well, Hans!'

'All right, Mother. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye, Hans.'

Hans comes to Grettel.

'Good morning, Grettel.'

'Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?'

'I've not brought you anything. I want a present.'

Grettel gives him a needle. Hans takes the needle, and sticks it in a load of hay, and walks home behind the cart.

'Good evening, Mother.'

'Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?'

'I've been to Grettel's.'

'What did you give her?'

'I gave her nothing. But she made me a present.'

'What did she give you?'

'She gave me a needle.'

'What did you do with it?'

'Stuck it in the hay-cart.'

'That was stupid, Hans. You should have stuck it in your sleeve.'

'Never mind, Mother; I'll do better next time.'

'Where are you going, Hans?'

'To see Grettel, Mother.'

'Behave well.'

‘All right, Mother. Good-bye.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans comes to Grettel.

‘Good morning, Grettel.’

‘Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?’

‘I’ve brought nothing. But I want something.’

Grettel gives him a knife.

‘Good-bye, Grettel.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans takes the knife, and sticks it in his sleeve, and goes home.

‘Good evening, Mother.’

‘Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?’

‘Been to see Grettel.’

‘What did you give her?’

‘I gave her nothing. But she gave me something.’

‘What did she give you?’

‘She gave me a knife.’

‘Where is the knife, Hans?’

‘I stuck it in my sleeve.’

‘That’s a stupid place, Hans. You should have put it in your pocket.’

‘Never mind, Mother; I’ll do better next time.’

‘Where are you going, Hans?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’

‘Behave well, then.’

‘All right, Mother. Good-bye.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans comes to Grettel.

‘Good morning, Grettel.’

‘Good morning, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?’

‘I’ve brought nothing. What have you got for me?’

Grettel gives him a young kid.

‘Good-bye, Grettel.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans takes the kid, ties its legs together, and puts it in his pocket.

When he got home, it was suffocated.

‘Good evening, Mother.’

‘Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?’

‘Been to see Grettel, Mother.’

‘What did you give her?’

‘I gave her nothing. But I brought away something.’

‘What did Grettel give you?’

‘She gave me a young kid.’

‘What did you do with the kid?’

‘Put it in my pocket, Mother.’

‘That was very stupid. You should have led it by a rope.’

‘Never mind, Mother; I’ll manage better next time.’

‘Where are you going, Hans?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’

‘Manage well, then.’

‘All right, Mother. Good-bye.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans comes to Grettel.

‘Good morning, Grettel.’

‘Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?’

‘I’ve brought you nothing. What have you got for me?’

Grettel gives him a piece of bacon.

‘Good-bye, Grettel.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans takes the bacon, ties a rope round it, and drags it along behind him. The dogs come after him, and eat it up. When he got home he had the rope in his hand, but there was nothing at the end of it.

‘Good evening, Mother.’

‘Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’

‘What did you take her?’

‘I took nothing. But I brought something away.’

‘What did she give you?’

‘She gave me a piece of bacon.’

‘What did you do with the bacon, Hans?’

‘I tied it to a rope, and dragged it home. But the dogs ate it.’

‘That was a stupid business, Hans. You should have carried it on your head.’

‘Never mind, Mother; I’ll do better next time.’ ‘Where are you going, Hans?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’ ‘Behave properly, then.’ ‘All right, Mother. Good-bye.’

‘Good-bye, Hans.’ Hans comes to Grettel. ‘Good morning, Grettel.’ ‘Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?’ ‘I’ve brought nothing. What have you got for me?’ Grettel gives Hans a calf. ‘Good-bye, Grettel.’ ‘Good-bye, Hans.’

Hans takes the calf, and puts it on his head. It kicks his face.

‘Good evening, Mother.’

‘Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?’

‘Been to see Grettel, Mother.’

‘What did you take her?’

‘I took her nothing, Mother. She gave me something.’

‘What did she give you, Hans?’

‘She gave me a calf, Mother.’

‘What did you do with the calf?’

‘Put it on my head, Mother, and it kicked my face.’

‘That was very stupid, Hans. You should have led it by a rope, and put it in the cow-stall.’

‘Never mind, Mother; I’ll do better next time.’

‘Where are you going, Hans?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’

‘Mind how you behave, Hans.’

‘All right, Mother. Good-bye.’

Hans goes to Grettel.

**When he got home he had the rope in his hand, but there was nothing at the end of it.**

‘Good morning, Grettel.’

‘Good morning, Hans. What have you brought me?’

‘I’ve brought you nothing. I want to take away something.’

‘I’ll go with you myself, Hans.’

Hans ties Grettel to a rope, and leads her home, where he puts her in a stall, and ties her up. Then he goes into the house to his Mother.

‘Good evening, Mother.’

‘Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?’

‘To see Grettel, Mother.’

‘What did you take her?’

‘I took nothing.’

‘What did Grettel give you?’

‘She gave me nothing. She came with me.’

‘Where did you leave Grettel?’

‘Tied up in the stable with a rope.’

‘That was stupid. You should have cast sheep’s eyes at her.’

‘Never mind; I’ll do better next time.’

Hans went into the stable, plucked the eyes out of the cows and calves, and threw them in Grettel’s face.

Grettel got angry, broke the rope, and ran away.

Yet she became Hans’ wife.

# The Three Languages

THERE once lived in Switzerland an old Count, who had an only son; but he was very stupid, and could learn nothing. So his father said to him: 'Listen to me, my son. I can get nothing into your head, try as hard as I may. You must go away from here, and I will hand you over to a renowned Professor for a whole year.' At the end of the year he came home again, and his father asked: 'Now, my son, what have you learnt?'

'Father, I have learnt the language of dogs.'

'Mercy on us!' cried his father, 'is that all you have learnt? I will send you away again to another Professor in a different town.' The youth was taken there, and remained with this Professor also for another year. When he came back his father asked him again: 'My son, what have you learnt?'

He answered: 'I have learnt bird language.'

Then the father flew into a rage, and said: 'Oh, you hopeless creature, have you been spending all this precious time and learnt nothing? Aren't you ashamed to come into my presence? I will send you to a third Professor, but if you learn nothing this time, I won't be your father any longer.'

The son stopped with the third Professor in the same way for a whole year, and when he came home again and his father asked, 'My son, what have you learnt?' he answered—

'My dear father, this year I have learnt frog language.'

Thereupon his father flew into a fearful passion, and said: 'This creature is my son no longer. I turn him out of the house and command you to lead him into the forest and take his life.'

**On the way he passed a swamp, in which a number of Frogs were croaking.**

They led him forth, but when they were about to kill him, for pity's sake they could not do it, and let him go. Then they cut out the eyes and tongue of a Fawn, in order that they might take back proofs to the old Count.

The youth wandered about, and at length came to a castle, where he begged a night's lodging.

'Very well,' said the Lord of the castle. 'If you like to pass the night down there in the old tower, you may; but I warn you that it will be at the risk of your life, for it is full of savage

dogs. They bark and howl without ceasing, and at certain hours they must have a man thrown to them, and they devour him at once.'

The whole neighbourhood was distressed by the scourge, but no one could do anything to remedy it. But the youth was not a bit afraid, and said: 'Just let me go down to these barking dogs, and give me something that I can throw to them; they won't do me any harm.' As he would not have anything else, they gave him some food for the savage dogs, and took him down to the tower.

The dogs did not bark at him when he entered, but ran round him wagging their tails in a most friendly manner, ate the food he gave them, and did not so much as touch a hair of his head. The next morning, to the surprise of every one, he made his appearance again, and said to the Lord of the castle, 'The Dogs have revealed to me in their own language why they live there and bring mischief to the country. They are enchanted, and obliged to guard a great treasure which is hidden under the tower, and will get no rest till it has been dug up; and how that has to be done I have also learnt from them.' Every one who heard this was delighted, and the Lord of the castle said he would adopt him as a son if he accomplished the task successfully. He went down to the tower again, and as he knew how to set to work he accomplished his task, and brought out a chest full of gold. The howling of the savage Dogs was from that time forward heard no more. They entirely disappeared, and the country was delivered from the scourge. After a time, he took it into his head to go to Rome. On the way he passed a swamp, in which a number of Frogs were croaking. He listened, and when he heard what they were saying he became quite pensive and sad. At last he reached Rome, at a moment when the Pope had just died, and there was great doubt among the Cardinals whom they ought to name as his successor. They agreed at last that the man to whom some divine miracle should be manifested ought to be chosen as Pope. Just as they had come to this decision, the young Count entered the church, and suddenly two snow-white doves flew down and alighted on his shoulders. The clergy recognised in this the sign from Heaven, and asked him on the spot whether he would be Pope.

He was undecided, and knew not whether he was worthy of the post; but the Doves told him that he might accept, and at last he said 'Yes.'

Thereupon he was anointed and consecrated, and so was fulfilled what he had heard from the Frogs on the way, which had disturbed him so much—namely, that he should become Pope. Then he had to chant mass, and did not know one word of it. But the two Doves sat upon his shoulders and whispered it to him.

# The Fox and the Cat

IT happened once that the Cat met Mr. Fox in the wood, and because she thought: 'He is clever and experienced in all the ways of the world,' she addressed him in a friendly manner.

'Good morning, dear Mr. Fox! how are you and how do you get along in these hard times?'

The Fox, full of pride, looked at the Cat from head to foot for some time hardly knowing whether he would deign to answer or not. At last he said—

'Oh, you poor whisker-wiper, you piebald fool, you starveling mouse-hunter! what has come into your head? How dare you ask me how I am getting on? What sort of education have you had? How many arts are you master of?'

**The Cat crept stealthily up to the topmost branch.**

'Only one,' said the Cat, meekly. 'And what might that one be?' asked the Fox. 'When the hounds run after me, I can jump into a tree and save myself.' 'Is that all?' said the Fox. 'I am master of a hundred arts, and I have a sack full of cunning tricks in addition. But I pity you. Come with me, and I will teach you how to escape the hounds.'

Just then, a huntsman came along with four hounds. The Cat sprang trembling into a tree, and crept stealthily up to the topmost branch, where she was entirely hidden by twigs and leaves.

'Open your sack, Mr. Fox! open your sack!' cried the Cat; but the hounds had gripped him, and held him fast.

'O Mr. Fox!' cried the Cat, 'you with your hundred arts, and your sack full of tricks, are caught, while I, with my one, am safe. Had you been able to climb up here, you would not have lost your life.'

# The Four Clever Brothers

THERE was once a poor man who had four sons, and when they were grown up, he said to them: 'Dear children, you must go out into the world now, for I have nothing to give you. You must each learn a trade and make your own way in the world.'

So the four Brothers took their sticks in their hands, bid their father good-bye, and passed out of the town gate.

When they had walked some distance, they came to four cross roads, which led into four different districts. Then the eldest one said: 'We must part here, but this day four years, we will meet here again, having in the meantime done our best to make our fortunes.' Then each one went his own way. The eldest met an old man, who asked him where he came from, and what he was going to do.

'I want to learn a trade,' he answered.

Then the Man said: 'Come with me and learn to be a Thief.'

'No,' answered he, 'that is no longer considered an honest trade; and the end of that song would be that I should swing as the clapper in a bell.'

'Oh,' said the Man, 'you need not be afraid of the gallows. I will only teach you how to take things no one else wants, or knows how to get hold of, and where no one can find you out.'

So he allowed himself to be persuaded, and under the Man's instructions he became such an expert thief that nothing was safe from him which he had once made up his mind to have. The second Brother met a Man who put the same question to him, as to what he was going to do in the world.

'I don't know yet,' he answered.

'Then come with me and be a Star-gazer. It is the grandest thing in the world, nothing is hidden from you.'

He was pleased with the idea, and became such a clever Star-gazer, that when he had learnt everything and wanted to go away, his master gave him a telescope, and said—

'With this you can see everything that happens in the sky and on earth, and nothing can remain hidden from you.'

The third Brother was taken in hand by a Huntsman, who taught him everything connected with sport so well, that he became a first-rate Huntsman.

On his departure his master presented him with a gun, and said: 'This gun will never miss: whatever you aim at you will hit without fail.'

The youngest Brother also met a Man who asked him what he was going to do.

'Wouldn't you like to be a Tailor?' he asked.

'I don't know about that,' said the young man. 'I don't much fancy sitting cross-legged from morning till night, and everlastingly pulling a needle in and out, and pushing a flat iron.'

'Dear, dear!' said the Man, 'what are you talking about? If you come to me you will learn quite a different sort of tailoring. It is a most pleasant and agreeable trade, not to say most honourable.' So he allowed himself to be talked over, and went with the Man, who taught him his trade thoroughly.

On his departure, he gave him a needle, and said: 'With this needle you will be able to stitch anything together, be it as soft as an egg, or as hard as steel; and it will become like a whole piece of stuff with no seam visible.' When the four years, which the Brothers had agreed upon, had passed, they met at the cross-roads. They embraced one another and hurried home to their Father.

'Well!' said he, quite pleased to see them, 'has the wind wafted you back to me again?'

They told him all that had happened to them, and that each had mastered a trade. They were sitting in front of the house under a big tree, and their Father said—

'Now, I will put you to the test, and see what you can do.'

Then he looked up and said to his second son—

'There is a chaffinch's nest in the topmost branch of this tree; tell me how many eggs there are in it?'

The Star-gazer took his glass and said: 'There are five.'

His Father said to the eldest: 'Bring the eggs down without disturbing the bird sitting on them.'

The cunning Thief climbed up and took the five eggs from under the bird so cleverly that it never noticed they were gone, and he gave them to his Father. His Father took them, and put them one on each corner of the table, and one in the middle, and said to the Sportsman—

'You must shoot the five eggs through the middle at one shot.'

The Sportsman levelled his gun, and divided each egg in half at one shot, as his Father desired. He certainly must have had some of the powder which shoots round the corner.

‘Now it is your turn,’ said his Father to the fourth son. ‘You will sew the eggs together again, the shells and the young birds inside them; and you will do it in such a manner that they will be none the worse for the shot.’

The Tailor produced his needle, and stitched away as his Father ordered. When he had finished, the Thief had to climb up the tree again, and put the eggs back under the bird without her noticing it. The bird spread herself over the eggs, and a few days later the fledglings crept out of the shell, and they all had a red line round their throats where the Tailor had sewn them together. ‘Yes,’ said the old man to his sons; ‘I can certainly praise your skill. You have learnt
something worth knowing, and made the most of your time. I don’t know which of you to give the palm to. I only hope you may soon have a chance of showing your skill so that it may be settled.’

Not long after this there was a great alarm raised in the country: the King’s only daughter had been carried off by a Dragon. The King sorrowed for her day and night, and proclaimed that whoever brought her back should marry her.

The four Brothers said to one another: ‘This would be an opportunity for us to prove what we can do.’ And they decided to go out together to deliver the Princess.

‘I shall soon know where she is,’ said the Star-gazer, as he looked through his telescope; and then he said—

‘I see her already. She is a long way from here, she is sitting on a rock in the middle of the sea, and the Dragon is near, watching her.’

Then he went to the King and asked for a ship for himself and his Brothers to cross the sea in search of the rock.

They found the Princess still on the rock, but the Dragon was asleep with his head on her lap.

The Sportsman said: ‘I dare not shoot. I should kill the beautiful maiden.’

‘Then I will try my luck,’ said the Thief, and he stole her away from beneath the Dragon. He did it so gently and skilfully, that the monster never discovered it, but went snoring on.

Full of joy, they hurried away with her to the ship, and steered for the open sea. But the Dragon on waking had missed the Princess, and now came after them through the air, foaming with rage.

Just as he was hovering over the ship and about to drop on them, the Sportsman took aim with his gun and shot him through the heart. The monster fell down dead, but he was so huge, that in falling, he dragged the whole ship down with him. They managed to seize a few boards, on which they kept themselves afloat.

They were now in great straits, but the Tailor, not to be outdone, produced his wonderful needle, and put some great stitches into the boards, seated himself on them, and collected all the floating bits of the ship. Then he stitched them all together so cleverly, that in a very short time the ship was seaworthy again, and they sailed happily home.

**They found the Princess still on the rock, but the Dragon was asleep with his head on her lap.**

The King was overjoyed when he saw his daughter again, and he said to the four Brothers: 'One of you shall marry her, but which one, you must decide among yourselves.'

An excited discussion then took place among them, for each one made a claim.

The Star-gazer said: 'Had I not discovered the Princess, all your arts would have been in vain, therefore she is mine!'

The Thief said: 'What would have been the good of discovering her if I had not taken her from under the Dragon? So she is mine.'

The Sportsman said: ‘You, as well as the Princess, would have been destroyed by the monster if my shot had not hit him. So she is mine.’

The Tailor said: ‘And if I had not sewn the ship together with my skill, you would all have been drowned miserably. Therefore she is mine.’

The King said: ‘Each of you has an equal right; but, as you can’t all have her, none of you shall have her. I will give every one of you half a kingdom as a reward.’

The Brothers were quite satisfied with this decision, and they said: ‘It is better so than that we should quarrel over it.’

So each of them received half a kingdom, and they lived happily with their Father for the rest of their days.

# The Lady and the Lion

THERE was once a Man who had to take a long journey, and when he was saying good-bye to his daughters he asked what he should bring back to them.

The eldest wanted pearls, the second diamonds, but the third said, 'Dear father, I should like a singing, soaring lark.'

The father said, 'Very well, if I can manage it, you shall have it'; and he kissed all three and set off. He bought pearls and diamonds for the two eldest, but he had searched everywhere in vain for the singing, soaring lark, and this worried him, for his youngest daughter was his favourite child.

Once his way led through a wood, in the midst of which was a splendid castle; near it stood a tree, and right up at the top he saw a lark singing and soaring. 'Ah,' he said, 'I have come across you in the nick of time'; and he called to his Servant to dismount and catch the little creature. But as he approached the tree a Lion sprang out from underneath, and shook himself, and roared so that the leaves on the tree trembled. 'Who dares to steal my lark?' said he. 'I will eat up the thief!' Then the Man said, 'I didn't know that the bird was yours. I will make up for my fault by paying a heavy ransom. Only spare my life.'

But the Lion said, 'Nothing can save you, unless you promise to give me whatever first meets you when you get home. If you consent, I will give you your life and the bird into the bargain.' But the Man hesitated, and said, 'Suppose my youngest and favourite daughter were to come running to meet me when I go home!'

But the Servant was afraid, and said, 'Your daughter will not necessarily be the first to come to meet you; it might just as well be a cat or a dog.'

So the Man let himself be persuaded, took the lark, and promised to the Lion for his own whatever first met him on his return home. When he reached home, and entered his house, the first person who met him was none other than his youngest daughter; she came running up and kissed and caressed him, and when she saw that he had brought the singing, soaring lark, she was beside herself with joy. But her father could not rejoice; he began to cry, and said, 'My dear child, it has cost me dear, for I have had to promise you to a Lion who will tear you in pieces when he has you in his power.' And he told her all that had happened, and begged her not to go, come what might.

But she consoled him, saying, 'Dear father, what you have promised must be performed. I will go and will soon soften the Lion's heart, so that I shall come back safe and sound.' The

next morning the way was shown to her, and she said good-bye and went confidently into the forest.

Now the Lion was an enchanted Prince, who was a Lion by day, and all his followers were Lions too; but by night they reassumed their human form. On her arrival she was kindly received, and conducted to the castle. When night fell, the Lion turned into a handsome man, and their wedding was celebrated with due magnificence. And they lived happily together, sitting up at night and sleeping by day. One day he came to her and said, 'To-morrow there is a festival at your father's house to celebrate your eldest sister's wedding; if you would like to go my Lions shall escort you.' She answered that she was very eager to see her father again, so she went away accompanied by the Lions.

There was great rejoicing on her coming, for they all thought that she had been torn to pieces and had long been dead.

But she told them what a handsome husband she had and how well she fared; and she stayed with them as long as the wedding festivities lasted. Then she went back again into the wood.

When the second daughter married, and the youngest was again invited to the wedding, she said to the Lion, 'This time I will not go alone, you must come too.'

But the Lion said it would be too dangerous, for if a gleam of light touched him he would be changed into a Dove and would have to fly about for seven years.

'Ah,' said she, 'only go with me, and I will protect you and keep off every ray of light.'

So they went away together, and took their little child with them too. They had a hall built with such thick walls that no ray could penetrate, and thither the Lion was to retire when

the wedding torches were kindled. But the door was made of fresh wood which split and caused a little crack which no one noticed.

Now the wedding was celebrated with great splendour. But when the procession came back from church with a large number of torches and lights, a ray of light no broader than a hair fell upon the Prince, and the minute this ray touched him he was changed; and when his wife came in and looked for him, she saw nothing but a White Dove sitting there. The Dove said to her, 'For seven years I must fly about the world; every seventh step I will let fall a drop of blood and a white feather which will show you the way, and if you will follow the track you can free me.' Thereupon the Dove flew out of the door, and she followed it, and every seventh step it let
fall a drop of blood and a little white feather to show her the way. So she wandered about the world, and never rested till the seven years were nearly passed. Then she rejoiced, thinking that she would soon be free of her troubles; but she was still far from release. One day as they were journeying on in the accustomed way, the feather and the drop of blood ceased falling, and when she looked up the Dove had vanished.

'Man cannot help me,' she thought. So she climbed up to the Sun and said to it, 'You shine upon all the valleys and mountain peaks, have you not seen a White Dove flying by?'

'No,' said the Sun, 'I have not seen one; but I will give you a little casket. Open it when you are in dire need.'

She thanked the Sun, and went on till night, when the Moon shone out. 'You shine all night,' she said, 'over field and forest, have you seen a White Dove flying by?'

'No,' answered the Moon, 'I have seen none; but here is an egg. Break it when you are in great need.'

She thanked the Moon, and went on till the Night Wind blew upon her. 'You blow among all the trees and leaves, have not you seen a White Dove?' she asked.

'No,' said the Night Wind, 'I have not seen one; but I will ask the other three Winds, who may, perhaps, have seen it.'

The East Wind and the West Wind came, but they had seen no Dove. Only the South Wind said, 'I have seen the White Dove. It has flown away to the Red Sea, where it has again become a Lion, since the seven years are over; and the Lion is ever fighting with a Dragon who is an enchanted Princess.'

Then the Night Wind said, 'I will advise you. Go to the Red Sea, you will find tall reeds growing on the right bank; count them, and cut down the eleventh, strike the Dragon with it and then the Lion will be able to master it, and both will regain human shape. Next, look round, and you will see the winged Griffin, who dwells by the Red Sea, leap upon its back with your beloved, and it will carry you across the sea. Here is a nut. Drop it when you come to mid-ocean; it will open immediately and a tall nut-tree will grow up out of the

water, on which the Griffin will settle. Could it not rest, it would not be strong enough to carry you across, and if you forget to drop the nut, it will let you fall into the sea.'

Then she journeyed on, and found everything as the Night Wind had said. She counted the reeds by the sea and cut off the eleventh, struck the Dragon with it, and the Lion mastered it; immediately both regained human form. But when the Princess who had been a Dragon was free from enchantment, she took the Prince in her arms, seated herself on the Griffin's back, and carried him off. And the poor wanderer, again forsaken, sat down and cried. At last she took courage and said to herself: 'Wherever the winds blow, I will go, and as long as cocks crow, I will search till I find him.' So she went on a long, long way, till she came to the castle where the Prince and Princess were living. There she heard that there was to be a festival to celebrate their wedding. Then she said to herself, 'Heaven help me,' and she opened the casket which the Sun had given her; inside it was a dress, as brilliant as the Sun itself. She took it out, put it on, and went into the castle, where every one, including the Bride, looked at her with amazement. The dress pleased the Bride so much that she asked if it was to be bought.

'Not with gold or goods,' she answered; 'but with flesh and blood.'

The Bride asked what she meant, and she answered, 'Let me speak with the Bridegroom in his chamber to-night.'

The Bride refused. However, she wanted the dress so much that at last she consented; but the Chamberlain was ordered to give the Prince a sleeping draught.

At night, when the Prince was asleep, she was taken to his room. She sat down and said: 'For seven years I have followed you. I have been to the Sun, and the Moon, and the Four Winds to look for you. I have helped you against the Dragon, and will you now quite forget me?'

But the Prince slept so soundly that he thought it was only the rustling of the wind among the pine-trees. When morning came she was taken away, and had to give up the dress; and as it had not helped her she was very sad, and went out into a meadow and cried. As she was sitting there, she remembered the egg which the Moon had given her; she broke it open, and out came a hen and twelve chickens, all of gold, who ran about chirping, and then crept back under their mother's wings. A prettier sight could not be seen. She got up and drove them about the meadow, till the Bride saw them from the window. The chickens pleased her so much that she asked if they were for sale. 'Not for gold and goods, but for flesh and blood. Let me speak with the Bridegroom in his chamber once more.' The Bride said 'Yes,' intending to deceive her as before; but when the Prince went to his room he asked the Chamberlain what all the murmuring and rustling in the night meant. Then the Chamberlain told him how he had been ordered to give him a sleeping draught because a poor girl had been concealed in his room, and that night he was to do the same again. 'Pour out the drink, and put it near my bed,' said the Prince. At night she was brought in again, and when she began to relate her sad fortunes he recognised the voice of his dear wife, sprang up, and said, 'Now I am really free for the first time. All has been as a dream,

for the foreign Princess cast a spell over me so that I was forced to forget you; but heaven in a happy hour has taken away my blindness.'

Then they both stole out of the castle, for they feared the Princess's father, because he was a sorcerer. They mounted the Griffin, who bore them over the Red Sea, and when they got to mid-ocean, she dropped the nut. On the spot a fine nut-tree sprang up, on which the bird rested; then it took them home, where they found their child grown tall and beautiful, and they lived happily till the end.

# The Fox and the Horse

A PEASANT once had a faithful Horse, but it had grown old and could no longer do its work. Its master grudged it food, and said: 'I can't use you any more, but I still feel kindly towards you, and if you show yourself strong enough to bring me a Lion I will keep you to the end of your days. But away with you now, out of my stable'; and he drove it out into the open country.

The poor Horse was very sad, and went into the forest to get a little shelter from the wind and weather. There he met a Fox, who said: 'Why do you hang your head, and wander about in this solitary fashion?' 'Alas!' answered the Horse, 'avarice and honesty cannot live together. My master has forgotten all the service I have done him for these many years, and because I can no longer plough he will no longer feed me, and he has driven me away.' 'Without any consideration?' asked the Fox. 'Only the poor consolation of telling me that if I was strong enough to bring him a Lion he would keep me, but he knows well enough that the task is beyond me.'

The Fox said: 'But I will help you. Just you lie down here, and stretch your legs out as if you were dead.' The Horse did as he was told, and the Fox went to the Lion's den, not far off, and said: 'There is a dead Horse out there. Come along with me, and you will have a rare meal.' The Lion went with him, and when they got up to the Horse, the Fox said: 'You can't eat it in comfort here. I'll tell you what. I will tie it to you, and you can drag it away to your den, and enjoy it at your leisure.'

The plan pleased the Lion, and he stood quite still, close to the Horse, so that the Fox should fasten them together. But the Fox tied the Lion's legs together with the Horse's tail, and twisted and knotted it so that it would be quite impossible for it to come undone. When he had finished his work he patted the Horse on the shoulder, and said: 'Pull, old Grey! Pull!'

Then the Horse sprang up, and dragged the Lion away behind him. The Lion in his rage roared, so that all the birds in the forest were terrified, and flew away. But the Horse let him roar, and never stopped till he stood before his master's door.

When the master saw him he was delighted, and said to him: 'You shall stay with me, and have a good time as long as you live.'

And he fed him well till he died.

# The Blue Light

THERE was once a Soldier who had served his King well and faithfully for many years. But, on account of his many wounds, he could serve no longer.

The King said: 'You can go home now. I have no further need for you. I can only pay those who serve me.'

The Soldier did not know what to do for a living, and he went sadly away.

He walked all day, till he reached a wood, where, in the distance, he saw a light. On approaching it, he found a house inhabited by a Witch.

'Pray give me shelter for the night, and something to eat and drink,' he said, 'or I shall perish.'

'Oh ho!' she said. 'Who gives anything to a runaway Soldier, I should like to know. But I will be merciful and take you in, if you will do something for me.'

'What is it?' asked the Soldier.

'I want you to dig up my garden to-morrow.'

The Soldier agreed to this, and next day he worked as hard as he could, but he could not finish before evening.

'I see,' said the Witch, 'that you can do no more this evening. I will keep you one night more, and to-morrow you shall split up some logs for firewood.'

The Soldier took the whole day over this task, and in the evening the Witch proposed that he should again stay another night.

'You shall only have a very light task to-morrow,' she said. 'There is an old, dry well behind my house. My light, which burns blue, and never goes out, has fallen into it, and I want you to bring it back.'

Next day the Witch led him to the well, and let him down in a basket.

He found the light, and made a sign to be pulled up; but when he was near the top, the Witch put out her hand, and wanted to take it from him.

But he, seeing her evil designs, said: 'No; I will not give you the light till I have both feet safe on dry land again.'

The Witch flew into a passion, let him fall back into the well again, and went away.

The poor Soldier fell on to the damp ground without taking any harm, and the Blue Light burnt as brightly as ever. But what was the good of that? He saw that he could not escape death.

He sat for some time feeling very sad, then happening to put his hand into his pocket, he found his pipe still half full.

'This will be my last pleasure,' he thought, as he lighted it at the Blue Light, and began to smoke.

When the cloud of smoke he made cleared off a little, a tiny black Man appeared before him, and asked: 'What orders, Master?'

'What do you mean?' the Soldier asked in amazement.

'I must do anything that you command,' said the Little Man.

'Oh, if that is so,' said the Soldier, 'get me out of this well first.'

The Little Man took him by the hand, and led him through an underground passage; but the Soldier did not forget to take the Blue Light with him.

On the way he showed the Soldier all the treasures the Witch had amassed there, and he took as much gold as he could carry.

When they reached the top he said to the Little Man: 'Now go, bind the Witch and take her before the Judge.'

Before long she came by riding at a furious pace on a tom cat, and screaming at the top of her voice.

The Little Man soon after appeared, and said: 'Everything is done as you commanded, and the Witch hangs on the gallows. What further orders have you, Master?'

'Nothing at this moment,' answered the Soldier. 'You can go home; only be at hand when I call.'

'You only have to light your pipe at the Blue Light, and I will be there,' said the Little Man, and then he vanished.

The Soldier went back to the town that he had left, and ordered some new clothes, then he went to the best inn and told the landlord to give him the best rooms.

**Before long the Witch came by riding at a furious pace on a tom cat.**

When he had taken possession, he summoned the little black Man, and said: 'I served my King faithfully, but he sent me away to die of hunger. Now I will have my revenge.'

'What do you wish me to do?' asked the Little Man.

'Late at night, when the Princess is asleep in her bed, bring her, sleeping, to me, and I will make her do menial service for me.'

'It is an easy enough thing for me to do,' said the Little Man. 'But it will be a bad business for you if it comes out.'

As the clock struck twelve, the door sprang open, and the Little Man bore the Maiden in.

'Ah ha! There you are!' cried the Soldier. 'Set about your work at once. Fetch the broom and sweep the floor.'

When she had finished, he sat down and ordered her to take his boots off. Then he threw them at her, and made her pick them up and clean them. She did everything he ordered without resistance, silently, and with half-shut eyes. At the first cock-crow, the Little Man carried her away to the royal palace, and put her back in bed.

In the morning when the Princess got up, she went to her Father, and told him that she had had an extraordinary dream.

'I was carried through the streets at lightning speed, and taken to the room of a Soldier, whom I had to serve as a maid, and do all kinds of menial work. I had to sweep the room, and clean his boots. Of course, it was only a dream, and yet I am as tired this morning as if I had done it all.'

‘The dream could not have been true,’ said the King. ‘But I will give you a piece of advice. Fill your pocket with peas, and cut a little hole in it, then if you are carried away again, they will drop out and leave a track on the road.’

When the King said this, the Little Man was standing by, invisible, and heard it all.

At night, when he again carried off the Princess, the peas certainly fell out of her pocket, but they were useless to trace her by, for the cunning Little Man had scattered peas all over the streets. Again the Princess had to perform her menial duties till cock-crow.

The next morning the King sent out people who were to find the track; but they were unable to do so, because in every street the poor children were picking up peas, and saying: ‘It must have rained peas in the night.’ ‘We must devise a better plan,’ said the King. ‘Keep your shoes on when you go to bed, and before you come away from the place where you are taken, hide one of them. I shall be sure to find it.’ The Little Man heard this plan also; and when the Soldier told him to bring the Princess again, he advised him to put it off. He said he knew no further means against their craftiness; and if the shoe were found, it would be very dangerous for his master. ‘Do what I tell you,’ answered the Soldier; and for the third time the Princess was brought and made to work like a servant. But before leaving she hid one of her shoes under the bed.

Next morning the King ordered the whole town to be searched for his Daughter’s shoe, and it was soon found in the Soldier’s room. He himself, at the request of the Little Man, had gone outside the gates; but before long he was seized and thrown into prison. In his flight he had forgotten his greatest treasures, the Blue Light and his gold. He had but one ducat in his pocket.

As he stood at his window in the prison, loaded with chains, he saw one of his comrades going by. He tapped on the pane, and said:

‘Be so good as to fetch me the little bundle I left behind at the inn, and I will give you a ducat.’

His comrade hurried off and brought him the bundle. As soon as the Soldier was alone, he lighted his pipe and summoned the Little Man.

‘Don’t be afraid,’ he said to his Master. ‘Go where they take you, and let what will happen, only take the Blue Light with you.’

Next day a trial was held, and although the Soldier had done no harm, the Judge sentenced him to death.

When he was led out to execution he asked a last favour of the King.

‘What is your wish?’ asked the King.

‘That I may smoke a last pipe.’

‘You may smoke three,’ answered the King. ‘But don’t imagine that I will therefore grant you your life.’

Then the Soldier drew out his pipe, and lighted it at the Blue Light.

As soon as a few rings of smoke arose, the Little Man appeared with a little cudgel in his hand, and said: ‘What is my Master’s command?’

‘Strike the false Judge and his minions to the ground, and do not spare the King either for all his cruelty to me.’

Then the Little Man flew about like lightning, zig-zag, hither and thither, and whomever he touched with his cudgel fell to the ground, and dared not move.

The King was now seized with alarm, and, begging on his knees that his life might be spared, he rendered up his kingdom and gave his Daughter to the Soldier to be his wife.

# The Goosegirl

THERE was once an old Queen whose husband had been dead for many years, and she had a very beautiful daughter. When she grew up she was betrothed to a Prince in a distant country. When the time came for the maiden to be sent into this distant country to be married, the old Queen packed up quantities of clothes and jewels, gold and silver, cups and ornaments, and, in fact, everything suitable to a royal outfit, for she loved her daughter very dearly.

She also sent a Waiting-woman to travel with her, and to put her hand into that of the bridegroom. They each had a horse. The Princess's horse was called Falada, and it could speak. When the hour of departure came, the old Queen went to her bedroom, and with a sharp little knife cut her finger and made it bleed. Then she held a piece of white cambric under it, and let three drops of blood fall on to it. This cambric she gave to her daughter, and said, 'Dear child, take good care of this; it will stand you in good stead on the journey.' They then bade each other a sorrowful farewell. The Princess hid the piece of cambric in her bosom, mounted her horse, and set out to her bridegroom's country.

When they had ridden for a time the Princess became very thirsty, and said to the Waiting-woman, 'Get down and fetch me some water in my cup from the stream. I must have something to drink.' 'If you are thirsty,' said the Waiting-woman, 'dismount yourself, lie down by the water and drink. I don't choose to be your servant.'

So, in her great thirst, the Princess dismounted and stooped down to the stream and drank, as she might not have her golden cup. The poor Princess said, 'Alas!' and the drops of blood answered, 'If your mother knew this, it would break her heart.'

The royal bride was humble, so she said nothing, but mounted her horse again. Then they rode several miles further; but the day was warm, the sun was scorching, and the Princess was soon thirsty again.

When they reached a river she called out again to her Waiting-woman, 'Get down, and give me some water in my golden cup!'

She had forgotten all about the rude words which had been said to her. But the Waiting-woman answered more haughtily than ever, 'If you want to drink, get the water for yourself. I won't be your servant.'

Being very thirsty, the Princess dismounted, and knelt by the flowing water. She cried, and said, 'Ah me!' and the drops of blood answered, 'If your mother knew this it would break her heart.'

While she stooped over the water to drink, the piece of cambric with the drops of blood on it fell out of her bosom, and floated away on the stream; but she never noticed this in her great fear. The Waiting-woman, however, had seen it, and rejoiced at getting more power over the bride, who, by losing the drops of blood, had become weak and powerless.

Now, when she was about to mount her horse Falada again, the Waiting-woman said, 'By rights, Falada belongs to me; this jade will do for you!'

The poor little Princess was obliged to give way. Then the Waiting-woman, in a harsh voice, ordered her to take off her royal robes, and to put on her own mean garments. Finally, she forced her to swear before heaven that she would not tell a creature at the Court what had taken place. Had she not taken the oath she would have been killed on the spot. But Falada saw all this and marked it.

The Waiting-woman then mounted Falada and put the real bride on her poor jade, and they continued their journey.

There was great rejoicing when they arrived at the castle. The Prince hurried towards them, and lifted the Waiting-woman from her horse, thinking she was his bride. She was led upstairs, but the real Princess had to stay below. The old King looked out of the window and saw the delicate, pretty little creature standing in the courtyard; so he went to the bridal apartments and asked the bride about her companion, who was left standing in the courtyard, and wished to know who she was. 'I picked her up on the way, and brought her with me for company. Give the girl something to do to keep her from idling.'

But the old King had no work for her, and could not think of anything. At last he said, 'I have a little lad who looks after the geese; she may help him.'

The boy was called little Conrad, and the real bride was sent with him to look after the geese.

Soon after, the false bride said to the Prince, 'Dear husband, I pray you do me a favour.'

He answered, 'That will I gladly.'

'Well, then, let the knacker be called to cut off the head of the horse I rode; it angered me on the way.'

Really, she was afraid that the horse would speak, and tell of her treatment of the Princess.

So it was settled, and the faithful Falada had to die.

When this came to the ear of the real Princess, she promised the knacker a piece of gold if he would do her a slight service. There was a great dark gateway to the town, through which she had to pass every morning and evening. 'Would he nail up Falada's head in this gateway, so that she might see him as she passed?'

The knacker promised to do as she wished, and when the horse's head was cut off, he hung it up in the dark gateway. In the early morning, when she and Conrad went through the gateway, she said in passing—

'Alas! dear Falada, there thou hangest.'

And the Head answered—

'Alas! Queen's daughter, there thou gangest.

If thy mother knew thy fate,

Her heart would break with grief so great.'

Then they passed on out of the town, right into the fields, with the geese. When they reached the meadow, the Princess sat down on the grass and let down her hair. It shone like pure gold, and when little Conrad saw it, he was so delighted that he wanted to pluck some out; but she said—

'Blow, blow, little breeze,

And Conrad's hat seize.

Let him join in the chase

While away it is whirled,

Till my tresses are curled

And I rest in my place.'

Then a strong wind sprang up, which blew away Conrad's hat right over the fields, and he had to run after it. When he came back, she had finished combing her hair, and it was all put up again; so he could not get a single hair. This made him very sulky, and he would not say another word to her. And they tended the geese till evening, when they went home.

Next morning, when they passed under the gateway, the Princess said—

'Alas! dear Falada, there thou hangest.'

Falada answered:—

'Alas! Queen's daughter, there thou gangest.

If thy mother knew thy fate,

Her heart would break with grief so great.'

Again, when they reached the meadows, the Princess undid her hair and began combing it. Conrad ran to pluck some out; but she said quickly—

'Blow, blow, little breeze,

And Conrad's hat seize.

Let him join in the chase

While away it is whirled,

Till my tresses are curled

And I rest in my place.'

The wind sprang up and blew Conrad's hat far away over the fields, and he had to run after it. When he came back the hair was all put up again, and he could not pull a single hair out.

And they tended the geese till the evening. When they got home Conrad went to the old King, and said, ‘I won’t tend the geese with that maiden again.’

‘Why not?’ asked the King.

‘Oh, she vexes me every day.’

The old King then ordered him to say what she did to vex him.

Conrad said, ‘In the morning, when we pass under the dark gateway with the geese, she talks to a horse’s head which is hung up on the wall. She says—

‘Alas! Falada, there thou hangest,’

and the Head answers—

‘Alas! Queen’s daughter, there thou gangest.

If thy mother knew thy fate,

Her heart would break with grief so great.’

Then Conrad went on to tell the King all that happened in the meadow, and how he had to run after his hat in the wind.

The old King ordered Conrad to go out next day as usual. Then he placed himself behind the dark gateway, and heard the Princess speaking to Falada’s head. He also followed her into the field, and hid himself behind a bush, and with his own eyes he saw the Goosegirl and the lad come driving the geese into the field. Then, after a time, he saw the girl let down her hair, which glittered in the sun. Directly after this, she said— ‘Blow, blow, little breeze,

And Conrad’s hat seize. Let him join in the chase While away it is whirled, Till my tresses are

curled And I rest in my place.’ Then came a puff of wind, which carried off Conrad’s hat and he

had to run after it. While
he was away, the maiden combed and did up her hair; and all this the old King observed. Thereupon he went away unnoticed; and in the evening, when the Goosegirl came home, he called her aside and asked why she did all these things.

‘That I may not tell you, nor may I tell any human creature; for I have sworn it under the open sky, because if I had not done so I should have lost my life.’

He pressed her sorely, and gave her no peace, but he could get nothing out of her. Then he said, 'If you won't tell me, then tell your sorrows to the iron stove there'; and he went away.

She crept up to the stove, and, beginning to weep and lament, unburdened her heart to it, and said: 'Here I am, forsaken by all the world, and yet I am a Princess. A false Waiting-woman brought me to such a pass that I had to take off my royal robes. Then she took my place with my bridegroom, while I have to do mean service as a Goosegirl. If my mother knew it she would break her heart.'

The old King stood outside by the pipes of the stove, and heard all that she said. Then he came back, and told her to go away from the stove. He caused royal robes to be put upon her, and her beauty was a marvel. The old King called his son, and told him that he had a false bride—she was only a Waiting-woman; but the true bride was here, the so-called Goosegirl.

The young Prince was charmed with her youth and beauty. A great banquet was prepared, to which all the courtiers and good friends were bidden. The bridegroom sat at the head of the table, with the Princess on one side and the Waiting-woman at the other; but she was dazzled, and did not recognise the Princess in her brilliant apparel.

When they had eaten and drunk and were all very merry, the old King put a riddle to the Waiting-woman. 'What does a person deserve who deceives his master?' telling the whole story, and ending by asking, 'What doom does he deserve?' The false bride answered, 'No better than this. He must be put stark naked into a barrel stuck with nails, and be dragged along by two white horses from street to street till he is dead.' 'That is your own doom,' said the King, 'and the judgment shall be carried out.' When the sentence was fulfilled, the young Prince married his true bride, and they ruled their kingdom together in peace and happiness.

# The Golden Goose

THERE was once a man who had three sons. The youngest of them was called Simpleton; he was scorned and despised by the others, and kept in the background.

The eldest son was going into the forest to cut wood, and before he started, his mother gave him a nice sweet cake and a bottle of wine to take with him, so that he might not suffer from hunger or thirst. In the wood he met a little, old, grey Man, who bade him good-day, and said, 'Give me a bit of the cake in your pocket, and let me have a drop of your wine. I am so hungry and thirsty.'

But the clever son said: 'If I give you my cake and wine, I shan't have enough for myself. Be off with you.'

He left the little Man standing there, and went on his way. But he had not been long at work, cutting down a tree, before he made a false stroke, and dug the axe into his own arm, and he was obliged to go home to have it bound up.

Now, this was no accident; it was brought about by the little grey Man.

The second son now had to go into the forest to cut wood, and, like the eldest, his mother gave him a sweet cake and a bottle of wine. In the same way the little grey Man met him, and asked for a piece of his cake and a drop of his wine. But the second son made the same sensible answer, 'If I give you any, I shall have the less for myself. Be off out of my way,' and he went on.

His punishment, however, was not long delayed. After a few blows at the tree, he hit his own leg, and had to be carried home.

Then Simpleton said, 'Let me go to cut the wood, father.'

But his father said, 'Your brothers have only come to harm by it; you had better leave it alone. You know nothing about it.' But Simpleton begged so hard to be allowed to go that at last his father said, 'Well, off you go then. You will be wiser when you have hurt yourself.'

**There stands an old tree; cut it down, and you will find something at the roots.**

His mother gave him a cake which was only mixed with water and baked in the ashes, and a bottle of sour beer. When he reached the forest, like the others, he met the little grey Man, who greeted him, and said, 'Give me a bit of your cake and a drop of your wine. I am so hungry and thirsty.'

Simpleton answered, 'I only have a cake baked in the ashes, and some sour beer; but, if you like such fare, we will sit down and eat it together.'

So they sat down; but when Simpleton pulled out his cake it was a sweet, nice cake, and his sour beer was turned into good wine. So they ate and drank, and the little Man said, 'As you have such a good heart, and are willing to share your goods, I will give you good luck. There stands an old tree; cut it down, and you will find something at the roots.'

**So now there were seven people running behind Simpleton and his Goose.**

So saying he disappeared. Simpleton cut down the tree, and when it fell, lo, and behold! a Goose was sitting among the roots, and its feathers were of pure gold. He picked it up, and taking it with him, went to an inn, where he meant to stay the night. The landlord had three daughters, who saw the Goose, and were very curious as to what kind of bird it could be, and wanted to get one of its golden feathers. The eldest thought, 'There will soon be some opportunity for me to pull out one of the feathers,' and when Simpleton went outside, she took hold of its wing to pluck out a feather; but her hand stuck fast, and she could not get away. Soon after, the second sister came up, meaning also to pluck out one of the golden feathers; but she had hardly touched her sister when she found herself held fast.

Lastly, the third one came, with the same intention, but the others screamed out, 'Keep away! For goodness sake, keep away!'

But she, not knowing why she was to keep away, thought, 'Why should I not be there, if they are there?'

So she ran up, but as soon as she touched her sisters she had to stay hanging on to them, and they all had to pass the night like this.

**And so they followed up hill and down dale after Simpleton and his Goose.**

In the morning, Simpleton took up the Goose under his arm, without noticing the three girls hanging on behind. They had to keep running behind, dodging his legs right and left.

In the middle of the fields they met the Parson, who, when he saw the procession, cried out: 'For shame, you bold girls! Why do you run after the lad like that? Do you call that proper behaviour?' Then he took hold of the hand of the youngest girl to pull her away; but no sooner had he
touched her than he felt himself held fast, and he, too, had to run behind.

Soon after the Sexton came up, and, seeing his master the Parson treading on the heels of the three girls, cried out in amazement, 'Hullo, your Reverence! Whither away so fast? Don't forget that we have a christening!' So saying, he plucked the Parson by the sleeve, and soon found that he could not get away. As this party of five, one behind the other, tramped on, two Peasants came along the road,
carrying their hoes. The Parson called them, and asked them to set the Sexton and himself free. But as soon as ever they touched the Sexton they were held fast, so now there were seven people running behind Simpleton and his Goose.

By-and-by they reached a town, where a King ruled whose only daughter was so solemn that nothing and nobody could make her laugh. So the King had proclaimed that whoever could make her laugh should marry her.

When Simpleton heard this he took his Goose, with all his following, before her, and when she saw these seven people running, one behind another, she burst into fits of laughter, and seemed as if she could never stop.

Thereupon Simpleton asked her in marriage. But the King did not like him for a son-in-law, and he made all sorts of conditions. First, he said Simpleton must bring him a man who could drink up a cellar full of wine.

Then Simpleton at once thought of the little grey Man who might be able to help him, and he went out to the forest to look for him. On the very spot where the tree that he had cut down had stood, he saw a man sitting with a very sad face. Simpleton asked him what was the matter, and he answered—

'I am so thirsty, and I can't quench my thirst. I hate cold water, and I have already emptied a cask of wine; but what is a drop like that on a burning stone?'

'Well, there I can help you,' said Simpleton. 'Come with me, and you shall soon have enough to drink and to spare.'

He led him to the King's cellar, and the Man set to upon the great casks, and he drank and drank till his sides ached, and by the end of the day the cellar was empty.

Then again Simpleton demanded his bride. But the King was annoyed that a wretched fellow called 'Simpleton' should have his daughter, and he made new conditions. He was now to find a man who could eat up a mountain of bread. Simpleton did not reflect long, but went straight to the forest, and there in the self-same place sat a man tightening a strap round his body, and making a very miserable face. He said: 'I have eaten up a whole ovenful of rolls, but what is the good of that when any one is as hungry as I am. I am never satisfied. I have to tighten my belt every day if I am not to die of hunger.'

Simpleton was delighted, and said: 'Get up and come with me. You shall have enough to eat.'

And he took him to the Court, where the King had caused all the flour in the kingdom to be brought together, and a huge mountain of bread to be baked. The Man from the forest sat down before it and began to eat, and at the end of the day the whole mountain had disappeared.

Now, for the third time, Simpleton asked for his bride. But again the King tried to find an excuse, and demanded a ship which could sail on land as well as at sea.

'As soon as you sail up in it, you shall have my daughter,' he said.

Simpleton went straight to the forest, and there sat the little grey Man to whom he had given his cake. The little Man said: 'I have eaten and drunk for you, and now I will give you the ship, too. I do it all because you were merciful to me.'

Then he gave him the ship which could sail on land as well as at sea, and when the King saw it he could no longer withhold his daughter. The marriage was celebrated, and, at the King's death, the Simpleton inherited the kingdom, and lived long and happily with his wife.

# The Water of Life

THERE was once a King who was so ill that it was thought impossible his life could be saved. He had three sons, and they were all in great distress on his account, and they went into the castle gardens and wept at the thought that he must die. An old man came up to them and asked the cause of their grief. They told him that their father was dying, and nothing could save him. The old man said, 'There is only one remedy which I know; it is the Water of Life. If he drinks of it, he will recover, but it is very difficult to find.'

The eldest son said, 'I will soon find it'; and he went to the sick man to ask permission to go in search of the Water of Life, as that was the only thing to cure him.

'No,' said the King. 'The danger is too great. I would rather die.'

But he persisted so long that at last the King gave his permission.

The Prince thought, 'If I bring this water I shall be the favourite, and I shall inherit the kingdom.'

So he set off, and when he had ridden some distance he came upon a Dwarf standing in the road, who cried, 'Whither away so fast?'

'Stupid little fellow,' said the Prince, proudly; 'what business is it of yours?' and rode on.

The little man was very angry, and made an evil vow.

Soon after, the Prince came to a gorge in the mountains, and the further he rode the narrower it became, till he could go no further. His horse could neither go forward nor turn round for him to dismount; so there he sat, jammed in.

The sick King waited a long time for him, but he never came back. Then the second son said, 'Father, let me go and find the Water of Life,' thinking, 'if my brother is dead I shall have the kingdom.' The King at first refused to let him go, but at last he gave his consent. So the Prince started on the same road as his brother, and met the same Dwarf, who stopped him and asked where he was going in such a hurry. 'Little Snippet, what does it matter to you?' he said, and rode away without looking back. But the Dwarf cast a spell over him, and he, too, got into a narrow gorge like his brother, where he could neither go backwards nor forwards.

This is what happens to the haughty.

As the second son also stayed away, the youngest one offered to go and fetch the Water of Life, and at last the King was obliged to let him go.

When he met the Dwarf, and he asked him where he was hurrying to, he stopped and said, 'I am searching for the Water of Life, because my father is dying.'

'Do you know where it is to be found?'

'No,' said the Prince.

'As you have spoken pleasantly to me, and not been haughty like your false brothers, I will help you and tell you how to find the Water of Life. It flows from a fountain in the courtyard of an enchanted castle; but you will never get in unless I give you an iron rod and two loaves of bread. With the rod strike three times on the iron gate of the castle, and it will spring open. Inside you will find two Lions with wide-open jaws, but if you throw a loaf to each they will be quiet. Then you must make haste to fetch the Water of Life before it strikes twelve, or the gates of the castle will close and you will be shut in.' The Prince thanked him, took the rod and the loaves, and set off. When he reached the castle all was just as the Dwarf had said. At the third knock the gate flew open, and when he had pacified the Lions with the loaves, he walked into the castle. In the great hall he found several enchanted Princes, and he took the rings from their fingers. He also took a sword and a loaf, which were lying by them. On passing into the next room he found a beautiful Maiden, who rejoiced at his coming. She embraced him, and said that he had saved her, and should have the whole of her kingdom; and if he would come back in a year she would marry him. She also told him where to find the fountain with the enchanted water; but, she said, he must make haste to get out of the castle before the clock struck twelve.

Then he went on, and came to a room where there was a beautiful bed freshly made, and as he was very tired he thought he would take a little rest; so he lay down and fell asleep. When he woke it was striking a quarter to twelve. He sprang up in a fright, and ran to the fountain, and took some of the water in a cup which was lying near, and then hurried away. The clock struck just as he reached the iron gate, and it banged so quickly that it took off a bit of his heel.

He was rejoiced at having got some of the Water of Life, and hastened on his homeward journey. He again passed the Dwarf, who said, when he saw the sword and the loaf, 'Those things will be of much service to you. You will be able to strike down whole armies with the sword, and the loaf will never come to an end.'

The Prince did not want to go home without his brothers, and he said, 'Good Dwarf, can you not tell me where my brothers are? They went in search of the Water of Life before I did, but they never came back.' 'They are both stuck fast in a narrow mountain gorge. I cast a spell over them because of their pride.'

Then the Prince begged so hard that they might be released that at last the Dwarf yielded; but he warned him against them, and said, 'Beware of them; they have bad hearts.'

He was delighted to see his brothers when they came back, and told them all that had happened to him; how he had found the Water of Life, and brought a goblet full with him. How he had released a beautiful Princess, who would wait a year for him and then marry him, and he would become a great Prince.

Then they rode away together, and came to a land where famine and war were raging. The King thought he would be utterly ruined, so great was the destitution.

The Prince went to him and gave him the loaf, and with it he fed and satisfied his whole kingdom. The Prince also gave him his sword, and he smote the whole army of his enemies with it, and then he was able to live in peace and quiet. Then the Prince took back his sword and his loaf, and the three brothers rode on. But they had to pass through two more

countries where war and famine were raging, and each time the Prince gave his sword and his loaf to the King, and in this way he saved three kingdoms.

After that they took a ship and crossed the sea. During the passage the two elder brothers said to each other, 'Our youngest brother found the Water of Life, and we did not, so our father will give him the kingdom which we ought to have, and he will take away our fortune from us.'

This thought made them very vindictive, and they made up their minds to get rid of him. They waited till he was asleep, and then they emptied the Water of Life from his goblet and took it themselves, and filled up his cup with salt sea water. As soon as they got home the youngest Prince took his goblet to the King, so that he might drink of the water which was to make him well; but after drinking only a few drops of the sea water he became more ill than ever. As he was bewailing himself, his two elder sons came to him and accused the youngest of trying to poison him, and said that they had the real Water of Life, and gave him some. No sooner had he drunk it than he felt better, and he soon became as strong and well as he had been in his youth.

Then the two went to their youngest brother, and mocked him, saying, 'It was you who found the Water of Life; you had all the trouble, while we have the reward. You should have been wiser, and kept your eyes open; we stole it from you while you were asleep on the ship. When the end of the year comes, one of us will go and bring away the beautiful Princess. But don't dare to betray us. Our father will certainly not believe you, and if you say a single word you will lose your life; your only chance is to keep silence.'

The old King was very angry with his youngest son, thinking that he had tried to take his life. So he had the Court assembled to give judgment upon him, and it was decided that he must be secretly got out of the way. One day when the Prince was going out hunting, thinking no evil, the King's Huntsman was ordered to go with him. Seeing the Huntsman look sad, the Prince said to him, 'My good Huntsman, what is the matter with you?' The Huntsman answered, 'I can't bear to tell you, and yet I must.' The Prince said, 'Say it out; whatever it is I will forgive you.' 'Alas!' said the Huntsman, 'I am to shoot you dead; it is the King's command.' The Prince was horror-stricken, and said, 'Dear Huntsman, do not kill me, give me my life.
Let me have your dress, and you shall have my royal robes.'

The Huntsman said, 'I will gladly do so; I could never have shot you.' So they changed clothes, and the Huntsman went home, but the Prince wandered away into the forest.

After a time three wagon loads of gold and precious stones came to the King for his youngest son. They were sent by the Kings who had been saved by the Prince's sword and his miraculous loaf, and who now wished to show their gratitude.

Then the old King thought, ‘What if my son really was innocent?’ and said to his people, ‘If only he were still alive! How sorry I am that I ordered him to be killed.’

‘He is still alive,’ said the Huntsman. ‘I could not find it in my heart to carry out your commands,’ and he told the King what had taken place.

A load fell from the King’s heart on hearing the good news, and he sent out a proclamation to all parts of his kingdom that his son was to come home, where he would be received with great favour. In the meantime, the Princess had caused a road to be made of pure shining gold leading to her castle, and told her people that whoever came riding straight along it would be the true bridegroom, and they were to admit him. But any one who came either on one side of the road or the other would not be the right one, and he was not to be let in.

When the year had almost passed, the eldest Prince thought that he would hurry to the Princess, and by giving himself out as her deliverer would gain a wife and a kingdom as well. So he rode away, and when he saw the beautiful golden road he thought it would be a thousand pities to ride upon it; so he turned aside, and rode to the right of it. But when he reached the gate the people told him that he was not the true bridegroom, and he had to go away.

Soon after the second Prince came, and when he saw the golden road he thought it would be a thousand pities for his horse to tread upon it; so he turned aside, and rode up on the left of it. But when he reached the gate he was also told that he was not the true bridegroom, and, like his brother, was turned away.

When the year had quite come to an end, the third Prince came out of the wood to ride to his beloved, and through her to forget all his past sorrows. So on he went, thinking only of her, and wishing to be with her; and he never even saw the golden road. His horse cantered right along the middle of it, and when he reached the gate it was flung open and the Princess received him joyfully, and called him her Deliverer, and the Lord of her Kingdom. Their marriage was celebrated without delay, and with much rejoicing. When it was over, she told him that his father had called him back and forgiven him. So he went to him and told him everything; how his brothers had deceived him, and how they had forced him to keep silence. The old King wanted to punish them, but they had taken a ship and sailed away over the sea, and they never came back as long as they lived.

# Clever Grethel

THERE was once a cook called Grethel, who wore shoes with red rosettes; and when she went out in them, she turned and twisted about gaily, and thought, 'How fine I am!'

After her walk she would take a draught of wine, in her light-heartedness; and as wine gives an appetite, she would then taste some of the dishes that she was cooking, saying to herself, 'The cook is bound to know how the food tastes.' It so happened that one day her master said to her, 'Grethel, I have a guest coming to-night;
roast me two fowls in your best style.'

'It shall be done, sir!' answered Grethel. So she killed the chickens, scalded and plucked them, and then put them on the spit; towards evening she put them down to the fire to roast. They got brown and crisp, but still the guest did not come. Then Grethel called to her Master, 'If the guest does not come I must take the fowls from the fire; but it will be a thousand pities if they are not eaten soon while they are juicy.' Her Master said, 'I will go and hasten the guest myself.' Hardly had her Master turned his back before Grethel laid the spit with the fowls on it on
one side, and said to herself, 'It's thirsty work standing over the fire so long. Who knows when he will come. I'll go down into the cellar in the meantime and take a drop of wine.' She ran down and held a jug to the tap, then said, 'Here's to your health, Grethel,' and took a good pull. 'Drinking leads to drinking,' she said, 'and it's not easy to give it up,' and again she took a good pull. Then she went upstairs and put the fowls to the fire again, poured some butter over them, and turned the spit round with a will. It smelt so good that she thought, 'There may be something wanting, I must have a taste.' And she passed her finger over the fowls and put it in her mouth. 'Ah, how good they are; it's a sin and a shame that there's nobody to eat them.' She ran to the window to see if her Master was coming with the guest, but she saw nobody. Then she went back to the fowls again, and thought, 'One wing is catching a little, better to eat it—and eat it I will.' So she cut it off and ate it with much enjoyment. When it was finished, she thought, 'The other must follow, or the Master will notice that something is wanting.' When the wings were consumed she went back to the window again to look for her Master, but no one was in sight.

'Who knows,' she thought. 'I dare say they won't come at all; they must have dropped in somewhere else.' Then she said to herself, 'Now, Grethel, don't be afraid, eat it all up: why should the good food be wasted? When it's all gone you can rest; run and have another drink and then finish it up.' So she went down to the cellar, took a good drink, and contentedly ate up the rest of the fowl. When it had all disappeared and still no Master came, Grethel looked at the other fowl and said, 'Where one is gone the other must follow. What is good for one is right for the other. If I have a drink first I shall be none the worse.'

So she took another hearty pull at the jug, and then she sent the other fowl after the first one.

In the height of her enjoyment, her Master came back, and cried, 'Hurry, Grethel, the guest is just coming.'

'Very well, sir, I'll soon have it ready,' answered Grethel.

Her Master went to see if the table was properly laid, and took the big carving-knife with which he meant to cut up the fowls, to sharpen it. In the meantime the guest came and knocked politely at the door. Grethel ran to see who was there, and, seeing the guest, she put her finger to her lips and said, 'Be quiet, and get away quickly; if my Master catches you it will be the worse for you. He certainly invited you to supper, but only with the intention of cutting off both your ears. You can hear him sharpening his knife now.'

The guest heard the knife being sharpened, and hurried off down the steps as fast as he could.

Grethel ran with great agility to her Master, shrieking, ‘A fine guest you have invited, indeed!’

‘Why, what’s the matter, Grethel? What do you mean?’

‘Well,’ she said, ‘he has taken the two fowls that I had just put upon the dish, and run off with them.’

‘That’s a clever trick!’ said her Master, regretting his fine fowls. ‘If he had only left me one so that I had something to eat.’

He called out to him to stop, but the guest pretended not to hear. Then he ran after him, still holding the carving-knife, and cried, ‘Only one, only one!’—meaning that the guest should leave him one fowl; but the guest only thought that he meant he was to give him one ear, and he ran as if he was pursued by fire, and so took both his ears safely home.

# The King of the Golden Mountain

THERE was once a Merchant who had two children, a boy and a girl. They were both small, and not old enough to run about. He had also two richly-laden ships at sea, and just as he was expecting to make a great deal of money by the merchandise, news came that they had both been lost. So now instead of being a rich man he was quite
poor, and had nothing left but one field near the town.

To turn his thoughts from his misfortune, he went out into this field, and as he was walking up and down a little black Mannikin suddenly appeared before him, and asked why he was so sad. The Merchant said, 'I would tell you at once, if you could help me.' 'Who knows,' answered the little Mannikin. 'Perhaps I could help you.' Then the Merchant told him that all his wealth had been lost in a wreck, and that now he
had nothing left but this field.

'Don't worry yourself,' said the Mannikin. 'If you will promise to bring me in twelve years' time the first thing which rubs against your legs when you go home, you shall have as much gold as you want.' The Merchant thought, 'What could it be but my dog?' He never thought of his boy, but said
Yes, and gave the Mannikin his bond signed and sealed, and went home.

When he reached the house his little son, delighted to hold on to the benches and totter towards his father, seized him by the leg to steady himself.

The Merchant was horror-stricken, for his vow came into his head, and now he knew what he had promised to give away. But as he still found no gold in his chests, he thought it must only have been a joke of the Mannikin's. A month later he went up into the loft to gather together some old tin to sell it, and there he found a great heap of gold on the floor. So he was soon up in the world again, bought and sold, became a richer merchant than ever, and was altogether contented.

In the meantime the boy had grown up, and he was both clever and wise. But the nearer the end of the twelve years came, the more sorrowful the Merchant grew; you could even see his misery in his face. One day his son asked him what was the matter, but his father would not tell him. The boy, however, persisted so long that at last he told him that, without knowing what he was doing, he had promised to give him up at the end of twelve years to a little black Mannikin, in return for a quantity of gold. He had given his hand and seal on it, and the time was now near for him to go. Then his son said, 'O father, don't be frightened, it will be all right. The little black Mannikin
has no power over me.'

When the time came, the son asked a blessing of the Priest, and he and his father went to the field together; and the son made a circle within which they took their places.

When the little black Mannikin appeared, he said to the father, 'Have you brought what you promised me?'

The man was silent, but his son said, 'What do you want?'

The Mannikin said, 'My business is with your father, and not with you.'

The son answered, 'You deceived and cheated my father. Give me back his bond.'

'Oh no!' said the little man; 'I won't give up my rights.'

They talked to each other for a long time, and at last they decided that, as the son no longer belonged to his father, and declined to belong to his foe, he should get into a boat on a flowing stream, and his father should push it off himself, thus giving him up to the stream. So the youth took leave of his father, got into the boat, and his father pushed it off. Then, thinking that his son was lost to him for ever, he went home and sorrowed for him. The little boat, however, did not sink, it drifted quietly down the stream, and the youth sat in it in perfect safety. It drifted for a long time, till at last it stuck fast on an unknown shore. The youth landed, and seeing a beautiful castle near, walked towards it. As he passed under the doorway, however, a spell fell upon him. He went through all the rooms, but found them empty, till he came to the very last one, where a Serpent lay coiling and uncoiling itself. The Serpent was really an enchanted maiden, who was delighted when she saw the youth, and said, 'Have you come at last, my preserver? I have been waiting twelve years for you. This whole kingdom is bewitched, and you must break the spell.'

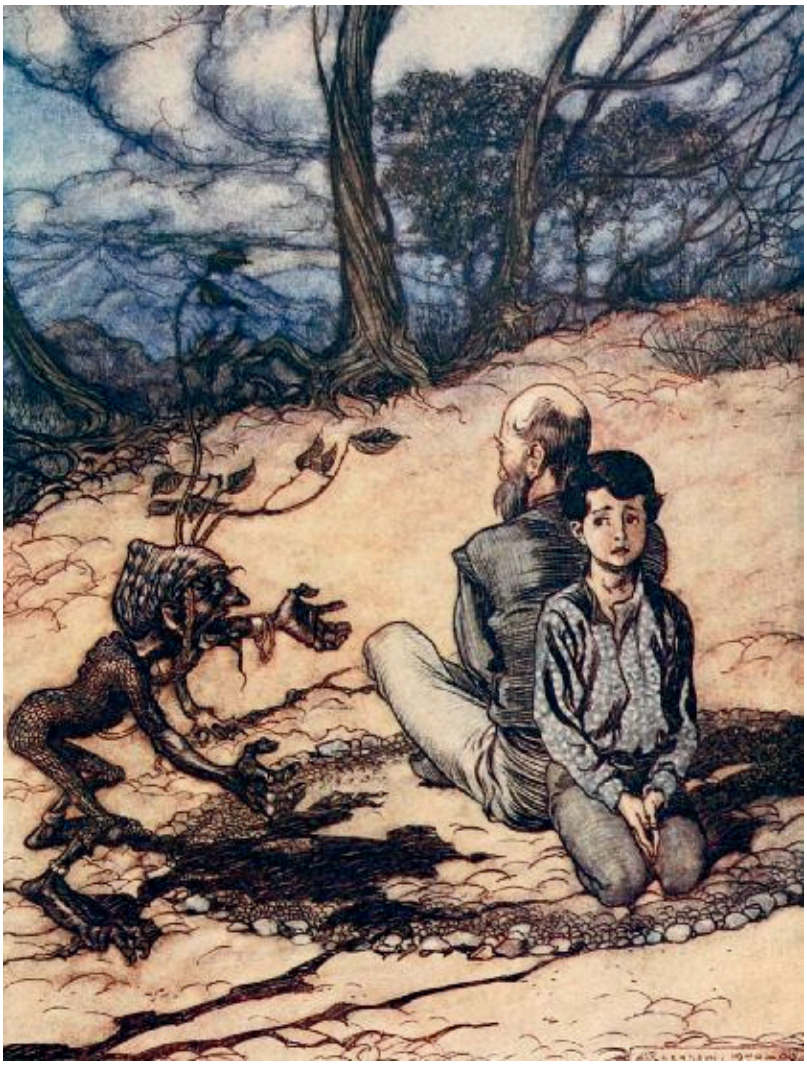
'How am I to do that?' he asked.

She said, 'To-night, twelve black men hung with chains will appear, and they will ask what you are doing here. But do not speak a word, whatever they do or say to you. They will torment you, strike, and pinch you, but don't say a word. At twelve o'clock they will have to go away. On the second night twelve more will come, and on the third twenty-four. These will cut off your head. But at twelve o'clock their power goes, and if you have borne it, and not spoken a word, I shall be saved. Then I will come to you, and bring a little flask containing the Water of Life, with which I will sprinkle you, and you will be brought to life again, as sound and well as ever you were.'

Then he said, 'I will gladly save you!'

Everything happened just as she had said. The black men could not force a word out of him; and on the third night the Serpent became a beautiful Princess, who brought the Water of Life as she had promised, and restored the youth to life. Then she fell on his neck and kissed him, and there were great rejoicings all over the castle.

Their marriage was celebrated, and he became King of the Golden Mountain.



They lived happily together, and in course of time a beautiful boy was born to them. When eight years had passed, the King's heart grew tender within him as he thought of his father, and he wanted to go home to see him. But the Queen did not want him to go. She said, 'I know it will be to my misfortune.' However, he gave her no peace till she agreed to let him go. On his departure she gave him a wishing-ring, and said, 'Take this ring, and put it on your finger, and you will at once be at the place where you wish to be. Only, you must promise never to use it to wish me away from here to be with you at your father's.'

He made the promise, and put the ring on his finger; he then wished himself before the town where his father lived, and at the same moment found himself at the gate. But the sentry would not let him in because his clothes, though of rich material, were of such strange cut. So he went up a mountain, where a Shepherd lived, and, exchanging clothing with him, put on his old smock, and passed into the town unnoticed.

When he reached his father he began making himself known; but his father, never thinking that it was his son, said that it was true he had once had a son, but he had long been dead. But, he added, seeing that he was a poor Shepherd, he would give him a plate of food.

The supposed Shepherd said to his parents, 'I am indeed your son. Is there no mark on my body by which you may know me?'

His mother said, 'Yes, our son has a strawberry mark under his right arm.'

He pushed up his shirt sleeve, and there was the strawberry mark; so they no longer doubted that he was their son. He told them that he was the King of the Golden Mountain, his wife was a Princess, and they had a little son seven years old.

'That can't be true,' said his father. 'You are a fine sort of King to come home in a tattered Shepherd's smock.'

His son grew angry, and, without stopping to reflect, turned his ring round and wished his wife and son to appear. In a moment they both stood before him; but his wife did nothing but weep and lament, and said that he had broken his promise, and by so doing had made her very unhappy. He said, 'I have acted incautiously, but from no bad motive,' and he tried to soothe her. She appeared to be calmed, but really she nourished evil intentions towards him in her
heart.

Shortly after he took her outside the town to the field, and showed her the stream down which he had drifted in the little boat. Then he said, 'I am tired; I want to rest a little.'

So she sat down, and he rested his head upon her lap, and soon fell fast asleep. As soon as he was asleep, she drew the ring from his finger, and drew herself gently away from him, leaving only her slipper behind. Last of all, taking her child in her arms, she wished herself back in her own kingdom. When he woke up, he found himself quite deserted; wife and child were gone, the ring had disappeared from his finger, and only her slipper remained as a token.

'I can certainly never go home to my parents,' he said. 'They would say I was a sorcerer. I must go away and walk till I reach my own kingdom again.'

So he went away, and at last he came to a mountain, where three Giants were quarrelling about the division of their father's property. When they saw him passing, they called him up, and said, 'Little people have sharp wits,' and asked him to divide their inheritance for them.

It consisted, first, of a sword, with which in one's hand, if one said, 'All heads off, mine alone remain,' every head fell to the ground. Secondly, of a mantle which rendered any one putting it on invisible. Thirdly, of a pair of boots which transported the wearer to whatever place he wished.

He said, 'Give me the three articles so that I may see if they are all in good condition.'

So they gave him the mantle, and he at once became invisible. He took his own shape again, and said, 'The mantle is good; now give me the sword.'

But they said, 'No, we can't give you the sword. If you were to say, "All heads off, mine alone remain," all our heads would fall, and yours would be the only one left.'

At last, however, they gave it to him, on condition that he was to try it on a tree. He did as they wished, and the sword went through the tree trunk as if it had been a straw. Then he wanted the boots, but they said, 'No, we won't give them away. If you were to put them on and wish yourself on the top of the mountain, we should be left standing here without anything.' 'No,' said he; 'I won't do that.' So they gave him the boots too; but when he had all three he could think of nothing but his wife and child, and said to himself, 'Oh, if only I were on the Golden Mountain again!' and immediately he disappeared from the sight of the Giants, and there was an end of their inheritance.

When he approached his castle he heard sounds of music, fiddles and flutes, and shouts of joy. People told him that his wife was celebrating her marriage with another husband. He was filled with rage, and said, 'The false creature! She deceived me, and deserted me when I was asleep.'

Then he put on his mantle, and went to the castle, invisible to all. When he went into the hall, where a great feast was spread with the richest foods and the costliest wines, the guests were joking and laughing while they ate and drank. The Queen sat on her throne in their midst in gorgeous clothing, with the crown on her head. He placed himself behind her, and no one saw him. Whenever the Queen put a piece of meat on her plate, he took it away and ate it, and when her glass was filled he took it away and drank it. Her plate and her glass were constantly refilled, but she never had anything, for it disappeared at once. At last she grew frightened, got up, and went to her room in tears, but he followed her there too. She said to herself, 'Am I still in the power of the demon? Did my preserver never come?' He struck her in the face, and said, 'Did your preserver never come? He is with you now, deceiver that you are. Did I deserve such treatment at your hands?' Then he made himself visible, and went into the hall, and cried, 'The wedding is stopped, the real King has come.'

The Kings, Princes, and Nobles who were present laughed him to scorn. But he only said, 'Will you go, or will you not?' They tried to seize him, but he drew his sword and said, 'All heads off, mine alone remain.'

Then all their heads fell to the ground, and he remained sole King and Lord of the Golden Mountain.

# Doctor Know-All

ONCE upon a time a poor Peasant, named Crabb, was taking a load of wood drawn by two oxen to the town for sale. He sold it to a Doctor for four thalers. When the money was being paid to him, it so happened that the Doctor was sitting at dinner. When the Peasant saw how daintily the Doctor was eating and drinking, he felt a great desire to become a Doctor too. He remained standing and looking on for a time, and then asked if he could not be a Doctor.

'Oh yes!' said the Doctor; 'that is easily managed.'

'What must I do?' asked the Peasant.

'First buy an ABC book; you can get one with a cock as a frontispiece. Secondly, turn your wagon and oxen into money, and buy with it clothes and other things suitable for a Doctor. Thirdly, have a sign painted with the words, "I am Doctor Know-all," and have it nailed over your door.'

The Peasant did everything that he was told to do.

Now when he had been doctoring for a while, not very long though, a rich nobleman had some money stolen from him. He was told about Doctor Know-all, who lived in such and such a village, who would be sure to know what had become of it. So the gentleman ordered his carriage and drove to the village.

He stopped at the Doctor's house, and asked Crabb if he were Doctor Know-all.

'Yes, I am.'

'Then you must go with me to get my stolen money back.'

'Yes, certainly; but Grethe, my wife, must come too.'

The nobleman agreed, and gave both of them seats in his carriage, and they all drove off together.

When they reached the nobleman's castle the dinner was ready, and Crabb was invited to sit down to table.

'Yes; but Grethe, my wife, must dine too'; and he seated himself with her.

When the first Servant brought in a dish of choice food, the Peasant nudged his wife, and said: 'Grethe, that was the first,'—meaning that the servant was handing the first dish. But the servant thought he meant, 'That was the first thief.' As he really was the thief, he became much alarmed, and said to his comrades outside—

'That Doctor knows everything, we shan't get out of this hole; he said I was the first.'

The second Servant did not want to go in at all, but he had to go, and when he offered his dish to the Peasant he nudged his wife, and said—'Grethe, that is the second.'

This Servant also was frightened and hurried out.

The third one fared no better. The Peasant said again: 'Grethe, that is the third.'

The fourth one brought in a covered dish, and the master told the Doctor that he must show his powers and guess what was under the cover. Now it was a dish of crabs.

The Peasant looked at the dish and did not know what to do, so he said: 'Wretched Crabb that I am.'

When the Master heard him he cried: 'There, he knows it! Then he knows where the money is too.'

Then the Servant grew terribly frightened, and signed to the Doctor to come outside.

When he went out, they all four confessed to him that they had stolen the money; they would gladly give it to him and a large sum in addition, if only he would not betray them to their Master, or their necks would be in peril. They also showed him where the money was hidden. Then the Doctor was satisfied, went back to the table, and said—

'Now, Sir, I will look in my book to see where the money is hidden.'

The fifth, in the meantime, had crept into the stove to hear if the Doctor knew still more. But he sat there turning over the pages of his ABC book looking for the cock, and as he could not find it at once, he said: 'I know you are there, and out you must come.'

The man in the stove thought it was meant for him, and sprang out in a fright, crying: 'The man knows everything.'

Then Doctor Know-all showed the nobleman where the money was hidden, but he did not betray the servants; and he received much money from both sides as a reward, and became a very celebrated man.

# The Seven Ravens

THERE was once a Man who had seven sons, but never a daughter, however much he wished for one.

At last, however, he had a daughter.

His joy was great, but the child was small and delicate, and, on account of its weakness, it was to be christened at home.

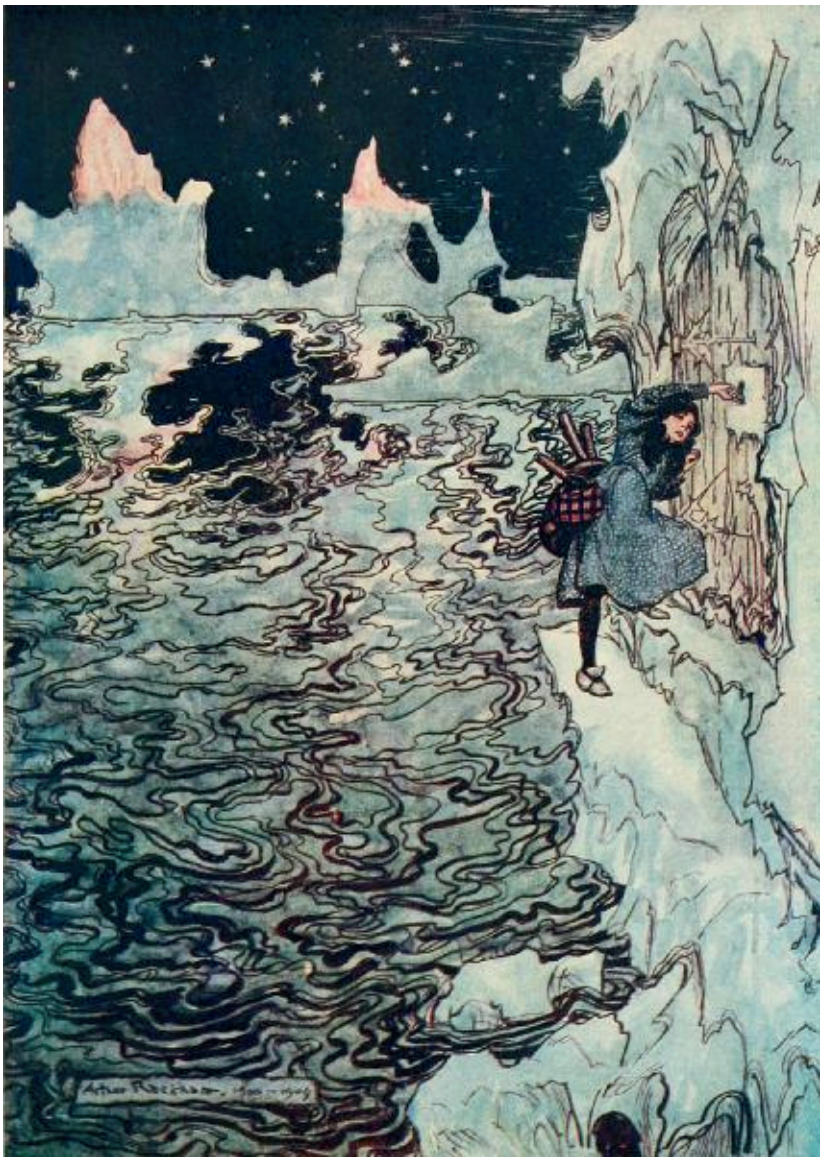
The Father sent one of his sons in haste to the spring to fetch some water; the other six ran with him, and because each of them wanted to be the first to draw the water, between them the pitcher fell into the brook. There they stood and didn't know what to do, and not one of them ventured to go home. As they did not come back, their Father became impatient, and said: 'Perhaps the young
rascals are playing about, and have forgotten it altogether.'

He became anxious lest his little girl should die unbaptized, and in hot vexation, he cried: 'I wish the youngsters would all turn into Ravens!'

Scarcely were the words uttered, when he heard a whirring in the air above his head, and, looking upwards, he saw seven coal-black Ravens flying away.

The parents could not undo the spell, and were very sad about the loss of their seven sons, but they consoled themselves in some measure with their dear little daughter, who soon became strong, and every day more beautiful. For a long time she was unaware that she had had any brothers, for her parents took care
not to mention it.

However, one day by chance she heard some people saying about her: 'Oh yes, the girl's pretty enough; but you know she is really to blame for the misfortune to her seven brothers.'



Then she became very sad, and went to her father and mother and asked if she had ever had any brothers, and what had become of them.

The parents could no longer conceal the secret. They said, however, that what had happened was by the decree of heaven, and that her birth was merely the innocent occasion. But the little girl could not get the matter off her conscience for a single day, and thought that she was bound to release her brothers again. She had no peace or quiet until she had secretly set out, and gone forth into the wide world to trace her brothers, wherever they might be, and to free them, let it cost what it might.

She took nothing with her but a little ring as a remembrance of her parents, a loaf of bread against hunger, a pitcher of water against thirst, and a little chair in case of fatigue. She kept ever going on and on until she came to the end of the world.

Then she came to the Sun, but it was hot and terrible, it devoured little children. She ran hastily away to the Moon, but it was too cold, and, moreover, dismal and dreary. And when the child was looking at it, it said: 'I smell, I smell man's flesh!' Then she quickly made off, and

came to the Stars, and they were kind and good, and every
one sat on his own special seat.

But the Morning Star stood up, and gave her a little bone, and said: 'Unless you have this bone, you cannot open the glass mountain, and in the glass mountain are your brothers.'

The girl took the bone, and wrapped it up carefully in a little kerchief, and went on again until she came to the glass mountain.

The gate was closed, and she meant to get out the little bone. But when she undid the kerchief it was empty, and she had lost the good Star's present.

How, now, was she to set to work? She was determined to rescue her brothers, but had no key to open the glass mountain.

The good little sister took a knife and cut off her own tiny finger, fitted it into the keyhole, and succeeded in opening the lock.

When she had entered, she met a Dwarf, who said: 'My child, what are you looking for?'

'I am looking for my brothers, the Seven Ravens,' she answered.

The Dwarf said: 'My masters, the Ravens, are not at home; but if you like to wait until they come, please to walk in.'

Thereupon the Dwarf brought in the Ravens' supper, on seven little plates, and in seven little cups, and the little sister ate a crumb or two from each of the little plates, and took a sip from each of the little cups, but she let the ring she had brought with her fall into the last little cup.

All at once a whirring and crying were heard in the air; then the Dwarf said: 'Now my masters the Ravens are coming home.'

Then they came in, and wanted to eat and drink, and began to look about for their little plates and cups.

But they said one after another: 'Halloa! who has been eating off my plate? Who has been drinking out of my cup? There has been some human mouth here.'

**When she entered she met a Dwarf.**

And when the seventh drank to the bottom of his cup, the ring rolled up against his lips.

He looked at it, and recognised it as a ring belonging to his father and mother, and said: ‘God grant that our sister may be here, and that we may be delivered.’

As the maiden was standing behind the door listening, she heard the wish and came forward, and then all the Ravens got back their human form again.

And they embraced and kissed one another, and went joyfully home.

# The Marriage of Mrs. Reynard

THERE was once an old Fox who thought that his wife was not true to him, and determined to put her to the test. He stretched himself under the bank, lay motionless, and pretended to be as dead as a door nail. Mrs. Reynard went to her chamber, and shut herself in; and her servant, Mistress Cat, sat by the fire, and cooked the dinner.

Now, when it became known that the old Fox was dead, suitors began to announce themselves. Soon afterwards, the servant heard some one knocking at the front door. She went and opened the door, and there stood a young Fox, who said—

'What are ye doing, pray, Mistress Cat?

Sleeping or waking? or what are ye at?'

She answered—

'I'm not asleep; I'm wide awake.

D'ye want to know what now I make?

I'm warming beer, with butter in it;

I beg ye'll taste it in a minute.'

'I'm much obliged, Mistress,' said the Fox. 'What is Mrs. Reynard doing?'

The Maid answered—

'In chamber sad she sits alone,

And ceases not with grief to moan.

She weeps until her eyes are red,

Because the dear old Fox is dead.'

'Well, just tell her, Mistress, that there's a young Fox here, who would be glad to woo her.'

'Very well, young gentleman.'

'Then went the Cat with pit-a-pat

And smote the door, rat-tata-tat!

"Pray, Mrs. Reynard, are you in?

Outside a wooer waits below!"'

'Well, what's he like? I want to know. Has he got nine such beautiful tails as the late lamented Mr. Reynard?'

'Oh dear no,' answered the Cat. 'He has only got one.'

'Then I won't have him.'

Mistress Cat went down, and sent the wooer away.

Soon after this there was knocking again, and another Fox appeared at the door, who wished to pay his addresses to Mrs. Reynard. He had two tails, but he came off no better than the first. Afterwards others came, each with one tail more; but they were all rejected, till at last one came that had nine tails like old Mr. Reynard.

When the widow heard this, full of joy, she said to the Cat—

'Open the gates and doors; be swift.

Old Mr. Reynard turn adrift.'

But when the wedding was about to be celebrated, then old Mr. Reynard under the bank roused himself, and gave the whole crew a good drubbing, and sent them, Mrs. Reynard and all, helter-skelter out of the house.

## SECOND TALE

When old Mr. Reynard really died, the Wolf came as a suitor, and knocked at the door, and the Cat who acted as servant to Mrs. Reynard, opened it.

The Wolf greeted her, and said—

'Good-day, Miss Cat, of sprightly wit,

How comes it that alone you sit?

What are you making there, so good?'

The Cat answered—

'Tumbling milk and butter up.

Will your Lordship have a sup?'

'Thank you kindly, Mistress Cat. Mistress Reynard is not at home, I suppose.'

'Upstairs in her chamber she sits,

And weeps as her sorrow befits.

Her sad case she doth much deplore,

Because Mr. Reynard's no more.' The Wolf answered— '"If now she wants to wed again, She must come down the stairs, 'tis plain." The Cat ran up without delay, Nor did her claws their clatter stay Until she reached the long saloon. There, tapping with her five gold rings, "Is Mrs. Reynard in?" she sings. "If now she wants to wed again, She must come down the stairs, 'tis plain."' Mrs. Reynard asked: 'Does the gentleman wear red breeches, and has he a pointed muzzle?' 'No,' answered the Cat. 'Then he is no use to me.' When the Wolf was rejected, there came a Dog, a Stag, a Hare, a Bear, and one after another every sort of wild animal. But in every one there was wanting some of the good qualities which old Mr. Reynard had possessed, and the Cat was obliged to dismiss the suitors every time. At last there came a young Fox. Then Mrs. Reynard asked: 'Does the gentleman wear red breeches, and has he got a pointed muzzle?' 'Yes,' said the Cat. 'He has both.' 'Then let him come up,' said Mrs. Reynard, and ordered the maid to make ready the wedding feast.

'Now, Cat, set to and sweep the room.

Then fling the old Fox from the house;

Bring in many a good fat mouse,

But eat them all yourself alone,

Nor give your mistress e'er a one.'

Then the wedding with young Mr. Fox was held, and there was merry-making and dancing, and if they haven't stopped, they are dancing still.

# The Salad

THERE was once a merry young Huntsman, who went into the forest to hunt. He was gay and light-hearted, and whistled a tune upon a leaf as he went along.

Suddenly an ugly old Crone spoke to him, and said: 'Good morning, dear Huntsman; you are merry and happy enough, while I am hungry and thirsty. Pray give me an alms.'

The Huntsman pitied the poor Old Woman, put his hand in his pocket, and made her a present according to his means.

Then he wanted to go on. But the Old Woman held him back, and said: 'Hark ye, dear Huntsman, I will make you a present because of your good heart. Go on your way, and you will come to a tree, on which nine birds are sitting. They will have a cloak in their claws, over which they are fighting. Take aim with your gun, and shoot into the middle of them. They will drop the cloak, and one of the birds will fall down dead. Take the cloak with you, it is a wishing-cloak. When you throw it round your shoulders you only have to wish yourself at a place to be there at once. Take the heart out of the dead bird and swallow it whole, then you will find a gold coin under your pillow every single morning when you wake.' The Huntsman thanked the Wise Woman, and thought: 'She promises fine things, if only
they turn out as well.'

When he had gone about a hundred paces, he heard above him, in the branches of a tree, such a chattering and screaming that he looked up.

There he saw a flock of birds tearing a garment with their beaks and claws; snatching and tearing at it as if each one wanted to have it for himself.

'Well,' said the Huntsman, 'this is extraordinary, it is exactly what the Old Woman said.'

He put his gun to his shoulder, took aim and fired right into the middle of them, making the feathers fly about.

The birds took flight with a great noise, all except one, which fell down dead, and the cloak dropped at his feet.

He did as the Old Woman had told him, cut the heart out of the bird and swallowed it whole. Then he took the cloak home with him.

When he woke in the morning, he remembered the Old Woman's promise, and looked under his pillow to see if it was true.

There, sure enough, lay the golden coin shining before him, and the next morning he found another, and the same every morning when he got up.

He collected quite a heap of gold, and at last he thought: 'What is the good of all my gold if I stay at home here? I will go and look about me in the world.'

So he took leave of his parents, shouldered his gun, and started off into the world.

**But the Old Woman was a witch.**

It so happened that one day he came to a thick forest, and when he got through it, he saw a fine castle lying in the plain beyond.

He saw an Old Woman standing in one of the windows looking out, with a beautiful Maiden beside her.

But the Old Woman was a witch, and she said to the Maiden: 'Here comes some one out of the forest. He has a wonderful treasure inside him; we must try to get it from him, my darling, it will suit us better than him. He has a bird's heart about him, and therefore he finds a gold coin every morning under his pillow when he wakes.'

She told the girl how he had got it, and at last said: 'If you don't get it from him, it will be the worse for you.'

When the Huntsman got nearer, he saw the Maiden, and said: 'I have been wandering about for a long time, I will go into this castle and take a rest. I have plenty of money.'

But the real reason was that he had caught sight of the pretty picture at the window. He went in, and he was kindly received and hospitably treated.

Before long, he was so enamoured of the Witch-Maiden that he thought of nothing else, and cared for nothing but pleasing her.

The Old Woman said to the Maiden: 'Now we must get the bird's heart, he will never miss it.'

They concocted a potion, and when it was ready they put it into a goblet.

And the Maiden took it to him, and said: 'Now, my beloved, you must drink to me.'

He took the cup and drank the potion, and when he was overpowered by it the bird's heart came out of his mouth.

The Maiden took it away secretly and swallowed it herself, for the Old Woman wanted to have it.

From this time the Huntsman found no more gold under his pillow; but the coin was always under the Maiden's instead, and the Old Woman used to fetch it away every morning.

But he was so much in love, that he thought of nothing but enjoying himself in the Maiden's company.

Then the Old Woman said: 'We have got the bird's heart, but we must have his wishing-cloak too.'

The Maiden said: 'Let us leave him that; we have taken away his wealth.'

The Old Woman was very angry, and said: 'A cloak like that is a very wonderful thing, and not often to be got. Have it I must, and will!'

So she obeyed the Witch's orders, placed herself at the window, and looked sadly out at the distant hills.

The Huntsman said: 'Why are you so sad?'

'Alas! my love,' was her answer, 'over there are the garnet mountains, where the precious stones are found. I long for them so much that I grow sad whenever I think of them. But who could ever get them? The birds which fly, perhaps; no mortal could ever reach them.'

'If that is all your trouble,' said the Huntsman, 'I can soon lift that load from your heart.'

Then he drew her under his cloak, and in a moment they were both sitting on the mountain. The precious stones were glittering around them; their hearts rejoiced at the sight of them, and they soon gathered together some of the finest and largest.

Now the Witch had so managed that the Huntsman began to feel his eyes grow very heavy.

So he said to the Maiden: 'We will sit down to rest a while, I am so tired I can hardly stand.'

So they sat down, and he laid his head on her lap and was soon fast asleep.

As soon as he was asleep, the Maiden slipped the cloak from his shoulders and put it on her own, loaded herself with the precious garnets, and wished herself at home.

When the Huntsman had had his sleep out, he woke up and saw that his beloved had betrayed him, and left him alone on the wild mountain.

'Oh, what treachery there is in the world!' he exclaimed, as he sat down in grief, and did not know what to do.

Now the mountain belonged to some wild and savage Giants who lived on it, and before long he saw three of them striding along.

He quickly lay down again and pretended to be fast asleep.

The first one, as he came along, stumbled against him, and said: 'What kind of earthworm is this?'

The second said: 'Tread on him and kill him.'

But the third said: 'It isn't worth the trouble. Let him alone,—he can't live here; and when he climbs higher up the mountain, the clouds will roll down and carry him off.'

Then they passed on, and as soon as they were gone, the Huntsman, who had heard all they said, got up and climbed up to the top of the mountain.

After he had sat there for a time, a cloud floated over him, and carried him away.

At first he was swept through the air, but then he was gently lowered and deposited within a large walled garden, upon a soft bed of lettuces and other herbs.

He looked around him and said: 'If only I had something to eat; I am so hungry. And it will be difficult to get away from here. I see neither apples nor pears, nor any other fruit, nothing but salad and herbs.' At last, however, he thought: 'At the worst, I can eat some of this salad; it does not taste very good, but it will, at least, be refreshing.'

He picked out a fine head of lettuce, and began eating it. But he had hardly swallowed a little piece, when he began to feel very odd, and quite changed. He felt four legs growing, a big head, and two long ears, and he saw to his horror that he was changed into an ass. As he at the same time felt as hungry as ever, and the juicy salad was now very much to his taste, he went on eating greedily.

At last he reached another kind of salad, which he had hardly tasted when he felt a new change taking place, and found himself back in his human shape.

After this he lay down and slept off his fatigue.

When he woke next morning he broke off a head of the bad salad, and a head of the good, and thought: 'These will help me to regain my own, and also to punish the traitors.'

He put the salad into his wallet, climbed over the wall, and went off to find the castle of his beloved.

After wandering about for a few days, he was fortunate enough to find it. Then he stained his face, and disguised himself so that his own mother would not have known him, and went to the castle to ask for shelter.

'I am so tired,' he said; 'I cannot go any further.'

The Witch said: 'Who are you, countryman, and what do you want?' He answered: 'I am a messenger from the King. He sent me to find the rarest salad which grows under the sun. I have been lucky enough to find it, and I carry it with me. But the sun is so burning, that I am afraid the tender plant will be withered, and I don't know if I shall be able to take it any further.'

When the Old Witch heard about the rare salad, she felt a great desire to have some, and said: 'Good countryman, let me try the wonderful salad!'

'By all means,' he answered. 'I have two heads with me, and you shall have one.' So saying, he opened his sack, and handed her the bad one.

The Witch had no suspicions, and her mouth so watered for the new dish, that she went to the kitchen herself to prepare it.

When it was ready, she could not wait till it was put upon the table, but put a few leaves into her mouth at once.

Hardly had she swallowed them, when she lost her human shape, and ran out into the courtyard, as an old she-ass.

Then the Maid came into the kitchen, saw the salad standing ready, and was about to put it on the table. But on the way the fancy seized her to taste it, according to her usual habit, and she ate a few leaves. The power of the salad at once became apparent, because she also turned into an ass, and ran out into the yard to join the Old Witch, while the dish of salad fell to the ground.

In the meantime the messenger was sitting with the beautiful Maiden, and as no one appeared with the salad, she also was seized with a desire to taste it, and said: 'I don't know what has become of the salad.' But the Huntsman thought: 'The plant must have done its work,' and said: 'I will go into the kitchen and see.'

As soon as he got downstairs he saw the two asses running about, and the salad lying on the ground.

'This is all right!' he said; 'two of them are done for.'

Then he picked up the leaves, put them on a dish, and took them to the Maiden.

'I am bringing the precious food to you myself,' said he, 'so that you may not have to wait any longer.'

She ate some, and, like the others, was immediately changed into an ass, and ran out to them in the yard.

**He tied them all together and drove them along till he came to a mill.**

When the Huntsman had washed his face so that the transformed creatures might know him, he went into the courtyard, and said: 'Now, you shall be paid for your treachery.'

He tied them all together with a rope, and drove them along till he came to a mill. He tapped at the window, and the Miller put his head out and asked what he wanted.

'I have three bad animals here,' he said, 'that I want to get rid of. If you will take them and feed them, and treat them as I wish, I will pay you what you like to ask.'

'Why not?' said the Miller. 'How do you want them treated?'

The Huntsman said he wanted the old she-ass (the Witch) to be well beaten three times a day and fed once. The younger one, which was the Maid, beaten once and fed three times. The youngest of all, who was the beautiful Maiden, was to be fed three times, and not beaten at all; he could not find it in his heart to have her beaten.

Then he went back to the castle and found everything he wanted in it.

A few days later the Miller came and told him that the old ass which was to be beaten three times and fed once, was dead. 'The other two,' he said, 'which are to be fed three times, are not dead, but they are pining away, and won't last long.'

The Huntsman's heart was stirred with pity, and he told the Miller to bring them back to him.

When they came he gave them some of the other salad to eat, so that they took their human shapes again.

The beautiful Maiden fell on her knees before him, and said: ‘O my beloved, forgive me all the wrong I have done you. My mother forced me to do it. It was against my own will, for I love you dearly. Your wishing-cloak is hanging in the cupboard, and you shall have the bird’s heart back too.’

But he said: ‘Keep it; it will be all the same, as I will take you to be my own true wife.’

Their marriage was soon after celebrated, and they lived happily together till they died.

# The Youth who could not Shudder

THERE was once a Father who had two sons. One was clever and sensible, and always knew how to get on. But the younger one was stupid, and could not learn anything, and he had no imagination.

When people saw him, they said: 'His Father will have plenty of trouble with him.'

Whenever there was anything to be done, the eldest one always had to do it. But if his Father sent him to fetch anything late in the evening, or at night, and the way lay through the churchyard, or any other dreary place, he would answer: 'Oh no, Father, not there; it makes me shudder!' For he was afraid.

In the evening, when stories were being told round the fire which made one's flesh creep, and the listeners said: 'Oh, you make me shudder!' the youngest son, sitting in the corner listening, could not imagine what they meant. 'They always say "It makes me shudder! It makes me shudder!" And it doesn't make me shudder a bit. It must be some art which I can't understand.' Now it happened one day that his Father said to him: 'I say, you in the corner there, you are growing big and strong. You must learn something by which you can make a living. See what pains your brother takes, but you are not worth your salt.' 'Well, Father,' he answered, 'I am quite ready to learn something; nay, I should very much like to learn how to shudder, for I know nothing about that.'

The elder son laughed when he heard him, and thought: 'Good heavens! what a fool my brother is; he will never do any good as long as he lives.'

But his Father sighed, and answered: 'You will easily enough learn how to shudder, but you won't make your bread by it.'

Soon after, the Sexton came to the house on a visit, and the Father confided his troubles about his son to him. He told him how stupid he was, and how he never could learn anything. 'Would you believe that when I asked him how he was going to make his living, he said he would like to learn how to shudder?'

'If that's all,' said the Sexton, 'he may learn that from me. Just let me have him, and I'll soon put the polish on him.'

The Father was pleased, for he thought: 'Anyhow, the Lad will gain something by it.'

So the Sexton took him home with him, and he had to ring the church bells.

A few days after, the Sexton woke him at midnight, and told him to get up and ring the bells. 'You shall soon be taught how to shudder!' he thought, as he crept stealthily up the stairs beforehand.

When the Lad got up into the tower, and turned round to catch hold of the bell rope, he saw a white figure standing on the steps opposite the belfry window.

'Who is there?' he cried; but the figure neither moved nor answered.

'Answer,' cried the Lad, 'or get out of the way. You have no business here in the night.'

But so that the Lad should think he was a ghost, the Sexton did not stir.

The Lad cried for the second time: 'What do you want here? Speak if you are an honest fellow, or I'll throw you down the stairs.'

The Sexton did not think he would go to such lengths, so he made no sound, and stood as still as if he were made of stone.

Then the Lad called to him the third time, and, as he had no answer, he took a run and threw the ghost down the stairs. It fell down ten steps, and remained lying in a corner.

Then he rang the bells, went home, and, without saying a word to anybody, went to bed and was soon fast asleep.

The Sexton's wife waited a long time for her husband, but, as he never came back, she got frightened, and woke up the Lad.

'Don't you know what has become of my husband?' she asked. 'He went up into the church tower before you.'

'No,' answered the Lad. 'There was somebody standing on the stairs opposite the belfry window, and, as he would neither answer me nor go away, I took him to be a rogue and threw him downstairs. Go and see if it was your husband; I should be sorry if it were.' The woman hurried away and found her husband lying in the corner, moaning, with a broken leg. She carried him down, and then hastened with loud cries to the Lad's father.

'Your son has brought about a great misfortune; he has thrown my husband downstairs and broken his leg. Take the good-for-nothing fellow away, out of our house.'

The Father was horrified, and, going back with her, gave the Lad a good scolding.

'What is the meaning of this inhuman prank? The evil one must have put it into your head.'

'Father,' answered the Lad, 'just listen to me. I am quite innocent. He stood there in the dark, like a man with some wicked design. I did not know who it was, and I warned him three times to speak, or to go away!' 'Alas!' said his Father, 'you bring me nothing but disaster. Go away out of my sight. I will have nothing more to do with you.'

'Gladly, Father. Only wait till daylight; then I will go away, and learn to shudder. Then, at least, I shall have one art to make my living by.'

‘Learn what you like,’ said his Father. ‘It’s all the same to me. Here are fifty thalers for you. Go out into the world, and don’t tell a creature where you come from, or who your Father is, for you will only bring me to shame.’

‘Just as you please, Father. If that is all you want, I can easily fulfil your desire.’

At daybreak, the Lad put his fifty thalers into his pocket, and went out along the high road, repeating over and over to himself as he went: ‘If only I could shudder, if only I could shudder.’

A Man came by and overheard the words the Lad was saying to himself, and when they had gone a little further, and came within sight of the gallows, he said: ‘See, there is the tree where those seven have been wedded to the ropemaker’s daughter, and are now learning to fly. Sit down below them, and when night comes you will soon learn to shudder.’

‘If nothing more than that is needed,’ said the Lad, ‘it is easily done. And if I learn to shudder as easily as that, you shall have my fifty thalers. Come back to me early to-morrow morning.’ Then the Lad went up to the gallows, and sat down under them to wait till night came. As he was cold he lighted a fire, but at midnight the wind grew so cold that he did not know how to keep himself warm.

The wind blew the men on the gallows backwards and forwards, and swung them against each other, so he thought: ‘Here am I freezing by the fire, how much colder they must be up there.’ And as he was very compassionate, he mounted the ladder, undid them, and brought all seven down one by one.

Then he blew up the fire, and placed them round it to warm themselves.

They sat there and never moved, even when the fire caught their clothing.

‘Take care, or I will hang you all up again.’

The dead men, of course, could not hear, and remained silent while their few rags were burnt up.

Then he grew angry, and said: ‘If you won’t take care of yourselves, I can’t help you, and I won’t be burnt with you.’

So he hung them all up again in a row, and sat down by the fire and went to sleep again.

Next morning, the Man, wanting to get his fifty thalers, came to him and said: ‘Now do you know what shuddering means?’

‘No,’ he said; ‘how should I have learnt it? Those fellows up there never opened their mouths, and they were so stupid that they let the few poor rags they had about them burn.’

Then the Man saw that no thalers would be his that day, and he went away, saying: 'Never in my life have I seen such a fellow as this.'

The Lad also went on his way, and again began saying to himself: 'Oh, if only I could learn to shudder, if only I could learn to shudder.'

A Carter, walking behind him, heard this, and asked: 'Who are you?'

'I don't know,' answered the Youth.

'Who is your Father?'

'That I must not say.'

'What are you always mumbling in your beard?'

'Ah,' answered the Youth, 'I want to learn to shudder, but no one can teach me.'

'Stop your silly chatter,' said the Carter. 'Just you come with me, and I'll see that you have what you want.'

The Youth went with the Carter, and in the evening they reached an inn, where they meant to pass the night. He said quite loud, as they entered: 'Oh, if only I could learn to shudder, if only I could learn to shudder.' The Landlord, who heard him, laughed, and said: 'If that's what you want, there should be
plenty of opportunity for you here.'

'I will have nothing to say to it,' said the Landlady. 'So many a prying fellow has already paid the penalty with his life. It would be a sin and a shame if those bright eyes should not see the light of day again.' But the Youth said: 'I will learn it somehow, however hard it may be. I have been driven out
for not knowing it.'

He gave the Landlord no peace till he told him that there was an enchanted castle a little way off, where any one could be made to shudder, if he would pass three nights in it.

The King had promised his daughter to wife to any one who dared do it, and she was the prettiest maiden the sun had ever shone on.

There were also great treasures hidden in the castle, watched over by evil spirits, enough to make any poor man rich who could break the spell.

Already many had gone in, but none had ever come out.

Next morning the Youth went to the King, and said: 'By your leave, I should like to pass three nights in the enchanted castle.'

The King looked at him, and, as he took a fancy to him, he said: 'You may ask three things to take into the castle with you, but they must be lifeless things.'

He answered: ‘Then I ask for a fire, a turning-lathe, and a cooper’s bench with the knife.’

The King had all three carried into the castle for him.

When night fell, the Youth went up to the castle and made a bright fire in one of the rooms. He put the cooper’s bench with the knife near the fire, and seated himself on the turning-lathe.

‘Oh, if only I could shudder,’ he said; ‘but I shan’t learn it here either.’

Towards midnight he wanted to make up the fire, and, as he was blowing it up, something in one corner began to shriek: ‘Miau, miau, how cold we are!’

‘You fools!’ he cried. ‘What do you shriek for? If you are cold, come and warm yourselves by the fire.’

As he spoke, two big black cats bounded up and sat down, one on each side of him, and stared at him with wild, fiery eyes.

After a time, when they had warmed themselves, they said: ‘Comrade, shall we have a game of cards?’

‘Why not?’ he answered; ‘but show me your paws first.’

Then they stretched out their claws.

‘Why,’ he said, ‘what long nails you’ve got. Wait a bit; I must cut them for you.’

He seized them by the scruff of their necks, lifted them on to the cooper’s bench, and screwed their paws firmly to it.

**Crowds of black cats and dogs swarmed out of every corner.**

'I have looked at your fingers, and the desire to play cards with you has passed.'

Then he killed them and threw them out into the moat.

But no sooner had he got rid of these two cats, and was about to sit down by his fire again, than crowds of black cats and dogs swarmed out of every corner, more and more of them.

They howled horribly, and trampled on his fire, and tried to put it out.

For a time he looked quietly on, but when it grew too bad he seized his cooper's knife, and cried: 'Away with you, you rascally pack,' and let fly among them right and left. Some of them sprang away, the others he killed, and threw them out into the water.

When he came back he scraped the embers of his fire together again, and warmed himself.

He could hardly keep his eyes open, and felt the greatest desire to go to sleep. He looked round, and in one corner he saw a big bed. 'That's the very thing,' he said, and lay down in it.

As soon as he closed his eyes, the bed
began to move, and soon it was tearing round and round the castle. 'Very good!' he said.

‘The faster the better!’ The bed rolled on as if it were dragged by six horses; over thresholds and stairs, up and down.

Suddenly it went hop, hop, hop, and turned topsy-turvy, so that it lay upon him like a mountain. But he pitched the pillows and blankets into the air, slipped out of it, and said: ‘Now any one may ride who likes.’ Then he lay down by his fire and slept till daylight. In the morning the King came, and when he saw him lying on the floor, he thought the ghosts had killed him, and he was dead. So he said: ‘It’s a sad pity, for such a handsome fellow.’ But the Youth heard him, and sat up, saying: ‘It has not come to that yet.’ The King was surprised and delighted, and asked him how he had got on. ‘Pretty well!’ he answered. ‘One night is gone, I suppose I shall get through the others too.’ When the Landlord saw him he opened his eyes, and said: ‘I never thought I should see you alive again. Have you learnt how to shudder now?’

‘No,’ he answered; ‘it’s all in vain. If only some one would tell me how.’

The second night came, and up he went again and sat down by the fire, and began his old song: ‘Oh, if only I could learn to shudder.’

In the middle of the night a great noise and uproar began, first soft, and then growing louder; then for a short time there would be silence.

At last, with a loud scream, half the body of a man fell down the chimney in front of him.

‘Hullo!’ he said, ‘another half is wanting here; this is too little.’

The noise began again, and, amidst shrieks and howls, the other half fell down.

‘Wait a bit,’ he said; ‘I’ll blow up the fire.’

When this was done, and he looked round, the two halves had come together, and a hideous man sat in his place.

‘We didn’t bargain for that,’ said the Youth. ‘The bench is mine.’

The man wanted to push him out of the way, but the Youth would not have it, flung him aside, and took his own seat.

Then more men fell down the chimney, one after the other, and they fetched nine human shin bones and two skulls, and began to play skittles.

The Youth felt inclined to join them, and cried: ‘I say, can I play too?’

‘Yes, if you’ve got any money.’

‘Money enough,’ he answered, ‘but your balls aren’t quite round.’ Then he took the skulls and turned them on the lathe till they were quite round. ‘Now they will roll better,’ he said. ‘Here goes! The more, the merrier!’

So he played with them, and lost some money, but when it struck twelve everything disappeared. He lay down, and was soon fast asleep.

Next morning the King came again to look after him, and said: ‘Well, how did you get on this time?’

‘I played skittles,’ he answered, ‘and lost a few coins.’

‘Didn’t you learn to shudder?’

‘Not I. I only made merry. Oh, if I could but find out how to shudder.’

On the third night he again sat down on his bench, and said quite savagely: ‘If only I could shudder!’

When it grew late, six tall men came in, carrying a bier, and he said: ‘Hullo there! That must be my cousin who died a few days ago.’ And he beckoned and said: ‘Come along, cousin, come along.’ The men put the coffin on the floor, and he went up and took the lid off, and there lay a dead man. He felt the face, and it was as cold as ice. ‘Wait,’ he said; ‘I will warm him.’

Then he went to the fire and warmed his hand, and laid it on his face, but the dead man remained cold. He took him out of the coffin, sat down by the fire, and took him on his knees, and rubbed his arms to make the blood circulate. But it was all no good. Next, it came into his head that if two people were in bed together, they warmed each other. So he put the dead man in the bed, covered him up, and lay down beside him. After a time the dead man grew warm, and began to move. Then the Youth said: ‘There, you see, cousin mine, have I not warmed you?’ But the Man rose up, and cried: ‘Now, I will strangle you!’ ‘What!’ said he, ‘are those all the thanks I get? Back you go into your coffin then.’ So saying, he lifted him up, threw him in, and fastened down the lid. Then the six men came back and carried the coffin away. ‘I cannot shudder,’ he said; ‘and I shall never learn it here.’

Just then a huge Man appeared. He was frightful to look at, old, and with a long white beard.

‘Oh, you miserable wight!’ he cried. ‘You shall soon learn what shuddering is, for you shall die.’

‘Not so fast,’ said the Youth. ‘If I am to die, I must be present.’

‘I will make short work of you,’ said the old monster.

‘Softly! softly! don’t you boast. I am as strong as you, and very likely much stronger.’

‘We shall see about that,’ said the Old Man. ‘If you are the stronger, I will let you go. Come; we will try.’

Then he led him through numberless dark passages to a smithy, took an axe, and with one blow struck one of the anvils into the earth.

‘I can better that,’ said the Youth, and went to the other anvil. The Old Man placed himself near to see, and his white beard hung over.

Then the Youth took the axe and split the anvil with one blow, catching in the Old Man’s beard at the same time.

‘Now, I have you fast,’ said the Youth, ‘and you will be the one to die.’

Then he seized an iron rod, and belaboured the Old Man with it, till he shrieked for mercy, and promised him great riches if he would stop.

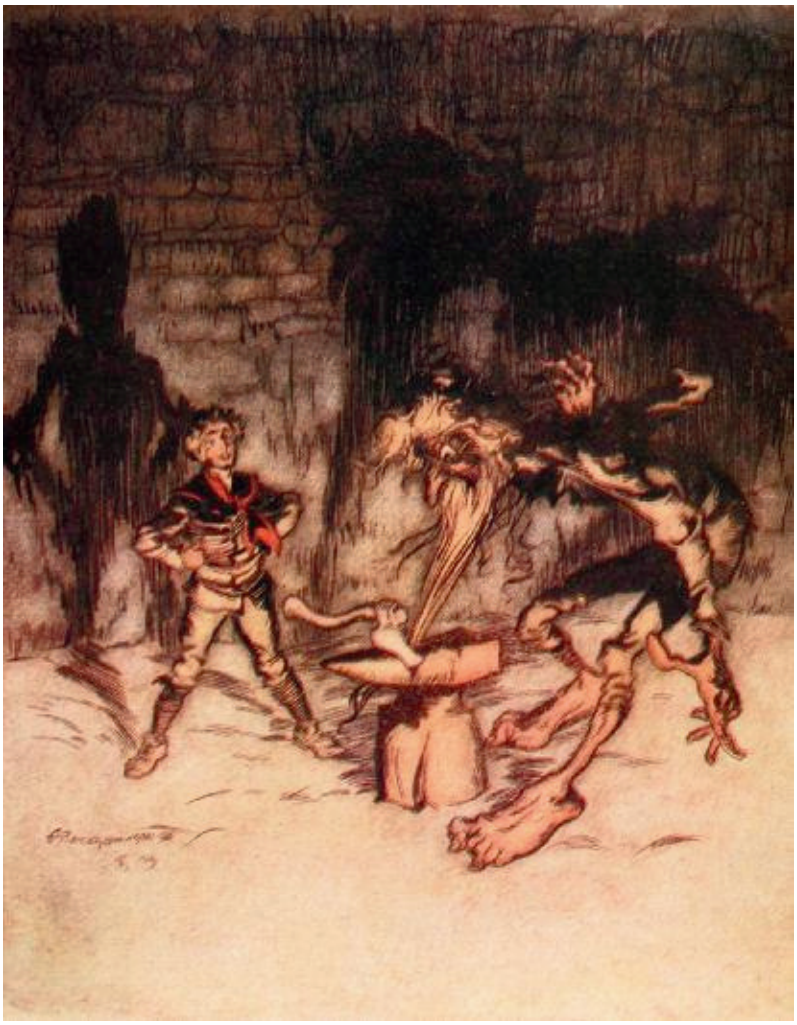
Then the Youth pulled out the axe and released him, and the Old Man led him back into the castle, and showed him three chests of gold in a cellar.

‘One is for the poor,’ he said, ‘one for the King, and one for you.’

The clock struck twelve, and the ghost disappeared, leaving the Youth in the dark.

‘I must manage to get out somehow,’ he said, and groped about till he found his way back to his room, where he lay down by the fire and went to sleep.

Next morning the King came and said: ‘Now you must have learnt how to shudder.’



'No,' said he. 'What can it be? My dead cousin was there, and an Old Man with a beard came and showed me a lot of gold. But what shuddering is, that no man can tell me.'

Then said the King: 'You have broken the spell on the castle, and you shall marry my daughter.'

'That is all very well,' he said; 'but still I don't know what shuddering is.'

The gold was got out of the castle, and the marriage was celebrated, but, happy as the young King was, and much as he loved his wife, he was always saying: 'Oh, if only I could learn to shudder, if only I could learn to shudder.'

At last his wife was vexed by it, and her waiting-woman said: 'I can help you; he shall be taught the meaning of shuddering.'

And she went out to the brook which ran through the garden and got a pail full of cold water and little fishes.

At night, when the young King was asleep, his wife took the coverings off and poured the cold water over him, and all the little fishes flopped about him.

Then he woke up, and cried: ‘Oh, how I am shuddering, dear wife, how I am shuddering! Now I know what shuddering is!’

# King Thrushbeard

THERE was once a King who had a Daughter. She was more beautiful than words can tell, but at the same time so proud and haughty that no man who came to woo her was good enough for her. She turned away one after another, and even mocked them.

One day her father ordered a great feast to be given, and invited to it all the marriageable young men from far and near.

They were all placed in a row, according to their rank and position. First came Kings, then Princes, then Dukes, Earls, and Barons.

The Princess was led through the ranks, but she had some fault to find with all of them.

One was too stout. 'That barrel!' she said. The next was too tall. 'Long and lean is no good!' The third was too short. 'Short and stout, can't turn about!' The fourth was too white. 'Pale as death!' The fifth was too red. 'Turkey-cock!' The sixth was not straight. 'Oven-dried!'

So there was something against each of them. But she made specially merry over one good King, who stood quite at the head of the row, and whose chin was a little hooked.

'Why!' she cried, 'he has a chin like the beak of a thrush.'

After that, he was always called 'King Thrushbeard.'

When the old King saw that his Daughter only made fun of them, and despised all the suitors who were assembled, he was very angry, and swore that the first beggar who came to the door should be her husband. A few days after, a wandering Musician began to sing at the window, hoping to receive charity.

When the King heard him, he said: 'Let him be brought in.'

The Musician came in, dressed in dirty rags, and sang to the King and his Daughter, and when he had finished, he begged alms of them.

The King said: 'Your song has pleased me so much, that I will give you my Daughter to be your wife.'

The Princess was horror-stricken. But the King said: 'I have sworn an oath to give you to the first beggar who came; and I will keep my word.'

No entreaties were of any avail. A Parson was brought, and she had to marry the Musician there and then.

When the marriage was completed, the King said: 'Now you are a beggar-woman, you can't stay in my castle any longer. You must go away with your Husband.'

The Beggar took her by the hand and led her away, and she was obliged to go with him on foot.

When they came to a big wood, she asked:

‘Ah! who is the Lord of this forest so fine?’

‘It belongs to King Thrushbeard. It might have been thine,

If his Queen you had been.’

‘Ah! sad must I sing!

I would I’d accepted the hand of the King.’

After that they reached a great meadow, and she asked again:

‘Ah! who is the Lord of these meadows so fine?’

‘They belong to King Thrushbeard, and would have been thine,

If his Queen you had been.’

‘Ah! sad must I sing!

I would I’d accepted the love of the King.’

Then they passed through a large town, and again she asked:

‘Ah! who is the Lord of this city so fine?’

‘It belongs to King Thrushbeard, and it might have been thine,

If his Queen you had been.’

‘Ah! sad must I sing!

I would I’d accepted the heart of the King.’

‘It doesn’t please me at all,’ said the Musician, ‘that you are always wishing for another husband. Am I not good enough for you?’

At last they came to a miserable little hovel, and she said:

‘Ah, heavens! what’s this house, so mean and small?

This wretched little hut’s no house at all.’

The Musician answered: ‘This is my house, and yours; where we are to live together.’

The door was so low that she had to stoop to get in.

‘Where are the servants?’ asked the Princess.

‘Servants indeed!’ answered the Beggar. ‘Whatever you want done, you must do for yourself. Light the fire, and put the kettle on to make my supper. I am very tired.’

But the Princess knew nothing about lighting fires or cooking, and to get it done at all, the Beggar had to do it himself.

When they had finished their humble fare, they went to bed. But in the morning the Man made her get up very early to do the housework.

They lived like this for a few days, till they had eaten up all their store of food.

Then the Man said: ‘Wife, this won’t do any longer; we can’t live here without working. You shall make baskets.’

So he went out and cut some osiers, and brought them home. She began to weave them, but the hard osiers bruised her tender hands.

‘I see that won’t do,’ said the Beggar. ‘You had better spin; perhaps you can manage that.’

So she sat down and tried to spin, but the harsh yarn soon cut her delicate fingers and made them bleed.

‘Now you see,’ said the Man, ‘what a good-for-nothing you are. I have made a bad bargain in you. But I will try to start a trade in earthenware. You must sit in the market and offer your goods for sale.’

‘Alas!’ she thought, ‘if any of the people from my father’s kingdom come and see me sitting in the market-place, offering goods for sale, they will scoff at me.’ But it was no good. She had to obey, unless she meant to die of hunger.

All went well the first time. The people willingly bought her wares because she was so handsome, and they paid what she asked them—nay, some even gave her the money and left her the pots as well. They lived on the gains as long as they lasted, and then the Man laid in a new stock of wares.

She took her seat in a corner of the market, set out her crockery about her, and began to cry her wares.

Suddenly, a drunken Hussar came galloping up, and rode right in among the pots, breaking them into thousands of bits.

She began to cry, and was so frightened that she did not know what to do. 'Oh! what will become of me?' she cried. 'What will my Husband say to me?' She ran home, and told him her misfortune. 'Who would ever think of sitting at the corner of the market with crockery?' he said. 'Stop that crying. I see you are no manner of use for any decent kind of work. I have been to our King's palace, and asked if they do not want a kitchen wench, and they have promised to try you. You will get your victuals free, at any rate.'

So the Princess became a kitchen wench, and had to wait upon the Cook and do all the dirty work. She fixed a pot into each of her pockets, and in them took home her share of the scraps and leavings, and upon these they lived. It so happened that the marriage of the eldest Princess just then took place, and the poor Woman went upstairs and stood behind the door to peep at all the splendour.

When the rooms were lighted up, and she saw the guests streaming in, one more beautiful than the other, and the scene grew more and more brilliant, she thought, with a heavy heart, of her sad fate. She cursed the pride and haughtiness which had been the cause of her humiliation, and of her being brought to such depths.

Every now and then the Servants would throw her bits from the savoury dishes they were carrying away from the feast, and these she put into her pots to take home with her.

All at once the King's son came in. He was dressed in silk and velvet, and he had a golden chain round his neck.

When he saw the beautiful Woman standing at the door, he seized her by the hand, and wanted to dance with her.

But she shrank and refused, because she saw that it was King Thrushbeard, who had been one of the suitors for her hand, and whom she had most scornfully driven away.

Her resistance was no use, and he dragged her into the hall. The string by which her pockets were suspended broke. Down fell the pots, and the soup and savoury morsels were spilt all over the floor. When the guests saw it, they burst into shouts of mocking laughter. She was so ashamed, that she would gladly have sunk into the earth. She rushed to the door, and tried to escape, but on the stairs a Man stopped her and brought her back.

When she looked at him, it was no other than King Thrushbeard again.

He spoke kindly to her, and said: ‘Do not be afraid. I and the Beggar-Man, who lived in the poor little hovel with you, are one and the same. For love of you I disguised myself; and I was also the Hussar who rode among your pots. All this I did to bend your proud spirit, and to punish you for the haughtiness with which you mocked me.’

She wept bitterly, and said: ‘I was very wicked, and I am not worthy to be your wife.’

But he said: ‘Be happy! Those evil days are over. Now we will celebrate our true wedding.’

The waiting-women came and put rich clothing upon her, and her Father, with all his Court, came and wished her joy on her marriage with King Thrushbeard.

Then, in truth, her happiness began. I wish we had been there to see it, you and I.

# Iron Hans

THERE was once a King whose castle was surrounded by a forest full of game. One day he sent a Huntsman out to shoot a deer, but he never came back.

'Perhaps an accident has happened to him,' said the King.

Next day he sent out two more Huntsmen to look for him, but they did not return either. On the third day he sent for all his Huntsmen, and said to them, 'Search the whole forest without ceasing, until you have found all three.'

But not a single man of all these, or one of the pack of hounds they took with them, ever came back. From this time forth no one would venture into the forest; so there it lay, wrapped in silence and solitude, with only an occasional eagle or hawk circling over it. This continued for several years, and then one day a strange Huntsman sought an audience of the King, and offered to penetrate into the dangerous wood. The King, however, would not give him permission, and said, 'It's not safe, and I am afraid if you go in that you will never come out again, any more than all the others.'

The Huntsman answered, 'Sire, I will take the risk upon myself. I do not know fear.'

So the Huntsman went into the wood with his Dog. Before long the Dog put up some game, and wanted to chase it; but hardly had he taken a few steps when he came to a deep pool, and could go no further. A naked arm appeared out of the water, seized him, and drew him down.

When the Huntsman saw this, he went back and fetched three men with pails to empty the pool. When they got to the bottom they found a Wild Man, whose body was as brown as rusty iron, and his hair hanging down over his face to his knees. They bound him with cords, and carried him away to the castle. There was great excitement over the Wild Man, and the King had an iron cage made for him in the courtyard. He forbade any one to open the door of the cage on pain of death, and the Queen had to keep the key in her own charge. After this, anybody could walk in the forest with safety.

The King had a little son eight years old, and one day he was playing in the courtyard. In his play his golden ball fell into the cage. The boy ran up, and said, 'Give me back my ball.'

'Not until you have opened the door,' said the Wild Man.

'No; I can't do that,' said the boy. 'My father has forbidden it,' and then he ran away.

Next day he came again, and asked for his ball. The Man said, 'Open my door'; but he would not.

On the third day the King went out hunting, and the boy came again, and said, 'Even if I would, I could not open the door. I have not got the key.'

Then the Wild Man said, 'It is lying under your mother's pillow. You can easily get it.'

The boy, who was very anxious to have his ball back, threw his scruples to the winds, and fetched the key. The door was very stiff, and he pinched his fingers in opening it. As soon as it was open the Wild Man came out, gave the boy his ball, and hurried away. The boy was now very frightened, and cried out, 'O Wild Man, don't go away, or I shall be beaten!'

The Wild Man turned back, picked up the boy, put him on his shoulder, and walked hurriedly off into the wood.

When the King came home he saw at once the cage was empty, and asked the Queen how it had come about. She knew nothing about it, and went to look for the key, which was of course gone. They called the boy, but there was no answer. The King sent people out into the fields to look for him, but all in vain; he was gone. The King easily guessed what had happened, and great grief fell on the royal household. When the Wild Man got back into the depths of the dark forest he took the boy down off his shoulder, and said, 'You will never see your father and mother again; but I will keep you here with me, because you had pity on me and set me free. If you do as you are told, you will be well treated. I have treasures and gold enough and to spare, more than anybody in the world.' He made a bed of moss for the boy, on which he went to sleep. Next morning the Man led him to a spring, and said, 'You see this golden well is bright and clear as crystal? You must sit by it, and take care that nothing falls into it, or it will be contaminated. I shall come every evening to see if you have obeyed my orders.'

The boy sat down on the edge of the spring to watch it; sometimes he would see a gold fish or a golden snake darting through it, and he guarded it well, so that nothing should fall into it. One day as he was sitting like this his finger pained him so much that involuntarily he dipped it into the water. He drew it out very quickly, but saw that it was gilded, and although he tried hard to clean it, it remained golden. In the evening Iron Hans came back, looked at the boy, and said, 'What has happened to the well to-day?'

'Nothing, nothing!' he answered, keeping his finger behind his back, so that Iron Hans should not see it.

But he said, 'You have dipped your finger into the water. It does not matter this time, but take care that nothing of the kind occurs again.'

Early next morning the boy took his seat by the spring again to watch. His finger still hurt very much, and he put his hand up above his head; but, unfortunately, in so doing he brushed a hair into the well. He quickly took it out, but it was already gilded. When Iron Hans came in the evening, he knew very well what had happened.

‘You have let a hair fall into the well,’ he said. ‘I will overlook it once more, but if it happens for the third time, the well will be polluted, and you can no longer stay with me.’

On the third day the boy again sat by the well; but he took good care not to move a finger, however much it might hurt. The time seemed very long to him as he looked at his face reflected in the water. As he bent over further and further to look into his eyes, his long hair fell over his shoulder right into the water. He started up at once, but not before his whole head of hair had become golden, and glittered like the sun. You may imagine how frightened the poor boy was. He took his pocket-handkerchief and tied it over his head, so that Iron Hans should not see it. But he knew all about it before he came, and at once said, ‘Take that handkerchief off your head,’ and then all the golden hair tumbled out. All the poor boy’s excuses were no good. ‘You have not stood the test, and you can no longer stay here. You must go out into the world, and there you will learn the meaning of poverty. But as your heart is not bad, and as I wish you well, I will grant you one thing. When you are in great need, go to the forest and cry “Iron Hans,” and I will come and help you. My power is great, greater than you think, and I have gold and silver in abundance.’ So the King’s son left the forest, and wandered over trodden and untrodden paths till he reached a great city. He tried to get work, but he could not find any; besides, he knew no trade by which to make a living. At last he went to the castle and asked if they would employ him. The courtiers did not know what use they could make of him, but they were taken with his appearance, and said he might stay. At last the Cook took him into his service, and said he might carry wood and water for him, and sweep up the ashes.

One day, as there was no one else at hand, the Cook ordered him to carry the food up to the royal table. As he did not want his golden hair to be seen, he kept his cap on. Nothing of the sort had ever happened in the presence of the King before, and he said, ‘When you come into the royal presence, you must take your cap off.’

‘Alas, Sire,’ he said, ‘I cannot take it off, I have a bad wound on my head.’

Then the King ordered the Cook to be called, and asked how he could take such a boy into his service, and ordered him to be sent away at once. But the Cook was sorry for him, and exchanged him with the Gardener’s boy.

Now the boy had to dig and hoe, plant and water, in every kind of weather. One day in the summer, when he was working alone in the garden, it was very hot, and he took off his cap for the fresh air to cool his head. When the sun shone on his hair it glittered so that the beams penetrated right into the Princess’s bedroom, and she sprang up to see what it was. She discovered the youth, and called to him, ‘Bring me a nosegay, young man.’ He hurriedly put on his cap, picked a lot of wild flowers, and tied them up. On his way up to the Princess, the Gardener met him, and said, ‘How can you take such poor flowers to the Princess? Quickly cut another bouquet, and mind they are the choicest and rarest flowers.’ ‘Oh no,’ said the youth. ‘The wild flowers have a sweeter scent, and will please her better.’

**She immediately clutched at his cap to pull it off; but he held it on with both hands.**

As soon as he went into the room the Princess said, 'Take off your cap; it is not proper for you to wear it before me.'

He answered again, 'I may not take it off, because I have a wound on my head.'

But she took hold of the cap, and pulled it off, and all his golden hair tumbled over his shoulders in a shower. It was quite a sight. He tried to get away, but she took hold of his arm, and gave him a handful of ducats. He took them, but he cared nothing for the gold, and gave it to the Gardener for his children to play with.

Next day the Princess again called him to bring her a bunch of wild flowers, and when he brought it she immediately clutched at his cap to pull it off; but he held it on with both hands. Again she gave him a handful of ducats, but he would not keep them, and gave them to the Gardener's children. The third day the same thing happened, but she could not take off his cap, and he would not keep the gold. Not long after this the kingdom was invaded. The King assembled his warriors. He did not know whether they would be able to conquer his enemies or not, as they were very powerful, and had a mighty army. Then the Gardener's assistant said, 'I have been brought up to fight; give me a horse, and I will go too.'

**He called three times, 'Iron Hans,' as loud as he could.**

The others laughed and said, 'When we are gone, find one for yourself. We will leave one behind in the stable for you.'

When they were gone, he went and got the horse out; it was lame in one leg, and hobbled along, humpety-hump, humpety-hump. Nevertheless, he mounted it and rode away to the dark forest. When he came to the edge of it, he called three times, 'Iron Hans,' as loud as he could, till the trees resounded with it.

The Wild Man appeared immediately, and said, 'What do you want?'

'I want a strong horse to go to the war.'

'You shall have it, and more besides.'

The Wild Man went back into the wood, and before long a Groom came out, leading a fiery charger with snorting nostrils. Behind him followed a great body of warriors, all in armour, and their swords gleaming in the sun. The youth handed over his three-legged steed to the Groom, mounted the other, and rode away at the head of the troop.

When he approached the battle-field a great many of the King's men had already fallen, and before long the rest must have given in. Then the youth, at the head of his iron troop, charged, and bore down the enemy like a mighty wind, smiting everything which came in their way. They tried to fly, but the youth fell upon them, and did not stop while one remained alive. Instead of joining the King, he led his troop straight back to the wood and called Iron Hans again.

'What do you want?' asked the Wild Man.

'Take back your charger and your troop, and give me back my three-legged steed.'

His request was granted, and he rode his three-legged steed home.

When the King returned to the castle his daughter met him and congratulated him on his victory.

'It was not I who won it,' he said; 'but a strange Knight, who came to my assistance with his troop.' His daughter asked who the strange Knight was, but the King did not know, and said, 'He pursued the enemy, and I have not seen him since.' She asked the Gardener about his assistant, but he laughed, and said, 'He has just come
home on his three-legged horse, and the others made fun of him, and said, "Here comes our hobbler back again," and asked which hedge he had been sleeping under. He answered, "I did my best, and without me things would have gone badly." Then they laughed at him more than ever.'

The King said to his daughter, 'I will give a great feast lasting three days, and you shall throw a golden apple. Perhaps the unknown Knight will come among the others to try and catch it.'

When notice was given of the feast, the youth went to the wood and called Iron Hans.

'What do you want?' he asked.

'I want to secure the King's golden apple,' he said.

'It is as good as yours already,' answered Iron Hans. 'You shall have a tawny suit, and ride a proud chestnut.'

When the day arrived the youth took his place among the other Knights, but no one knew him. The Princess stepped forward and threw the apple among the Knights, and he was the only one who could catch it. As soon as he had it he rode away.

On the second day Iron Hans fitted him out as a White Knight, riding a gallant grey. Again he caught the apple; but he did not stay a minute, and, as before, hurried away.

The King now grew angry, and said, 'This must not be; he must come before me and give me his name.'

He gave an order that if the Knight made off again he was to be pursued and brought back.

On the third day the youth received from Iron Hans a black outfit, and a fiery black charger.

Again he caught the apple; but as he was riding off with it the King's people chased him, and one came so near that he wounded him in the leg. Still he escaped, but his horse galloped so fast that his helmet fell off, and they all saw that he had golden hair. So they rode back, and told the King what they had seen.

Next day the Princess asked the Gardener about his assistant.

'He is working in the garden. The queer fellow went to the feast, and he only came back last night. He has shown my children three golden apples which he won.'

The King ordered him to be brought before him. When he appeared he still wore his cap. But the Princess went up to him and took it off; then all his golden hair fell over his shoulders, and it was so beautiful that they were all amazed by it.

'Are you the Knight who came to the feast every day in a different colour, and who caught the three golden apples?' asked the King.

'Yes,' he answered, 'and here are the apples,' bringing them out of his pocket, and giving them to the King. 'If you want further proof, here is the wound in my leg given me by your people when they pursued me. But I am also the Knight who helped you to conquer the enemy.'

'If you can do such deeds you are no Gardener's boy. Tell me who is your father?'

'My father is a powerful King, and I have plenty of gold—as much as ever I want.'

'I see very well,' said the King, 'that we owe you many thanks. Can I do anything to please you?'

'Yes,' he answered; 'indeed, you can. Give me your daughter to be my wife!'

The maiden laughed, and said, 'He does not beat about the bush; but I saw long ago that he was no Gardener's boy.'

Then she went up to him and kissed him.

His father and mother came to the wedding, and they were full of joy, for they had long given up all hope of ever seeing their dear son again. As they were all sitting at the wedding feast, the music suddenly stopped, the doors flew open, and a proud King walked in at the head of a great following. He went up to the Bridegroom, embraced him, and said, 'I am Iron Hans, who was bewitched and changed into a Wild Man; but you have broken the spell and set me free. All the treasure that I have is now your own.'