

THE FROG KING, OR IRON HENRY

Once upon a time there was a princess who went out into the forest and sat down at the edge of a cool well. She had a golden ball that was her favorite plaything. She threw it up high and caught it in the air and was delighted by all this. One time the ball flew up very high, and as she stretched out her hand and bent her fingers to catch it again, the ball hit the ground near her and rolled and rolled until it fell right into the water.

The princess was horrified, and when she went to look for the ball, she found the well was so deep that she couldn't see the bottom. So she began to weep miserably and to lament: "Oh, if only I had my ball again! I'd give anything—my clothes, my jewels, my pearls and anything else in the world—to get my ball back!"

As she sat there grieving, a frog stuck its head out of the water and said: "Why are you weeping so miserably?"

"Oh," she said, "you nasty frog, you can't help me! My golden ball has fallen into the water."

"Well, I don't want your pearls, your jewels, and your clothes," the frog responded. "But if you will accept me as your companion and let me sit next to you and let me eat from your little golden plate and sleep in your little bed and promise to love and cherish me, I'll fetch your ball for you."

The princess thought, "what nonsense the simple-minded frog is blabbering! He's got to remain in his water. But perhaps he can get me my ball. So I'll say yes to him." And she said, "Yes, fair enough, but first fetch me the golden ball. I promise you everything."

The frog dipped his head beneath the water and dived down. It didn't take long before he came back to the surface with the ball in his mouth. He threw it onto the ground, and when the princess caught sight of the ball again, she quickly ran over to it, picked it up, and was so delighted to have the ball in her hands again that she thought of nothing else but to rush back home with it. The frog called after her: "Wait, princess, take me with you the way you promised!"

But she didn't pay any attention to him.

The next day the princess sat at the table and heard something coming up the marble steps, *splish, splash! splish, splash!* Soon thereafter it knocked at the door and cried out: "Princess, youngest daughter, open up!"

She ran to the door and opened it, and there was the frog whom she had forgotten. Horrified, she quickly slammed the door shut and sat down back at the table. But the king saw that her heart was thumping and said, "Why are you afraid?"

"There's a nasty frog outside," she replied. "He retrieved my golden ball from the water, and I promised him that he could be my companion. But I never believed at all he could get out of the water. Now he's standing outside in front of the door and wants to come inside."

As she said this, there was a knock at the door, and the frog cried out:

"Princess, youngest daughter,
Open up!
Don't you remember, what you said
down by the well's cool water?
Princess, youngest daughter,
Open up!"

The king said: "You must keep your promise no matter what you said. Go and open the door for the frog."

She obeyed, and the frog hopped inside and followed her at her heels until they came to her chair, and when she sat down again, he cried out: "Lift me up to the chair beside you."

The princess didn't want to do this, but the king ordered her to do it. When the frog was up at the table, he said: "Now push your little golden plate nearer to me so we can eat together."

The princess had to do this as well, and after he had eaten until he was full, he said: "Now I'm tired and want to sleep. Bring me upstairs to your little room. Get your little bed ready so that we can lie down in it."

The princess became terrified when she heard this, for she was afraid of the cold frog. She didn't dare to touch him, and now he was to lie in

her bed next to her. She began to weep and didn't want to comply with his wishes at all. But the king became angry and ordered her to do what she had promised, or she'd be held in disgrace. Nothing helped. She had to do what her father wanted, but she was bitterly angry in her heart. So she picked up the frog with two fingers, carried him upstairs into her room, lay down in her bed, and instead of setting him down next to her, she threw him *crash!* against the wall. "Now you'll leave me in peace, you nasty frog!"

But the frog didn't fall down dead. Instead, when he fell down on the bed, he became a handsome young prince. Well, now indeed he did become her dear companion, and she cherished him as she had promised, and in their delight they fell asleep together.

The next morning a splendid coach arrived drawn by eight horses with feathers and glistening gold harnesses. The prince's Faithful Henry accompanied them. He had been so distressed when he had learned his master had been turned into a frog that he had ordered three iron bands to be wrapped around his heart to keep it from bursting from grief. When the prince got into the coach with the princess, his faithful servant took his place at the back so they could return to the prince's realm. And after they had traveled some distance, the prince heard a loud cracking noise behind him. So, he turned around and cried out: "Henry, the coach is breaking!"

"No, my lord, it's really nothing
but the band around my heart,
which nearly came apart
when you turned into a frog and your fortune fell
and you were made to live in that dreadful well."

Two more times the prince heard the cracking noise and thought the coach was breaking, but the noise was only the sound of the bands springing from Faithful Henry's heart because his master had been released from the spell and was happy.

THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE CAT AND MOUSE

A cat and a mouse wanted to live together, and so they set up a common household. They also prepared for the winter and bought a little jar of fat, but since they didn't know of a better and safer place to put it, they stuck it under the altar in the church, where it was supposed to stay until they needed it.

Now, it was not long before the cat felt a craving for the fat and went to the mouse and said, "Listen, little mouse, my cousin has asked me to be godfather for her child. She gave birth to a baby boy, white with brown spots. I'm to hold him at the christening. Would you mind letting me go out today and taking care of the house by yourself?"

"No, no," answered the mouse. "Go there, and when you get something good to eat, think of me. I sure would like a little drop of that sweet, red christening wine."

But the cat went straight to the church and licked up the skin off the top of the fat. Then he strolled around the city and didn't return home until evening.

"You must have enjoyed yourself very much," the mouse said. "What name did they give the child?"

"*Skin-Off*," the cat answered.

"Skin-Off? That's a strange name. I've never heard of it before."

Soon thereafter the cat felt another craving and went to the mouse and said: "I've been asked to be godfather once more. The child has a white ring around his body. I can't refuse. You must do me a favor and look after the house."

The mouse consented, and the cat went and ate up half the jar of fat. When he returned home, the mouse asked, "What name was this godchild given?"

"*Half-Gone*."

"Half-Gone! You don't say! I've never heard of such a name. I'm sure it's not on the list of proper baptismal names."

Now the cat couldn't stop thinking about the jar of fat.

“I’ve been asked to be godfather again for a third time. This child’s all black and has white paws. Aside from that there’s not a white hair on his body. That only happens once every few years. You’ll let me go, won’t you?”

“Skin-Off, Half-Gone,” the mouse said. “Those are really curious names. I’m beginning to wonder about them. Even so, go ahead.”

The mouse cleaned the house and put it in order. Meanwhile the cat ate up the rest of the fat in the jar and came home stout and stuffed late at night.

“What’s the name of the third child?”

“*All-Gone.*”

“All-Gone! Hey now! That’s the most suspicious of all the names,” said the mouse. “All-Gone! What’s it supposed to mean? I’ve never seen it in print!”

Upon saying that, the mouse shook her head and went to sleep.

Nobody called upon the cat to become godfather for the fourth time. However, soon winter came, and there was nothing more to be found outside. So the mouse said to the cat, “Come, let’s go to our supply that we stuck beneath the altar in the church.”

But when they arrived there, the jar was completely empty.

“Oh!” said the mouse. “Now I know what’s happened! It’s as clear as day. You ate it all up when you went to serve as godfather. First the skin, then half, then . . .”

“Shut up!” yelled the cat. “One more word, and I’ll eat you up!”

“All gone” was already on the tip of the poor mouse’s tongue. No sooner did she say it than the cat jumped on her and swallowed her in one gulp.

3

THE VIRGIN MARY’S CHILD

A poor woodcutter and his wife lived at the edge of a large forest with their only child, a three-year-old little girl. They were so poor that they couldn’t afford daily meals anymore and didn’t know how they would provide food for their daughter. One morning the woodcutter, who was distressed by

all this, went into the forest to work. As he began chopping wood, a tall, beautiful woman suddenly appeared before him. She was wearing a crown of shining stars on her head, and she said to him, "I am the Virgin Mary, mother of the Christ Child. Since you are poor and needy, bring me your child. I'll take her with me and be her mother and look after her."

The woodcutter obeyed her. He fetched his child and gave her to the Virgin Mary, who took her up to heaven. Once there everything went well for the girl: she ate only cake and drank sweet milk. Her clothes were made of gold, and the little angels played with her. One day, about the time the girl had turned fourteen, the Virgin Mary had to go on a long journey. Before she went away, she summoned the girl and said, "Dear child, I am trusting you with the keys to the thirteen doors of the kingdom of heaven. You may open twelve of the doors and look at all the marvelous things inside, but I forbid you to open the thirteenth door that this little key unlocks."

The maiden promised to obey her commands, and after the Virgin Mary had departed, she opened a new room every day and looked into the rooms of the heavenly realm. In each one of them, there was an apostle in dazzling light. Never in her life had she seen such splendor and glory. When she had finished opening the twelve doors, the forbidden door was the only one left. For a long time she resisted her curiosity, but finally she was overcome by it and opened the thirteenth door as well. And as the door sprang open, she saw the Holy Trinity sitting in fire and splendor. Then she touched the flames a little bit with her finger, and the finger turned golden. Quickly she slammed the door shut and ran away. Her heart started pounding and wouldn't stop.

A few days later the Virgin Mary returned from her journey and asked the maiden to return the keys of heaven to her. When the girl handed her the bunch of keys, the Virgin looked into her eyes and said, "Didn't you also open the thirteenth door?"

"No," she answered.

Then the Virgin Mary put her hand on the maiden's heart and could feel it pounding and pounding. Now she knew the girl had disobeyed her

command and had opened the door. Once again she asked, "Are you sure you didn't open the door?"

"I'm sure," the maiden denied doing it for a second time.

When the Virgin Mary glanced at the finger that had become golden from touching the heavenly fire, she knew the maiden was guilty and said: "You've disobeyed me and lied. You're no longer worthy to stay in heaven."

All at once the girl sank into a deep sleep, and when she awoke, she was lying on the earth beneath a tall tree surrounded by thick bushes so that she was completely encircled. Her mouth was also locked so that she couldn't utter one word. Since the tree was hollow, she could sit inside during the rain and storms, and it was also where she slept. Roots and wild berries were her only food, and she went out looking for them as far as she could walk. In the autumn she gathered roots and leaves and carried them into the hollow tree. When snow and ice came, she sat inside the tree. Before long her clothes became tattered, and one piece after the other fell off her body. So she sat there completely covered by leaves. As soon as the sun began to shine again, she went out and sat in front of the tree. Her long hair covered her on all sides like a cloak.

One day during springtime she was sitting in front of the tree when someone forced his way through the bushes. It was the king, who had been hunting in the forest and had lost his way, and he was amazed to find such a beautiful maiden sitting alone in this desolate spot. So he asked her whether she would like to come with him to his castle. However, she couldn't answer. Instead, she merely nodded a little with her head. Then the king lifted her up onto his horse and brought her to the castle. Soon he became so fond of her that he made her his wife.

After a year had passed, the queen gave birth to a beautiful son. During the night, however, the Virgin Mary appeared before her and said, "If you'll tell me the truth and say that you unlocked the forbidden door, I'll give you back the power of speech, without which you really can't enjoy life. If you are stubborn and won't confess, I shall take your baby away with me."

But the queen remained stubborn and denied that she had opened the forbidden door. So the Virgin Mary took the little child and disappeared

with him. The next morning, when the baby was no longer there, a rumor began circulating among the people that the queen was an ogress and had eaten her own child.

Then another year passed, and the queen gave birth to another son. Once more the Virgin Mary appeared before her and asked her to tell the truth, otherwise she would also lose the second child. But the queen persisted in denying that she had opened the forbidden door. So the Virgin Mary took the child away with her. The next morning, when this baby was also missing, the king's councilors said openly that the queen was an ogress, and they demanded that she be executed for her godless deeds. However, the king ordered them to keep quiet and refused to believe them because he loved his wife so much.

In the third year the queen gave birth to a princess, and the Virgin Mary appeared before her once more and took her to heaven, where she showed her how her two oldest children were playing with a globe of the earth. Thereupon, the Virgin Mary asked the queen once more to confess her mistake and stop lying. However, the queen wouldn't budge and continued to stand by her story. So the Virgin Mary left her and took away her third child, too.

Now the king could no longer restrain his councilors, who continued to claim that the queen was an ogress. They were certain, and since she couldn't speak, she couldn't defend herself. Consequently, she was condemned to die at the stake.

As she stood tied to the stake, and the fire began to burn all around her, her heart was moved, and she thought to herself: "Oh, before I die, I'd like to confess to the Virgin Mary that I opened the forbidden door in heaven. I've been so wicked by denying it all this time!"

And just as she was thinking all this to herself, heaven opened up right then and there, and the Virgin Mary descended with the two little sons at either side and the daughter in her arms. The fire was extinguished by itself, and the Virgin Mary stepped forward to the queen and said: "Since you want to speak the truth, your guilt is forgiven." Then she handed the queen her children, opened her mouth so that she could speak from then on, and bestowed happiness on her for the rest of her life.

Once upon a time there was an old king who had the most beautiful daughter in the world. One day he announced: "Whoever can keep watch in my old castle for three nights can have the princess for his bride."

Now, there was a young man from a poor family who thought to himself, "Why not risk my life? I've got nothing to lose, and a lot to win. What's there to think about?"

So he appeared before the king and offered to keep watch in the castle for three nights.

"You may request three things to take with you into the castle, but they have to be lifeless objects," the king said.

"Well, I'd like to take a carpenter's bench with a knife, a lathe, and fire."

All of these things were carried into the castle for him. When it turned dark, he himself went inside. At first everything was quiet. He built a fire, placed the carpenter's bench with the knife next to it, and sat down at the lathe. Toward midnight, however, a rumbling could be heard, first softly, then more loudly: "*Bif! Baf! Hebe! Holla ho!*"

It became more dreadful, and then it was somewhat quiet. Finally, a leg came down the chimney and stood right before him.

"Hey, there!" the young man cried out. "How about some more? One is too little."

The noise began once again. Another leg fell down the chimney and then another and another, until there were nine.

"That's enough now. I've got enough for bowling, but there are no balls. Out with them!"

There was a tremendous uproar, and two skulls fell down the chimney. He put them in the lathe and turned them until they were smooth. "Now they'll roll much better!"

Then he did the same with the legs and set them up like bowling pins.

"Hey, now I can have some fun!"

Suddenly two large black cats appeared and strode around the fire. "Meow! Meow!" they screeched. "We're freezing! We're freezing!"

“You fools! What are you screaming about? Sit down by the fire and warm yourselves.”

After the cats had warmed themselves, they said, “Good fellow, we want to play a round of cards.”

“All right,” he replied, “but show me your paws. You’ve got such long claws that I’ve got to give them a good clipping before we begin.”

Upon saying this, he grabbed them by the scruffs of their necks and lifted them to the carpenter’s bench. There he fastened them to the vise and beat them to death. Afterward he carried them outside and threw them into a pond that lay across from the castle. Just as he returned to the castle and wanted to settle down and warm himself by the fire, many black cats and dogs came out of every nook and cranny, more and more, so that he couldn’t hide himself. They screamed, stamped on the fire, and kicked it about so that the fire went out. So he grabbed his carving knife and yelled, “Get out of here, you riffraff!”

And he began swinging the knife. Most of the cats and dogs ran away. The others were killed, and he carried them out and threw them into the pond. Then he went back inside to the fire and blew the sparks so that the fire began again and he could warm himself.

After he had warmed himself, he was tired and lay down on a large bed that stood in a corner. Just as he wanted to fall asleep, the bed began to stir and raced around the entire castle.

“That’s fine with me. Just keep it up!”

So the bed drove around as though six horses were pulling it over stairs and landings: “*Bing bang!*”

It turned upside down, from top to bottom, and he was beneath it. So he flung the blankets and pillows into the air and jumped off.

“Anyone who wants a ride can have one!”

Then he lay down next to the fire until dawn.

In the morning the king arrived, and when he saw the young man lying asleep, he thought he was dead and said, “What a shame.”

But when the young man heard these words, he awoke, and as soon as he saw the king, he stood up. Then the king asked him how things had gone during the night.

“Quite well. One night’s gone by smoothly, the other two will go by as well.”

Indeed, the other nights were just like the first. But he already knew what to do, and so on the fourth day, he was rewarded with the king’s beautiful daughter.

5

THE WOLF AND THE SEVEN KIDS

A goat had seven young kids, whom she loved very much and carefully protected from the wolf. One day, when she had to go and fetch some food, she called them all together and said, “Dear children, I must go out to find some food. So be on your guard against the wolf and don’t let him inside. Pay close attention because he often disguises himself, but you can recognize him right away by his gruff voice and black paws. Protect yourselves. If he gets into the house, he’ll eat you all up.”

Upon saying this, the goat went on her way, but it was not long before the wolf arrived at the door and called out, “Open up, dear children. I’m your mother and have brought you some beautiful things.”

But the seven kids said: “You’re not our mother. She has a lovely, soft voice, and yours is gruff. You’re the wolf, and we’re not going to open the door.”

The wolf went away to a shopkeeper and bought a big piece of chalk, which he ate, and it made his voice soft. Then he returned to the house door of the seven kids and called out with a soft voice: “Dear children, let me in. I’m your mother, and I’ve brought something for each of you.”

But the wolf had put his paw on the windowsill, and when the children saw it, they said, “You’re not our mother. She doesn’t have a black paw like yours. You’re the wolf. We’re not going to open the door for you!”

So the wolf ran to a baker and said, “Baker, put some dough on my paws for me.”

And after that was done, the wolf went to the miller and said, “Sprinkle some white flour on my paws.”

The miller said no.

“If you don’t do it, I’ll eat you up!”

So the miller had to do it.

Now the wolf went once again to the house door of the seven kids and said, “Dear children, let me in. I’m your mother, and I’ve brought something for each of you.”

The seven kids wanted to see the paws first, and when they saw that they were snow white and heard the wolf speak so softly, they thought he was their mother and opened the door. Once the wolf entered, however, they recognized him and quickly hid themselves as best they could. The first kid slid under the table, the second hid in the bed, the third in the oven, the fourth in the kitchen, the fifth in the cupboard, the sixth under the large washbasin, and the seventh in the clock case. However, the wolf found them all and swallowed them, except for the youngest in the clock case, who remained alive.

When the wolf had satisfied his craving, he went off. Shortly thereafter, the mother goat came home, and oh, what a terrible sight! The wolf had been there and had devoured her dear children! She thought they were all dead, but then the youngest jumped out of the clock case and told her how everything had happened.

In the meantime, the wolf, who was stuffed, had gone to a green meadow, where he had lain himself down in the sun and had fallen into a deep sleep. The old goat thought she still might be able to save her children. Therefore, she said to the youngest kid: “Take the scissors, needle, and thread and follow me.”

After she left the house, she found the wolf lying on the ground in the meadow and snoring.

“There’s that nasty wolf!” she said and inspected him from all sides. “There he is after eating my six children for supper. Give me the scissors! Oh, if only they’re still alive inside him!”

Then she cut his belly open, and the six kids that had been swallowed whole by the gluttonous wolf jumped out and were unscathed. Immediately she ordered them to gather large and heavy stones and to bring them

to her. Then she filled his stomach with them, and the kids sewed him up again and hid behind a hedge.

When the wolf had finished sleeping, he felt that his stomach was very heavy and said: "It's rumbling and tumbling in my belly! It's rumbling and tumbling in my belly! And I've only eaten six kids!"

He thought he had better have a drink of fresh water to help himself, and he looked for a well, but when he leaned over, he couldn't stand straight because of the stones and fell into the water. When the seven kids saw this, they came running and danced joyfully around the well.

6

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE BLINDWORM

Once upon a time there lived a nightingale and a blindworm, each with one eye. For a long time they lived together peacefully and harmoniously in a house. However, one day the nightingale was invited to a wedding, and she said to the blindworm, "I've been invited to a wedding and don't particularly want to go with one eye. Would you be so kind as to lend me yours? I'll bring it back to you tomorrow."

The blindworm gave her the eye out of the kindness of her heart. But when the nightingale came home the following day, she liked having two eyes in her head and being able to see on both sides. So she refused to return the borrowed eye to the blindworm. Then the blindworm swore that she would avenge herself on the nightingale's children and the children of her children.

"Well," replied the nightingale, "see if you can find me.

I'll build my nest in the linden, so high, so high, so high.

You'll never be able to find it, no matter how hard you try."

Ever since that time all the nightingales have had two eyes, and all the blindworms, none. But wherever the nightingale builds her nest, a blindworm lives beneath it in the bushes and constantly tries to crawl up the tree, pierce the eggs of her enemy, and drink them up.

THE STOLEN PENNIES

One day a father was sitting at the table with his wife and children and a good friend who was visiting him, and they were having their noonday meal. As they were sitting there, the clock struck twelve, and the visitor saw the door open, and a pale child dressed in snow-white clothes entered. He didn't look around or say anything but went silently into the next room. Shortly thereafter he returned and went away just as quietly as he had entered. On the second and third day the child came again. Finally, the visitor asked the father who the beautiful child was that entered the room every day at noon. The father answered that he knew nothing about him. He hadn't seen anything.

The next day as the clock struck noon, the child entered again, and the visitor pointed the child out to the father, but he didn't see the boy. Neither did the mother nor the children. The visitor stood up, went to the door, opened it a little, and looked inside. There he saw the pale child sitting on the floor, digging and rummaging in the cracks of the boards. However, as soon as the child noticed the visitor, he disappeared. Now the visitor told the family what he had seen and gave an exact description of the boy. The mother was then able to recognize the child and said, "Alas, it's my own dear child who died four weeks ago."

Then they ripped up the boards of the floor and found two pennies that the boy had received from his mother at one time to give to a poor man, but the child had thought, "You can buy yourself a biscuit for that." Therefore, he had kept the pennies and had hidden them in the cracks of the floor. This is why he hadn't been able to rest in his grave and had come back every day at noon to look for the pennies. So the parents gave the money to a poor man, and after that the little child was never seen again.

THE HAND WITH THE KNIFE

There once was a little girl who had three brothers, and the boys meant the world to her mother. Yet the little girl was always neglected, treated

badly, and forced to go out early in the morning every day to dig up peat from the dry ground on the heath, which they used for making fires and cooking. To top it all off, she was given an old, blunt shovel to perform this nasty work.

But the little girl had an admirer who was an elf and lived in a hill near her mother's house. Whenever she went by the hill, he would stretch out his hand from the rocky slope and offer her a knife that had miraculous powers and could cut through anything. She used this knife to cut out the peat and would finish her work quickly. Then she would return home happily with the necessary load, and when she walked by the rocky slope, she would knock twice, and the hand would reach out and take back the knife.

When the mother noticed how swiftly and easily she came back home with the peat, she told the girl's brothers that there must be someone helping her; otherwise, it would be impossible for her to complete the work so fast. So the brothers crept after her and watched her receive the magic knife. They overtook her and forced her to give it to them. Then they returned to the rocky slope, knocked the way she had always done, and when the good elf stretched out his hand, they cut it off with his very own knife. The bloody arm drew back, and since the elf believed that his beloved had betrayed him, he was never seen after that.

9

THE TWELVE BROTHERS

Once upon a time there was a king who had twelve children, all boys. Moreover, he didn't want to have a daughter and said to his wife: "If you give birth to our thirteenth child, and it's a girl, I shall have the twelve boys killed. However, if it's a boy, then they'll all remain alive and stay together."

The queen thought of talking him out of this, but the king refused to hear anything more about this topic.

"If everything turns out like I said, they must die. I'd rather chop off their heads myself than let a girl be among them."

The queen was sad about this because she loved her sons with all her heart and didn't know how she could save them. Finally, she went to the



youngest, who was her favorite, and revealed to him what the king had decided.

“Dearest child,” she said, “go into the forest with your eleven brothers. Stay there, and don’t come home. One of you should keep watch on a tree and look over here toward the tower. If I give birth to a little son, I’ll raise a white flag on top of the tower. However, if it’s a little daughter, I’ll raise a red flag. If you all see that it’s red, then save yourselves. Flee into the wide world, and may our dear Lord protect you. I’ll get up every night and pray that you won’t freeze in the winter and are able to warm yourselves by a fire and that when it’s hot in the summer, you can rest in a cool forest and sleep.”

After she gave her blessing to her sons, they went out into the forest, where they frequently looked toward the tower. One of them had to sit on top of a high tree and constantly keep watch. Soon a flag was hoisted, but it wasn’t a white one. It was a blood-red flag that foreshadowed their doom. As soon as the brothers caught sight of it, they all became angry and cried out: “Why should we lose our lives because of a girl?”

Then they all swore to remain in the middle of the forest and to keep on their guard, and if a maiden were to appear, they would kill her without mercy.

Soon after this they searched for a cave where the forest was the darkest, and that’s where they began to live. Every morning eleven of the brothers went off to hunt. One of them had to remain home, cook, and keep house. Whenever they encountered a maiden, she was treated without mercy and lost her life. This is how they lived for many years.

In the meantime their little sister grew up and was the only child left at home. One day there was a large amount of washing to do, and among the clothes there were twelve shirts for boys.

“Whose shirts are these?” the princess asked the washerwoman. “They’re much too small for my father.”

It was then that the washerwoman told her that she had once had twelve brothers, but they had mysteriously gone away. Nobody knew where because the king had wanted to have them killed, and the twelve shirts belonged to the twelve brothers. The little sister was astonished that

she had never heard of her twelve brothers, and during the afternoon as the clothes were drying and she was sitting in the meadow, she recalled the words of the washerwoman. After giving considerable thought to what she had heard, she stood up, took the twelve shirts, and went into the forest where her brothers were living.

The little sister made her way straight to the cave that served as her brothers' dwelling. Eleven of them were out hunting, and only one of them who had to cook was at home. When he caught sight of the maiden, he composed himself and drew his sword.

"Kneel down! Your red blood will flow this very second!"

But the maiden pleaded: "Dear sir, let me live. I'll stay with you and serve you honestly. I'll cook and keep house."

She spoke these words to the youngest brother, and he took pity on her because of her beauty and spared her life. Later, when his eleven brothers returned home and were astonished to find a maiden alive in their cave, he said to them: "Dear brothers, this girl came to our cave, and when I wanted to cut her to pieces, she pleaded for her life so much and said that she would serve us faithfully and keep house that I spared her life."

The others thought that this would be a great benefit to them because now all twelve of them could go hunting, and they were satisfied with this arrangement. Then the maiden showed them the twelve shirts and told them that she was their sister. Indeed, they were all very happy about this and were glad that they hadn't killed her.

Now the little sister took over all the household chores, and when the brothers went out hunting, she gathered wood and herbs, kept the fire going, made up the beds nice and white and clean, and did everything with zeal and without getting tired.

One day, when she was finished with all the work, she took a walk in the woods and came to a place where there were twelve large beautiful white lilies. Since they pleased her so much, she plucked all twelve of them. No sooner did she do this than an old woman stood before her.

"Oh, my daughter," she said, "why didn't you let the twelve budding flowers just stand there? They're your twelve brothers. Now they've been changed into ravens and are lost forever."

The little sister began to weep and said, "Isn't there any way that I can save them?"

"No, there isn't any way in the world except one that's so difficult you won't be able to rescue them. You must spend the next twelve years without speaking. If you say one single word, even if there's only an hour left, everything will be in vain, and your brothers will die that very moment."

Well, the little sister responded by climbing a tall tree in the forest, where she took a place. She wanted to sit there twelve years without saying a word to free her brothers. But it so happened that a king was out riding and hunting in the forest, and as he rode by the tree, his dog stood still and barked. So the king stopped, looked up, and was very amazed by the princess's beauty. He called to her and asked her whether she wanted to become his wife. However, she remained silent and only nodded a bit with her head. So the king himself dismounted, helped her down from the tree, and lifted her up before him onto his horse. Then he brought her home to his castle. Meanwhile the princess did not utter one word, and the king thought that she was mute. They would have lived happily with one another if it hadn't been for the king's mother, who began to slander the young queen in front of her son.

"She's a common beggar that you've dug up from nowhere, and she's doing the most disgraceful things behind your back!"

Since the young queen couldn't defend herself, the king was led astray and finally believed what his mother said. So, he sentenced his wife to death, and a enormous fire was built in the courtyard, where she was to be burned to death.

Soon the queen was standing in the flames that grazed the fringes of her dress. One minute was left before the twelve years of her silence would be completed. There was a noise in the air, and twelve ravens swooped down into the courtyard. As soon as they touched the ground, they became twelve handsome princes who instantly put out the fire's flames and led their sister to safety. Then she spoke once again and told the king how everything had happened and how she had to save her twelve brothers. Indeed, they were all pleased that everything turned out so well.

Now they had to decide what they should do with the evil mother-in-law. Well, they stuck her into a barrel full of boiling oil and poisonous snakes, and she died a ghastly death.

IO
RIFFRAFF

The rooster said to the hen, "The nuts are ripe. Let's go up the hill and for once eat our fill of nuts before the squirrel hauls them all away."

"Yes," responded the hen. "Let's go and have a good time together."

So they went up the hill, and since it was such a bright day, they stayed till evening. Now, I don't know whether it was because they had stuffed themselves too much, or whether they had become too high and mighty, but they didn't want to return home on foot. So the rooster had to build a small carriage made out of nut shells. When it was finished, the hen got in and said to the rooster, "Now you can just harness yourself to it."

"No," said the rooster. "You have some nerve! I'd rather go home by foot than let myself be harnessed to this carriage. No, that wasn't part of our bargain. I'd gladly be coachman and sit on the box, but I refuse to pull the carriage!"

As they were quarreling, a duck came by quacking and pouted, "You thieves! Who said you could come up on my nut hill? Just you wait! You'll pay for this!"

She charged at the rooster with a wide-open beak, but the rooster was on his toes and threw himself at the duck's body nice and hard. Then he dug his spurs into her so violently that the duck begged for mercy and willingly let herself be harnessed to the carriage as punishment. Now the rooster sat down on the box as coachman, and off they went in a gallop.

"Duck, run as fast as you can!" cried the rooster.

After they had gone some distance, they encountered two travelers on foot, a needle and a pin, who called and asked them to stop. They said it would soon be very dark, and they wouldn't be able to go one step farther. Besides, the road was dirty. So they asked if they could have a ride. They

had been at the tailor's tavern outside the town gate and had had one beer too many, which made them late as well.

Since they were thin and didn't take up much room, the rooster let them both get in, but they had to promise not to step on his or the hen's feet. Later that evening they came to an inn, and since they didn't want to travel any farther, and since the duck was not walking well but swayed from side to side, they decided to stop there. At first the innkeeper raised a lot of objections and said his inn was already full. Moreover, he thought they were not a very distinguished-looking group. However, they used some sweet talk and offered him the egg that the hen had laid along the way and told him that he could also keep the duck, who laid an egg a day. So finally he relented and said they could spend the night. Now they ordered some good hot food and had a merry time of it.

Early the next morning, as the sun was rising and everyone was asleep, the rooster woke the hen, fetched the egg, pecked it open, and together they devoured it. After throwing the shells on the hearth, they went to the needle, who was still asleep, grabbed him by the head, and stuck him into the innkeeper's easy chair. Then they stuck the pin into the innkeeper's towel. Finally, without much ado, they flew away over the heath.

The duck, who liked to sleep in the open air and had spent the night in the yard, heard the flapping of their wings. So she roused herself, found a brook, and swam away. That went much faster than being harnessed to a carriage. A few hours later the innkeeper got out of bed, washed himself, and took the towel to dry himself. However, the pin scratched his face, leaving a red mark from ear to ear. Then he went into the kitchen and wanted to light his pipe. But, as he leaned over the hearth, the eggshells popped into his eyes.

"Everything's attacking my head this morning," he said, and went to sit down in his easy chair to settle his bad mood, but he jumped up immediately and screamed, "Oww!" The needle had stuck him worse than the pin and not in the head. Now he was completely angry and suspected the guests who had arrived so late the night before. But when he went looking for them, they were gone. Then he swore he would never again let riffraff

stay at his inn, especially when they eat so much, pay nothing, and play mean tricks on top of it all.

II

LITTLE BROTHER AND LITTLE SISTER

A little brother took his little sister by the hand and said, “Ever since our mother died, we’ve not had one moment of happiness. Our stepmother beats us every day, and when we come near her, she kicks us away with her foot. We get nothing but hard crusts of bread, just leftovers for food, and the dog under the table is better off. At least he gets a good chunk of meat to eat every now and then. Lord have mercy on us, if our mother only knew! Come, let’s go off together into the wide world.”

So they went away and came to a large forest, where they were so sad and so tired that they crept into a hollow tree and just wanted to die from hunger. Then they both fell asleep. When they woke the next morning, the sun was already high in the sky and warmed the hollow tree with its rays.

“Little sister,” said the little brother after a while, “I’m thirsty. If only I knew where to find a spring, I’d go and have a drink right away. Listen, I think I hear one trickling.”

“What good will that do?” the little sister answered. “Why do you want to drink when we just want to die from hunger?”

The little brother kept quiet and climbed out of the hollow tree, and since he always held his sister’s hand tightly, she had to climb out with him.

Now, their evil stepmother was a witch, and when she had noticed that the two children had left, she followed them and caused a clear little stream near the tree to trickle from some rocks and form a spring. The trickling spring was intended to lure the children and make their mouths water. But whoever drank from the spring would be changed into a little fawn.

The little brother soon came to the spring with his sister, and when he saw the glittering water trickle over the stones into the spring, his thirst became even greater, and he wanted to drink some of the water. However, the little sister was fearful. She thought she heard the spring speak to her as it trickled: “Whoever drinks me will be changed into a fawn! Whoever

drinks me will be changed into a fawn!" So, she begged her little brother not to drink the water.

"I don't hear anything," said the little brother. "I just hear how lovely the water is trickling. Let me go!"

Upon saying this he lay down on the ground, leaned over, and drank, and as soon as he felt the first drop of water on his lips, he was changed into a little fawn sitting beside the spring.

The little sister wept and wept. However, the witch was angry that she hadn't been able to lure the little sister to drink the water as well. After the girl wept for three days, she stood up, gathered some bulrushes, and wove them into a soft rope. Then she attached it to the little fawn and led him with her. She looked for a cave, and when she found one, she carried moss and foliage inside and made a soft bed for him. The next morning she went out with the fawn to a place with tender grass, and there she gathered the most beautiful grass, which he ate out of her hand. The fawn was delighted and romped about on the hills. In the evening when the little sister was tired, she laid her head on the back of the fawn. It was her pillow, and this is how she fell asleep. If only her brother could have retained his human form, it would have been a wonderful life.

For many years they lived like this in the forest. Then one day the king went out on a hunt, and when he became lost, he stumbled upon the maiden with the little animal in the forest and was amazed by her beauty. He lifted her up onto his horse and took her with him, while the fawn, attached by the rope, ran along side. At the royal court the maiden was treated with honor. Beautiful young women had to serve her, but she herself was more beautiful than any of the other ladies. She never let the fawn out of her sight, and she tended him with care. Shortly after her arrival the queen mother died, and the king wed the sister, and they lived together in great joy.

However, the stepmother had heard about the good fortune of the poor little sister. She had thought that the maiden had long since been torn to pieces by wild beasts, but they had never done anything to her. Indeed, the maiden was now the queen of the realm. The witch was so angry about this that she could only think of some way she might ruin the queen's happiness.

When the queen gave birth to a handsome prince the next year and the king was out hunting, the witch appeared in the form of a chambermaid and entered the room where the queen was recovering from the birth.

“The bath has been prepared for you,” she said. “It will do you good and strengthen you. Come, before the water becomes too cold.”

The witch led the queen into the bathroom and locked the door behind her. Inside there was a brutally hot fire, and the beautiful queen was suffocated to death.

Now the witch had a daughter of her own, and she endowed her with the outward shape of the queen and laid her in bed in place of the queen. In the evening when the king returned home, he didn’t realize that he had a false wife. But in the night—and the nurse saw this—the real queen appeared in the room. She went to the cradle, lifted the child to her breast, and suckled him. Then she plumped up his tiny mattress, laid the baby in the cradle again, and covered him. After this, she went into the corner, where the fawn slept, and stroked his back. This was how she came and went every night without saying a word.

One time, however, she entered again and said:

“How’s my child? How’s my fawn?
Twice more I’ll come, then I’ll be gone.”

Then she did what she had usually done the other nights. Meanwhile, the nurse woke the king and told him secretly what had occurred. So the next night the king kept watch, and he, too, saw how the queen came, and he clearly heard her words.

“How’s my child? How’s my fawn?
Once more I’ll come, then I’ll be gone.”

However, he didn’t dare to speak to her. The following night he kept watch again, and the queen said:

“How’s my child? How’s my fawn?
There’s no more time. Soon I’ll be gone.”

The king could no longer restrain himself. He sprang forth and embraced her, and as soon as he touched her, she was restored to life, rosy red and well. The false queen was led into the forest, where the wild beasts devoured her. The evil stepmother was burned at the stake, and as the fire consumed her, the fawn was transformed, and brother and sister were once again together and lived happily until the end of their days.

12

RAPUNZEL

Once upon a time there lived a husband and wife who had been wishing for a child many years, but it had all been in vain. Finally, the woman became pregnant.

Now, in the back of their house the couple had a small window that overlooked a fairy's garden filled with all kinds of flowers and herbs. But nobody ever dared to enter it.

One day, however, when the wife was standing at the window and looking down into the garden, she noticed a bed of wonderful rapunzel. She had a great craving to eat some of the lettuce, and yet she knew that she couldn't get any. So she began to waste away and looked wretched. Her husband eventually became horrified and asked what was ailing her.

"If I don't get any of that rapunzel from the garden behind our house, I shall have to die."

Her husband loved her very much and thought, "No matter what it costs, you're going to get her some rapunzel."

So one evening he quickly climbed over the high wall into the garden, grabbed a handful of rapunzel, and brought the lettuce to his wife. Then she immediately made a salad and ate it with great zest. However, the rapunzel tasted so good to her, so very good, that her craving for it became three times greater by the next day. Her husband knew that if she was ever to be satisfied, he had to climb into the garden once more. And so he went over the wall into the garden but was extremely terrified when he stood face-to-face with the fairy, who angrily berated him for daring to come into the garden and stealing her rapunzel.

He excused himself as best he could by explaining that his wife was pregnant and that it had become too dangerous to deny her the rapunzel.

“All right,” the fairy finally spoke. “I shall permit you to take as much rapunzel as you like, but only if you give me the child that your wife is carrying.”

In his fear the man agreed to everything, and when his wife gave birth, the fairy appeared at once, named the baby girl Rapunzel, and took her away.

Rapunzel grew to be the most beautiful child under the sun. But when she turned twelve, the fairy locked her in a very high tower that had neither doors nor stairs, only a little window high above. Whenever the fairy wanted to enter the tower, she would stand below and call out:

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
let down your hair.”

Rapunzel had radiant hair, as fine as spun gold. Each time she heard the fairy’s voice, she unpinned her braids and wound them around a hook on the window. Then she let her hair drop twenty yards, and the fairy would climb up on it.

One day a young prince went riding through the forest and came upon the tower. He looked up and saw beautiful Rapunzel at the window. When he heard her singing with such a sweet voice, he fell completely in love with her. However, since there were no doors in the tower and no ladder could ever reach her high window, he fell into despair. Nevertheless, he went into the forest every day until one time he saw the fairy, who called out:

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
let down your hair.”

As a result, he now knew what kind of ladder he needed to climb up into the tower. He took careful note of the words he had to say, and the next day at dusk, he went to the tower and called out:

“Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
let down your hair.”

So she let her hair drop, and when her braids were at the bottom of the tower, he tied them around him, and she pulled him up. At first Rapunzel was terribly afraid, but soon the young prince pleased her so much that she agreed to see him every day and pull him up into the tower. Thus, for a while they had a merry time and enjoyed each other's company. The fairy didn't become aware of this until, one day, Rapunzel began talking and said to her, "Tell me, Mother Gothel, why are my clothes becoming too tight? They don't fit me any more."

"Oh, you godless child!" the fairy replied. "What's this I hear?"

And she immediately realized that she had been betrayed and became furious. Then she grabbed Rapunzel's beautiful hair, wrapped it around her left hand a few times, picked up a pair of scissors with her right hand, and *snip, snap*, the hair was cut off. Afterward the fairy banished Rapunzel to a desolate land, where she had to live in great misery. In the course of time she gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl.

On the same day that the fairy had banished Rapunzel, she fastened the braids that she had cut off to the hook on the window, and that evening, when the prince came and called out

"Rapunzel, Rapunzel,
let down your hair,"

she let the braids down. But when the prince climbed up into the tower, he was astonished to find the fairy instead of Rapunzel.

"Do you know what, you villain?" the angry fairy said. "Rapunzel is lost to you forever!"

In his despair the prince threw himself from the tower. He escaped with his life, but he lost both eyes. Sadly he wandered around in the forest, eating nothing but grass and roots, and did nothing but weep. Some years later, he made his way to the desolate land where Rapunzel was leading a wretched existence with her children. When he heard her voice, it sounded familiar at first, and then he immediately recognized it. She recognized him, too, and embraced him. Two of her tears fell upon his eyes. Then his eyes became clear again, and he could see as usual.

THE THREE LITTLE MEN IN THE FOREST

There was a man whose wife died, and he was undecided whether he wanted to marry again. Finally, he took off one of his boots that had a hole in the sole and said to his daughter, his only child: "Take this boot and carry it up to the loft, where you'll find a large nail. Hang the boot on the nail. Then fetch some water, and pour the water into the boot. If it holds the water, I'll get married again. But if it leaks, I'll let things remain as they are."

The maiden did as she was told. The water drew the hole together, and the boot became full to the brim. The father checked to see for himself whether this was true. Then he said: "Well, now I've got to take a wife."

So he went and courted a widow who brought a daughter from her first husband with her into the house. When she saw that her stepdaughter was beautiful and that everyone was fond of her, and that her own daughter was ugly, she scolded the stepdaughter whenever she could and only thought of how she might torment her.

One day, in the middle of winter, when the snow was high, the stepmother sewed her a dress made of paper, and when it was finished, she called her stepdaughter to her and said, "I've got a craving to eat strawberries. So put on this dress, go into the forest, and fetch me a basket of strawberries. And don't you dare return home until the basket is full."

The maiden wept bitter tears and said, "Strawberries don't grow in winter, and even if they were there, they'd be covered by the snow. How am I supposed to find them? It's so cold outside that my breath will freeze. How can I go out in a paper dress? The wind will blow right through the dress, and the thorns will tear it off my body."

"Don't say one more word!" the stepmother replied. "Get going and look for the strawberries."

In her jealous heart she thought that the maiden would freeze outside and never return. That's why she had made the thin paper dress. Since the maiden was obedient, she put on the paper dress and went out into the forest. There was nothing but snow, not even a blade of green grass. So she kept going, and when she reached the middle of the forest, she saw a small cottage, and three

little men were looking out the window. She wished them a good day, and since she greeted them so politely, they asked her what she was looking for in the forest dressed in such a thin paper dress when it was wintertime.

“Oh,” she answered, “I’m supposed to look for strawberries, and I’m not allowed to return home until I’ve gathered a basketful.”

The three little men responded: “Go behind our house and clear the snow away. The strawberries have been protected there and have grown. You’ll find enough to fill your basket.”

The maiden thanked them and did as she was told. While she cleared away the snow and gathered the strawberries, the three little men began talking among themselves.

“Since she’s been so polite to us and is so beautiful, what gifts should we grant her?”

“I’ll make sure that she becomes even more beautiful than she is. This is my gift,” one of the little men said.

“Each time she speaks, golden coins will fall out of her mouth. That will be my gift,” said another one of the little men.

“I’ll grant her a king who will come and take her for his wife,” the third little man said.

When the maiden came back to them, they bestowed their gifts on her, and when she wanted to thank them, golden coins fell out of her mouth. Then she went home, and the stepmother was astonished by the strawberries that she had brought with her and was even more astonished when she saw the coins that fell from the girl’s mouth. Shortly thereafter, a king came, took the maiden with him, and made her his wife.

Now the mother thought about how she might provide her daughter with the same great fortune. So she sewed her a splendid fur coat and told her to go into the forest and ask the little men for a gift. But the men saw that she had a wicked heart, and instead of giving her good gifts, they gave her bad ones. The first wished that she would freeze in her fur coat as if it were made of paper. The second wished that she would grow uglier with each passing day. The third wished that she would die a miserable death.

The girl returned home shivering, as if her fur coat had been made of paper, and she told her mother what she had encountered, and when her

mother saw that the curses of the three men were starting to take effect, she thought only of avenging herself. So she went to her stepdaughter, who was now the queen, and pretended to be friendly and charming. Consequently, she was welcomed and given her own apartment.

Shortly thereafter the queen gave birth to a prince, and one night, when she was alone and sick and weak, the wicked stepmother lifted her out of the bed with the help of her daughter, and they carried the queen outside to a river and threw her into it. The next morning they told the king that the queen had died during the night.

The following night the kitchen boy saw a duck swimming through the drain into the kitchen, and it asked:

“Are all my guests now sound asleep?”

Then the kitchen boy answered:

“Yes, indeed, you can’t hear a peep.”

“How about that baby of mine?”

“He’s asleep and doing just fine.”

Then the duck assumed the shape of the queen, went upstairs, suckled and nursed the baby, plumped up his little bed, covered him, and returned to the drain, where she swam away as a duck. This happened the next night too, and on the third night, she said to the kitchen boy, “Go and tell the king to take his sword and swing it three times over my head on the threshold.”

The kitchen boy ran and told the king, and when he swung the sword three times, his wife appeared before him alive and well. The duplicity of the stepmother and her daughter was now clear as day, and they were cast into the forest to be devoured by wild animals.

14

NASTY FLAX SPINNING

In olden times there lived a king who loved flax spinning more than anything else, and his daughters had to spin the entire day. If he didn’t hear the wheels humming, he became angry. One time he had to take a trip, and

before he said his farewell, he gave a large casket of flax to the queen and said: "All this must be spun by the time I return."

The princesses became distressed and wept.

"If we are to spin all of that flax, we'll have to sit the entire day, and we won't be able to get up at all."

But the queen replied: "Console yourselves. I'll certainly help you."

Now there were three especially ugly spinsters in the realm. The first had such a huge lower lip that it hung beneath her chin. The second had an index finger on her right hand that was so thick and wide that one could make three other fingers out of it. The third had a thick and wide flat foot that was as large as a kitchen board. The queen summoned the three spinsters to the castle, and on the day that the king was supposed to return home, she sat them down next to one another in her room, gave each of them a spinning wheel, and ordered them to spin. Moreover, she told each of them what to answer when the king questioned them. As soon as the king arrived, he heard the humming of the wheels from a distance and was so glad that he intended to praise his daughters. However, upon entering the room and seeing the horrible spinsters sitting there, he was at first startled. Then he stepped toward them and asked the first woman how she got the hideously large lower lip.

"From licking, from licking!"

Then he asked the second where she got her thick finger from.

"From turning the thread, from turning the thread and twining it!"

As she said this, she let the thread run around her finger a couple of times.

Finally, he asked the third one where she got her flat foot from.

"From stamping, from stamping!"

When the king heard all this, he commanded the queen and the princesses never ever to touch a spinning wheel again, and this is how they rid themselves of their agony.

15

HANSEL AND GRETEL

A poor woodcutter lived on the edge of a large forest. He didn't have a bite to eat and barely provided the daily bread for his wife and two children,

Hansel and Gretel. It reached a point when he couldn't even provide that anymore. Indeed, he didn't know how to solve this predicament.

One night as he was tossing and turning in bed because of his worries, his wife said to him, "Listen to me, husband, early tomorrow morning you're to take both the children and give them each a piece of bread. Then lead them into the middle of the forest where it's most dense. After you build a fire for them, go away and leave them there. We can no longer feed them."

"No, wife," the man said. "I don't have the heart to take my own children and abandon them to wild beasts, for they'd soon come and tear them apart in the forest."

"If you don't do that," his wife responded, "we shall all have to starve to death."

She didn't give him any peace until he said yes.

The two children were still awake because of their hunger, and they had heard everything that their mother said to their father. Gretel thought, "Now it's all over for me," and began to weep pitiful tears. But Hansel spoke: "Be quiet, Gretel. Don't get upset. I'll find a way to help us."

Upon saying this, he got up, put on his little jacket, opened the bottom half of the door, and crept outside. The moon was shining very brightly, and the white pebbles glittered in front of the house like pure silver coins. Hansel stooped down to the ground and stuffed his pocket with as many pebbles as he could fit in. Then he went back into the house.

"Don't worry, Gretel. Just sleep quietly." And he lay down again in his bed and fell asleep.

Early the next morning, before the sun had even begun to rise, their mother came and woke the two children.

"Get up, children. We're going into the forest. Here's a piece of bread for each of you. But be smart and don't eat it until noon."

Gretel put the bread under her apron because Hansel had the pebbles in his pocket. Then they all set out together into the forest. After they had walked a while, Hansel stopped still and looked back at the house. He did this time and again until his father said, "Hansel, what are you looking at there and why are you dawdling? Pay attention and march along!"

“Oh, father,” said Hansel, “I’m looking at my little white cat that’s sitting up on the roof and wants to say good-bye to me.”

“You fool,” the mother said. “That’s not a cat. It’s the morning sun shining on the chimney.”

But Hansel had not been looking at the cat. Instead, he had been looking at the shiny pebbles from his pocket that he had been dropping on the ground. When they reached the middle of the forest, the father said, “Children, I want you to gather some wood. I’m going to make a fire so you won’t get cold.”

Hansel and Gretel gathered together some brushwood and built quite a nice little pile. The brushwood was soon kindled, and when the fire was ablaze, the mother said, “Now, children, lie down by the fire and sleep. We’re going into the forest to chop wood. When we’re finished, we’ll come back and get you.”

Hansel and Gretel sat by the fire, and when noon came, they kept eating their pieces of bread until evening. But their mother and father did not return. Nobody came to fetch them. When it became pitch dark, Gretel began to weep, but Hansel said, “Just wait awhile until the moon has risen.”

And when the full moon had risen, Hansel took Gretel by the hand. The pebbles glittered like newly minted silver coins and showed them the way. They walked the whole night long and arrived back at their father’s house at break of day. Their father rejoiced with all his heart when he saw his children again, for he had not liked the idea of abandoning them alone in the forest. Their mother also seemed to be delighted by their return, but secretly she was angry.

Not long after this, there was once again nothing to eat in the house, and one evening Gretel heard her mother say to their father: “The children found their way back one time, and I just let that go, but now there’s nothing left in the house except for a half loaf of bread. Tomorrow you must take them farther into the forest so they won’t find their way back home again. Otherwise, there’s no hope for us.”

All this saddened the father, and he thought, “It’d be much better to share your last bite to eat with your children.” But since he had given in the first time, he also had to yield a second.

Hansel and Gretel overheard their parents' conversation. Then Hansel got up and intended to gather pebbles once again, but their parents had locked the door. Nevertheless, he comforted Gretel and said, "Just sleep, dear Gretel. The dear Lord will certainly help us."

Early the next morning they each received little pieces of bread, but they were smaller than the last time. On the way into the forest Hansel crumbled the bread in his pocket and stopped as often as he could to throw the crumbs on the ground.

"Hansel, why are you always stopping and looking around?" asked the father. "Keep going!"

"Oh, I'm looking at my little pigeon that's sitting on the roof and wants to say good-bye to me," Hansel answered.

"You fool!" his mother said. "That's not your little pigeon. It's the morning sun shining on the chimney."

Now their mother led the children even deeper into the forest until they came to a spot they had never been to before in their lives. Once again they were to sleep by a large fire, and their parents were to come and fetch them in the evening.

When noon came, Gretel shared her bread with Hansel because he had scattered his along the way. Noon went by and then evening passed, but no one came for the poor children. Hansel comforted Gretel and said, "Just wait until the moon has risen, Gretel. Then I'll see the little bread crumbs that I scattered. They'll show us the way back home."

When the moon rose and Hansel looked for the bread crumbs, they were gone because the many thousands of birds that fly about the forest had found them and gobbled them up. Nevertheless, Hansel believed he could find the way home and pulled Gretel along with him, but they soon lost their way in the great wilderness. They walked the entire night and all the next day as well, from morning till night, until they fell asleep from exhaustion. Then they walked for one more day, but they didn't find their way out of the forest. They were now also very hungry, for they had had nothing to eat except some berries that they had found growing on the ground.

On the third day they continued walking until noon. Then they came to a little house made of bread with cake for a roof and pure sugar for windows.

“Let’s sit down and eat until we’re full,” said Hansel. “I want to eat a piece of the roof. Gretel, you can have part of the window since it’s sweet.”

Hansel had already eaten a good piece of the roof and Gretel had devoured a couple of small round windows and was about to break off a new one when they heard a shrill voice cry from inside:

“Nibble, nibble, I hear a louse!
Who’s that nibbling on my house?”

Hansel and Gretel were so tremendously frightened that they dropped what they had in their hands, and immediately thereafter a small, ancient woman crept out of the door. She shook her head and said, “Well now, dear children, where’ve you come from? Come inside with me. You’ll have a good time.”

She took them both by the hand and led them into her little house. Then she served them a good meal of milk and pancakes with sugar and apples and nuts. Afterward she made up two beautiful beds, and when Hansel and Gretel lay down in them, they thought they were in heaven.

The old woman, however, was really a wicked witch on the lookout for children and had built the house made of bread only to lure them to her. As soon as she had any children in her power, she would kill, cook, and eat them. It would be like a feast day for her. Therefore, she was quite happy that Hansel and Gretel had come her way.

Early the next morning, before the children were awake, she got up and looked at the two of them sleeping so sweetly, and she was delighted and thought, “They’ll certainly be a tasty meal for you!”

Then she grabbed Hansel and stuck him into a small coop, and when he woke up, he was behind a wire mesh used to lock up chickens, and he couldn’t move about. Immediately after, she shook Gretel and yelled, “Get up, you lazybones! Fetch some water, and then go into the kitchen and cook something nice. Your brother’s sitting in a chicken coop. I want to fatten him up, and when he’s fat enough, I’m going to eat him. But now I want you to feed him.”

Gretel was frightened and wept, but she had to do what the witch demanded. So the very best food was cooked for poor Hansel so that he

would become fat, while Gretel got nothing but crab shells. Every day the old woman came and called out, “Hansel, stick out your finger so I can feel whether you’re fat enough.”

However, Hansel stuck out a little bone, and the witch was continually puzzled that Hansel didn’t get any fatter.

One evening, after a month had passed, she said to Gretel, “Get a move on and fetch some water! I don’t care whether your little brother’s fat enough or not. He’s going to be slaughtered and boiled tomorrow. In the meantime I want to prepare the dough so that we can also bake.”

So Gretel went off with a sad heart and fetched the water in which Hansel was to be boiled. Early the next morning Gretel had to get up, light the fire, and hang up a kettle full of water.

“Make sure that it boils,” said the witch. “I’m going to light the fire in the oven and shove the bread inside.”

Gretel was standing in the kitchen and wept bloody tears and thought, “It would have been better if the wild animals in the forest had eaten us. Then we would have died together and wouldn’t have had to bear this sorrow, and I wouldn’t have to boil the water that will be the death of my dear brother. Oh dear God, help us poor children get out of this predicament!”

Then the old woman called: “Gretel, come right away over here to the oven!”

When Gretel came, she said, “Look inside and see if the bread is already nice and brown and well-done. My eyes are weak. I can no longer see so well from a distance, and if you can’t see, then sit down on the board, and I’ll shove you inside. Then you can get around inside and check everything.”

The witch wanted to shut the oven door once Gretel was inside, for she wanted to bake her in the hot oven and eat her, too. This is what the wicked witch had planned and why she had called the girl. But God inspired Gretel, and she said, “I don’t know how to do it. First you show it to me. Sit down on the board, and I’ll shove you inside.”

And so the old woman sat down on the board, and since she was light, Gretel shoved her inside as far as she could, and then she quickly shut the oven door and bolted it with an iron bar. The old woman began to scream

and groan in the hot oven, but Gretel ran off, and the witch was miserably burned to death.

Meanwhile, Gretel went straight to Hansel and opened the door to the coop. After Hansel jumped out, they kissed each other and were glad. The entire house was full of jewels and pearls. So they filled their pockets with them. Then they went off and found their way home. Their father rejoiced when he saw them again. He hadn't spent a single happy day since his children had been away. Now he was a rich man. However, the mother had died.

16

HERR FIX-IT-UP

Fix-It-Up had been a soldier for a long time. When the war came to an end, however, and there was nothing but the same old things to do every day, he resigned from the army and decided to become a servant for a great lord. There would be clothes trimmed with gold, a lot to do, and always new things happening. So he set out on his way and came to a foreign court, where he saw a lord taking a walk in the garden. Fix-It-Up did not hesitate. He moved briskly over to the lord and said, "Sir, I'm looking for employment with a great lord. If Your Majesty is himself such a person, it would give me great pleasure to serve you. There's nothing I don't know or can't do. I know just how to carry out orders, no matter how they are given."

"Fine, my son," the lord said. "I'd be pleased to have you. First tell me, what do I desire right now?"

Without answering, Fix-It-Up spun around, rushed away, and returned with a pipe and tobacco.

"Fine, my son. You are hired as my servant, but now I'm going to command you to get Princess Nomini, the most beautiful maiden in the world. I want to have her for my wife."

"All right," said Fix-It-Up. "That's a trifle for me. Your Majesty shall soon have her. Just give me a coach drawn by six horses, a coachman, guards, couriers, servants, and a cook, all in full dress. I myself must have princely garments, and everyone must obey my commands."

Soon they departed. Fix-It-Up, the servant, sat inside the coach, which headed straight toward the beautiful princess's court. When the road came to an end, they drove into a field and soon reached the edge of a large forest filled with many thousands of birds. A boisterous song soared splendidly into the blue air.

"Stop! Stop!" exclaimed Fix-It-Up. "Don't disturb the birds. They are praising their creator and will serve me some other time. Let's go to the left."

So the coachman had to turn and drive around the forest. Soon after, they came to a large field, where close to a thousand million ravens were sitting and crying shrilly for food.

"Stop! Stop!" exclaimed Fix-It-Up. "Untie one of the horses way up front. Lead it into the field and slaughter it so that the ravens can eat. I don't want them to suffer from hunger."

After the ravens had eaten, the journey continued, and they came to a pond with a fish in it that was moaning and groaning: "For God's sake, I have nothing to eat in this terrible swamp. Throw me into a running river, and I'll repay your deed one day."

Before the fish could even finish speaking, Fix-It-Up had exclaimed, "Stop! Stop! Cook, put the fish in your apron. Coachman, drive it to a running river."

Fix-It-Up himself got out and threw the fish into the water, and the fish flapped its tail in joy.

"Now, get the horses going," said Fix-It-Up. "We must arrive at the designated spot by evening."

When he reached the royal residence, he drove straight to the best inn, where the innkeeper and all his people came out and welcomed him in their best manners, thinking that a foreign king had arrived, though it was only a servant. Fix-It-Up had himself announced at the royal court, where he endeavored to make a good impression and court the princess.

"My son," said the king, "many such suitors have already been turned away because they couldn't perform the tasks I assigned them to win my daughter."

"All right," said Fix-It-Up, "set any kind of hard task that you want me to do."

“I’ve ordered a quarter of a liter of poppy seeds to be sown in a field. If you can gather them so that not one kernel is missing, you shall have the princess for your wife.”

“Hoho!” Fix-It-Up thought, “that’s not much for me.” He then took a measuring cup, a sack, and snow-white sheets, went out to the field, and spread the sheets next to the field where the seeds had been sown. Soon after, those birds whose singing he had left undisturbed in the forest arrived, and they picked up the seeds, kernel after kernel, and carried them to the white sheets. When the birds had picked up all of them, Fix-It-Up poured them into the sack, took the measuring cup under his arm, went to the king, and measured out the poppy seeds for him. Now he thought the princess was already his—but he was wrong.

“One thing more, my son,” said the king. “My daughter has recently lost her golden ring. You must return it to me before you can have her.”

Fix-It-Up did not get upset. “Let Your Majesty show me the river and bridge where the ring was lost, then I shall soon return it to you.”

When Fix-It-Up was brought there, he looked down, and there he saw the fish that he had thrown into the river. It stuck its head out into the air and said, “Wait a moment. I’ll dive below. A whale has the ring underneath its fins, and I’ll fetch it.”

Indeed, the fish soon returned and tossed the ring onto the shore. Fix-It-Up brought it to the king, but the latter replied, “Now, just one more thing. There’s a unicorn in the forest, and it’s been causing a great deal of damage. If you can kill it, there’s nothing more you’ll have to do.”

Fix-It-Up did not get very upset here either. Instead, he went straight into the forest, where he came across the ravens whom he had once fed.

“Just have a little more patience,” they said. “The unicorn is lying down and sleeping, but it’s not on the side where you can see its eye. When it turns over, we’ll peck out its good eye. Then it’ll be blind and run furiously against trees and get itself stuck with its horn. That’s when you’ll be able to kill it easily.”

Soon the beast tossed itself around a few times and lay on its other side. All at once the ravens swooped down and pecked out its good eye. When it felt the pain, it jumped up and ran wildly around the forest. After it got its horn stuck in a thick oak tree, Fix-It-Up jumped out, cut off its head,



and brought it to the king, who could no longer deny him his daughter. She was delivered to Fix-It-Up, who took a seat next to her in the coach. He was in full dress, just as he had come, and immediately drove off and brought the lovely princess to his lord. Fix-It-Up was given a fine reception, and the lord's wedding with the princess was celebrated in great splendor. Then Fix-It-Up was appointed prime minister.

Everyone in the company to whom this tale was told wished to be at the celebration. One person wanted to be chambermaid; the other, wardrobe attendant. Someone wanted to be a chamber servant; another, the cook, and so on.

17

THE WHITE SNAKE

Every day at noon a covered dish was placed on the king's table. Then, after everyone left, the king would eat alone from this dish, and nobody in the entire realm knew what kind of food was in it. One of the servants became curious and wanted to know what the dish contained. On one occasion, after the king had ordered him to take the dish away, he could no longer restrain himself. So he took the dish to his room and uncovered it. As he lifted the cover, he found a white snake lying inside, and once he laid his eyes on it, he felt a great desire to taste some of it. So he cut off a piece and began eating it. No sooner did his tongue touch the flesh of the snake than he understood the language of animals and heard what the birds on the window sill were saying to each other.

On this very same day the queen lost one of her most beautiful rings, and the suspicion fell on him. The king also said that if he was not able to find the thief by morning, he himself would be punished as if he had been the guilty person. The servant became sad and went down into the courtyard, where some ducks were resting in the water. As he was watching them, he heard one of them say, "There's something heavy in my stomach. I ate a ring that the queen has lost."

The servant took the duck and carried it to the cook, "Kill this one. It's fat enough."

So the cook cut off the duck's neck, and when he began cleaning it, the queen's ring was lying in its stomach. The servant brought it to the king, who was astonished and happy. Since he was sorry that he had treated the servant unjustly, he said, "Demand whatever you would like and whatever position of royal honor you would like."

However, the servant declined every offer even though he was young and handsome. His heart was sad, and he didn't want to remain at the court any longer. So he asked only for a horse and for money to travel and see the world. Well, he was provided with everything in the very best way.

The next morning he rode off and came to a pond where three fish were trapped in the reeds and were wailing that they'd have to die if they couldn't get back into the water. So he dismounted, took them out of the reeds, and put them back into the water. Then the fish cried out: "We'll remember you, and one day we'll repay you."

He rode on, and a while later he heard an ant king crying out: "Get away from us! Your enormous beast is trampling us with his large hooves!"

The young man looked down to the ground and saw that his horse had stepped on an ant hill. So he turned his horse away, and the ant king called out: "We'll remember you, and one day we'll repay you."

Soon the servant entered a forest where two ravens were throwing their young ones out of their nests. They said that their tiny ones were now big enough and could feed themselves.

The young birds lay on the ground and screamed that they would die from starvation because their wings were still too small, and they couldn't fly yet and search for food. So the young man dismounted, killed his horse with his sword, and threw the horse to the young ravens. They hopped over to the horse, ate their fill, and said, "We'll remember this, and one day we'll repay you."

The young man moved on and came to a large city, where he heard a proclamation that whoever wanted to marry the king's daughter would have to perform a task given by her, and if he didn't complete it successfully, he would forfeit his life. Many princes had already been there and had lost their lives, so there was nobody any more who dared to try. This is why the princess had the proclamation issued again. The servant

thought about it and decided to declare himself as a suitor. So he was led out to the sea, where a ring was thrown into it. He was to fetch it, and if he came out of the water without it, he'd be pushed back into the sea and would have to die in the water. As he was standing on the shore, the three fish that he had taken from the reeds and thrown into the water came swimming toward him. One of the fish held a shell in its mouth, and the ring was in the shell. The fish set it down on the beach at the feet of the young man, who was full of joy. So he brought the ring to the king and demanded the princess. However, when the princess heard that he wasn't a prince, she refused to accept him. Instead, she scattered ten sacks full of millet seeds in the grass. He was to pick them all up before sunrise the next day, and every single grain was to be gathered or else he'd lose his life. All at once the ant king came with all his ants whom the young man had protected, and they picked up the millet seeds during the night and poured them back into the sacks. By morning they had finished the task. When the princess saw that the sacks had been filled, she was astonished, and the young man was brought before her. Since he was handsome, she liked him but demanded that he perform a third task: he was to fetch an apple from the Tree of Life. As he stood there and thought about how he might get it, one of the ravens whom he had fed with his horse came and brought the apple in its beak. This is how he became the princess's husband, and, when her father died, he became king of the entire country.

18

THE JOURNEY OF THE STRAW,
THE COAL, AND THE BEAN

A straw, a coal, and a bean came together and wanted to take a great journey. They had already gone through many countries when they reached a brook without a bridge and couldn't cross. Finally, straw came up with a good idea. He laid himself across the brook, and the others were to cross over him, first coal, then bean. Coal took wide steps and slowly crossed the straw, while bean toddled after. When coal got to the middle of straw,

however, straw began to burn and burned through and through. Coal fell fizzling into the water and died. Straw broke into two pieces and flowed away. Bean, who was somewhat behind, slipped and fell into the water but managed to help herself a little by swimming. Finally, bean had to drink so much water that she burst and was driven to shore in this condition. Fortunately, a tailor was sitting there. He was resting while taking a hike in the woods. Since he had a needle and thread in his sack, he sewed bean together. Ever since this time all the beans have a seam.



According to another story bean was the first to make it across the straw. She reached the other side safely and looked back at coal on the other side and how he was crossing. In the middle of the way coal burned through straw, fell into the water, and fizzled. When bean saw this, she laughed so hard that she burst. The tailor, who was sitting on the shore, sewed her up but only had black thread. This is why all the beans have a black seam.

19

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE

Once upon a time there was a fisherman who lived with his wife in a piss pot near the sea. Every day the fisherman went out to fish, and all he did was fish and fish. One day he was sitting with his line and gazing into the clear water. And all he did was sit and sit. Suddenly his line sank deep down to the bottom, and when he pulled it up, he had a large flounder on the line, and the flounder said to him, "Listen here, fisherman, I beg of you, let me live. I'm not a real flounder but an enchanted prince. So what good would it do you to kill me? I certainly wouldn't taste very good. Put me back into the water, and let me go."

"Hold on," said the man. "You don't have to waste your words on me. I would have thrown a talking fish back into the water anyway."

He then put the fish back into the clear water, and the flounder swam to the bottom, leaving behind a long streak of blood. Then the fisherman

stood up and returned to the piss pot to be with his wife and told her that he had caught a flounder but since it had been an enchanted prince, he had let him go.

“Didn’t you wish for anything?” asked the wife.

“No,” said the husband. “What should I have wished for?”

“Ah,” said the wife. “Don’t you think it’s awful that we’ve got to live in this piss pot? It stinks, and it’s disgusting. You should have wished for a little hut. Go back and call him. Tell him we want a little hut. I’m sure he’ll give us one.”

The husband didn’t think that this was the right thing to do, but he went back to the sea anyway, and when he arrived, the sea was green and yellow, and he stood on the shore and said:

“Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
if you’re a man, then speak to me.
Though I don’t agree with my wife’s request,
I’ve come to ask it nonetheless.”

The flounder came swimming up to him and said, “Well, what does she want?”

“Oh,” said the man, “my wife, Isabel, thinks I should have wished for something because I caught you. Since she doesn’t want to live in a piss pot, she’d like to have a hut.”

“Just go home,” said the flounder. “She’s already got it.”

The fisherman went home, and his wife was standing in the doorway of a hut and said to him: “Come inside, husband. Look! Now, isn’t this much better?”

There was a stove and a parlor, also a kitchen. Behind the hut was a little yard and garden with all kinds of vegetables and chickens and ducks.

“Oh,” said the fisherman, “now we can enjoy ourselves.”

“Yes,” said the wife, “we’re going to enjoy it.”

Everything went well for about a week or two, and then the wife said, “Listen, husband, the hut is much too cramped, and the yard and garden are too little. I want a large stone castle. Go back to the flounder and tell him to give us a castle.”

“Ah, wife,” said the husband. “The flounder has just given us a hut, and I don’t want to go back again so soon. The flounder might be unwilling to do anything.”

“What do you mean?” said the wife. “He can easily do it, and he’ll be glad to do it. Just go back to him!”

So the fisherman left, and his heart grew heavy. When he got to the sea, the water was purple, dark blue, gray, and dense but still calm. Then he stood there and said:

“Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
if you’re a man, then speak to me.
Though I don’t agree with my wife’s request,
I’ve come to ask it nonetheless.”

“What now! What does she want?” the flounder asked.

“Oh,” said the fisherman, somewhat distressed. “My wife wants to live in a large stone castle.”

“Go home. She’s standing in front of the door,” the flounder said.

The fisherman went home, and his wife was standing in front of a large palace.

“So, husband,” she said, “isn’t this beautiful?”

He went inside with her, and there were many servants, and the walls were all bright. The chairs and tables were made of gold. Behind the palace was a huge yard and a park half a mile long with deer and does and rabbits. There was also a stable for cows and horses.

“Oh,” said the husband, “now let’s live in the beautiful castle and be content.”

“We’ll have to think about that,” said the wife, “and sleep on it.”

Then they went to bed.

The next morning the wife woke up. It was just daybreak, and he poked her husband in his side with her elbow and said, “Husband, get up. We must be king and rule this entire country.”

“Ah, wife!” said the husband. “Why should we be king? I don’t want to be king.”

“Well,” said the wife, “then I’ll be king.”

“Oh, wife,” said the husband, “where can you be king? The flounder won’t want to make you king.”

“Husband,” said the wife, “go straight to him and tell him I must be king!”

The fisherman went but was very distressed that his wife wanted to be king.

When he got to the sea, it was completely gray and black, and the water was fermenting from below. The fisherman stood there and said:

“Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
if you’re a man, then speak to me.
Though I don’t agree with my wife’s request,
I’ve come to ask it nonetheless.”

“Well, what does she want?” asked the flounder.

“Oh,” said the man, “she wants to be king.”

“Go back home,” said the flounder. “She’s already king.”

Then the man went home, and as he approached the palace, he saw that there were many soldiers, drums, and trumpets. His wife was sitting on a high throne of gold and diamonds, and she wore a large golden crown. Two rows of ladies-in-waiting were standing on either side of her, each lady a head shorter than the next.

“Oh,” said the fisherman, “now you’re king, aren’t you?”

“Yes,” said his wife, “I am king.”

After he gazed at her for some time, he said, “Oh, wife, it’s wonderful that you’re king! Now let’s not wish for anything more.”

“No, husband,” the wife said as she became very restless. “I have too much time on my hands, and I can’t stand it anymore. I’m king, but now I also want to be emperor.”

“Oh, wife,” said the fisherman, “why do you want to be emperor?”

“Husband,” she said, “go to the flounder. I want to be emperor!”

“Oh, wife,” the husband said. “He can’t make you emperor. I don’t want to tell that to the flounder.”

“I’m king,” she said, “and you’re just my husband. Go there at once!”

The fisherman went away, but as he was walking, he thought, “This won’t turn out well at all. It’s outrageous for her to be emperor. The

flounder's going to become sick and tired of this in the end." When he got to the sea, it was all black and dense, and a strong wind whipped across the surface and made the water curdle. Then the fisherman stepped forward and said:

"Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
if you're a man, then speak to me.
Though I don't agree with my wife's request,
I've come to ask it nonetheless."

"Well, what does she want?" asked the flounder.

"Oh, flounder," he said. "My wife wants to be emperor."

"Go back home," said the flounder. "She's already emperor."

Then the man went home, and when he arrived, he saw his wife sitting on a very high throne made from a single piece of gold. She was wearing a large crown three yards tall and covered with diamonds and garnets. She was flanked on either side by two rows of bodyguards, each man shorter than the next, beginning with a tremendous giant two miles tall and ending with the tiniest dwarf, who was no bigger than my pinky. There were also many princes and dukes standing before her, and her husband stepped up and said, "Wife, now you're emperor, aren't you?"

"Yes," she said, "I'm emperor."

"Oh," said the fisherman, and he gazed at her for some time, "it's wonderful that you're emperor."

"Husband," she replied. "why are you standing there like that? I'm emperor, but now I also want to be pope."

"Oh, wife," said the husband. "Why do you want to be pope?"

"Husband," she said. "I want to be pope!"

"No, wife," said the fisherman. "The flounder can't make you pope. It won't turn out well."

"Stop talking nonsense, husband!" said the wife. "If he can make me emperor, he can also make me pope. Go there at once!"

So the fisherman went off, but he felt rather queasy. He was trembling, and his knees began to wobble. A strong wind swept across the land. The water rose up in waves, and the waves splashed against the shore. Ships

were in distress as they were tossed up and down by the waves. Though there was still a little blue in the middle of the sky, the horizon was completely red, as if a heavy thunderstorm were coming. Then he stepped forward and said:

“Flounder, flounder, in the sea
if you’re a man, then speak to me.
Though I don’t agree with my wife’s request,
I’ve come to ask it nonetheless.”

“Well, what does she want?” asked the flounder.

“Oh,” the man said, “she wants to be pope.”

“Go back home,” said the flounder. “She’s already pope.”

Then the man went home, and when he arrived, his wife was sitting on a throne two miles high and was wearing three large golden crowns on her head. Numerous bishops and priests were standing around her, and there were two rows of candles on either side of her. The biggest candle was as thick and as large as the highest tower, and the tiniest was a church candle.

“Wife,” the man said as he took a good look at her, “are you the pope?”

“Yes,” she said, “I’m pope.”

“Oh, wife,” he said, “Isn’t it wonderful that you’re pope. You must be satisfied. Now that you’re pope, you can’t become anything greater.”

“I’ll think about it,” said the wife.

Then they both went to bed, but she wasn’t satisfied, and her ambition prevented her from sleeping. She kept thinking of ways she might become greater than she was. When the sun began to rise, she sat at the window and thought, “Aha, I could also make the sun rise!” Then she became quite grim and poked her husband and said, “Husband, go to the flounder. I want to be like God.”

The husband was still half asleep, but he was so shocked by what she had said that he fell out of the bed.

“Ah, wife,” he said. “Be content and remain pope.”

“No,” his wife said. “I won’t have any peace of mind and won’t be able bear it until I can make the sun and moon rise. I want to be like God!”

“Ahh, wife!” the husband said. “The flounder can’t do that. He can make you emperor and pope, but he can’t make you God.”

“Husband,” she said and looked ghastly, “I want to be like God. I want you to go to the flounder at once!”

Now his limbs began to tremble, and he was filled with fear. Outside a great storm was raging so much that all the trees and mountains were shaking. The sky was pitch black, and there was thunder and lightning. Black waves rose up in the sea as high as mountains, and they all had crests of white foam on top. Then the fisherman said:

“Flounder, flounder, in the sea,
if you’re a man, then speak to me.
Though I don’t agree with my wife’s request,
I’ve come to ask it nonetheless.”

“Well, what does she want?” the flounder asked.

“Oh,” he said, “she wants to be like God.”

“Go back home. She’s sitting in your piss pot again.”

And that’s where they are still sitting this very day.

20

A STORY ABOUT A BRAVE TAILOR

I

Once in the little city of Romandia a tailor was sitting and working, and he had an apple lying nearby. There were also many flies around the apple as was usual during the summer time. The tailor became angry, and he took a piece of cloth. Then he hit the flies on the apple and killed seven of them. When the simple-minded tailor saw this, he thought that he had taken care of the situation quite well, and he soon had a beautiful suit of armor made for himself and also had golden letters inscribed that read: *Seven with One Stroke*. Then, dressed in his armor, he went onto the street, and whoever saw him believed that he had killed seven men with one stroke. After that, everyone was very terrified of him.

Now in the same region there was a king whose praise resounded far and wide, and the lazy tailor made his way to king's court, lay down on the grass, and slept. The royal servants, who went in and out of the castle, saw the tailor in the splendid suit of armor and read the inscription. They were very puzzled about what this warrior was doing in the king's courtyard during a time of peace. They thought he was undoubtedly a great lord. The king's councilors, who had also seen the tailor, informed his majesty that this man could be very useful whenever there might be a conflict. The king was very satisfied with their advice and soon summoned the well-armed tailor and asked him whether he wanted to enter his royal service. The tailor answered right away and told his majesty the king that this is why he had come and asked him to tell him where he might be of use to the king. The king immediately accepted him into his service and gave him special lodgings.

Now it didn't take long for the knights to show the good tailor their ill will. They wished the devil would cart him away. But they were afraid that, if ever they had differences, they wouldn't be able to stand up to him because he had killed seven with one stroke. So, they continually thought of ways to get rid of this warrior. Finally, they discussed the situation with one another and agreed that they would all go to the king and ask to be released from his service, and the king granted their wish.

The king was sad to lose all his knights on account of one man, and he wished he had never laid eyes on him. Indeed, he actually wanted to get rid of him, but he didn't dare to discharge him for fear that the tailor might kill him and all his people and take over the his realm. The king pondered the situation for a long time, going back and forth in his mind, until he hit upon a plan. Since he needed such a strong and powerful warrior, he summoned the tailor and offered the following proposal: there were two giants living in a forest in the king's country, and they were causing great damage by robbing, murdering, and burning people. Nobody could get near them because they tore apart anyone who approached. Neither weapons nor anything else helped. However, if the tailor could conquer these two giants and kill them, the king promised him he would receive the king's only daughter for his wife and half the kingdom as dowry. Moreover, one hundred knights were to accompany him and lend him assistance.

The tailor felt good about this proposal, especially since he would become the king's son-in-law, and he replied that he'd like very much to kill the giants, but he didn't need the help of the knights, for he knew quite well how to kill the giants. Then he went to the forest, and after he left the knights at the edge of the woods, he entered and began looking to see if he could find the giants in the distance. After he searched for a long time, he found them sleeping and snoring beneath a tree. The tailor didn't have to think long about what to do. He quickly filled his shirt with stones and climbed up the tree under which they were sleeping. Then he threw one stone after another on the chest of one of the giants until he woke up. The giant became angry with his companion and asked him why he was hitting him. The other giant excused himself as best he could. Then they lay down to sleep again, and the tailor threw a stone at the other giant. He, too, became angry and asked his companion why he was throwing stones at him. They quarreled for a while, but since they were tired, they let it pass, and their eyes closed again. Then the tailor threw a stone at the first giant again with all his might, and the giant couldn't tolerate his companion doing this anymore. So, he hit him violently because he thought that it was his companion who had struck him. Well the other giant didn't like this and stood up. They both became so furious that they ripped trees from the ground and began beating each other to death. Fortunately, they didn't tear up the tree that the tailor was sitting in. When he saw what had happened, he summoned his courage, which he normally didn't have, and climbed cheerfully down the tree. Then he stabbed the giants with his sword a few times to create wounds and left the forest to meet the knights, who asked him whether he had seen the giants.

"Yes," he said. "I've slaughtered the two of them and have left them lying beneath a tree."

The knights doubted very much that he could come away from the giants without being wounded. So they rode into the forest to inspect this miracle and found everything just as the tailor had said it was. While they all felt astonished, they also felt great horror. Indeed, they felt worse than ever. They feared that he might kill them all if he suspected that they were his enemy. So they rode home and told the king about the tailor's deed.

Now the tailor wished to have the king's daughter along with half the realm, but when the king saw that he had killed the giants, he regretted that he had promised his daughter in marriage to the unknown warrior and began thinking of a way to break his promise, for he had no intention of giving his daughter to him. So he said to the tailor that there was a unicorn in the forest that caused great damage by harming fish and people, and if the tailor captured the unicorn, the king would give him his daughter.

The tailor was satisfied with this proposal. So he took some rope, went to the forest, and ordered his escorts to remain outside. He wanted to enter alone, and as soon as he went into the forest, he saw the unicorn charging at him and intent on killing him. However, the tailor was nimble, and he waited until the unicorn was very close before jumping behind a nearby tree. Meanwhile, the unicorn was running at full speed and couldn't turn, so that it thrust its horn into the tree so hard that it became stuck. When the tailor saw this, he went to the unicorn, put the rope around its neck, and tied it to the tree. Then he left the forest and announced his victory over the unicorn. Once the king learned of the tailor's triumph, he became tremendously sad and didn't know what to do, for the tailor continued to desire his daughter. So once again the king demanded that he perform a task and capture a wild boar that was running around in the forest, and if he succeeded, the king would immediately give him his daughter. The king's huntsmen were to lend him a hand. So the tailor went off to the forest with the huntsmen, but he ordered them to stay outside, and they were pleased, for the wild boar had already given them such rough treatment that they had no desire to chase it, and they thanked the tailor very much. Once the tailor entered the forest, the boar charged at him, foaming at the mouth and gnashing its teeth, and sought to trample him to the ground. Fortunately, there was a chapel in the forest where people often rested, and it was nearby. When the tailor saw it, he ran inside and jumped right out again through one of the windows. The boar followed him inside, while the tailor ran around on the outside, slammed the door shut, and locked the boar in the little church. Then he went and announced to the huntsmen that he had captured the boar. In turn, they rode to the king and informed him of the tailor's deed.

It's not clear whether the king liked it or not, and that doesn't matter. He had to give his daughter to the tailor. However, I'm certain that if he had known that the hero was actually a tailor, he would have put a noose around his head instead of giving his daughter to him. As it was, the king had to give his daughter to this stranger but with grave concern. Thereafter, the tailor didn't ask much but just thought about becoming the king's son-in-law. So the wedding took place with little joy, and a king was made out of a tailor.

After he had spent some nights lying next to his bride, the tailor began talking in his sleep and said: "Boy, finish that jerkin and mend the trousers fast, or else I'll give you a whack on your head with my yardstick."

Well, his wife happened to hear all of this, and she went to her father to complain. She begged him to help her get rid of this husband who was nothing but a tailor. The king was cut to the heart when he heard that he had given his only daughter to a tailor. So he consoled her as best he could and told her to leave the door of her bedroom open that night. Then he would post some servants outside, and when the tailor began to talk, they would go inside and do away with him.

The king's daughter was content with this plan. However, the king had a weapons-bearer at his court who was kindly disposed to the tailor, and he had overheard everything. So he went quickly to the young king and informed him about the plot against him and advised him to protect himself as best he could.

The tailor was very grateful and assured his friend that he knew how to take care of this matter. When night arrived, the tailor went to bed with his young queen and pretended to fall asleep, while she secretly got out of bed, went to the door, opened it, and then got back into bed. As soon as the tailor heard this, he began to talk loudly as if he were talking in his sleep and so loudly that the servants outside the door could hear him.

"Boy, finish that jerkin and mend the trousers fast, or else I'll give you a whack on your head with my yardstick! I've slain seven with one stroke, killed two giants, captured a unicorn, and trapped a wild boar. Do you think I'm afraid of those fellows waiting outside my door?"

When the men heard the tailor's words, they fled as if the wild host of hell were after them, and nobody wanted to do anything to him after this. Thus the tailor remained a king for the rest of his life.

II

One summer morning a little tailor was sitting at his table by his window. Just then a peasant woman came down the street and cried out, "Good jam for sale! Good jam for sale!"

The tailor stuck his head out the window and called, "Up here, my dear woman, you're sure to make a good sale with me!"

When the woman came up, he inspected each of the jars and finally bought a quarter of a pound. Afterward he fetched a loaf of bread, cut a full slice for himself, spread it with the jam, and placed it on the table next to him.

"You'll taste good," he said to himself, "but first I want to finish the jacket before I take a bite."

So he began to sew and made big stitches out of joy. Meanwhile, the smell of the sweet jam rose to the flies, and a lot of them flew and landed on the jam.

"Hey, who invited you as guests?" the little tailor said and chased them away. But it didn't take long for the flies to come back in even larger numbers. My little tailor became angry, and he grabbed a piece of cloth from under his worktable.

"Wait, I'll let you have it!" And he whacked them.

When he withdrew the cloth, he counted to see how many flies he had hit, and there were twenty-nine dead ones before his eyes.

"You're quite a man!" he said to himself, and since he was so delighted with himself he cut out a belt and embroidered it with: *Twenty-nine with one stroke!*

"Now you have to go out into the world!" he thought, and so he tied the belt around him and searched his house for something to take with him, but he found only a piece of old cheese, which he put in his pocket. And as he set out on his way, he caught a bird and also stuck it into his pocket.

His way led him up a high mountain, and when he reached the peak, he came across a huge giant who was sitting there, and he said, "How are you, my good fellow? You're gazing at the world, right? Well, I happen to be on my way into the world."

The giant looked at the tailor contemptuously and said, "You're a miserable creature!"

The little tailor responded by opening his coat to show the giant his belt. "You can read for yourself what kind of man you have standing before you!"

The giant read the words *Twenty-nine with one stroke!* and thought that it meant the tailor had slain twenty-nine men. Therefore, he began to show some respect for the little tailor. Nevertheless, he wanted to test him first. So he took a stone in his hand and squeezed it until water began to drip from it.

"You're not as strong as that!"

"I can do that as well," the little tailor said, "if that's all you have to show."

He immediately reached into his pocket, took out the soft cheese, and squeezed it until the liquid ran out.

"That beats yours, doesn't it?" the tailor declared.

The giant was puzzled, and so he picked up a stone and threw it so high that it could barely be seen with the naked eye.

"Now, you do the same!"

"That was a good throw," said the tailor, "but even so, the stone had to return to the ground in the end. Now, I'm going to throw one that won't ever come back."

He reached into his pocket, took out the bird, threw it into the air, and the bird flew away for good.

"How did you like that?"

The giant was astounded. So he decided to join him, and they continued walking together until they came to a cherry tree. The giant seized the top, where the fruit was ripest. He bent it down, handed it to the tailor, and told him to eat some of the fruit. But the little tailor was much too weak to hold on to the treetop, and when the giant let go of it, the tailor was catapulted into the air. After he had come down again, unharmed, the

giant said, "What's this? Don't tell me that you're not strong enough to hold on to that twig!"

"That's nothing," the tailor responded. "Do you think that something like that is really difficult for a man who's slain twenty-nine with one stroke? Do you know why I did that? I jumped over the tree because some huntsmen were shooting there in the bushes. Let's see if you can jump over it yourself."

Now the giant believed for sure that there was nobody in the world who could surpass the little tailor in strength and cunning.

[*The rest of this tale is missing.*]

Once upon a time there was a rich man who lived happily with his wife for a long time, and they had one little girl together. Then the wife became ill, and as she became deathly ill, she called her daughter and said, "Dear child, I must leave you, but when I am up in heaven, I shall look after you. Plant a little tree on my grave, and whenever you wish for something, shake it, and you'll have what you wish. And whenever you are otherwise in a predicament, then I'll send you help. Just stay good and pure."

After she said this, she closed her eyes and died. Her child wept and planted a little tree on her grave and didn't need to water it, for her tears were good enough.

The snow covered the mother's grave like a little white blanket, and by the time the sun had taken it off again and the little tree had become green for the second time, the man had married a second wife. However, the stepmother already had two daughters from her first husband. They had beautiful features but proud, nasty, and wicked hearts. After the wedding had now been celebrated, and all three entered the house, a difficult time began for the poor child.

"What's this terrible and useless thing doing in our rooms?" the stepmother said. "Off with you into the kitchen. Whoever wants to eat bread must first earn it. She can be our maid."

The stepsisters took away her clothes and dressed her in an old gray smock.

“You look good in that!” they said, while mocking her and leading her to the kitchen, where the poor child had to do heavy work: she had to get up before dawn, carry the water into the house, make the fire, cook, and wash. Meanwhile her sisters did everything imaginable to cause her grief and make her look ridiculous. They poured peas and lentils into the ashes of the hearth so she had to sit there the entire day and separate them. In the evening, when she was tired, there was no bed for her, and she had to lie next to the hearth in the ashes. Since she always rummaged in dust and looked dirty, they named her Cinderella.

At a certain time the king decided to organize a magnificent ball that was to last three days, and his son was supposed to choose a bride at this event. The two proud stepsisters were also invited to it.

“Cinderella,” they called to her, “Come up here! Comb out our hair, brush our shoes, and fasten our buckles! We’re going to see the prince at the ball.”

Cinderella worked hard and cleaned and brushed as well as she could. However, the stepsisters continually scolded her, and when they had finished dressing, they asked her in a mocking tone: “Cinderella, wouldn’t you like to go to the ball?”

“Oh, yes,” Cinderella replied. “But how can I go? I don’t have any clothes.”

“No,” said the eldest daughter. “That’s all we’d need for you show up there! If the people heard that you were our sister, we’d be ashamed. You belong in the kitchen where there’s a bowl full of lentils. When we return, they must be sorted, and take care that we don’t find a bad one among them. Otherwise, you know what will happen to you.”

After that the stepsisters left, and Cinderella stood there and looked after them, and when she could no longer see them, she went sadly into the kitchen and shook the lentils on to the hearth, and they formed a very large pile.

“Oh,” she sighed and said, “I’ll have to sort them until midnight, and I won’t be able to shut my eyes no matter how much they may hurt. If my mother knew about this!”

Then she knelt down in the ashes in front of the hearth and wanted to begin sorting. All at once two white pigeons flew through the window and landed next to the lentils on the hearth. They nodded with their little heads and said, "Cinderella, would you like us to help you sort the lentils?"

"Yes," answered Cinderella:

"The good ones for the little pot,
the bad ones for your little crop."

And peck, peck! Peck, peck! They began and ate the bad ones and let the good ones remain. And in a quarter of an hour the lentils were so clean that there was not a bad one among them, and Cinderella could smooth them out in the little pot. Now the pigeons said to her, "Cinderella, if you want to see your sisters dance with the prince, then climb up to the pigeon coop."

Cinderella followed them and climbed to the top of the ladder of the pigeon coop and could see the ballroom from there. Indeed, she could see her sisters dance with the prince, and a thousand chandeliers glittered and glistened before her eyes. And after she had seen enough, she climbed down the ladder. Her heart was heavy, and she laid herself down in the ashes and fell asleep.

The next morning the two sisters went into the kitchen, and when they saw that Cinderella had cleanly sorted the lentils, they were angry because they would have liked to have scolded her. Since they couldn't do that, they began to tell her about the ball and said, "Cinderella, that was so much fun, especially the dance. The prince, who's the most handsome in the world, led us out onto the dance floor, and one of us will become his bride."

"Yes," Cinderella said. "I saw the chandeliers glimmer. That must have been splendid."

"What! How did you manage that?" the eldest sister asked.

"I climbed up to the pigeon coop."

When the sister heard this, she was filled with jealousy, and she immediately ordered the pigeon coop to be torn down.

Now Cinderella had to comb and clean again, and the youngest sister, who had a little sympathy in her heart, said, "Cinderella, when it turns dark, you can go to the ball and look in through the windows."

“No,” said the eldest. “That will only make her lazy. Here’s a sack of sweet peas, Cinderella. Sort the good from the bad and work hard. If you don’t have them sorted cleanly by tomorrow, then I’ll spill them all into the ashes, and you’ll have to starve until you’ve fished them out of the ashes.”

Cinderella sat down on the hearth in distress and poured the peas out of the sack. Then the pigeons flew into the kitchen once again and asked in a friendly way: “Cinderella, do you want us to sort the peas?”

“Yes.”

“The good ones for the little pot,
the bad ones for your little crop.”

Peck, peck! Peck, peck! It all went so quickly as if twelve hands were there. And when they were finished, the pigeons said: “Cinderella, do you want to go and dance at the ball?”

“Oh, my God!” she cried out. “But how can I go there in my dirty clothes?”

“Go to the little tree on your mother’s grave. Shake it and wish for clothes. However, you must return before midnight.”

So, Cinderella went to the grave, shook the little tree, and spoke:

“Shake and wobble, little tree!
Let beautiful clothes fall down to me.”

No sooner had she said all this than a splendid dress lay right before her along with pearls, silk stockings, silver slippers, and everything else that belonged to her outfit. Cinderella carried everything into the house, and after she had washed herself and dressed herself, she was as beautiful as a rose washed by the dew. And when she stepped outside, a carriage stood there drawn by six black horses adorned with feathers. There were also servants, dressed in blue and silver, who helped her inside. Then off they galloped to the king’s castle.

When the prince saw the carriage come to a halt before the gate, he thought that a strange princess from afar had come traveling to the ball. So he himself went down the stairs, helped Cinderella out of the carriage, and led her into the ballroom. And when the glitter of the four thousand

chandeliers fell upon her, she was so beautiful that everyone there was amazed, and the sisters also stood there and were annoyed that some other young lady was more beautiful than they. However, they didn't think in the least that it might be Cinderella, who was presumably at home in the ashes. Now, the prince danced with Cinderella and showed her royal honor. As he danced, he thought to himself, "I'm supposed to choose a bride, and I know she's the only one for me." On the other hand, Cinderella had lived for such a long time in ashes and sadness, and now she was in splendor and joy. But when midnight came, before the clock struck twelve, she stood up and bowed good-bye. Even though the prince begged and begged, she refused to remain any longer. So the prince led her down the stairs. The carriage was below and waiting for her, and it drove off in splendor as it had come.

When Cinderella arrived home, she went once again to the little tree on her mother's grave.

"Shake and wobble, little tree!
Take these clothes back from me."

Then the tree took the clothes, and Cinderella had her gray smock on again. And she returned to the kitchen with it, put some dust on her face, and laid herself down to sleep.

In the morning the sisters came. They looked morose and kept quiet. Then Cinderella said, "You must have had an enjoyable time last night."

"No, a princess was there, and the prince almost always danced with her. Nobody had ever seen her or knew where she came from."

"Was it perhaps that lady who arrived in the splendid carriage pulled by six black horses?" Cinderella asked.

"How do you know this?"

"As I was standing in the entrance to the house, I saw her drive by."

"In the future stay inside working," said the eldest sister, who looked angrily at Cinderella. "What business do you have to stand in the entrance to the house?"

For a third time Cinderella had to dress up the two sisters, and as a reward they gave her a bowl with peas that she was to sort. "And don't you dare to leave your work!" the eldest daughter cried out to her.

Cinderella thought, "If only my pigeons will return!" And her heart beat anxiously until the pigeons came as they had the previous night and said, "Cinderella, do you want us to sort the peas?"

"Yes."

"The good ones for the little pot,
the bad ones for your little crop."

Once more the pigeons pecked the bad ones out, and once they were finished, they said, "Cinderella, shake the little tree. It will throw down even more beautiful clothes. Go to the ball, but take care that you return before midnight."

Cinderella went to her mother's grave:

"Shake and wobble, little tree!
Let beautiful clothes fall down to me."

Then a dress fell down, and it was even more glorious and splendid than the previous one. It was made out of gold and precious gems. In addition there were golden gusseted stockings and gold slippers. And after Cinderella was completely dressed, she glistened really like the sun at midday. A carriage drawn by six white horses that had plumes on their heads stopped in front of the house, and the servants were dressed in red and gold. When Cinderella arrived, the prince was already on the stairs and led her into the ballroom. And if everyone had been astonished by her beauty the day before, they were even more astounded this evening, and the sisters stood in a corner and were pale with envy. If they had known that it was Cinderella, who was supposed to be at home in the ashes, they would have died of envy.

Now the prince wanted to know who the strange princess was, where she came from, and where she drove off to. So he had people stationed on the road, and they were to pay attention to her whereabouts. Moreover, he had the stairs painted with black pitch so that she wouldn't be able to run so fast. Cinderella danced and danced with the prince and was filled with so much joy that she didn't think about midnight. All of a sudden, as she was in the middle of a dance, she heard the clock begin to strike. She

was reminded of the pigeons' warning and was terrified. So she rushed to the door and flew down the stairs. However, since they were covered with pitch, one of her golden slippers got caught, and Cinderella didn't stop to take it with her out of fear. Indeed, just as she reached the last step of the stairs, the clock struck twelve. Consequently, the carriage and horses disappeared, and Cinderella stood in her gray smock on the dark road. In the meantime, the prince had rushed after her, and he found the golden slipper on the steps. He pulled it from the pitch and carried it with him, but by the time he made it down the stairs, everything had disappeared. Even the people who had stood guard came and said that they had seen nothing.

Cinderella was glad that nothing worse had happened, and she went home. Once there she turned on her dim oil lamp, hung it in the chimney, and laid herself down in the ashes. It didn't take long before the two sisters also returned and called out: "Cinderella, get up and light the way."

Cinderella yawned and pretended that she had been wakened from her sleep. As she showed them the way, she heard one of the sisters say, "God knows who the presumable princess is. If she were only in her grave! The prince danced just with her alone, and after she had gone, he didn't want to remain, and the entire ball came to an end."

"It was really as if all the lights had suddenly been blown out," the other said.

Meanwhile, the prince was thinking, "If everything else has gone wrong for you, now the slipper will help you find your bride." So he had a proclamation announced and declared that whichever maiden's foot fit the golden slipper was to become his wife. But the slipper was much too small for anyone who tried it on. Indeed, many couldn't even slip their foot into the slipper and couldn't have done so even if the single slipper were two. Finally, it was the turn of the two sisters to take the test. They were glad because they had small beautiful feet and believed that it couldn't go wrong for them and that the prince should have gone to them right away.

"Listen," said the mother secretly. "here's a knife, and if the slipper is still too tight for you, then cut off a piece of your foot. It will hurt a bit. But what does that matter? It will soon pass, and one of you will become queen."

So the eldest sister went into the chamber and tried on the slipper. Her toe slipped inside, but her heel was too large. So, she took the knife and cut off a part of her heel until she could force her foot into the slipper. Then she went out of the chamber to the prince, and when he saw that she had the slipper on her foot, he said that she was to be his bride. Then he led her to his carriage and wanted to drive off. However, when he came to the gate, the pigeons were above and called out:

“Looky, look, look
at the shoe that she took.
There’s blood all over, the shoe’s too small.
She’s not the bride that you met at the ball.”

The prince leaned over and saw that blood was spilling out of the slipper, and he realized that he had been deceived. So he brought the false bride back to the house. However, the mother said to her second daughter, “Take the slipper, and if it’s too short for you, then cut off one of your toes.”

So the sister took the slipper into her chamber, and since her foot was too large, she bit her lips and cut off a large part of her toes. Then she quickly slipped her foot into the slipper and came out of her chamber. Since the prince thought she was the right bride, he wanted to drive off with her. However, when he came to the gate, the pigeons called out again:

“Looky, look, look
at the shoe that she took.
There’s blood all over, and the shoe’s too small.
She’s not the bride you met at the ball.”

The prince looked down and saw that the stockings of the bride were colored red and that her blood was streaming out of the slipper. So the prince brought her to her mother and said, “She, too, is not the right bride. But is there another daughter in your house?”

“No,” said the mother, “there’s just a nasty Cinderella. She sits below in the ashes. I’m sure the slipper won’t fit her.”

The mother didn’t want to have her summoned, but the prince demanded that she do so. Therefore, Cinderella was alerted, and when she

heard that the prince was there, she washed her face and hands quickly so that they were fresh and clean. When she entered the room, she curtsied. Then the prince handed her the golden slipper and said, "Try it on! If it fits, you'll become my wife."

So Cinderella took off the heavy shoe from her left foot and put this foot into the golden slipper, and after she pressed a bit, her foot fit as though the slipper had been made for her. And when she stood up, the prince looked at her face and recognized the beautiful princess once again and cried: "This is the right bride!"

The stepmother and the two haughty sisters were horrified and became pale, but the prince led Cinderella away. He helped her into the carriage, and as they drove off through the gate, the pigeons called out:

"Looky, look, look,
there's no blood at all.
The golden shoe's a perfect fit.
She's truly the bride you met at the ball."

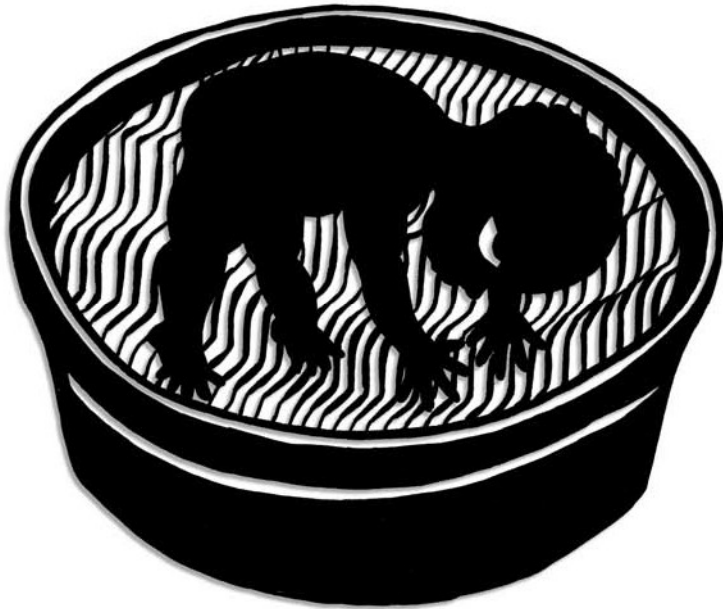
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HOW SOME CHILDREN PLAYED AT SLAUGHTERING

I

In a city named Franecker, located in West Friesland, some young boys and girls between the ages of five and six happened to be playing with one another. They chose one boy to play a butcher, another boy was to be a cook, and a third boy was to be a pig. Then they selected one girl to be a cook and another girl to be her assistant. The assistant was to catch the blood of the pig in a little bowl so they could make sausages. As agreed, the butcher now fell upon the little boy playing the pig, threw him to the ground, and slit his throat open with a knife, while the assistant cook caught the blood in her little bowl.

A councilman was walking nearby and saw this wretched act. He immediately took the butcher boy with him and led him into the house of



the mayor, who instantly summoned the entire council. They deliberated about this incident and didn't know what to do with the boy, for they realized it had all been part of a children's game. One of the councilmen, a wise old man, advised the chief judge to take a beautiful red apple in one hand and a Rhenish gold coin in the other. Then he was to call the boy and stretch out his hands to him. If the boy took the apple, he was to be set free. If he took the gold coin, he was to be killed. The judge took the wise man's advice, and the boy grabbed the apple with a laugh. Thus he was set free without any punishment.

II

There once was a father who slaughtered a pig, and his children saw that. In the afternoon, when they began playing, one child said to the other, "You be the little pig, and I'll be the butcher." He then took a shiny knife and slit his little brother's throat.

Their mother was upstairs in a room bathing another child, and when she heard the cries of her son, she immediately ran downstairs. Upon seeing what had happened, she took the knife out of her son's throat and was so enraged that she stabbed the heart of the other boy, who had been playing the butcher. Then she quickly ran back to the room to tend to her child in the bathtub, but while she had been gone, he had drowned in the tub. Now the woman became so frightened and desperate that she wouldn't allow the neighbors to comfort her and finally hung herself. When her husband came back from the fields and saw everything, he became so despondent that he died soon thereafter.

23

THE LITTLE MOUSE, THE LITTLE BIRD, AND THE SAUSAGE

Once upon a time a little mouse, a little bird, and a sausage came together and set up house. For a long time they lived together in peace and happiness, and they managed to increase their possessions by a considerable

amount. The little bird's job was to fly into the forest every day and bring back wood. The mouse had to carry water, light the fire, and set the table while the sausage did the cooking.

Now, if things go too well for people, they always look for new things! So, one day as the bird was flying about, he came upon another bird, and he boasted and told him about his superb situation. But the other bird called him a poor sap because he had to do most of the work while the other two friends had easy lives. For instance, after the mouse started the fire and carried the water into the house, she generally went to her little room and rested until she was called to set the table. The sausage stayed by the pot and kept an eye on the cooking, and right at mealtime, he slid through the stew or vegetables to make sure everything was salted, seasoned, and ready to eat. As soon as the little bird came home and laid down his bundle, they would sit down at the table, and after finishing the meal, they would sleep soundly until the next morning. Such was their glorious life.

However, the little bird had been disturbed by what the other bird had said the previous day and told his companions that he had been their slave long enough and was no longer going to be taken for a fool. He wanted them to change and try another arrangement. No matter how long the mouse and the sausage vehemently argued against this, the bird dominated and insisted that they try a new way. So they drew lots, and it fell upon the sausage to get the wood; the mouse became cook; and the bird was to fetch water.

What happened?

After the sausage went to fetch the wood, the bird started the fire, and the mouse put the kettle on the stove. Then they waited for the sausage to return home with the wood for the next day. However, the sausage was gone for such a long time that the other two had an uneasy feeling, and the bird flew out a little way to meet him.

Not far from their home, the sausage had encountered a dog. Now this dog had considered the sausage free game and had grabbed him and swallowed him down. The little bird arrived and accused the dog of highway robbery, but it was of no use, for the dog maintained he had found forged

letters on the sausage, and therefore, the sausage had had to pay for this with his life.

Now the little bird sadly picked up the wood and carried it back home. He told the mouse what he had seen and heard, and they were very distressed. Nevertheless, they agreed to do the best they could and stay together. Meanwhile, the little bird set the table, and the mouse prepared the meal. She intended to put the finishing touches on it by seasoning it and sliding through the vegetables the way the sausage used to do, but before she even reached the middle of the vegetables, she got stuck and had to pay for it with her life.

When the bird came to serve the meal, there was no cook. He became so upset that he scattered wood all over the place, calling and searching for the mouse. But his cook was no longer to be found. Since the little bird was so distracted, he didn't notice that the wood had caught fire, and the house went up in flames. The bird rushed out to fetch some water, but the bucket slipped and fell into the well, dragging the bird along. Since he couldn't manage to get himself out, he was left to drown.

24

MOTHER HOLLE

A widow had two daughters, one who was beautiful and diligent, the other, ugly and lazy. But she was fonder of the ugly and lazy one, and the other had to do all the work and was just like the Cinderella in the house.

Now, one day the beautiful maiden went out to fetch water, and as she bent over to pull the bucket from the well, she leaned over too much and fell into the water. And when she awoke and came to her senses, she was lying on the ground in a beautiful meadow, where the sun was shining and thousands of flowers were growing. She left the meadow, and soon she came to a baker's oven full of bread, but the bread was yelling, "Oh, take me out! Take me out, or else I'll burn, I've already been baked long enough!"

So she went to the oven and diligently took out everything. After that she moved on and came to a tree full of apples.

“Oh, shake me! Shake me!” the tree exclaimed. “My apples are all ripe.”

So she shook the tree until the apples fell like raindrops, and she kept shaking until they had all fallen to the ground. After that she moved on. At last she came to a small cottage where an old woman was looking out of a window. She had such big teeth that the maiden was scared and wanted to run away. But the old woman cried after her, “Don’t be afraid, my dear child! Stay with me, and if you do all the housework properly, everything will turn out well for you. You must only make my bed nicely and give it a good shaking so the feathers fly. Then it will snow on earth, for I am Mother Holle.”¹

Since the old woman had spoken so kindly to her, the maiden agreed to enter her service. She took care of everything to the old woman’s satisfaction and always shook the bed so hard that the feathers flew about like snowflakes. In return, the woman treated her well: she never said an unkind word to the maiden, and she gave her roasted or boiled meat every day. After the maiden had spent a long time with Mother Holle, her heart saddened. Even though everything was a thousand times better there than at home, she still had a yearning to return. At last she said to Mother Holle, “I’ve got a tremendous longing to return home, and even though everything is wonderful here, I can’t stay any longer.”

“You’re right,” Mother Holle responded, “and since you’ve served me so faithfully, I myself shall bring you up there again.”

She took the maiden by the hand and led her to a large gate. When it was opened and the maiden was standing beneath the gateway, an enormous shower of gold came pouring down, and all the gold stuck to her so that she became completely covered with it.

“I want you to have this because you’ve been so diligent,” said Mother Holle. Thereupon, the gate closed, and the maiden found herself up on earth. Then she went to her mother, and since she was covered with so much gold, her mother gave her a warm welcome. Then, when her mother heard how she had obtained so much wealth, she wanted her other, ugly and lazy daughter to have the same good fortune. Therefore, this daughter

¹Whenever it snowed in olden days, people in Hessa used to say Mother Holle is making her bed.

also had to jump down the well. Like her sister, she awoke in the beautiful meadow and walked along the same path. When she came to the oven, the bread cried out again, "Oh, take me out! Take me out, or else I'll burn! I've already been baked long enough!"

But the lazy maiden answered, "Do you think I want to get myself dirty?"

She moved on, and soon she came to the apple tree that cried out, "Oh, shake me! Shake me! My apples are all ripe."

However, the lazy maiden replied, "Are you serious? One of the apples could fall and hit me on my head."

When she came to Mother Holle's cottage, she wasn't afraid because she had already heard about the old woman's big teeth, and she hired herself out to her right away. On the first day she made an effort to work hard and obey Mother Holle when the old woman told her what to do, for the thought of gold was on her mind. On the second day she started loafing, and on the third day she loafed even more. Indeed, she didn't want to get out of bed in the morning, and she did a poor job of making Frau Holle's bed. She certainly didn't shake it hard enough to make the feathers fly. Soon Mother Holle became tired of this and discharged the maiden from her service. The lazy maiden was quite happy to go and now expected the shower of gold. Mother Holle led her to the gate, but as the maiden was standing beneath the gateway, a big kettle of pitch came pouring down over her instead of gold.

"That's a reward for your services," Mother Holle said and closed the gate. The lazy maiden went home covered with pitch, and it stuck to her for as long as she lived.

Once upon a time there was a mother who had three little sons who were playing cards one day next to the church. And when the sermon was finished, their mother returned home and saw what they had been doing. So she cursed her godless children, and they were immediately turned into three coal-black ravens and flew away.

The three brothers, however, had a little sister who loved them with all her heart, and she grieved so much about their banishment that she no longer had any peace of mind and finally set out to look for them. The only thing that she took with her for the long, long journey was a little stool on which she rested when she became too tired, and she ate nothing the entire time but wild apples and pears. Unfortunately, she couldn't find the three ravens. But one time, when they had flown over her head, one of them had dropped a ring, and when she picked it up, she recognized it as the ring that she had given to her youngest brother one time as a present.

The sister continued her journey, and she went so far, so very far, until she came to the end of the world and went to the sun, which was, however, much too hot and ate small children. So after that she went to the moon, which was, however, much too cold and also mean, and when it saw her, it said, "I smell, I smell human flesh!"

So the maiden left there quickly and went to the stars, which were good to her, and each one sat on a little stool, and the morning star stood up and gave her a gammy leg to help her open the gate to the glass mountain.

"If you don't have this little leg, you won't be able to climb the glass mountain. It's on the glass mountain that you'll find your brothers!"

So the sister took the gammy leg, wrapped it in some cloth, and continued her journey until she came to the glass mountain. However, the gate was closed, and just as she wanted to take the gammy leg from the cloth, she discovered that she had lost it along the way. Since she didn't know what to do, she took a knife, sliced off her pinky, stuck it into the lock, and opened the gate. Then a little dwarf came toward her and said, "My child, what are you looking for here?"

"I'm looking for my brothers, the three ravens."

"The lord ravens are not at home," said the little dwarf. "If you want to wait, then come in."

And the little dwarf brought three little plates and three little mugs, and the sister ate a bit from each little plate and drank a sip from each mug, and she let the little ring fall into the last mug. All of a sudden a whizzing and a buzzing could be heard in the air.

"The lord ravens are flying back home," said the little dwarf.

And the ravens began to speak one after the other:

“Who has eaten from my little plate?”

“Who has drunk from my little mug?”

As the third raven, however, came to his little mug, he found the ring and saw clearly that their little sister had arrived. They recognized her because of the ring, and they were all saved and transformed and were happy to go home.

26

LITTLE RED CAP

Once upon a time there was a sweet little maiden. Whoever laid eyes upon her couldn't help but love her. But it was her grandmother who could never give the child enough. One day she made her a present, a small, red velvet cap, and since it was so becoming and the maiden always wanted to wear it, people only called her Little Red Cap.

One day her mother said to her: “Come, Little Red Cap, take this piece of cake and bottle of wine and bring them to your grandmother. She's sick and weak, and this will strengthen her. Be nice and good and greet her from me. Go directly there and don't stray from the path, otherwise you'll fall and break the glass, and your grandmother will get nothing.”

Little Red Cap promised to obey her mother. Well, the grandmother lived out in the forest, half an hour from the village, and as soon as Little Red Cap entered the forest, she encountered the wolf. However, Little Red Cap didn't know what a wicked sort of an animal he was and was not afraid of him.

“Good day, Little Red Cap,” he said.

“Thank you kindly, wolf.”

“Where are you going so early, Little Red Cap?”

“To grandmother's.”

“What are you carrying under your apron?”

“Cake and wine. My grandmother's sick and weak, and yesterday we baked this cake so it will help her get well.”

“Where does your grandmother live, Little Red Cap?”

“About a quarter of an hour from here in the forest. Her house is under the three big oak trees. You can tell it by the hazel bushes,” said Little Red Cap.

The wolf thought to himself, “What a juicy morsel she’ll be for me! Now, how am I going to catch her?” Then he said, “Listen, Little Red Cap, haven’t you seen the beautiful flowers growing in the forest? Why don’t you look around? I believe you haven’t even noticed how lovely the birds are singing. You march along as if you were going straight to school in the village, and yet it’s so delightful out here in the woods!”

Little Red Cap looked around and saw that the sun had broken through the trees and that the woods were full of beautiful flowers. So she thought to herself, “If I bring grandmother a bunch of flowers, she’d certainly like that. It’s still early, and I’ll arrive on time.”

So she plunged into the woods to look for flowers. And each time she plucked one, she thought she saw another even prettier flower and ran after it, going deeper and deeper into the forest. But the wolf went straight to the grandmother’s house and knocked at the door.

“Who’s there?”

“Little Red Cap. I’ve brought you some cake and wine. Open up.”

“Just lift the latch,” the grandmother called. “I’m too weak and can’t get up.”

The wolf lifted the latch, and the door sprang open. Then he went straight to the grandmother’s bed and gobbled her up. Next he took her clothes, put them on along with her nightcap, lay down in her bed, and drew the curtains.

Meanwhile, Little Red Cap had been running around and looking for flowers, and only when she had as many as she could carry did she continue on the way to her grandmother. She was puzzled when she found the door open, and as she entered the room, it seemed so strange inside that she thought, “Oh, my God, how frightened I feel today, and usually I like to be at grandmother’s.” Then she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. There lay her grandmother with her cap pulled down over her face, giving her a strange appearance.

“Oh, grandmother, what big ears you have!”

“The better to hear you with.”

“Oh, grandmother, what big eyes you have!”

“The better to see you with.”

“Oh, grandmother, what big hands you have!”

“The better to grab you with.”

“Oh, grandmother, what a terribly big mouth you have!”

“The better to eat you with!”

No sooner did the wolf say that than he jumped out of bed and gobbled up poor Little Red Cap. After the wolf had the fat chunks in his body, he lay down in bed again, fell asleep, and began to snore very loudly. The huntsman happened to be passing by the house and thought to himself, “The way the old woman’s snoring, you’d better see if something’s wrong.” He went into the room, and when he came to the bed, he saw the wolf lying in it. He had been searching for the wolf a long time and thought that the beast had certainly eaten the grandmother. “Perhaps she can still be saved,” he said to himself. “I won’t shoot.” So he took some scissors and cut open the wolf’s belly. After he made a couple of cuts, he saw the little red cap shining forth, and after he made a few more cuts, the girl jumped out and exclaimed, “Oh, how frightened I was! It was so dark in the wolf’s body.”

Soon the grandmother emerged alive. Little Red Cap quickly fetched some large heavy stones, and they filled the wolf’s body with them. When he awoke and tried to run away, the stones were so heavy that he fell down at once and died.

All three were delighted. The huntsman skinned the fur from the wolf. The grandmother ate the cake and drank the wine that Little Red Cap had brought. And Little Red Cap thought to herself: “Never again will you stray from the path by yourself and go into the forest when your mother has forbidden it.”



It’s also been told that Little Red Cap returned to her grandmother one day to bring some baked goods. Another wolf spoke to her and tried to

entice her to leave the path, but this time Little Red Cap was on her guard. She went straight ahead and told her grandmother that she had seen the wolf, that he had wished her good day, but that he had had such a mean look in his eyes that “he would have eaten me if we hadn’t been on the open road.”

“Come,” said the grandmother. “We’ll lock the door so he can’t get in.”

Soon after, the wolf knocked and cried out, “Open up, grandmother. It’s Little Red Cap, and I’ve brought you some baked goods.”

But they kept quiet and didn’t open the door. So the wicked wolf circled the house several times and finally jumped on top of the roof. He wanted to wait till evening when Little Red Cap would go home. He intended to sneak after her and eat her up in the darkness. But the grandmother realized what he had in mind. In front of the house was a big stone trough, and she said to the child, “Fetch the bucket, Little Red Cap. I cooked sausages yesterday. Get the water they were boiled in and pour it into the trough.”

Little Red Cap kept carrying the water until she had filled the big, big trough. Then the smell of sausages reached the nose of the wolf. He sniffed and looked down. Finally, he stretched his neck so far that he could no longer keep his balance on the roof. He began to slip from the roof and fell right into the big trough and drowned. Then Little Red Cap went happily and safely to her home.

27

DEATH AND THE GOOSE BOY

A poor goose boy went walking along the bank of a large, turbulent river while looking after a flock of white geese. When he saw Death come toward him across the water, the boy asked him where he had come from and where he intended to go. Death answered that he had come from the water and wanted to leave the world. The poor goose boy asked Death once more how one could actually leave the world. Death said that one must go across the river into the new world that lay on the other side. The

goose boy said he was tired of this life and asked Death to take him across the water. Death said it was not time yet, for there were things Death still had to do.

Not far from there lived a greedy man, who at night kept trying to gather together more and more money and possessions. Death led him to the large river and pushed him in. Since he couldn't swim, he sank to the bottom before he could reach the bank. His cats and dogs that had run after him were also drowned. A few days later Death returned to the goose boy and found him singing cheerfully.

"Do you want to come with me now?" he asked.

The goose boy went willingly and crossed the river with his white geese, which were all turned into white sheep. The goose boy looked at the beautiful country and heard that the shepherds of places like that became kings, and as he was looking around, the arch-shepherds, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, came toward him, put a royal crown on his head, and led him to the castle of the shepherds, where he can still be found.

A wild boar was causing great damage throughout the entire country. Nobody dared to go into the forest, where the beast was running around. Whoever had been so bold as to enter the forest and to try to kill the boar had been ripped apart by its tusks. So the king proclaimed that whoever killed the wild boar would receive his only daughter for a wife.

Now, three brothers were living in the realm. The eldest was wily and smart; the second, somewhat intelligent; and the third and youngest, naïve and dumb. They thought of winning the princess and wanted to look for the wild boar and kill it. The two older brothers went out together, while the youngest proceeded alone. As this young man entered the forest, a little man appeared before him. He was holding a heavy lance in his hand and said: "Take this lance and attack the wild boar without fear. You'll easily be able to kill it."



And this is what happened. He struck the boar with the black lance so that it fell to the ground. Then he cheerfully lifted the beast on his shoulders and carried it toward home. Along the way he passed by a house in which his older brothers were enjoying themselves by drinking wine. When they saw him carrying the boar on his back, they called out to him: “Come inside and have a drink with us. You must be tired.”

The innocent bumpkin didn’t suspect anything evil. So he went inside and told them how he had killed the boar with the lance and was delighted about his good fortune.

In the evening they headed toward their home together, and the two older brothers made a plan to take their brother’s life. They let him go ahead of them, and as they approached the city and were on a bridge, they attacked him and beat him to death. Then they buried him deep under the bridge. Afterward the eldest took the boar, carried it to the king, and received the princess for his wife.

It took many years before this deed was revealed, and it happened when a shepherd was crossing the bridge and noticed a little bone lying down below in the sand. Since it was so clean and snow white, he wanted to make a mouthpiece for his horn out of it. So he went down and picked it up. Later he made it into a mouthpiece, and as he set it into the horn and wanted to blow, the little bone began to sing on its own accord:

“Dear shepherd, blowing on my bone,
Hear my song, for I want you to know
My brothers killed me years ago!
They buried me by the brook that flows
and carried off the dead wild boar,
and won the king’s lone daughter.”

The shepherd immediately took the horn and brought it to the king, and once again it sang the same words. When the king heard the song, he had the ground beneath the bridge dug up, and the skeleton of the dead brother was revealed. The two evil brothers confessed their crime and were thrown into the water. However, the bone of the murdered brother was laid to rest in a beautiful grave in the churchyard.

THE DEVIL WITH THE THREE GOLDEN HAIRS

A woodcutter was chopping wood in front of the king's house, while the princess was standing at a window above and observing him. When noon arrived, he sat down in the shadows and wanted to rest. Now the princess was able to see that he was very handsome and fell in love with him. So she had him summoned to her, and as soon as he caught sight of her and saw how beautiful she was, he fell in love with her. Soon they were united in their love for one another, but the king learned that the princess was in love with a woodcutter, and as soon as he knew this, he went to her and said: "You know that you may only wed the man who brings me the three golden hairs from the devil's head, whether he be a prince or a woodcutter."

The king thought that there had never been a prince courageous enough to accomplish this task, and therefore, an inferior man like the woodcutter would certainly not succeed. The princess was distressed because many princes who had tried to fetch the devil's three golden hairs had died. Since there was nothing else she could do, she told the woodcutter what her father had said. However, the woodcutter was not at all depressed by this and said: "I'll certainly succeed. Stay true to me until I return. Early tomorrow I shall set out."

Indeed, the woodcutter began his journey to the devil the next day and soon came to a big city. In front of the gate, a guard asked him what kind of craft he practiced and what he knew.

"I know everything," answered the woodcutter.

"If you know everything," the gatekeeper said, "then make our princess healthy again. No doctor in the world has been able to cure her."

"When I return."

In the second city he was also asked what he knew.

"I know everything."

"Then tell us why our beautiful well at the marketplace has become dry."

“When I return,” said the woodcutter, and he refused to be detained.

After a while he came to a fig tree that was rotting, and nearby stood a man who asked him what he knew.

“I know everything.”

“Then tell me why the fig tree is rotting and no longer bearing any fruit.”

“When I return.”

The woodcutter traveled on and encountered a ferryman who had to transport him across a river, and he asked him what he knew.

“I know everything.”

“So tell me when will I be finally relieved and when someone else will transport people across the river?”

“When I return.”

After the woodcutter was on the other side, he entered hell. Everything appeared black and sooty. However, the devil was not home. Only his wife was sitting there. The woodcutter said to her, “Good day, Mrs. Devil, I’ve come here to take three golden hairs that your husband has on his head, and I’d like to know why a princess cannot be cured, why a deep well at a marketplace doesn’t have any water, why a fig tree doesn’t bear any fruit, and why a ferryman has not been relieved from his work.”

The wife was horrified and said, “When the devil comes and finds you here, he’ll eat you right away, and you’ll never be able to get the three golden hairs. But since you are so young, I feel sorry for you, and I’ll see if I can save you.”

The woodcutter had to lay down beneath the bed, and no sooner did he do this than the devil came home.

“Good evening, wife,” he said and proceeded to take off his clothes. Then he burst out saying, “What’s going on in this room? I smell, I smell the flesh of a man. I’ve got to look around.”

“What are you going to smell?” his wife asked. “You’ve got the sniffles, and the smell of human flesh is still stuffed up in your nose. Don’t mess up everything. I’ve just cleaned the house.”

“I won’t make any noise. I’m tired this evening, and you won’t even begrudge me some little thing to eat.”

Upon saying that the devil laid himself down in the bed, and his wife had to lie down beside him. Soon he fell asleep. First he blew, then he snored. At the beginning he did this softly, and then he was so loud that the windows trembled. When his wife saw that he was sound asleep, she grabbed hold of one of the three golden hairs, ripped it out, and threw it to the woodcutter beneath the bed. The devil jumped up: "What are you doing, wife? Why are you tearing out my hair?"

"Oh, I had a nightmare! I must have done it because I was afraid."

"What did you dream about?"

"I dreamed about a princess who was deathly sick, and no doctor in the world could cure her."

"Well, why don't they get rid of the white toad that's sitting under her bed?"

After saying that the devil turned to his other side and fell asleep again. When his wife heard him snoring, she grabbed hold of a second hair, ripped it out, and threw it under the bed. The devil jumped up.

"Hey, what are you doing? Have you gone mad? You've been terrible ripping my hair!"

"Oh, listen my dear husband! I was standing before a large well at a marketplace, and people were yammering because there was no longer any water in it. They asked me if I knew if there was any way to help them. Well, I looked down the well, but it was so deep that I became dizzy. I wanted to stop myself, and then I got entangled in your hair."

"You should have told them that they had to pull out the white stone lying at the bottom of the well, and now leave me in peace with all your dreams!"

He lay down once more and soon began snoring atrociously as before. His wife thought: "I've got to dare once more," and sure enough, she ripped the third golden hair out and threw it down to the woodcutter. The devil leapt into the air and wanted to teach her a nasty lesson, but his wife calmed him down, kissed him, and said, "What horrible dreams! A man showed me a fig tree that was wilting, and he complained that it was no longer bearing any fruit. Then I wanted to shake the tree to see

if something would fall off it, and the next thing I knew I was shaking your hair.”

“That would have been in vain. There is a mouse gnawing at the roots of the tree. If it’s not killed, then the tree will be lost. Once the mouse is dead, the tree will be fresh, regain its health, and bear fresh fruit. So, now stop plaguing me with all your dreams. I want to sleep, and if you wake me one more time, I’ll give you a good slap in your face!”

His wife was very much afraid of the devil’s anger, but the poor woodcutter had to know one more thing that only the devil knew. So the wife pulled his nose and lifted him up into the air. The devil jumped up as though he were out of his mind and gave her a smack in the face that resounded all over the place. His wife began to weep and said: “Do you want me to fall into the water and drown? The ferryman brought me across the river, and as the barge approached the other side, it bumped into the bank, and I was afraid that I might fall and wanted to grab hold of the anchor which was attached to a chain. That’s why I grabbed hold of your nose.”

“How come you didn’t pay attention? The barge does this all the time.”

“The ferryman complained to me that nobody has come to relieve him, and there’s no end to his work.”

“All he has to do is get the first man who comes to take over the ferrying from him until a third man comes who relieves him. This is the way that he can help himself. But your dreams are really strange. Everything you’ve told me about the ferryman is true, and everything else as well. Now don’t wake me again. Soon it will be morning, and I want to sleep a little more. Otherwise, I’ll make you pay if you disturb me.”

After the woodcutter had heard everything and the devil was snoring again, he thanked the devil’s wife and departed. When he arrived at the barge, the ferryman wanted some information.

“First take me across.”

When the woodcutter was on the other side, he said to the ferryman: “The next person who comes and wants to be taken across the river, keep him there until he takes over your job and continues your work until another man comes to relieve him.”

Soon thereafter the woodcutter came to the man with the wilted fig tree, and he said to him: "All you have to do is kill the white mouse that's gnawing on the roots. Then your tree will bear fruit again just as it did in the past."

"What do you demand for a reward?" asked the man.

"I want a troop of soldiers," and no sooner did he say this than a troop began marching behind him.

The woodcutter thought that things were going well and arrived in the city where the well at the marketplace had run dry.

"Fetch the white stone that's lying at the bottom of the well."

So someone climbed down and fetched the stone, and no sooner was he above than the well was once again filled with the clearest water.

"How should we reward you?" the mayor asked.

"Give me a regiment of cavalry officers."

And as the woodcutter went through the city gate, a regiment of cavalry officers rode behind him. This was how he entered the other city where the princess whom no doctor could cure was lying on her sick bed.

"All you have to do is kill the white toad that's hiding beneath the princess's bed."

And when that was done, the princess began to recuperate and became healthy and rosy.

"What do you want for a reward?" asked the king.

"Four wagons loaded with gold," said the woodcutter.

Finally, the woodcutter reached home, and behind him were a troop of infantrymen, a regiment of cavalry officers, and four wagons loaded entirely with gold. The three golden hairs of the devil, however, were carried by himself. He ordered his regiments to wait in front of the royal gate. They were to enter quickly if he gave them a signal from the castle. Then he went to the father of his beloved princess and handed him the devil's three golden hairs and asked him to give him the princess for his bride in keeping with the promise he had made. The king was astonished and said that the woodcutter had done quite right with regard to the devil's three golden hairs. Nevertheless, the king stated he would have to think about whether

he would give him the princess for his bride. As soon as the woodcutter heard this, he moved to the window and whistled to his companions. All of a sudden the troops of infantrymen and regiments of cavalry officers and four heavily loaded wagons marched and rolled through the gate.

“My king,” said the woodcutter, “take a look at my people whom I have brought along with me, and over there is all my wealth in those wagons full of gold. Don’t you want to give me the princess?”

The king was terrified and said: “Yes, with all my heart.”

Then the woodcutter and the princess were married and lived in bliss.

This is why whoever is not afraid of the devil can tear out his hair and win the entire world.

30

LITTLE LOUSE AND LITTLE FLEA

A little louse and a little flea were living together in a house and were brewing beer in an eggshell when the louse fell in and was scalded. Then the flea began to scream as loud as he could, and the little door to the room asked: “Why are you screaming, little flea?”

“Because little louse has been scalded.”

Then the little door began to creak, and a little broom in the corner asked, “Why are you creaking, door?”

“Why shouldn’t I creak?

Little louse has just got scalded.

Little flea is weeping.”

Then the little broom began to sweep in a frenzy, and when a little cart came driving by, it asked, “Why are you sweeping, broom?”

“Why shouldn’t I sweep?

Little louse has just got scalded.

Little flea is weeping.

Little door is creaking.”

“Well, then I’m going to race around,” said the little cart, and it began racing around furiously, and the little dung heap, which it passed, asked, “Why are you racing around, little cart?”

“Why shouldn’t I race around?
Little louse has just got scalded.
Little flea is weeping.
Little door is creaking.
Little broom is sweeping.”

“Then I’m going to burn with fury,” said the little dung heap, and it began to burn in bright flames. Then a little tree nearby asked, “Why are you burning, little dung heap?”

“Why shouldn’t I burn?
Little louse has just got scalded.
Little flea is weeping.
Little door is creaking.
Little broom is sweeping.
Little cart is racing.”

“Well, then I’m going to shake myself,” said the tree, and it shook itself so hard that all its leaves began to fall. Then a maiden with a water jug came by and asked, “Little tree, why are you shaking?”

“Why shouldn’t I shake?
Little louse has just got scalded.
Little flea is weeping.
Little door is creaking.
Little broom is sweeping.
Little cart is racing.
Little dung heap is burning.”

“Well, then I’m going to break my little water jug,” said the maiden, and as she was breaking it, the little spring from which the water came asked, “Maiden, why are you breaking the little water jug?”

“Why shouldn’t I break it?
Little louse has just got scalded.
Little flea is weeping.
Little door is creaking.
Little broom is sweeping.
Little cart is racing.
Little dung heap is burning.
Little tree is shaking.”

“Goodness gracious!” said the little spring. “Then I’m going to flow,” and it began to flow so violently that they were all drowned in the water—the maiden, the little tree, the little dung heap, the little cart, the little door, the little flea, and the little louse, every last one of them.

31

MAIDEN WITHOUT HANDS

A miller, who was so poor that he had nothing else but his mill and a large apple tree behind it, went into the forest to fetch wood. While there he met an old man who said: “Why are you torturing yourself so much? I’ll make you rich if you promise to give me what’s behind your mill. In three years I’ll come and fetch what’s mine.”

The miller thought to himself: “That’s my apple tree.” So, he said, “yes,” and signed it away to the man. When the miller returned home, his wife said to him, “Tell me, miller, how did all this wealth suddenly get into our house? All at once I’ve discovered our chests and boxes are full of money.”

“It’s from a stranger I met in the forest,” he said. “He promised me great wealth if I agreed in writing to give him what’s behind our mill.”

“Oh, husband!” his wife exclaimed in dread. “This is terrible. That was the devil! He didn’t mean the apple tree but our daughter, who was behind the mill sweeping out the yard.”

The miller’s daughter was a beautiful and pious maiden, and after three years the devil appeared quite early and wanted to fetch her, but she drew a

circle around herself and purified herself. Consequently, the devil couldn't get near her, and he said angrily to the miller, "I want you to take all the water away from her so she can't wash herself anymore! Then I'll have power over her."

Since the miller was afraid of the devil, he did as he was told. The next morning the devil came again, but she wept on her hands and washed herself with her tears so that she was completely clean. Once more the devil couldn't get near her and said furiously to the miller, "Chop off her hands so that I can grab hold of her."

The miller was horrified and replied, "How can I chop off the hands of my own dear child! I won't do it!"

"You know what! Then I'll take you instead if you don't do it!"

The father was so terribly scared of him that in his fear he promised to do what the devil commanded. He went to his daughter and said, "My child, if I don't chop off both your hands, the devil will take me away, and in my fear I promised I'd do it. Please forgive me."

"Father," she answered, "do what you want with me."

Then she extended both her hands and let him chop them off. The devil came a third time, but she had wept so long and so much on her stumps that they, too, were all clean. So he lost any claim he had to her.

Now, since the miller had gained so much wealth thanks to his daughter, he promised her he would see to it that she'd live in splendor for the rest of her life. But she didn't want to remain there.

"I want to leave here and shall depend on the kindness of people to provide me with whatever I need."

Then she had her maimed hands bound to her back, and at dawn she set out on her way and walked and walked the entire day until it had become dark and she had reached the king's garden. There was a hole in the hedge of the garden. So she went inside through the hole and found an apple tree that she shook with her body. When the apples fell to the ground, she leaned over and lifted them with her teeth and ate them. She lived this way for two days, but on the third the guards came and saw her. So they seized her and threw her into the prison house, and on

the next day she was led before the king and was to be expelled from the country.

“Why?” cried the prince. “It would be better if she looked after the chickens in the courtyard.”

So she remained there for some time and looked after the chickens. Meanwhile the prince saw her often and became very fond of her. However, the time came for him to marry, and royal messengers were sent out all over the world to find a beautiful bride for him.

“You don’t have to send out messengers to search so far,” said the prince. “I know a bride who is very close by.”

The old king reflected and tried to think of a maiden, but he wasn’t familiar with any young lady in his land who was beautiful and rich.

“You don’t intend to marry that maiden who tends the chickens in the courtyard, do you?”

The son explained, however, that he wouldn’t marry anyone else but her. Finally the king had to yield to his wish, and soon thereafter, he died. The prince inherited the throne and lived happily with his wife for some time.

Yet at one point the young king had to leave his realm to fight in a war, and during his absence his wife gave birth to a beautiful child. She sent a messenger with a letter to announce the good news. However, on the way the messenger stopped to rest near a brook and fell asleep. Then the devil appeared, for he was still trying to harm the pious queen, and so he exchanged the letter for another one that said the queen had given birth to a changeling. When the king read the letter, he was quite distressed, but he wrote a letter in which he declared that the queen and the child should be protected until his return. The messenger started back with the letter, but he stopped to rest at the same spot and fell asleep. Once again the devil came and put a different letter in his pocket that said they should banish the queen and the child from his land. This was to be done even if all the people at the court wept out of sadness.

“I didn’t come here to become queen. I don’t have any luck and also don’t demand any,” the queen declared. “Bind my child and my hands on my back. Then I’ll set out into the world.”

That evening she reached a fountain in a dense forest where a good old man was sitting.

“Please show me some mercy,” she said, “and lift my child to my breast so that I can give him something to drink.”

The man did this, whereupon he said to her, “There’s a thick tree standing over there. Go over and wrap your maimed arms around it.”

When she did this, her hands grew back. Thereupon, the old man pointed to a house.

“Go and live there. Don’t leave the house, and don’t open the door unless someone asks three times to enter for God’s sake.”

In the meantime the king returned home and realized how he had been deceived. Consequently, he set out accompanied by a single servant to look for his wife. After a long journey he lost his way one night in the same forest in which the queen was living. However, he didn’t know that the queen was so close.

“Over there,” his servant said, “there’s a little light glimmering in a house. Thank God, we can rest there.”

“Not at all,” responded the king. “I don’t want to rest very long. I want to continue to search for my wife before I can take any rest.”

But the servant pleaded and complained so much about being tired that the king agreed out of compassion. When they arrived at the house, the moon was shining, and they saw the queen standing at the window.

“Goodness, that must be our queen,” the servant said. “She resembles her very much. But I realize that she can’t be the queen because this woman has hands.”

The servant requested lodging for the night, but she refused because he didn’t ask for God’s sake. So he wanted to move on and look for another place to spend the night. Then the king himself stepped forward and cried out, “For God’s sake, let me enter!”

“I can’t let you enter until you ask me three times for God’s sake.”

And after the king asked another two times for God’s sake, she opened the door. Then his little son came skipping toward him and led the king to his mother, and he recognized her immediately as his beloved wife. The

next morning just as they left the house and began traveling together to return to their country, the house vanished right behind them.

32

CLEVER HANS

I

“Where are you going, Hans?” his mother asked.

“To Gretel’s,” Hans replied.

“Take care, Hans.”

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

Gretel gave him a needle.

“Good-bye, Gretel,” Hans said.

“Good-bye, Hans.”

Hans took the needle, stuck it in the hay wagon, and walked home behind the wagon.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got a needle.”

“Where’d you put the needle, Hans?”

“Stuck it in a hay wagon.”

“That was stupid of you. You should have stuck it in your sleeve.”

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll do better next time.”

“Where are you going, Hans?”

“To Gretel’s, Mother.”

“Take care, Hans.”

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

Gretel gave Hans a knife.

“Good-bye, Gretel.”

“Good-bye, Hans.”

Hans took the knife, stuck it in his sleeve, and went home.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got a knife.”

“Where’d you put the knife, Hans?”

“Stuck it in my sleeve.”

“That was stupid of you, Hans. You should have put it in your pocket.”

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll do better next time.”

“Where are you going, Hans?”

“To Gretel’s, Mother.”

“Take care, Hans.”

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

Gretel gave Hans a kid goat.

“Good-bye, Gretel.”

“Good-bye, Hans.”

Hans took the goat, tied its legs together, and stuck it in the pocket of his coat. By the time he got home the goat had suffocated.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got a goat.”

“Where’d you put the goat, Hans?”

“Stuck it in my pocket.”

“That was stupid of you, Hans. You should have tied the goat to a rope.”

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll do better next time.”

“Where are you going, Hans?”

“To Gretel’s, Mother.”

“Take care, Hans.”

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

Gretel gave Hans a piece of bacon.

Hans took the bacon, tied it to a rope, and dragged it along behind him. The dogs came and ate the bacon. By the time Hans arrived home he had the rope in his hand but nothing attached to it anymore.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got a piece of bacon.”

“What have you done with the bacon, Hans?”

“Tied it to a rope. Dragged it home. Dogs got it.”

“That was stupid of you, Hans. You should have carried it on your head.”

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll do better next time.”

“Where are you going, Hans?”

“To Gretel’s, Mother.”

“Take care, Hans. “

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

Gretel gave Hans a calf.

“Good-bye, Gretel.”

“Good-bye, Hans.”

Hans took the calf, set it on his head, and the calf kicked him in his face.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got a calf.”

“What have you done with the calf?”

“Put it on my head. Kicked me in my face.”

“That was stupid of you, Hans. you should have led the calf to the stable, and put it in the stall.”

“Doesn’t matter. I’ll do better next time.”

“Where are you going, Hans?”

“To Gretel’s, Mother.”

“Take care, Hans.”

“Don’t worry. Good-bye, Mother.”

Hans arrived at Gretel’s place.

“Good day, Gretel.”

“Good day, Hans. Have you brought me anything nice?”

“Didn’t bring anything. Want something from you.”

“I’ll come along with you,” Gretel said.

Hans took Gretel, put a rope around her, and led her into the stable, tied her to a stall, and threw her some grass. Then he went to his mother.

“Good evening, Mother.”

“Good evening, Hans. Where have you been?”

“At Gretel’s.”

“What did you bring her?”

“Didn’t bring her a thing. Got something.”

“What did Gretel give you?”

“Got nothing. She came along.”

“Where have you left Gretel?”

“Led her by a rope and tied her up in the stall and threw her some grass.”

“That was stupid of you, Hans. You should have thrown friendly looks at her with the eyes.”

Hans went out into the stable, cut out the eyes of all the cows and sheep, and threw them in Gretel’s face. Then Gretel got angry, tore herself loose, and ran away. That was how Hans lost his bride.

II

A very rich widow lived in the valley of Geslingen, and she had an only son who was coarse and had crazy ideas. He was also the greatest fool among all the inhabitants of the valley. Now one time this very same dunce happened to notice the beautiful, attractive, and intelligent daughter of a highly respected and distinguished man in Saarbrücken. The fool took an immediately liking to her. So he implored his mother to arrange a marriage with this young woman. If she didn’t, he would smash the oven and the windows and break all the staircases in the house. His mother knew and clearly understood how mad her son was and feared that if she didn’t let him court the young maiden right away and didn’t give him a great deal of property to boot, he would act like such a boorish ass that he’d be out

of control and there would be no reasoning with him. Even though the maiden's parents were wonderful people and of noble lineage, they were also very poor so that, because of their poverty, they were not in a position to look after her according to her social position. Consequently, they were obliged to approve the dunce's courting. But his mother was also afraid that her son was such a big bumbling oaf that the maiden would perhaps reject him. Therefore, she gave him all kinds of lessons so that he would know how to treat the young woman with fine and polite manners and how to be nimble on his feet.

After the maiden had her first meeting with him and talked with him, she gave him a pair of handsome gloves as a gift. They were made out of soft Spanish leather. The fool put them on and started out for home. Suddenly there was a rainstorm, and he kept the gloves on. He didn't care whether they became wet or not. As he was walking along the path, he slipped and fell into the swampy water. When he arrived home, he was covered with mud, and the gloves were nothing but soggy leather. He complained to his mother, and the good old woman scolded him and said, "The next time you should wrap them in a handkerchief and stuff them inside your shirt next to your chest."

Soon thereafter the numbskull showed up again at the maiden's house, and she asked him about the gloves. He told her what had happened, and she laughed and quickly grasped how little wisdom he possessed. Now she gave him another present, and this time it was a hawk. He took it, headed for home, and remembered his mother's words of advice. So he strangled the hawk, wrapped it in his handkerchief, and stuck it inside his shirt. His mother scolded him again and told him he should have carried it carefully in his hand.

The yokel went to the maiden a third time, and she asked him how things were going with the hawk. So he told her what had happened, and she thought to herself, "He's truly a living fool," and realized that he didn't deserve anything precious or splendid. Therefore, she gave him a big hoe with spikes as a gift that he could use while he was plowing the land. Again he took his mother's advice to heart and carried it home high above his head with his hands like a large ladle. His mother was not

at all satisfied and told him he should have tied it to a horse and dragged it home.

Finally, the maiden realized that even the Lord would not be able to help the fool, since there wasn't an ounce of brains or wisdom in him, but she didn't know how to get rid of him. So the next time she saw him, she gave him a huge piece of bacon and shoved it into his chest. Of course, he was very satisfied and wanted to go home right away. However, he was afraid that he might lose it and, therefore, tied it to the tail of his horse. Then he mounted the steed and rode home. As he was riding, the dogs came running after him and ripped the bacon from the horse's tail and ate it. When the fool arrived home, the bacon was gone.

It was now completely clear to this mother that her son's wisdom would prevent a marriage. So she decided to drive to the maiden's parents to set the date for the marriage, and before she departed, she had a serious word or two with him and told him to keep the house in order and not to do anything foolish, particularly since she had a goose that was about to hatch some eggs.

Now, as soon as the mother was out of the house, her son disappeared quickly into the cellar, where he got drunk on the wine and lost the plug to the wine barrel. As he hunted for the plug, all the wine spilled and flooded the cellar. Consequently, the bumbler took a sack of flour and shook it all over the wine so that his mother wouldn't see the damage when she returned home. After doing this, he ran up into the house and began eating some wild venison. But the goose that was sitting on her eggs became frightened and shrieked, "*Gaga! Gaga!*"

In turn, the fool became scared and thought the goose had said, "I'm going to tell on him," and he was positive the bird would tell what he had done in the cellar. So he took the goose and chopped its head off. Now he was afraid that the eggs would spoil and that he was really in trouble. But he thought of a solution: he would sit on the eggs until they hatched. However, it would not work unless he was covered with feathers like the goose. Again he thought of a solution: he took off his clothes and smeared his body all over with honey that his mother had recently made. Then he ripped open the quilt of a bed and rolled around in the feathers so that he

looked like a hobgoblin. Finally, he sat down on the goose eggs and was completely quiet so that the silly young geese inside would not become afraid. As the numbskull was sitting there, his mother returned and knocked on the door. Since the fool was sitting on the eggs, he didn't want to answer. She knocked again, and he screamed, "*Gaga! Gaga!*" and thought that he was hatching the silly young geese (or fools like himself), and therefore he couldn't speak. Finally, his mother threatened him so much that he crawled out of the nest and opened the door. When she saw him, she thought he was the devil himself and asked him what was going on, and he told her that everything was in top shape. However, his mother was anxious about her dunce because his bride was due to arrive soon. So she said to him that she would gladly forgive him, but he must now control himself, for his bride would soon be there. She advised him to welcome her in a friendly way and to be nice to her and to steadily cast polite eyes upon her.

The fool replied, "Yes, mother, I'll do as you say."

So he wiped off all the feathers, got dressed, and went out into the stable, where he cut out the eyes of all the sheep and stuffed them under his shirt next to his chest. As soon as the bride arrived, he went toward her and cast all the eyes that he had gathered at her face, for he thought this was the way it was to be done.

The good maiden was mortified that he had dirtied and ravaged her like that. It was clear that the fool was a complete boor and that he was totally berserk and might do anything or everything to her that came to his mind. So she turned around, went home, and rejected him.

Well, he remained a fool just as he was before, and he's still hatching young geese to this day. I'm concerned, however, that when the geese wake up, they, too, will become young fools. May the Lord protect us.

A miller had three sons, a mill, a donkey, and a cat. The sons had to grind grain, the donkey had to haul the grain and carry away the flour, and the cat had to catch the mice. When the miller died, the three sons divided

the inheritance: the oldest received the mill, the second the donkey, and nothing was left for the third but the cat. This made the youngest sad, and he said to himself, "I certainly got the worst part of the bargain. My oldest brother can grind wheat, and my second brother can ride on his donkey. But what can I do with the cat? Once I make a pair of gloves out of his fur, it's all over."

The cat, who had understood everything that he had said, began to speak. "Listen, there's no need to kill me when all you'll get will be a pair of poor gloves from my fur. Have some boots made for me instead. Then I'll be able to go out, mix with people, and help you before you know it."

The miller's son was surprised the cat could speak like that, but since the shoemaker happened to be walking by, he called him inside and had him fit the cat for a pair of boots. When the boots were finished, the cat put them on. After that he took a sack, filled the bottom with grains of wheat, and attached a piece of cord to the top, which he could pull to close it. Then he slung the sack over his back and walked out the door on two legs like a human being.

At that time there was a king ruling the country, and he liked to eat partridges. However, recently the situation had become grave for him because the partridges had become difficult to catch. The whole forest was full of them, but they frightened so easily that none of the huntsmen had been able to get near them. The cat knew this and thought he could do much better than the huntsmen. When he entered the forest, he opened the sack, spread the grains of wheat on the ground, placed the cord in the grass, and strung it out behind a hedge. Then he crawled in back of the hedge, hid himself, and lay in wait. Soon the partridges came running, found the wheat, and hopped into the sack, one after the other. When a good number were inside, the cat pulled the cord. Once the sack was closed tight, he ran over to it and wrung their necks. Then he slung the sack over his back and went straight to the king's castle. The sentry called out, "Stop! Where are you going?"

"To the king," the cat answered curtly.

"Are you crazy? A cat to the king?"

"Oh, let him go," another sentry said. "The king's often very bored. Perhaps the cat will give him some pleasure with his meowing and purring."

When the cat appeared before the king, he bowed and said, “My lord, the Count”—and he uttered a long, distinguished name—“sends you his regards and would like to offer you these partridges, which he recently caught in his traps.”

The king was amazed by the beautiful, fat partridges. Indeed, he was so overcome with joy that he commanded the cat to take as much gold from his treasury as he could carry and put it into the sack. “Bring it to your lord and give him my very best thanks for his gift.”

Meanwhile, the poor miller’s son sat at home by the window, propped his head up with his hand, and wondered why he had given away all he had for the cat’s boots when the cat would probably not be able to bring him anything great in return. Suddenly, the cat entered, threw down the sack from his back, opened it, and dumped the gold at the miller’s feet.

“Now you’ve got something for the boots. The king also sends his regards and best of thanks.”

The miller’s son was happy to have such wealth, even though he didn’t understand how everything had happened. However, as the cat was taking off his boots, he told him everything and said, “Surely you have enough money now, but we won’t be content with that. Tomorrow I’m going to put on my boots again, and you shall become even richer. Incidentally, I told the king you’re a count.”

The following day the cat put on his boots, as he said he would, went hunting again, and brought the king a huge catch. So it went every day, and every day the cat brought back gold to the miller’s son. At the king’s court he became a favorite, so that he was permitted to go and come and wander about the castle wherever he pleased. One day, as the cat was lying by the hearth in the king’s kitchen and warming himself, the coachman came and started cursing, “May the devil take the king and princess! I wanted to go to the tavern, have a drink, and play some cards. But now they want me to drive them to the lake so they can go for a walk.”

When the cat heard that, he ran home and said to his master, “If you want to be a rich count, come with me to the lake and go for a swim.”

The miller didn’t know what to say. Nevertheless, he listened to the cat and went with him to the lake, where he undressed and jumped into the

water completely naked. Meanwhile, the cat took his clothes, carried them away, and hid them. No sooner had he done it than the king came driving by. Now the cat began to wail in a miserable voice, "Ahh, most gracious king! My lord went for a swim in the lake, and a thief came and stole his clothes that were lying on the bank. Now the count is in the water and can't get out. If he stays in much longer, he'll freeze and die."

When the king heard that, he ordered the coach to stop, and one of his servants had to race back to the castle and fetch some of the king's garments. The count put on the splendid clothes, and since the king had already taken a liking to him because of the partridges that, he believed, had been sent by the count, he asked the young man to sit down next to him in the coach. The princess was not in the least angry about this, for the count was young and handsome and pleased her a great deal.

In the meantime, the cat went on ahead of them and came to a large meadow, where there were over a hundred people making hay.

"Who owns this meadow, my good people?" asked the cat.

"The great sorcerer."

"Listen to me. The king will be driving by, and when he asks who the owner of this meadow is, I want you to answer, 'The count.' If you don't, you'll all be killed."

Then the cat continued on his way and came to a wheat field so enormous that nobody could see over it. There were more than two hundred people standing there and cutting wheat.

"Who owns this wheat, my good people?"

"The sorcerer."

"Listen to me. The king will be driving by, and when he asks who the owner of this wheat is, I want you to answer, 'The count.' If you don't do this, you'll all be killed."

Finally, the cat came to a splendid forest where more than three hundred people were chopping down large oak trees and cutting them into wood.

"Who owns this forest, my good people?"

"The sorcerer."

“Listen to me. The king will be driving by, and when he asks who the owner of this forest is, I want you to answer, ‘The count.’ If you don’t do this, you’ll all be killed.”

The cat continued on his way, and the people watched him go. Since he looked so unusual and walked in boots like a human being, they were afraid of him. Soon the cat came to the sorcerer’s castle, walked boldly inside, and appeared before the sorcerer, who looked at him scornfully and asked him what he wanted. The cat bowed and said, “I’ve heard that you can turn yourself into a dog, a fox, or even a wolf, but I don’t believe that you can turn yourself into an elephant. That seems impossible to me, and this is why I’ve come: I want to be convinced by my own eyes.”

“That’s just a trifle for me,” the sorcerer said arrogantly, and within seconds he turned himself into an elephant.

“That’s great, but can you also turn yourself into a lion?”

“Nothing to it,” said the sorcerer, and he suddenly stood before the cat as a lion. The cat pretended to be terrified and cried out, “That’s incredible and unheard of! Never in my dreams would I have thought this possible! But you’d top all of this if you could turn yourself into a tiny animal, such as a mouse. I’m convinced that you can do more than any other sorcerer in the world, but that would be too much for you.”

The flattery had made the sorcerer quite friendly, and he said, “Oh, no, dear cat, that’s not too much at all,” and soon he was running around the room as a mouse.

All at once the cat ran after him, caught the mouse in one leap, and ate him up.

While all this was happening, the king had continued driving with the count and princess and had come to the large meadow.

“Who owns the hay?” the king asked.

“The count,” the people all cried out, just as the cat had ordered them to do.

“You’ve got a nice piece of land, count,” the king said.

Afterward they came to the large wheat field.

“Who owns that wheat, my good people?”

“The count.”

“My! You’ve got quite a large and beautiful estate!”

Next they came to the forest.

“Who owns these woods, my good people?”

“The count.”

The king was even more astounded and said, “You must be a rich man, count. I don’t think I have a forest as splendid as yours.”

At last they came to the castle. The cat stood on top of the stairs, and when the coach stopped below, he ran down, opened the door, and said, “Your majesty, you’ve arrived at the castle of my lord, the count. This honor will make him happy for the rest of his life.”

The king climbed out of the coach and was amazed by the magnificent building, which was almost larger and more beautiful than his own castle. The count led the princess up the stairs and into the hall, which was flickering with lots of gold and jewels.

The princess became the count’s bride, and when the king died, the count became king, and the puss in boots was his prime minster.

34

HANS’S TRINA

Hans’s Trina was lazy and didn’t want to do any work. She said to herself: “What should I do? Should I eat, sleep, or work?—Ahh! I think I’ll eat first!”

After she had stuffed herself fully, she said to herself again: “What should I do? Work or sleep?—Ahh! I think I’ll sleep a little first.”

Then she lay down and slept, and when she woke up, it was night. So she could no longer go out and work.

One time Hans returned home at noon and found Trina sleeping again in their room. So he took his knife and cut off her dress at the knees. Trina awoke and thought: “It’s time now to go to work.” However, when she went outside to work and saw that the dress was so short she became frightened and wondered whether she really was Trina and said to herself:

“Am I or am I not Trina?” She didn’t know how to answer this question and stood there a while in doubt. Finally, she thought: “You should go home and ask if you are you. They’ll know for sure.”

So she returned home, knocked at the window, and called inside: “Is Hans’s Trina inside?”

Since the others thought she was in her usual place, they answered: “Yes, she’s lying down in her room and sleeping.”

“Well, then I’m not me,” Trina said in delight. So she went off to the village and never returned, and this is how Hans got rid of his Trina.

THE SPARROW AND HIS FOUR CHILDREN

A sparrow had four young ones in a swallow’s nest. When they were fledged, some bad boys broke up the nest, but fortunately all the young birds escaped in a whirlwind. Then their father became sorry that his sons went off into the world before he was able to warn them about its many dangers or to give them good advice about how to fend for themselves.

In the autumn a great many sparrows came together in a wheat field. It was there that the father came upon his four sons once again, and he joyfully took them home with him.

“Ah, my dear sons, I was terribly concerned about you all summer, especially since you had been carried away by the wind before I could give you my advice. Now, listen to my words, obey your father, and keep this in mind: Little birds must face grave dangers!”

Then he asked his oldest son where he had spent the summer and how he had fed himself.

“I lived in the garden and hunted caterpillars and little worms until the cherries turned ripe.”

“Ah, my son,” said the father, “such tasty morsels are not bad, but it can be dangerous searching for them. So, from now on, be on your guard, especially when people walk around the gardens carrying long green poles that are hollow inside and have a hole on the top.”

“Yes, father,” said the son. “And what should I do when a green leaf is stuck over the hole with wax?”

“Where have you seen this?”

“In a merchant’s garden,” the young bird said.

“Oh, my son,” responded the father, “merchants are wily people! If you have been among such worldly folk, you have learned enough of their shrewd ways. But see that you use all this shrewdness well and don’t become overconfident.”

Then he asked the next son, “Where did you set up your home?”

“At court,” said the son.

“Sparrows and silly little birds have no business being in such a place. There is too much gold, velvet and silk, armor and harnesses, sparrow hawks, screech owls, and falcons. Keep to the horse stables, where the oats are winnowed and threshed. Then you may be lucky enough to get your daily piece of bread and eat it in peace.”

“Yes, father,” said this son, “but what shall I do if the stable boys make traps and set their gins and snares in the straw? Many a bird has gone away limp because of this.”

“Where have you seen this?”

“At the court, among the stable boys.”

“Oh, my son, those court servants are bad boys! If you have been at court and mixed with the lords and left no feathers behind, you have learned quite a bit and will know how to get by in the world. However, keep your eyes open all around you and above you, for often even the smartest dogs have felt the bite of wolves.”

The father now took his third son to account.

“Where did you try your luck?”

“I cast my lot on the highways and country roads, and sometimes I managed to find a grain of wheat or barley.”

“Indeed, this is a fine meal,” said the father, “but keep on the alert for signs of danger and look around carefully, especially when someone bends over and is about to pick up a stone. Then make sure you take off quickly.”

“That’s true,” said the son. “But what should I do when someone may already be carrying a rock, or a stone from a walk, under his shirt or in his pocket?”

“Where have you seen this?”

“Among the miners, dear father. When they return from work, they generally carry stones with them.”

“Miners are workers and resourceful people! If you’ve been around mining boys, you’ve seen and learned something.

Fly there if you will, but this you must know:
Mining boys have killed many a sparrow.”

Finally, the father came to the youngest son.

“You, my dear little chatterbox, you were always the silliest and weakest. Stay with me. The world is filled with crass and wicked birds that have crooked beaks and long claws. Stick to your own kind and pick up little spiders and caterpillars from the trees or cottages. This way you’ll live long and be content.”

“My dear Father, he who feeds himself without causing harm to other people will go far, and no sparrow hawk, falcon, eagle, or kite will do him harm if, each morning and evening, he faithfully commends himself and his honestly earned food to merciful God, who is the creator and preserver of all the birds of the forest and village. Likewise, it is He who hears the cries and prayers of the young ravens, for no sparrow or wren shall ever fall to the ground against His will.”

“Where have you learned this?”

The son answered: “When the gust of wind tore me from you, I landed in a church. There I picked the flies and spiders from the windows and heard those words during a sermon. Then the Father of all sparrows fed me during the summer and protected me from misfortune and fierce birds.”

“Faith, my dear son! If you take refuge in the churches and help clean out the spiders and the buzzing flies, and if you chirp to God like the young ravens and commend yourself to the eternal Creator, you will stay well, even if the entire world be full of wild and malicious birds.

For he who worships God in every way,
who suffers, waits, is meek, and prays,
who keeps his faith and conscience pure,
God will keep him, safe and sure.”

THE LITTLE MAGIC TABLE, THE GOLDEN
DONKEY, AND THE CLUB IN THE SACK

I

Once upon a time there was a shoemaker who had three sons and a goat. The sons had to help him in his trade, and the goat had to nourish them with her milk. In order for the goat to get good, delicious food every day, the sons took turns and led her out to graze in a meadow. The eldest took her to the churchyard, where the goat jumped about and ate the grass. In the evening, when he led her home, he asked, "Goat, have you had enough?"

The goat answered:

"Oh, my, I'm stuffed!
Enough's enough.
Meh! Meh!"

"Then let's head for home," the son said and led it back to the stable and tied it up. The old shoemaker asked his son whether the goat had received enough to eat. The son answered: "It's really stuffed. It's had enough."

However, the shoemaker wanted to see for himself whether that was true. So he went to the stall in the stable and asked: "Goat, have you had enough?"

The goat replied:

"How can I have eaten enough?
I just jumped over mounds real rough.
Didn't find one blade of grass 'cause the ground was tough.
Meh! Meh!"

When the shoemaker heard this, he was convinced that his son had lied to him. He became furious, jumped up, took his cane from the wall, gave his son a good beating, and sent him away. The next day the second son had to take the goat to a meadow and led it to the very best grass, which

the goat completely devoured. In the evening, he asked the goat: "Goat, have you had enough?"

"Oh, my, I'm stuffed!
Enough's enough.
Meh! Meh!"

"Then let's head home," and he took the goat to the stable and told the old man that the goat was full. Once again the father went to the stable and asked, "Goat, have you had enough?"

"How can I have eaten enough?
I just jumped over mounds real rough.
Didn't find one blade of grass 'cause the ground was tough.
Meh! Meh!"

The shoemaker became angry and also gave a good beating to his second son and chased him from the house. Finally, the third son had to take the goat into the meadow. He was on his guard and looked for the very best grass. Indeed, there was nothing left when the goat had finished eating. In the evening the son asked: "Goat, have you had enough?"

"Oh, my, I'm stuffed.
Enough's, enough.
Meh! Meh!"

"Then let's head home," he said and took the goat to the stable and assured his father that the goat was full. But the old man went to the stable again and asked: "Goat, are you full?"

"How can I have eaten enough?
I just jumped over mounds real rough.
Didn't find one blade of grass 'cause the ground was tough.
Meh! Meh!"

So after the father gave his third son a good beating, he chased him from the house.

Now the shoemaker wanted to take the goat out by himself. So he tied it with a rope and led it to the middle of the best grass on the meadow, where the goat ate grass the entire day. In the evening, the shoemaker asked: "Goat, have you had enough?"

"Oh, my, I'm stuffed.

Enough's enough.

Meh! Meh!"

"Well, let's head for home," and he led the goat to the stable. When he tied her up in the stall, he asked once again, "Goat, have you had enough?"

Now the goat answered him as usual:

"How can I have eaten enough?

I just jumped over mounds real rough.

Didn't find one blade of grass 'cause the ground was tough.

Meh! Meh!"

When the shoemaker heard this, he realized that he had driven his three sons away even though they had been innocent. Consequently, he became so angry with the nasty goat that he fetched his razor and shaved the goat's head until it was bald and gave it a good whipping.

In the meantime the eldest son had apprenticed himself to a carpenter, and when he had finished his apprenticeship and wanted to begin his travels, the carpenter gave him a little magic table and told him that he only had to say, "Little table, be covered," and it would be covered by a white tablecloth, and on it would be a silver plate with a silver knife and fork, a crystal glass filled with red wine, and all over, the most beautiful dishes of food. Upon receiving this gift, he set out into the world, and wherever he was, in a field, in the forest, or in a tavern, and whenever he set his table down and said, "Little table be covered," he would then have the most splendid meal.

One day he entered an inn where many guests had already gathered. They asked him whether he wanted to eat with them. He answered, "No, but you should all eat with me."

Upon saying this, he set down his little table in the room and said: "Little table, be covered!" And suddenly it stood there covered with the most sumptuous food, and when a dish became empty, a new one appeared immediately in its place, and all the guests were marvelously treated. The innkeeper, however, thought, "If you had such a table, you'd be a rich man," and that evening, as the carpenter was fast asleep and had put his little table in a corner, the innkeeper fetched another one that looked just like it and replaced the genuine one with it. Early the next morning the good fellow got up, lifted the little table onto his back, and didn't notice that it was the wrong one. He went home and said to his father: "Don't worry about anything anymore or concern yourself. I have a little magic table, and we can now live in luxury for the rest of our days."

His father was delighted to hear this and invited all their relatives to their home, and when they had all gathered together, the son set the table in the middle of the room and said: "Little table, be covered!"

But the little table remained as empty as it had been, and the son realized that he had been duped and was ashamed of himself while the relatives left without drinking and eating. Father and son had to resume their usual work.

The second son had gone to a miller, and when he had finished his apprenticeship, the miller gave him the donkey Bricklebrit as a gift. Whenever one said "Bricklebrit" to this donkey, it would begin to spew gold coins from the front and the behind. After he departed, the young man reached the same tavern where his brother's little table had been stolen from him. He let himself be treated like a prince, and when he was given the bill, he went to the donkey in the stable and said: "Bricklebrit!" All at once he had more gold coins than he needed. However, the innkeeper had observed this, and during the night he got up, untied the golden donkey, and replaced it with his animal. So, in the morning the miller's apprentice left with the wrong donkey and didn't realize that he had been deceived. When he returned home to his father, he also declared: "Enjoy life! I have the donkey Bricklebrit, and you can have as much gold as you wish."

So once again his father invited all their relatives, and a large white cloth was spread out in the middle of the room. Then the donkey was brought

from the stable and set onto the cloth. The miller said: “Bricklebrit!” but it was in vain. Not a single gold coin appeared. Immediately the son realized that he had been duped. He was ashamed of himself and began to practice his trade to support himself.

The third son had gone to a turner, who gave him a sack with a club in it as a gift when the young man was ready to go off on his travels. Whenever he said, “Club, come out of the sack!” the club would jump out and dance on people’s backs and beat them mercilessly. Now the young turner had heard that his brothers had lost their treasures at an inn. Therefore, he went to the same inn and said that his brothers had brought with them a little magic table and the donkey Bricklebrit, but what he was carrying in his sack was much more precious and worth much more. The innkeeper was curious and thought that all good things come in threes, and wanted to steal this treasure during the night. But the turner had placed the sack under his pillow, and when the innkeeper came and tried to pull it out, the young man said: “Club, come out of the sack!”

All at once the club jumped out of the sack, and danced with the innkeeper and beat him so mercilessly that he readily promised to return the little magic table and the donkey Bricklebrit. Once he received them, the youngest son set out for home and brought everything to his father and lived with him and his brothers in happiness and joy.

As for the goat, she had run off to a foxhole. And when the fox came home and looked into his cave, he saw a pair of large fiery eyes glaring at him. He became so frightened that he ran away and encountered the bear, who said: “Brother fox, why are you making such a face?”

“A gruesome beast is sitting in my cave with terrifying fiery eyes.”

“Well, then I’ll drive it out for you,” the bear said and went to the cave. However, when he arrived at the cave and saw the fiery eyes, he, too, was struck by fear and ran off. Now a bee came flying by and asked: “Why are you looking so pale, bear?”

“A gruesome beast is sitting in the fox’s cave, and we can’t chase it away.”

Then the bee said: “I’m nothing but a tiny creature and you don’t give me the attention that I deserve, but perhaps I can help you.”

So the bee flew into the foxhole and stung the goat on its smooth shaven head so that she jumped up screaming “*Meh! Meh!*” and ran away. And to this day nobody knows whatever happened to the goat.

II

A tailor had three sons whom he wanted to send off into the world one after the other. They were supposed to learn an honest living. Since he didn’t want them to leave empty-handed, each was to receive a pancake and a penny.

The eldest set out and encountered a little man who lived in a nutshell. However, he was enormously rich and said to the tailor’s son, “If you look after my herd on the mountain and will protect it, you’ll receive a good gift from me. However, you must beware of the house at the foot of the mountain. There are a lot of merry things going on there. You can always hear music and shouting and dancing. If you enter that house, then you can forget about working for me.”

The tailor’s son agreed, drove the herd up the mountain, looked after it diligently, and always kept far away from the house. However, one time on a Sunday, he heard how much fun people were having inside, and he thought, “One time won’t hurt.” So he went inside, danced, and was delighted. But when he went outside again, it was night, and the entire herd had disappeared. So he went to his master with a heavy heart and confessed to him what he had done. The man in the nutshell was immensely angry. However, since the young man had served him so diligently, and since he had confessed his mistake openly, he gave him a magic table as a gift.

The tailor’s son was deeply grateful and set out on the way home to his father. Along the way he stopped at an inn and asked the innkeeper to give him a special room. He told him that he didn’t need any food and locked himself in the room. The innkeeper wondered what the strange guest was going to do in the room. So he sneaked upstairs and looked through the keyhole. All at once he saw how the stranger set a small table down in front of him and said, “Little table, cover yourself!” and as soon as he said that,

the best food and drink appeared before him. The innkeeper thought that the little table would be better in his hands. So, in the night, when the stranger was fast asleep, he fetched the magic table and replaced it with another that looked the same.

In the morning the tailor's son departed and didn't notice that he had been deceived. When he returned home, he told his father about his good fortune, and the old man was happy and wanted to test the miraculous table right away. But even when his son spoke the words "Little table, cover yourself" a few times, it was to no avail. The table remained empty, and the young man realized that he had been robbed.

Now the second son received his pancake and a penny and went into the world to do better things. He, too, came upon the man in the nutshell and served him faithfully a long time, but he let himself be led astray. He went into the house, had fun, danced, and lost the herd. So he had to take his leave, but the man gave him a donkey. Whenever he said to the animal, "Rattle and shake yourself, spew gold from behind and from the front," gold rained from all sides. The second son set out for home with great pleasure, but he stopped at the inn, and the innkeeper replaced the donkey with a common one, and when the young man returned home and wanted to make his father rich, it was all over, and his good fortune was ruined.

Finally, the third son was equipped with the pancake and penny and went into the world. And he promised to do better. He served the man in the nutshell faithfully, and in order to prevent himself from entering the dangerous house, he stuffed his ears with cotton, and when the year of service had been completed, he delivered the entire herd to the man, and not one animal was missing. Then the little man said: "I must give you a special reward. Here is a satchel. There's a club in it, and as soon as you say, 'Club, get out of the satchel,' it will jump out and cause people a great deal of pain."

The third son set out for home and stopped by the inn and saw the innkeeper who had taken his brothers' gifts. He threw his satchel on the table and spoke about his brothers: "One of them had a little magic table, and the other, a golden donkey. All that's quite good, but it's nothing compared to what I have in this satchel. It's the most valuable thing in the world."

The innkeeper became curious and hoped to get this treasure as well. When night came, the the third son laid himself down in the straw, and he placed the satchel beneath his head. The innkeeper stayed awake and waited until he thought that the third son was fast asleep. Then he went and fetched another satchel and wanted to pull out the satchel from under the young man's head. However, the third son had stayed awake, and when he noticed the innkeeper's hand, he cried out: "Club, get out of the satchel!"

All at once the club jumped out and fell upon the innkeeper and beat him so badly that he fell upon his knees and screamed for mercy. However, the third son refused to let the club stop until the thief returned the little table and the golden donkey. Then he set out for home with the three magic gifts to join his brothers, and from then on they lived with their wealth and in happiness, and the father always said: "I didn't provide them with my pancake and my penny for nothing."

37

THE TABLECLOTH, THE KNAPSACK,
THE CANNON HAT, AND THE HORN

Once there were three brothers from the region of the Black Mountains. Originally, they were very poor and traveled to Spain, where they came to a mountain completely surrounded by silver. The oldest brother took advantage of the situation by gathering as much silver as he could carry and went back home with his booty. The other two continued traveling and came to a mountain where nothing could be seen but gold. One brother said to the other, "What should we do?"

The second took as much gold as he could carry, as his older brother had done, and went home. However, the third wanted to see if he could have even better luck and continued on his way. He walked for three days and then entered an enormous forest. After wandering about for some time, he became tired, hungry, and thirsty and couldn't find his way out of the forest. So he climbed a tall tree to see if he could catch a glimpse of the end of the forest. However, he saw nothing but the

tops of trees. His only wish now was to fill his body once more, and he began climbing down the tree. When he got to the bottom, he noticed a table covered with many different dishes underneath the tree. He was delighted by this and ate until he was full. After he had finished eating, he took the tablecloth with him and moved on. Whenever he got hungry or thirsty again, he opened the tablecloth, and whatever he wished for would appear on it.

After a day's journey he encountered a charcoal burner, who was burning coals and cooking potatoes. The charcoal burner invited him to be his guest, but he replied, "No thanks, but I want you to be my guest."

"How's that possible?" the charcoal burner asked. "You don't seem to be carrying anything with you."

"That doesn't matter," he said. "Just sit down over here."

Then he opened his tablecloth, and soon there was everything and anything one could possibly wish for. The charcoal burner enjoyed the meal and wanted to have the tablecloth. After they had eaten everything, he said, "How'd you like to trade with me? I'll give you an old soldier's knapsack for the tablecloth. If you tap it with your hand, a corporal and six men armed from top to bottom will come out each time you tap. They're of no help to me in the forest, but I'd certainly like the tablecloth."

They made the trade: the charcoal burner kept the tablecloth, while the man from the Black Mountains took the knapsack. However, no sooner had the man gone some distance than he tapped the knapsack, and out popped the war heroes.

"What does my master want?"

"I want you to march back and fetch my tablecloth that I left behind with the charcoal burner."

So they returned to the charcoal burner and then brought back the tablecloth. In the evening he came to another charcoal burner, who invited him to supper. He had the same potatoes without grease, but the man from the Black Mountains opened his tablecloth instead and invited him to be his guest. Nobody could have wished for a better meal! When it was over, this charcoal burner also wanted to make a trade. He gave the man a hat for the tablecloth. If the man turned the hat on his head,

cannons would fire as if an entire battalion of soldiers and battery were right on the spot.

When the man from the Black Mountains had gone some distance, he tapped the old knapsack again, and the corporal and his six men were ordered to fetch the tablecloth again. Now the man continued his journey in the same forest, and in the evening he came upon a third charcoal burner, who invited him to eat potatoes without grease like the others. Then they negotiated, and the charcoal burner gave the man a little horn for the tablecloth. If the man blew on it, all the cities and villages as well as the fortresses would collapse into heaps of rubble.

The charcoal burner didn't get to keep the tablecloth any longer than the other two, for the corporal and his six men soon came and fetched it. Now, when the man from the Black Mountains had everything together, he returned home and intended to visit his brothers, who had become rich from their gold and silver. When he went to them wearing an old tattered coat they refused to recognize him as their brother. So he immediately tapped his knapsack and had one hundred and fifty men march out and give his brothers a good thrashing on their backs. The entire village came to their aid, but they could do very little in this affair. News of this soon reached the king, who sent a military squad to take the soldiers prisoner, but the man from the Black Mountains kept tapping his knapsack and had an infantry and cavalry march out. They defeated the military squad and forced it to retreat. The following day the king had even more soldiers sent to bring an end to the old guy. However, he kept tapping his knapsack until he had an entire army. In addition, he turned his hat a few times. The cannons fired, and the enemy was defeated and took flight. Finally, peace was made, and he was appointed viceroy and awarded the princess for his bride.

However, the princess was constantly bothered by the fact that she had to take such an old guy for her husband. Her greatest wish was to get rid of him. Every day she tried to discover the source of the power that he used to his advantage. Finally, since he was so devoted to her, he revealed everything to her. She managed to talk him into giving her his knapsack, whereupon she forced him out. Afterward, when soldiers came marching against him, his men were defeated. However, he still had his little hat. So he turned it

and had the cannons fired. Once again he defeated the enemy, and peace was made. After this he was deceived again when the princess talked him into giving her his little hat. Now, when the enemy attacked him, he had nothing left but his little horn. So he blew it, and the villages, cities, and all the fortresses collapsed instantly into heaps of rubble. Then he alone was king and blew his horn until he died.

38

MRS. FOX

I

Once upon a time there was an old fox with nine tails. Since he wanted to know how faithful his wife was, he stretched himself out beneath the bench and pretended to be as dead as a door mouse. Then his wife, Mrs. Fox, went upstairs into her room and locked the door. Her maid, the cat, was sitting on the hearth and cooking. When it became known now that the old fox had died, there was a knocking at the door:

“What are you doing, my fine maiden cat?
Are you awake? Where are you at?”

The cat went to the door and opened it. A young fox stood outside.

“I’m not sleeping. I’m awake.
I’m cooking warm beer and a butter cake.

Would the gentlemen like to be my guest?”
“No, thank you. But what is Mrs. Fox doing?”

“Mrs. Fox sits up in her room until it’s late
and yammers all about her fate.
She weeps until her eyes are silky red
all because Mr. Fox is dead.”

“Well, tell her a young fox is here who’d like to court her.”
So the cat went up to the stairs, *trippety-trap*.

She opened the door, *clippety-clap*.

“Mrs. Fox, are you there?”

“Yes, my little cat, I’m here.”

“There’s a young fox outside who wants to court you.”

And Mrs. Fox said to her:

“My child, what’s he look like to you?”

Does he also have nine so bushy tails like blessed Mr. Fox?”

“Oh, no, he only has one tail.”

“Then I don’t want him.”

So the cat went down the stairs and sent the suitor away. Soon after there was another knocking at the door, and it was another fox that had two tails, and the same thing happened to him that happened to the first fox. Afterward others came with more tails than the previous fox until a suitor came with nine tails. Now Mrs. Fox said to the cat:

“Open the door and gate quite wide
and drag old Mr. Fox outside!”

But when they were just about to hold the wedding, old Mr. Fox reappeared. Within seconds he threw the entire crowd out of the house and chased Mrs. Fox away.

II

Old Mr. Fox died, and a suitor, a wolf, came to the door and knocked:

“Good day, Miss Cat von Kehrewitz.
How come you’re sitting there alone
What are you making, it smells so good?”

Cat: “I’m making porridge out of milk and bread
Does the gentleman desire now to be fed?”

Wolf: “No, thanks. Is Mrs. Fox at home?”

Cat: “She sits up in her room until it’s late
and yammers all about her hard cruel fate.

She weeps about her misery until her eyes are silky red,
all because Mr. Fox is dead.”

Wolf: “If she wants to have another husband now,
tell her I’m here and have her come down.”

So the cat ran up the stairs to find her way
through hallway after hallway,
until she came to a very large room packed full of things,
where she knocked on the door with her five golden rings:

“Mrs. Fox are you inside?
If you want a husband right now,
then you should come down, please come down.”

Mrs. Fox: “Is the gentleman wearing red pants
and does he have a pointed mouth?”

Cat: “No.”

Mrs. Fox: “Then he’s of no use to me.”

Now the wolf was rejected, and afterward a dog came, and he was treated the same way. Then came a moose, a rabbit, a bear, a lion, and all the animals of the forest. But they were all lacking something that the old fox had possessed, and the cat had to send them all away. Finally, a young fox came.

Mrs. Fox: “Is the gentleman wearing red pants
and does he have a pointed mouth?”

Cat: “Yes.”

Mrs. Fox: “Well then, let him come up.
But first clean the room,
and throw Mr. Fox out the window!
He brought many a fat mouse into the house
but ate them alone, the nasty old louse,
he never gave me one to eat in this house.”

Now the wedding was held, and they danced, and if they haven't stopped dancing, then they are still dancing.

About the Shoemaker for Whom They Did the Work

A shoemaker had become so poor that he didn't have enough leather left for a single pair of shoes. In the evening he cut out the shoes that he planned to work on the next morning. However, when he got up the next day and was about to sit down to do his work, he saw the two shoes already finished and beautifully made, standing on the table. Soon a customer paid so well that the shoemaker could purchase enough leather for two pairs of shoes, which he cut out that evening. The next morning when he once again wanted to sit down and work, they were already finished, just as the pair had been the other day. Now he was able to purchase enough leather for four pairs of shoes from the money he received from the two pairs. And so it went. Whatever he cut out in the evening was finished by morning, and soon he was a well-to-do man again.

Now one evening right before Christmas after he had cut out many shoes and wanted to go to bed, he said to his wife: "We should stay up one time and see who does our work in the night."

So they lit a candle, hid themselves in the corner of the room behind the clothes that had been hung up there, and watched closely. At midnight two cute little naked men came and sat down at the workbench, took all the cutout pieces of the shoes, and worked so swiftly and nimbly that the shoemaker could not take his eyes off them. Indeed, they were incredibly fast, and he was amazed. They didn't stop until they had finished the work on all the shoes. Then they scampered away, and it wasn't even day yet.

Now the shoemaker's wife said to him: "The little men have made us rich. So we ought to show that we're grateful. I feel sorry for them running around without any clothes and freezing. I want to sew shirts, coats,

jackets, and trousers for them, and you should make a pair of shoes for each one of them.”

The shoemaker agreed, and when everything was finished, they set all the things out in the evening. They wanted to see what the little men would do and hid themselves again. Then the little ones appeared as usual at midnight. When they saw the clothes lying there, they seemed to be quite pleased. They put the clothes on extremely quickly, and when they were finished, they began to hop, jump, and dance. Finally, they danced right out the door and never returned.

About a Servant Girl Who Acted as Godmother

A poor maiden was industrious and neat and swept the dirt from the door of a large house every day. One morning she found a letter lying in front of the door, and since she couldn't read, she brought it to her employers. The letter was an invitation to the maiden from the elves, who asked her to be godmother to one of their children. The maiden thought about this for a while, but after her employers convinced her that she shouldn't refuse the invitation, she said yes.

Soon after, three elves came and led her to a hollow mountain. Everything was small there and also incredibly dainty and splendid. The mother was lying on a black ebony bed with pearl knobs. The covers were embroidered with gold. The cradle was ivory. The bathtub was made of gold. The maiden performed her duties as godmother and then wanted to depart right after doing this. But the elves asked her to remain with them for another three days. She spent those days with great joy, and when they were over and she wanted to return home, they filled her pockets full of gold and led her back out of the mountain. And when she came to her home, she realized that it wasn't three days she had been gone but one whole year.

About a Woman Whose Child They Had Exchanged

The elves had taken a mother's child from the cradle and replaced the baby with a changeling who had a fat head and glaring eyes and who would do



nothing but eat and drink. In her distress the mother went to her neighbor and asked her for advice. The neighbor told her to carry the changeling into the kitchen, put him down on the hearth, light the fire, and boil water in two egg shells. That would cause the changeling to laugh, and when he laughed, he would lose his power. The woman did everything the neighbor said, and when she put the eggshells filled with water on the fire, the blockheaded changeling said:

“Now I’m as old
as the Wester Wood,
and in all my life I’ve never seen
eggshells cooked as these have been.”

And the changeling had to laugh about this, and as soon as he laughed, a crowd of elves came all at once. They brought the right child with them, placed him down on the hearth, and carried off the changeling.

40

THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM

A princess was pledged to marry a prince, and he asked her many times to come once and visit him in his castle. But since the way to the castle led through a large forest, she continually refused because she feared she might lose her way. If that was her concern, the prince told her, he would readily help her by tying a ribbon on each tree so that she could easily find her way. Nevertheless, she tried to postpone the trip for some time since she inwardly dreaded it. Finally, she couldn’t make any more excuses and had to set out one day on the journey.

It took her the entire day to walk through a long, long forest. When she finally arrived at a large house, everything was quiet inside, and only an old woman sat in front of the door.

“Can you tell me whether the prince, my bridegroom, lives here?”

“It’s good, my child, that you have come now,” responded the woman, “because the prince is not at home. Before your arrival I had to fetch water

and pour it into a large kettle. They want to kill you, and afterward they'll cook and eat you."

Just as she was saying this the prince could be seen returning from a robbery with his villainous band of robbers. Fortunately, the old woman took pity on the princess because of her youth and beauty, and before anyone had noticed her, she said: "Quick, go down into the cellar and hide yourself behind the large barrel!"

No sooner did the princess dash down into the cellar than the robbers also went down there, dragging an old woman whom they had captured. The princess saw clearly that it was her grandmother, for she could see everything that happened from her corner without being noticed. The robbers grabbed hold of the old grandmother, killed her, and pulled off all the rings from her fingers, one after the other. However, the gold ring on one of her fingers wouldn't come off. So one of the robbers took a hatchet and chopped off the finger, but the finger sprang behind the barrel and fell right into the princess's lap. After the robbers had searched in vain for the finger a long time, one of them spoke out: "Has anyone looked behind the large barrel?"

"It's better if we continue searching when there's more light," another said. "Early tomorrow morning we'll continue looking. Then we'll soon find the ring."

Soon thereafter the robbers lay down to sleep in the cellar, and as they were sleeping and snoring, the bride came out from behind the barrel. The robbers were lying there all in a row, and she had to step over the sleeping men until she came to the door. She cautiously entered the rooms in between, and she was constantly afraid that she might wake someone, but fortunately nothing happened, and once she reached the outside door and was in the forest again, she followed the ribbons, for the moon shone brightly up to the time that she managed to reach her home.

She told her father everything that had happened to her, and he immediately gave orders for an entire regiment to surround the castle as soon as the bridegroom was to arrive. The soldiers did as he ordered. Then the bridegroom came the same day and asked right away why the princess had not come to him as she had promised to do.

Then she said: "I had such a dreadful dream. I dreamt I came to a house where an old woman was sitting in front of the door, and she

said to me: 'What a good thing it is, my child, that you have come now because nobody is home, and I must tell you, I had to carry water to a large kettle. They want to kill you and then boil and eat you.' And as she was speaking, the robbers came home. Then, before anyone could notice, the old woman said: 'Quick, go down into the cellar and hide behind the large barrel.' No sooner did I hide behind the barrel than the robbers came down the cellar stairs and dragged an old woman with them. Then they grabbed hold of her and murdered her. After they had murdered the old woman, they pulled off all the rings from her fingers, one after another. But they couldn't pull off the gold ring from one of the fingers. So one of the robbers grabbed a hatchet and chopped off the finger, which flew into the air and fell behind the barrel right into my lap, and *here is the finger!*"

Upon saying this, the princess suddenly drew the finger from her pocket.

When the bridegroom heard and saw all this, he became chalk white from fright. He immediately thought of fleeing and jumped through the window. However, there were guards standing beneath the window. They caught the bridegroom and his entire band of robbers. All of them were executed as payment for their villainy.

41

HERR KORBES

Once upon a time there were a little hen and a little rooster who wanted to take a trip together. So the little rooster built a beautiful wagon with four red wheels and hitched four little mice to it. Then the little hen climbed into the wagon along with the little rooster, and this is how they drove off. Soon they came across a cat, who asked: "Where are you going?"

"We're off to see Herr Korbes today.

We're off without delay."

"Take me with you," said the cat.

"Gladly," answered the little rooster. "Sit in the back so you won't fall off in front.

Be sure you take good care,
for I've got clean red wheels down there.
Roll on, you wheels, *high ho!*
Squeak, squeak, you mice, *high ho!*
We're going to see Herr Korbes today.
We're off without delay."

Soon a millstone came, followed by an egg, a duck, a pin, and a sewing needle, who all got into the wagon and rode along. However, when they arrived at Herr Korbes's house, he wasn't there. The little mice pulled the wagon into the barn. The little hen and the little rooster flew up on a perch. The cat settled down on the hearth. The duck took a place by the well sweep. The egg wrapped itself in a towel. The pin stuck itself in a chair cushion. The sewing needle jumped on the bed right into the pillow. And the millstone climbed to the top of the door.

When Herr Korbes came home, he went to the hearth to make a fire, but the cat threw ashes right into his face. He ran quickly into the kitchen to wash the ashes off, but the duck splashed water in his face. As he tried to dry himself with the towel, the egg rolled toward him and broke open so that his eyes became glued shut. Now he wanted to rest and sit down in the chair, but the pin stuck him. This made him very irritated, and so he went and lay down in his bed, but the sewing needle stuck him just as his head hit the pillow. He became so angry and mad that he wanted to run out of the house. Just as he got through the front door, however, the millstone jumped down and killed him.

42

THE GODFATHER

A poor man had so many children that he had already asked everyone in the world to be godfather after he had yet another child. So there was nobody left to ask. He became so distressed that he lay down and fell asleep. Then he dreamt that he was to go outside the town gate and ask the first person he met to be godfather. So that's what the man did. He went

out in front of the gate and asked the first man he met to be godfather. The stranger gave him a little bottle of water and said: "With this water you can cure the sick when Death stands at the sick person's head, but when Death stands at the sick person's feet, the patient must die."

Now one day the king's child became sick, and Death stood at the child's head. So the man cured him with the water. The second time that the king's child became sick, the man cured him again because Death was standing at the head. But the third time, Death was standing at the foot of the bed, and the child had to die.

Later the man went to the godfather to tell him about everything. When he climbed the stairs in the house and reached the first landing, he encountered a shovel and a broom quarreling with each other. The man asked where the godfather lived, and the broom replied:

"One flight higher."

When he came to the second landing, he saw a bunch of dead fingers lying there, and asked once again where the godfather lived.

"One flight higher," replied one of the fingers.

On the third landing there was a pile of skulls who told him once again: "One flight higher."

On the fourth landing he saw some fish sizzling in a pan over a fire. They were frying themselves and also told him, "One flight higher."

After he had climbed to the fifth floor, he came to the door of a room and looked through the keyhole. There he saw the godfather, who had a pair of long, long horns. When he opened the door and entered the room, the godfather quickly jumped into the bed and covered himself.

"Godfather," the man said, "when I came to the first landing, a broom and shovel were quarreling."

"How can you be so simple-minded?" said the godfather. "That was the servant and the maid just talking to each other."

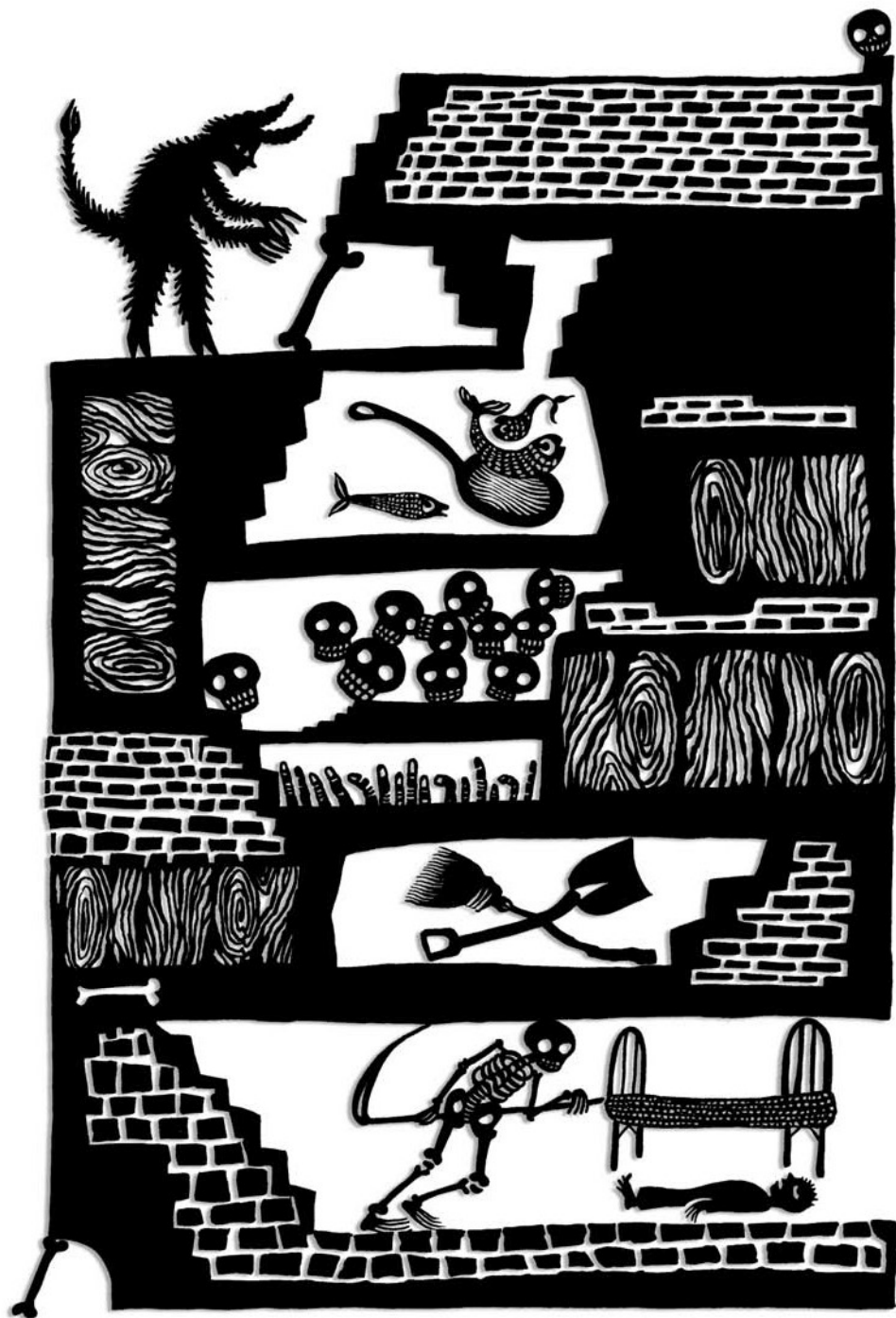
"On the second landing I saw dead fingers lying about."

"My goodness, how foolish you are! Those were salsify roots."

"On the third landing there were skulls lying about."

"You stupid man, those were cabbage heads."

"On the fourth landing I saw fish in a pan frying themselves."



Just as he said that, the fish came in and served themselves on a platter.
“And when I came to the fifth landing, I looked through the keyhole and saw that you had long, long horns.”
“Now, that’s just not true.”

A blood sausage and a liver sausage had been friends for some time, and the blood sausage invited the liver sausage for a meal at her home. At dinnertime the liver sausage merrily set out for the blood sausage’s house. But when she walked through the doorway, she saw all kinds of strange things. There were many steps, and on each of them she found something different. A broom and shovel were fighting with each other, and there was a monkey with a big wound on his head, and more such things.

The liver sausage was very frightened and upset by this. Nevertheless, she took heart, entered the room, and was welcomed in a friendly way by the blood sausage. The liver sausage began to inquire about the strange things on the stairs, but the blood sausage pretended not to hear her or made it seem it was not worth talking about, or she said something about the shovel and the broom such as, “That was probably my maid gossiping with someone on the stairs.” And she shifted the topic to something else.

Then the blood sausage said she had to leave the room to go into the kitchen and look after the meal. She wanted to check to see that everything was in order and nothing had fallen into the ashes. The liver sausage began walking back and forth in the room and kept wondering about the strange things until someone appeared—I don’t know who it was—and said, “Let me warn you, liver sausage, you’re in a bloody murderous trap. You’d better get out of here quickly if you value your life!”

The liver sausage didn’t have to think twice about this. She ran out the door as fast as she could. Nor did she stop until she got out of the house and was in the middle of the street. Then she looked around and saw the blood sausage standing high up in the attic window with a long, long knife that was gleaming as though it had just been sharpened. The blood sausage

threatened her with it and cried out, "If I had caught you, I would have had you!"

44

GODFATHER DEATH

Once upon a time there was a poor man who already had twelve children when the thirteenth was born. Since he was at his wits' end and in such distress, he ran into the forest, where he encountered our dear Lord, who said to him: "I feel sorry for you, my poor man. I shall stand sponsor to your child at the baptism and take care of him so that he'll live happily on this earth."

Upon saying this, the Lord left him standing there and moved on.

Soon thereafter the poor man encountered Death, who likewise spoke to him and said, "I want to be your godfather and stand sponsor to your child. If he has me as his friend, he will never be in need. I'll make him into a doctor."

"I'm satisfied with what you say," said the man. "You don't make a difference between rich and poor when you fetch them. Tomorrow is Sunday. My son will be baptized. Just show up at the right time."

The next morning Death came and held the child during the baptism. After the child had grown up, Death came once again and took his godson into the forest.

"Now you are to become a doctor, and you only have to pay attention to what I say. When you are called to a sick person and you see me standing at his head, it is a sign that I won't take him. Let him smell the vapors of this bottle and rub the salve on his feet. Then he'll become well again. However, if I stand at his feet, then it's all over, and I'll take him. Don't try to cure him."

Upon saying this, Death gave him the bottle, and the young man became a famous doctor. He only had to take a look at a sick person, and he knew in advance whether the person would become well again or had to die.

One time he was called to the king, who was lying in bed because of a serious illness. When the doctor entered the room, he saw Death standing at the king's feet, and so the vapors of the bottle could not be of any help.

Nevertheless, he had an urge to deceive Death. So, he grabbed hold of the king and turned him around so that Death stood at his head. This change succeeded, and the king became well again. However, when the doctor returned home, Death came to him, gave him some fierce looks, and said, "If you dare trick me another time, I'll twist your head off."

Soon thereafter the king's beautiful daughter became sick, and nobody in the world could help her. The king wept day and night. Finally, he announced that whoever cured her would have her as his reward and marry her. So the doctor came and saw Death standing at the feet of the princess. Since he was completely enchanted by her beauty, however, he forgot all of Death's warnings, turned the princess around, let her smell the vapors of the bottle, and rubbed the soles of her feet with the salve.

No sooner did he return home than Death stood there with a horrible look on his face. Then he seized his godson and carried him to an underground cave, where a thousand candles were burning.

"Take a look!" Death said. "These are the candles of the living, and this light over here that's only burning a little, this is your life. Watch out!"

45

THE WANDERING OF THUMBLING, THE TAILOR'S SON

A tailor had a son who was small, not much larger than a thumb. Therefore, he was called Thumbling. However, he was filled with courage and said to his father: "Father, I want to go out wandering."

"Fine with me, my son," said the old man, and he took a darning needle and put a lump of sealing wax on it in the light. "Now you'll also have a dagger to take with you on your way."

The little tailor set out into the world, and his first work was with a master tailor, but the food wasn't good enough.

"Mistress," Thumbling said to the master's wife, "if you don't give us better food, I'll take some chalk tomorrow and write 'Too many potatoes, too little meat!' on the house door, and then I shall leave."

“What do you want, you little grasshopper?!” replied the wife, who became angry, grabbed a washcloth, and wanted to beat him with it. However, my little tailor crawled quickly under the thimble, looked out from beneath it, and stuck out his tongue. She picked up the thimble, but Thumbling hopped into a bunch of washcloths, and as the wife began separating the washcloths to search for him, he crawled into a crack in the table.

“Hey! Hey! My lady!” he cried out and raised his head from the crack.

As soon as the tailor’s wife tried to hit him, he jumped into the drawers until she finally caught him and chased him out of the house.

Now, the little tailor continued wandering and came to a large forest, where he met a band of robbers, who wanted to steal the king’s treasure. When they saw the little tailor, they thought he could be of great help to them. So they spoke to Thumbling and said that he was a good and able fellow and that he should come along with them to the treasure chamber, crawl inside, and throw the money outside to them. Well, Thumbling agreed. So he went to the treasure chamber and examined the door to see if there was a crack in it. Fortunately, he soon found one and wanted to climb through it, but one of the guards said to his companion, “Look at that nasty spider crawling over there! I’m going to stamp on it until I kill it!”

“Hey, leave the spider alone,” the other guard said. “It’s done nothing to you.”

This was how Thumbling fortunately made his way into the treasure chamber. Then he went to the window where the robbers were standing outside, and he threw one coin after another out the window. When the king examined his treasure chamber later, there was so much money missing that nobody could understand how it had been stolen because all the locks had been well protected.

The king called for more guards, who heard something rattling in the coins. They went inside and wanted to grab hold of the thief. But the little tailor sat down in a corner beneath a coin and cried out: “Here I am!”

The guards ran over there, while Thumbling leaped to another corner, and when they were at the first corner, he cried out, “Here I am!”

The guards ran to the next corner, but Thumbling hopped to another corner once again and cried out: “Here I am!”

This way he kept making fools out of them and kept doing this until they became tired and left the chamber. Now Thumbling gradually threw all the coins through the window. He sat himself down on the last one and went flying through the window. The robbers gave him tremendous praise and would have made him their captain if he had wanted that. Then they divided the loot, but Thumbling wouldn't take more than one coin because he couldn't carry more than that.

Afterward he resumed walking, and finally, since he was not having much success with tailoring, he hired himself out as a servant at an inn. However, the maids weren't fond of him because he saw everything they did in secret without their noticing it. Then he reported them afterward. As a result, they wanted very much to play a prank on him.

So, one time, when he went for a walk in the meadow, where a maid was mowing the grass, she mowed him together with the grass and threw the grass and Thumbling to the cows when she returned home. Then the black cow swallowed Thumbling, and he was now cooped up inside the cow and heard that evening that the cow was to be slaughtered. Since his life was in danger, he cried out: "I'm here!"

"Where are you?"

"In the black cow!"

However, the people couldn't understand him, and the cow was slaughtered. Fortunately, he wasn't struck by the blows to the cow and became mixed with the sausage meat. When this meat was about to be chopped up, he cried out: "Don't chop too deeply! Don't chop too deeply! I'm stuck beneath the meat."

Because of all the noise, however, nobody heard him. So Thumbling jumped quickly between the chopping knives avoiding any harm, but he couldn't get completely away and was stuffed into a blood sausage that was hung in the chimney to be smoked until winter when the sausage was to be eaten. Well, when his lodging was eventually sliced open, he jumped out and ran away.

Now the little tailor wandered again. However, a fox came across his path and snatched him.

"Mister fox," Thumbling cried, "you've got me! Let me go!"

“All right,” said the fox. “Since there’s not very much of you, I’ll let you go if you get your father to give me all the hens in the chicken yard.”

So Thumbling swore that he’d do this, and the fox carried him to his home and was given all the hens in the chicken yard. Meanwhile, the little tailor brought his father the one coin that he had earned from all his wanderings.

“But why did the fox get all the poor little hens to eat?”

“Oh you fool, a father certainly loves his child more than he does his hens.”

46

FITCHER’S BIRD

Once upon a time there was a sorcerer who was a thief, and he used to go begging from house to house in the guise of a beggar. One time a maiden opened the door and gave him a piece of bread. He only had to touch her to force her to jump into his basket. Then he carried her off to his house, where everything was splendid inside, and he gave her whatever she desired.

Some time later he said to her: “I have some business to attend to outside the house, and so I must take a trip. Here is an egg. Take good care of it and carry it with you wherever you go. I’m also giving you a key, and if you value your life, don’t go into the room that it opens.”

Nevertheless, when he was gone, she went and opened up this room, and as she entered it, she saw a large basin in the middle with dead and butchered people lying in it. She was so tremendously horrified that the egg she was carrying plopped into the basin. To be sure she quickly took it out and wiped the blood off, but the blood reappeared instantly. She wiped and scraped, but she couldn’t get rid of the stain.

When the man returned from his journey, he demanded the key and the egg. He looked at both of them, and he realized right away that she had been in the bloody chamber.

“Didn’t you pay attention to my instructions?” he said angrily. “Now you’ll go back into the bloody chamber against your will.”

Upon saying this, he grabbed her, led her to the chamber, chopped her into pieces, and tossed her into the basin with the others.

After some time had passed the man went begging again and captured the second daughter. He took her from the house, and the same thing happened to her. She opened the forbidden door, let the egg fall into the blood, and was chopped to pieces and thrown into the basin.

Now the sorcerer wanted to have the third daughter as well. So he captured her and put her into his basket. After he returned home, he gave her the key and the egg before he set out on his journey. However, the third daughter was smart and cunning. She put the egg into a cupboard and then went into the secret chamber. When she found her sisters in the bloody basin, she looked all over the place for their missing parts and put them all together—head, body, arms, and legs. So the two sisters came back to life.

Then their sister led them out of the chamber and hid them.

When the man came home and didn't find any blood stains on the egg, he asked the third sister to become his bride. She said yes, but she told him that before she'd marry him, he had to fill his basket full of gold and carry it to her parents on his back. In the meantime she would make preparations for the wedding. Instead, she stuck her sisters into the basket, covered them with gold, and told them that they were to get help from home.

"Now carry this basket to my parents," she said to the man, "but don't dare to stop and rest along the way. I can see everything from my window."

So the man lifted the basket onto his back and went on his way. It was, however, so heavy that he was almost crushed to death by the weight. At one point he wanted to rest, but one of the sisters immediately cried out from the basket: "I see from my window that you're resting! Get a move on at once!"

He thought that it was his bride who was crying out, and so he immediately continued walking. Whenever he stopped along the way, he heard a voice and had to keep moving.

Back at his place, the bride took a skull, decorated it with jewels and set it on the window case. Then she invited the sorcerer's friends to the wedding, and after that was done, she dipped herself into a barrel of honey, cut open a bed, and rolled around in the feathers so that it was impossible to

recognize her because she looked so strange. And this is how she set out on her way. Soon she met some of the wedding guests, who asked:

“Where are you coming from, oh, Fitcher’s bird?”

“From Fitze Fitcher’s house, haven’t you heard?”

“And what may the young bride be doing there?”

“She’s swept the whole house from top to bottom.

Just now she’s looking straight out of the window.”

Soon thereafter she met the bridegroom, who was on his return home:

“Where are you coming from, oh, Fitcher’s bird?”

“From Fitze Fitcher’s house, haven’t you heard?”

“And what may the young bride be doing there?”

“She’s swept the whole house from top to bottom.

Just now she’s looking straight out of the window.”

The bridegroom looked and saw the decorated skull. He thought it was his bride and waved to her. However, once he and his guests were all gathered inside the house, the helpers who were sent by the sisters finally arrived. These people locked all the doors of the house and then they set fire to it. And since nobody could get out, they were all burned to death.

47

THE JUNIPER TREE

All this took place a long time ago, most likely some two thousand years ago. There was a rich man who had a beautiful and pious wife, and they loved each other very much. Though they didn’t have any children, they longed to have some. Day and night the wife prayed for a child, but still none came, and everything remained the same.

Now, in the front of the house there was a yard, and in the yard stood a juniper tree. One day during winter the wife was under the tree peeling an apple, and as she was peeling it, she cut her finger, and her blood dripped onto the snow.

“Oh,” said the wife, and she heaved a great sigh. While she looked at the blood before her, she became quite sad. “If only I had a child as red as blood and as white as snow!”

Upon saying that, her mood changed, and she became very cheerful, for she felt something might come of it. Then she went home.

After a month the snow vanished. After two months everything turned green. After three months the flowers sprouted from the ground. After four months all the trees in the woods grew more solid, and the green branches became intertwined. The birds began to sing, and their song resounded throughout the forest as the blossoms fell from the trees. Soon the fifth month passed, and when the wife stood under the juniper tree, it smelled so sweetly that her heart leapt for joy. Indeed, she was so overcome by joy that she fell down on her knees. When the sixth month had passed, the fruit was large and firm, and she was quite still. In the seventh month she picked the juniper berries and ate them so avidly that she became sad and sick. After the eighth month passed, she called her husband to her and wept.

“If I die,” she said, “bury me under the juniper tree.”

After that she was quite content and relieved until the ninth month had passed. Then she had a child as white as snow and as red as blood. When she saw the baby, she was so delighted that she died.

Her husband buried her under the juniper tree, and he began weeping a great deal. After some time he felt much better, but he still wept every now and then. Eventually, he stopped, and after more time passed, he took another wife. With his second wife he had a daughter, while the child from the first wife was a little boy, who was as red as blood and as white as snow. Whenever the woman looked at her daughter, she felt great love for her, but whenever she looked at the little boy, her heart was cut to the quick. She couldn't forget that he would always stand in her way and prevent her daughter from inheriting everything, which was what the woman had in mind. Gradually the devil took hold of her and influenced her feelings toward the boy until she became quite cruel toward him: she pushed him from one place to the next, slapped him here and cuffed him there, so that the poor child lived in constant fear. When he came home from school, he found no peace at all.

One day the woman went up to her room, and her little daughter followed her and said, "Mother, give me an apple."

"Yes, my child," said the woman, and she gave her a beautiful apple from the chest that had a large heavy lid with a big, sharp iron lock.

"Mother," said the little daughter, "shouldn't brother get one too?"

The woman was irritated by that remark, but she said, "Yes, as soon as he comes home from school."

And, when she looked out of the window and saw him coming, the devil took possession of her, and she snatched the apple away from her daughter. "You shan't have one before your brother," she said and threw the apple into the chest and shut it.

Meanwhile the little boy came through the door, and the devil compelled her to be friendly to him and say, "Would you like to have an apple, my son?" Yet, she gave him a fierce look.

"Mother," said the little boy, "How ferocious you look! Yes, give me an apple."

Then she felt compelled to coax him.

"Come over here," she said as she lifted the lid. "Take out an apple for yourself."

And as the little boy leaned over the chest, the devil prompted her, and *crash!* She slammed the lid so hard that his head flew off and fell among the apples. Then she was struck by fear and thought, "How am I going to get out of this?" She went up to her room and straight to her dresser, where she took out a white kerchief from a drawer. She put the boy's head back on his neck and tied the neckerchief around it so nothing could be seen. Then she set him on a chair in front of the door and put the apple in his hand.

Some time later little Marlene came into the kitchen and went up to her mother, who was standing by the fire in front of a pot of hot water, which she was constantly stirring.

"Mother," said Marlene, "brother's sitting by the door and looks very pale. He's got an apple in his hand, and I asked him to give me the apple, but he didn't answer, and I became very scared.

"Go back to him," said the mother, "and if he doesn't answer you, give him a box on the ear."

Little Marlene returned to him and said, "Brother, give me the apple."

But he wouldn't respond.

So she gave him a box on the ear, and his head fell off. The little girl was so frightened that she began to cry and howl. Then she ran to her mother and said, "Oh, mother, I've knocked my brother's head off!" And she wept and wept and couldn't be comforted.

"Marlene," said the mother. "What have you done! You're not to open your mouth about this. We don't want anyone to know, and besides there's nothing we can do about it now. So we'll make a stew out of him."

The mother took the little boy and chopped him into pieces. Next she put them into a pot and let them stew. But Marlene stood nearby and wept until all her tears fell into the pot, so it didn't need any salt. When the father came home, he sat down at the table and asked, "Where's my son?"

The mother served a huge portion of the stewed meat, and Marlene wept and couldn't stop.

"Where's my son?" the father asked again.

"Oh," said the mother, "he's gone off into the country to visit his mother's great-uncle. He intends to stay there awhile."

"What's he going to do there? He didn't even say good-bye to me."

"Well, he wanted to go very badly and asked me if he could stay there six weeks. They'll take good care of him."

"Oh, that makes me sad," said the man. "It's not right. He should have said good-bye to me." Then he began to eat and said, "Marlene, what are you crying for? Your brother will come back soon." Without pausing, he said, "Oh, wife, the food tastes great! Give me some more!" The more he ate, the more he wanted. "Give me some more," he said. "I'm not going to share this with you. Somehow I feel as if it were all mine."

As he ate and ate, he threw the bones under the table until he was all done. Meanwhile, Marlene went to her dresser and took out her best silk neckerchief from the bottom drawer, gathered all the bones from beneath the table, tied them up in her silk kerchief, and carried them outside the door. There she wept bitter tears and laid the bones beneath the juniper tree. As she put them there, she suddenly felt relieved and stopped crying. Now the juniper tree began to move. The branches separated and came

together again as though they were clapping their hands in joy. At the same time smoke came out of the tree, and in the middle of the smoke there was a flame that seemed to be humming. Then a beautiful bird flew out of the fire and began singing magnificently. He soared high in the air, and after he vanished, the juniper tree was as it was before. Yet the silk kerchief was gone. Marlene was very happy and gay. It was as if her brother were still alive, and she went merrily back into the house, sat down at the table, and ate.

Meanwhile, the bird flew away, landed on the roof of a goldsmith's house, and began to sing:

“My mother, she killed me.
My father, he ate me.
My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see
my bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,
and laid beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

The goldsmith was sitting in his workshop making a golden chain. When he heard the bird singing on his roof, he thought the song was very beautiful. Then he stood up, and as he walked across the threshold, he lost a slipper. Still, he kept on going, right into the middle of the street with only one sock and a slipper on. He was also wearing his apron, and in one of his hands he held the golden chain, in the other his tongs. The sun was shining brightly on the street as he walked, and then he stopped to get a look at the bird.

“Bird,” he said, “how beautifully you sing! Sing me that song again.”

“No,” said the bird, “I never sing twice for nothing. Give me the golden chain, and I’ll sing it for you again.”

“All right,” said the goldsmith. “Here’s the golden chain. Now sing the song again.”

The bird swooped down, grasped the golden chain in his right claw, went up to the goldsmith, and began singing:

“My mother, she killed me.
My father, he ate me.
My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see
my bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,
and laid beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

Then the bird flew off to a shoemaker, landed on his roof, and sang:

“My mother, she killed me.
My father, he ate me.
My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see
my bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,
and laid beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

When the shoemaker heard the song, he ran to the door in his shirt sleeves and looked up at the roof, keeping his hand over his eyes to protect them from the bright sun.

“Bird,” he said, “how beautifully you sing!” Then he called into the house, “Wife, come out here for a second! There’s a bird up there. Just look. How beautifully he sings!” Then he called his daughter and her children, and the journeyman, apprentices, and maid. They all came running out into the street and looked at the bird and saw how beautiful he was. He had bright red and green feathers, and his neck appeared to glisten like pure gold, while his eyes sparkled in his head like stars.

“Bird,” said the shoemaker, “now sing me that song again.”

“No,” said the bird. “I never sing twice for nothing. You’ll have to give me a present.”

“Wife,” said the man, “go into the shop. There’s a pair of red shoes on the top shelf. Get them for me.”

His wife went and fetched the shoes.

“There,” said the man. “Now sing the song again.”

The bird swooped down, grasped the shoes in his left claw, flew back up on the roof, and sang:

“My mother, she killed me.
My father, he ate me.
My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see
my bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,
and laid beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

When the bird finished the song, he flew away. He had the chain in his right claw and the shoes in his left, and he flew far away to a mill. The mill went *clickety-clack, clickety-clack, clickety-clack*. The miller had twenty men sitting in the mill, and they were hewing a stone. Their chisels went click-clack, click-clack, click-clack. And the mill kept going clickety-clack, clickety-clack, clickety-clack. The bird swooped down and landed on a linden tree outside the mill and sang:

“My mother, she killed me.”

Then one of the men stopped working.

“My father, he ate me.”

Then two more stopped and listened.

“My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see.”

Then four more stopped.

“My bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be.”

Now only eight kept chiseling.

“And laid beneath . . .”

Now only five.

“. . . the juniper tree.”

Now only one.

“Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

Then the last one also stopped and listened to the final words.

“Bird, how beautifully you sing! Let me hear that, too. Sing your song again for me.”

“No,” said the bird. I never sing twice for nothing. Give me the millstone, and I’ll sing the song again.”

“I would if I could,” he said. “But the millstone doesn’t belong to me alone.”

“If he sings again,” said the others, “he can have it.”

Then the bird swooped down, and all twenty of the miller’s men took some wooden beams to lift the stone. “Heave-ho! Heave-ho! Heave-ho!” Then the bird stuck his neck through the hole, put the stone on like a collar, flew back to the tree, and sang:

“My mother, she killed me.

My father, he ate me.

My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see

my bones were gathered secretly,

bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,

and laid beneath the juniper tree.

Tweet, tweet “What a lovely bird I am!”

After the bird had finished his song, he spread his wings, and in his right claw he had the chain, in his left the shoes, and around his neck the millstone. Then he flew away to his father’s house.

The father, mother, and Marlene were sitting at the table in the parlor, and the father said, “Oh, how happy I am! I just feel so wonderful!”

“Not me,” said the mother. “I feel scared as if a storm were about to erupt.”

Meanwhile, Marlene just sat there and kept weeping. Then the bird flew up, and when he landed on the roof, the father said, “Oh, I’m in such

good spirits. The sun's shining so brightly outside, and I feel as though I were going to see an old friend again."

"Not me," said his wife. "I'm so frightened that my teeth are chattering. I feel as if fire were running through my veins."

She tore open her bodice, while Marlene sat in a corner and kept weeping. She had her handkerchief in front of her eyes and wept until it was completely soaked with her tears. The bird swooped down on the juniper tree, where he perched on a branch and began singing:

"My mother, she killed me."

The mother stopped her ears, shut her eyes, and tried not to see or hear anything, but there was a roaring in her ears like a turbulent storm, and her eyes burned and flashed like lightning.

"My father, he ate me."

"Oh, Mother," said the man, "listen to that beautiful bird singing so gloriously! The sun's so warm, and it smells like cinnamon."

"My sister, Marlene, made sure to see."

Then Marlene laid her head on her knees and wept and wept, but the man said, "I'm going outside. I must see the bird close up."

"Oh, don't go!" cried the wife. "I feel as if the whole house were shaking and about to go up in flames!"

Nevertheless, the man went out and looked at the bird.

"My bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be,
and laid beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!"

After ending his song, the bird dropped the golden chain, and it fell around the man's neck just right, so that it fit him perfectly. Then he went inside and said, "Look how lovely that bird is! He gave me this beautiful golden chain, and he's just as beautiful as well!"

But the woman was petrified and fell to the floor. Her cap slipped off her head, and the bird sang again:

“My mother, she killed me.”

“Oh, I wish I were a thousand feet beneath the earth so I wouldn’t have to hear this!”

“My father, he ate me.”

Then the woman fell down again as if she were dead.

“My sister, Marlene, she made sure to see.”

“Oh,” said Marlene, I want to go outside, too, and see if the bird will give me something.”

Then she went out.

“My bones were gathered secretly,
bound nicely in silk, as neat as can be.”

All at once the bird threw her the shoes.

“And laid them beneath the juniper tree.
Tweet, tweet! What a lovely bird I am!”

Marlene felt cheerful and happy. She put on the new red shoes and danced and skipped back into the house.

“Oh,” she said, “I was so sad when I went out, and now I feel so cheerful. That certainly is a splendid bird. He gave me a pair of red shoes as a gift.”

“Not me,” said the wife, who jumped, and her hair flared up like red-hot flames. “I feel as if the world were coming to an end. Maybe I’d feel better if I went outside.”

As she went out the door, *crash!* The bird threw the millstone down on her head, and she was crushed to death. The father and Marlene heard the crash and went outside. Smoke, flames, and fire were rising from the spot, and when it was over, the little brother was standing there. He took his father and Marlene by the hand, and all three were very happy. Then they went into the house, sat down at the table, and ate.

A farmer had a faithful dog named Sultan. He was old and couldn't latch onto things with his teeth anymore. So the farmer said to his wife: "I'm going to shoot old Sultan. He's no longer of use to us anymore."

His wife replied, "Don't you do it! We should support the faithful dog in his old age. He's served us well so many years."

"You must be out of your mind!" her husband said. "What are we going to do with him? He doesn't have a tooth left in his head. No thief would be afraid of him anymore. If he's served us well, he's done it because of his hunger, and because he was well fed here. Tomorrow is his last day. End of discussion!"

The dog had overheard everything that they had discussed. Since he had a good friend, the wolf, he went out to see him in the evening and whine about his fate and tell him that his master was going to shoot him the next day.

"Don't worry," the wolf said. "I'm going to give you a good plan: Early tomorrow morning your master will be going out with his wife to make hay, and they'll take their little child with them because nobody will be staying at home. They generally lay the child behind the hedge while they work. Now, you're to lie down next to the child as if you want to rest and guard him. I'll come out of the forest and steal the child. Then you've got to jump up and run after me and chase me away. They'll believe that you rescued their child, and you'll be in their good graces, and they'll give you anything you want for the rest of your life."

The dog liked the plan, and it was carried out just as they had conceived it. The wolf ran off a short distance, and when the dog overtook him, the wolf dropped the child, and the dog brought him back to his master, whereupon the man cried out in a very loud voice: "Well, since our old Sultan has chased away the wolf once again, he's going to stay alive, and we'll support him for the rest of his life. Wife, go home and cook him some bread mush that he can easily swallow. Also, bring him my pillow. He's to have it for his bed as long as he lives."

All of a sudden old Sultan had it so good that he couldn't have wished for a better life. The wolf came to him and was delighted to learn that everything had succeeded so well.

"Now you certainly won't have anything against it and will help me when I steal a fat sheep from your master."

But Sultan was loyal to his master and told him what the wolf had in mind. So the man waited for the wolf in the barn, and when the wolf came and wanted to get a good bite of sheep, the farmer practically skinned him alive. Later the wolf was so outraged that he scolded old Sultan, called him a miserable fellow, and challenged him to a duel to settle things.

They were to take their positions right outside the forest, and each one was to bring a second with him. The wolf was the first one at the place and had brought the wild boar as his second, and old Sultan had only been able to recruit a lame cat and finally set out with her. When the wolf and the boar saw the cat coming toward them, constantly limping, they thought that she was picking up stones to throw at them, and they both became frightened. So the wild boar crawled into some bushes, and the wolf jumped up a tree. When the dog and cat reached the spot, they were both puzzled to find nobody there. However, the boar in the bushes began twitching his ear, and when the cat saw something move, she sprang on top of the boar and bit and scratched him. Consequently, the boar leapt into the air with a loud cry and ran away. As he was running, he yelled out: "Your opponent's sitting up there in the tree!"

So it came to light that the wolf had cowardly retreated, and the only way he could climb down from the tree was by agreeing to a peaceful settlement.

A king went hunting in a vast forest, got lost, and couldn't find his way out. Finally, he came upon a witch and asked her to show him the way out of the forest. However, the witch told him she wouldn't do it. He had to remain there and would lose his life. He could only be saved if he married

her daughter. The king cherished his life, and he was so frightened, he said yes. So the witch brought the maiden to him. Though she was young and beautiful, he couldn't look at her without getting the creeps and secretly shuddering. However, he intended to keep his promise. Then the old woman led both of them on the right path out of the forest, and once they were at the king's home, the witch's daughter became his wife.

Now the king still had seven children from his first wife, six boys and a girl, and since he was afraid the stepmother might harm them, he brought them to a castle in the middle of a forest. It lay so well concealed nobody knew the way to it, and he himself would not have found it if a wise woman had not given him a ball of yarn. When he threw the ball before him, the yarn unwound itself and showed him the way.

Since the king loved his children very much, he frequently went to the castle. However, the queen became curious and wanted to know why he was going out into the forest all alone. She interrogated the servants, and they revealed the entire secret. The first thing she did was to use her cunning and acquire the ball of yarn. Then she took seven small shirts and went out into the forest. The ball of yarn showed her the way, and when the six little princes saw her coming from the distance, they were delighted because they thought their father was coming and ran out to her. But all at once she threw a shirt over each one of them, and as soon as they were touched by the shirts, they were turned into swans and flew away over the forest.

Now the queen thought that she had gotten rid of all her stepchildren and returned home. So the maiden, who had remained in her room, was saved. The next day the king went to the castle in the forest, and she told him what had happened and showed him the swan feathers that had fallen down from her six brothers into the courtyard. The king was horrified but couldn't believe that that the queen had done such an evil deed. At the same time, he was worried that the princess might also be stolen away from him. So he wanted to take her with him. However, she was afraid of her stepmother and begged the king to allow her to spend one more night in the castle. Then, during the night, she fled and went deeper into the forest.

She walked the entire day, and toward evening she came to a hut. Once she entered, she found a room with six small beds. Since she was now tired, she lay herself down beneath one of the beds and wanted to spend the night there. Yet at sunset six swans came flying through the window, landed on the floor, and blew on one another until all their feathers were blown off as if some cloth had slipped off them, and there stood her six brothers. She crawled out from beneath the bed, and the brothers were both glad and distressed to see her again.

“You can’t stay here,” they said. “This is a robbers’ den. When they come home from their marauding, they live here. We can take off our swan skins for only a quarter of an hour every evening and assume our human form during this time. Then it’s all over. If you want to rescue us, you must sew six little shirts made out of asters, but during this time you’re not allowed to speak or laugh. Otherwise all your work will be for naught.”

As the brothers were speaking, the quarter of an hour expired, and once again they were transformed into swans. The next morning, however, the maiden gathered asters, perched herself on a branch of a tall tree, and began to sew. She didn’t speak a single word or laugh. She just sat there and concentrated on her work.

After she had been there for some time, the king who owned this land went hunting and came to the tree where the maiden was perched. His hunters called to her and told her to come down. But because she was not permitted to answer them, she wanted to satisfy them by throwing them presents. So she threw them her golden necklace. Yet they continued to call out. So she threw them her girdle, and when this didn’t work either, she threw down her garters and little by little everything that she had on and could do without until she had nothing left but her little shift. Still all this was not enough for the hunters. They climbed the tree, carried her down, and led her by force to the king, who was astonished by her beauty. He covered her with his cloak, lifted her onto his horse, and brought her to his home. Even though she was mute, he loved her with all his heart, and she became his wife.

Now the king’s mother was angry about all of this and spoke ill of the young queen: nobody knew where the wench came from, and she wasn’t

worthy of the king. When the queen gave birth to her first child, the old mother-in-law took the child away and smeared the queen's mouth with blood while she was asleep. Then she accused the young queen of having eaten her own child and of being a sorceress. However, because of his great love for his wife, the king refused to believe this.

Some time later the queen gave birth to a second prince, and the godless mother-in-law played the same trick and accused the queen of cannibalism again. Since the queen wasn't allowed to talk and had to sit there mute and work on the six little shirts, she couldn't save herself and was sentenced to burn at the stake.

The day came when the sentence was to be carried out. It was exactly the last day of the six years, and she had managed to finish sewing the six shirts. Only the left sleeve of the last shirt was missing. When she was led to the stake, she took the six shirts with her, and when she stood on the pile of wood and the fire was about to be lit, she saw the six swans flying through the air until they descended right near her. So she threw the shirts over them, and as soon as the shirts touched them, the swan skins fell off, and her six brothers stood before her in the flesh. Only the sixth one was missing his left arm; instead, he had a swan's wing on his shoulder. Now she could speak once again and told everyone how her mother-in-law had slandered her in such a wicked way. Consequently, the old woman was tied to the stake and burned to death. However, the young queen lived with the king and her six brothers a long time in great joy.

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BRIAR ROSE

A king and a queen couldn't have children, and they wanted very much to have one. Then one day, while the queen was bathing, a crab crawled out of the water, came onshore, and said: "Your wish will soon be filled, and you will give birth to a daughter."

Indeed, this is what happened, and the king was so delighted by the birth of the princess that he organized a great feast and also invited the fairies who were living in his realm. Since he had only twelve golden plates,

however, there was one fairy who had to be excluded, for there were thirteen in all.

The fairies came to the feast, and at the end of the celebration they gave the child some gifts. One gave virtue; the second, beauty; and the others gave every splendid thing that one could possibly wish for in the world. But, just after the eleventh fairy had announced her gift, the thirteenth appeared, and she was quite angry she had not been invited to the festivities.

“Since you didn’t ask me to attend this celebration,” she cried out, “I say to you that when your daughter turns fifteen, she will prick herself with a spindle and fall down dead!”

The parents were horrified, but the twelfth fairy hadn’t made her wish yet, and she said: “The girl will not die. She will fall into a deep sleep for one hundred years.”

The king still hoped to save his dear child and issued an order that all spindles in his entire kingdom were to be banned. Meanwhile, the girl grew up and became marvelously beautiful. On the day she turned fifteen, the king and queen had gone out, and she was left completely alone in the palace. So she wandered all over the place just as she pleased and eventually came to an old tower where she found a narrow staircase. Since she was curious, she climbed the stairs and came to a small door with a yellow key stuck in the lock. When she turned it, the door sprang open, and she found herself in a little room where she saw an old woman spinning flax. She took a great liking to the old woman and joked with her and said she wanted to try spinning one time. So she took the spindle from the old woman’s hand, and no sooner did she touch the spindle than she pricked herself and fell down into a deep sleep.

Just at that moment the king returned to the palace with his entire courtly retinue, and everybody and everything began to fall asleep—the horses in the stable, the pigeons on the roof, the dogs in the courtyard, and the flies on the wall. Even the fire flickering in the hearth became quiet and fell asleep. The roast stopped sizzling, and the cook, who was just about to pull the kitchen boy’s hair, let him go, and the maid, who was plucking the feathers of a hen, let it drop and fell asleep. And a hedge of thorns sprouted

around the entire castle and grew higher and higher until it was impossible to see the castle anymore.

There were princes who heard about the beautiful Briar Rose, and they came and wanted to rescue her, but they couldn't penetrate the hedge. It was as though the thorns clung tightly together like hands, and the princes got stuck there and died miserable deaths. All this continued for many, many years until one day a prince came riding through the country, and an old man told him that people believed that a castle was standing behind the hedge of thorns and that a gorgeous princess was sleeping inside with her entire royal household. His grandfather had told him that many princes had come and had wanted to penetrate the hedge. However, they got stuck hanging in the thorns and had died.

"That doesn't scare me," said the prince. "I'm going to make my way through the hedge and rescue the beautiful princess."

So off he went, and when he came to the hedge of thorns, there was nothing but flowers that separated and made a path for him, and as he went through them, the flowers turned back into thorns. After he reached the castle, the horses were lying asleep in the courtyard, and there was an assortment of hunting dogs. The pigeons were perched on the roof and had tucked their heads beneath their wings. When he entered the palace, the flies were sleeping, as was the fire in the kitchen along with the cook and the maid. The prince continued walking, and he saw the entire royal household with the king and queen lying asleep. Everything was so quiet that he could hear himself breathe.

Finally, he came to the old tower where Briar Rose was lying asleep. The prince was so astounded by her beauty that he leaned over and kissed her. Immediately after the kiss, she woke up, and the king and queen and the entire royal household and the horses and the dogs and the pigeons on the roof and the flies on the walls and the fire woke up. Indeed, the fire flared up and cooked the meat until it began to sizzle again, and the cook gave the kitchen boy a box on the ear, while the maid finished plucking the chicken. Then the wedding of the prince with Briar Rose was celebrated in great splendor, and they lived happily to the end of their days.

Once upon a time a forester went out hunting in the forest, and as he entered it, he heard some cries that sounded like those of a small child. He followed the sounds and eventually came to a tall tree where he saw a little child sitting on the top. The child's mother had fallen asleep with him under the tree, and a hawk had seen the child in her lap. So it had swooped down, carried the child away with its beak, and set him down on top of the tree.

The forester climbed the tree and brought the child down, and thought: "You ought to take him home with you and raise him with your little Lena." So he took the boy home, and the two children grew up together. However, the boy who had been found on top of the tree was called Foundling because he had been carried off by a bird. Foundling and little Lena were very fond of each other. In fact, they loved each other so much that they became sad if they were not constantly within sight of each other.

Now the forester had an old cook, and one evening she took two buckets and began fetching water. But she didn't go to the well simply one time but many times. When little Lena saw this, she asked, "Tell me, old Sanna, why are you fetching so much water?"

"If you promise to keep quiet, I'll let you in on my secret."

Little Lena of course replied that she wouldn't tell a soul. Then the cook said, "Early tomorrow morning, when the forester goes out hunting, I'm going to heat some water over the fire, and when it's boiling, I'm going to throw Foundling in and cook him."

Early the next morning the forester got up to go out hunting, and after he had gone, the children were still in bed. Then little Lena said to Foundling, "If you won't forsake me, I won't forsake you."

"Never ever," said Foundling.

"Well then, I'm going to tell you something important," said little Lena. "Last night old Sanna carried many buckets of water into the house, and I asked her why she was doing that. She said that if I wouldn't tell a soul, she'd let me in on her secret, and I promised her not to tell a living soul. Then she said that early this morning, when my father goes out hunting,

she would boil a kettle full of water, throw you in, and cook you. So let's get up quickly, dress ourselves, and run away together."

Then the two children got up, dressed themselves quickly, and ran away. When the water in the kettle began to boil, the cook went into the bedroom to get Foundling and throw him into the kettle. But as she entered the room and went over to the beds, she saw that the two children were gone, and she became greatly alarmed.

"What shall I say when the forester comes home and sees that the children are gone?" she said. "I'd better send some people after them so we get them back."

The cook sent three servants to pursue them and bring them back. But the children were sitting at the edge of the forest and saw the three servants coming from afar.

"If you won't forsake me, I won't forsake you," said little Lena.

"Never ever," said Foundling.

"Then change yourself into a rosebush, and I'll be the rose on it," said little Lena.

When the three servants reached the edge of the forest, they saw nothing but a rosebush with a little rose on it. The children were nowhere to be seen.

"There's nothing we can do here," they said, and they went home, where they told the cook they had seen nothing but a rosebush with a rose on it. Then the cook scolded them. "You blockheads! You should have cut the rosebush in two, plucked the rose, and brought it back with you. Now go quickly and do it!"

So they had to set out once more and look for the children. But when the children saw them coming from afar, little Lena said, "If you won't forsake me, I won't forsake you."

"Never ever," said Foundling.

"Then change yourself into a church, and I'll be the chandelier hanging in it," little Lena said.

When the three servants arrived at the spot, there was nothing but a church and a chandelier inside it.

"What should we do here? Let's go home."

When they got home, the cook asked whether they had found anything. They said no. They'd found nothing but a church with a chandelier inside.

"You fools!" the cook scolded them. "Why didn't you destroy the church and bring back the chandelier?"

This time the old cook herself set out on foot accompanied by the three servants and pursued the children. But the children saw the three servants coming from afar and also the cook, who was waddling behind them.

"Foundling," said little Lena. "If you won't forsake me, I won't forsake you."

"Never ever," said Foundling.

"Then change yourself into a pond," said little Lena, "and I'll be the duck swimming on it."

When the cook arrived and saw the pond, she lay down beside it and began to drink it up. However, the duck quickly swam over, grabbed her head in its beak, and dragged her into the water. The old witch was thus drowned, and the children went home together. They were very happy, and if they haven't died, they're still alive.

KING THRUSHBEARD

A king had a daughter who was marvelously beautiful but so proud and haughty that she rejected one suitor after the other out of stubbornness and ridiculed them as well.

Once her father held a great feast and invited all the marriageable young men to the event. They were all lined up according to their rank and class: first came the kings, then the dukes, princes, counts, and barons, and finally the gentry. The king's daughter was led down the line, and she found fault with each one of the suitors there. In particular, she made the most fun of a good king who stood at the head of the line and had a chin that was a bit crooked.

"My goodness!" she exclaimed and laughed. "He's got a chin like a thrush's beak!"

From then on, everyone called him Thrushbeard.

When her father saw how his daughter did nothing but ridicule people, he became furious and swore that she would have to marry the very first beggar who came to his door. A few days later a minstrel appeared and began singing beneath the princess's window. When the king heard him, he ordered him to come up to him immediately. Despite his dirty appearance, his daughter had to accept him as her bridegroom. A minister was summoned right away, and the wedding took place. After the wedding was finished, the king said to his daughter: "It's not fitting for you to stay in my palace any longer since you're a beggar woman. You must now depart with your husband."

The beggar took her away, and as they walked through a huge forest, she asked the beggar:

"Tell me, who might the owner of this beautiful forest be?"

"King Thrushbeard owns the forest and all you can see.

If you had taken him, it would belong to you."

"Alas, poor me! What can I do?

I should have wed King Thrushbeard. If only I knew!"

Soon they crossed a meadow, and she asked again:

"Tell me, who might the owner of this beautiful green meadow be?"

"King Thrushbeard owns the meadow and all you can see.

If you had taken him, it would belong to you."

"Alas, poor me! What can I do?

I should have wed King Thrushbeard. If only I knew!"

Then they came to a large city, and she asked once more:

"Tell me, who might the owner of this beautiful big city be?"

"King Thrushbeard owns the forest and all you can see.

If you had taken him, it would belong to you."

"Alas, poor me! What can I do?

I should have wed King Thrushbeard. If only I knew!"

The minstrel became very grumpy when he heard that she always desired another man and didn't think that he was good enough for her. Finally, they came to a tiny cottage, and she exclaimed:

“Oh, Lord! What a wretched tiny house!
It’s not even fit for a little mouse.”

The beggar answered, “This house is our house, and we shall live here together.”

“Now, make a fire at once and put the water on so you can cook me my meal. I’m very tired.”

However, the king’s daughter knew nothing about cooking, and the beggar had to lend a hand himself. At first things went reasonably well, and after they had eaten, they went to bed. But the next morning she had to get up very early and work. For a few days they lived miserably until the man finally said: “Wife, we can’t go on this way any longer. We’re eating everything up and not earning anything. You’ve got to weave baskets.”

He went out and cut some willows and brought them home, and she had to begin to weave baskets. However, the rough willows bruised her hands.

“I see you can’t do this work,” said the man. “So try spinning. Perhaps you’ll be better at that.”

She sat down and spun, but her fingers were so soft that the hard thread soon cut her, and blood began to flow.

“You’re not fit for any kind of work,” said the man who was now very irritated. “I’m going to start a business with earthenware. You’re to sit in the marketplace and sell the wares.”

On the first occasion everything went well. People gladly bought her pots because she was beautiful, and they paid what she asked. Indeed, many gave her money and didn’t even bother to take the pots with them. When everything had been sold, her husband bought a lot of new earthenware. Once again his wife sat down with it at the marketplace and hoped to make a good profit. Suddenly, a drunken hussar came galloping along and rode right over the pots so that they were all smashed to pieces. The woman became terrified, and for the rest of the day she didn’t dare to go home. When she finally did, the beggar was nowhere to be seen.

For some time she lived in poverty and in great need. Then a man came and invited her to a wedding. She wanted to take all kinds of

leftovers from the wedding and live off them for a while. So she put on her little coat with a pot underneath and stuck a large leather purse with it. The wedding was magnificent and with plenty of good things. She filled the pot with soup and her leather purse with scraps. As she was about to leave with everything, one of the guests demanded that she dance with him. She resisted with all her might, but to no avail. He grabbed hold of her, and she had to go with him. All at once the pot fell so that the soup flowed on the ground, and the many scraps also tumbled out of her purse. When the guests saw all this, they broke out in laughter and ridiculed her.

She was so ashamed that she wished she were a thousand fathoms under the earth. She ran out the door and tried to escape, but a man caught up with her on the stairs and brought her back. When she looked at him, she saw it was King Thrushbeard, and he said: "I and the beggar are the same person, and I was also the hussar who rode over your pots and smashed them to pieces. All this happened to you for your benefit and to punish you because you had ridiculed me some time ago. Now, however, our wedding will be celebrated."

Then her father also appeared with his entire court, and she was cleaned and magnificently dressed, appropriate for her position, and the festive event was her marriage with King Thrushbeard.

Once upon a time, in the middle of winter, when snowflakes were falling like feathers from the sky, a beautiful queen was sitting and sewing at a window with a black ebony frame. And as she was sewing and looking out the window at the snow, she pricked her finger with the needle, and three drops of blood fell on the snow. The red looked so beautiful on the white snow that she thought to herself, "If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the wood of the window frame!" Soon thereafter she gave birth to a little daughter who was as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair as black as ebony. That's why the child was called Little Snow White.

The queen was the most beautiful woman in the entire land and very proud about her beauty. She also had a mirror, and every morning she stepped in front of it and asked:

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is fairest of all?”

The mirror would answer:

“You, my queen, are the fairest of all.”

And then she knew for certain that there was nobody more beautiful in the entire world. However, Little Snow White grew up, and when she was seven years old, she was so beautiful that her beauty surpassed even that of the queen, and when the queen asked her mirror:

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is fairest of all?”

The mirror answered:

“You, my queen, may have a beauty quite rare,
but Little Snow White is a thousand times more fair.”

When the queen heard the mirror speak this way, she became pale with envy, and from that hour onward, she hated Snow White, and when she looked at her and thought that Little Snow White was to blame that she, the queen, was no longer the most beautiful woman in the world, her heart turned against Little Snow White. Her jealousy kept upsetting her, and so she summoned the huntsman and said: “Take the child out into the forest to a spot far from here. Then stab her to death and bring me back her lungs and liver as proof of your deed. After that I’ll cook them with salt and eat them.”

The huntsman took Little Snow White and led her out into the forest, but when he drew his hunting knife and was about to stab her, she began to weep and pleaded so much to let her live and promised never to return but to run deeper into the forest, the huntsman was moved to pity, also because she was so beautiful. Anyway, he thought the wild

beasts in the forest would soon devour her: “I’m glad that I won’t have to kill her.” Just then a young boar came dashing by, and the huntsman stabbed it to death. He took out the lungs and liver and brought them to the queen as proof that the child was dead. Then she boiled them in salt, ate them, and thought that she had eaten Little Snow White’s lungs and liver.

Meanwhile, Little Snow White was so all alone in the huge forest that she became afraid and began to run and run over sharp stones and through thorn bushes. She ran the entire day. Finally, as the sun was about to set, she came upon a little cottage that belonged to seven dwarfs. However, they were not at home but had gone to the mines. When Little Snow White entered, she found everything tiny, but dainty and neat. There was a little table with a white tablecloth, and on it were seven little plates with seven tiny spoons, seven tiny knives and tiny forks, and seven tiny cups. In a row against the wall stood seven little beds recently covered with sheets. Since she was so hungry and thirsty, Little Snow White ate some vegetables and bread from each of the little plates and had a drop of wine to drink out of each of the tiny cups. And since she was so tired, she wanted to lay down and sleep. So she began trying out the beds, but none of them suited her until she found that the seventh one was just right. So she lay down in it and fell asleep.

When it turned night, the seven dwarfs returned home from their work and lit their seven little candles. Then they saw that someone had been in their house.

The first dwarf said: “Who’s been sitting in my chair?”

“Who’s eaten off my plate?” said the second.

“Who’s eaten some of my bread?” said the third.

“Who’s eaten some of my vegetables?” said the fourth.

“Who’s been using my little fork?” said the fifth.

“Who’s been cutting with my little knife?” said the sixth.

“Who’s had something to drink from my little cup?” said the seventh.

Then the first dwarf looked around and said, “Who’s been sleeping in my bed?”

Then the second cried out, “Someone’s been sleeping in my bed!”

And he was followed by each one of them until the seventh dwarf looked at his bed and saw Little Snow White lying there asleep. The others came running over to him, and they were so astounded that they screamed and fetched their seven little candles to observe Little Snow White.

“Oh, my Lord! Oh, my Lord!” they exclaimed. “How beautiful she is!”

They took great delight in her but didn’t wake her up. Instead, they let her sleep in the bed, while the seventh dwarf spent an hour in each one of his companions’ beds until the night had passed. When Little Snow White awoke, they asked her who she was and how she had managed to come to their cottage. Then she told them how her mother had wanted to have her killed, how the huntsman had spared her life, and how she had run all day until she had eventually arrived at their cottage.

Then the dwarfs took pity on her and said, “If you’ll keep house for us, cook, sew make the beds, wash, and knit, and if you’ll keep everything neat and orderly, you can stay with us, and we’ll provide you with everything you need. When we come home in the evening, dinner must be ready. During the day we’re in the mines and dig for gold. You’ll be alone and will have to watch out for the queen and not let anyone enter the cottage.”

In the meantime, the queen believed that she was once again the most beautiful woman in the land and stepped before her mirror and asked:

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is fairest of all?”

The mirror answered:

“You, my queen, may have a beauty quite rare,
but beyond the seven mountains, this I must tell,
Little Snow White is living quite well.
Indeed, she’s still a thousand times more fair.”

When the queen heard this, she was horrified, for she saw that she had been deceived and that the huntsman had not killed Little Snow White. Since nobody but the seven dwarfs lived in the seven mountains region, the queen knew immediately that Little Snow White was dwelling with them and began once again plotting ways to kill her. As long as the mirror

refused to say that she was the most beautiful woman in the land, she would remain upset. Since she couldn't be absolutely certain and didn't trust anyone, she disguised herself as an old peddler woman, painted her face so that nobody could recognize her, and went to the cottage of the seven dwarfs, where she knocked at the door and cried out, "Open up! Open up! I'm the old peddler woman. I've got pretty wares for sale!"

Little Snow White looked out of the window: "What do you have for sale?"

"Stay laces, dear child!" the old woman replied and took out a lace woven from yellow, red, and blue silk. "Do you want it?"

"Well, yes," said Little Snow White and thought, "I can certainly let this good old woman inside. She's honest enough."

So Little Snow White unbolted the door and bought the lace.

"My goodness, you're so sloppily laced up!" said the old woman. "Come, I'll lace you up properly for once."

Little Snow White stood in front of the old woman, who took the lace and tied it around Little Snow White so tightly that she lost her breath and fell down as if dead. Then the queen was satisfied and left.

Not long after nightfall the dwarfs came home, and when they saw their dear Snow White lying on the ground, they were horrified, for she seemed to be dead. They lifted her up, and when they saw that she was laced too tightly, they cut the stay lace in two. At once she began to breathe a little, and after a while she had fully revived.

"That was nobody else but the queen," they said. "She wanted to take your life. Be careful, and don't let anyone else enter the cottage."

Now the queen asked her mirror:

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is fairest of all?"

The mirror answered:

"You, my queen, may have a beauty quite rare,
But Little Snow White's alive, this I must tell,
She's with the dwarfs and doing quite well.
Indeed, she's still a thousand times more fair."

The queen was so horrified that all her blood rushed to her heart when she realized that Little Snow White was alive once again. So she began thinking day and night how she could put an end to Little Snow White. Finally, she made a poisoned comb, disguised herself in a completely different shape, and went off to the dwarfs' cottage once again. When she knocked on the door, however, Little Snow White called out: "I'm not allowed to let anyone enter!"

The queen then took out the comb, and when Little Snow White saw it shine and that the woman was someone entirely different from the one she had previously met, she opened the door and bought the comb.

"Come," said the peddler woman, "I'll also comb your hair."

But no sooner did the old woman stick the comb in Little Snow White's hair than the maiden fell down and was dead.

"Now you'll remain lying there," the queen said, and her heart had become lighter as she returned home.

However, the dwarfs came just in the nick of time. When they saw what had happened, they pulled the poison comb out of Little Snow White's hair, and she opened her eyes and was alive again. She promised the dwarfs that she would certainly not let anyone inside again.

Now the queen stepped in front of her mirror once more and asked:

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is fairest of all?"

The mirror answered:

"You, my queen, may have a beauty quite rare,
But Little Snow White's alive, this I must tell,
She's with the dwarfs and doing quite well.
Indeed, she's still a thousand times more fair."

When the queen heard this once again, she trembled and shook with rage. "Little Snow White shall die!" she exclaimed. "Even if it costs me my own life!"

Then she went into a secret chamber where no one was allowed to enter. Once inside she made a deadly poisonous apple. On the outside it looked

beautiful with red cheeks. Anyone who saw it would be enticed to take a bite. Thereafter, she disguised herself as a peasant woman, went to the dwarfs' cottage, and knocked on the door. Little Snow White looked and said "I'm not allowed to let anyone inside. The seven dwarfs have strictly forbidden me."

"Well, if you don't want to let me in, I can't force you," answered the peasant woman. "I'll surely get rid of my apples in time. But let me give you one to test."

"No," said Little Snow White. "I'm not allowed to take anything. The dwarfs won't let me."

"You're probably afraid," said the old woman. "Look, I'll cut the apple in two. You eat the beautiful red half."

However, the apple had been made with such cunning that only the red part was poisoned. When Little Snow White saw the peasant woman eating her half, and when her desire to taste the apple grew stronger, she finally let the peasant woman give her the other half through the window. As soon as she took a bite of the apple, she fell to the ground and was dead.

The queen rejoiced, went home, and asked the mirror:

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is the fairest of all?"

And the mirror answered:

"You, my queen, are now the fairest of all."

"Now I can rest in peace," she said. "Once again I'm the most beautiful in the land, and Snow White will remain dead this time."

When the dwarfs came home from the mines that evening, they found Little Snow White lying on the ground, and she was dead. They unlaced her and tried to find something poisonous in her hair, but nothing helped. They couldn't revive her. So they laid her on a bier, and all seven of them sat down beside it and wept and wept for three whole days. Then they intended to bury her, but she looked more alive than dead, and she still had such pretty red cheeks. So, instead they made a glass coffin and placed her inside so that she could easily be seen. Then they wrote her name on

the coffin in gold letters and added the family name. One of the dwarfs remained at home every day to keep watch over her.

So Little Snow White lay in the coffin for a long, long time but did not rot. She was still white as snow and red as blood, and if her eyes could have opened, they would have been black as ebony, for she lay there as if she were sleeping.

Now it happened that a prince came to the dwarfs' cottage one day and wanted to spend the night there. When he entered the room and saw Little Snow White lying in the coffin and the seven little candles casting their light right on her, he couldn't get enough of her beauty. Then he read the golden inscription and saw that she was a princess. So he asked the dwarfs to sell him the coffin with the dead Little Snow White inside. But they wouldn't accept all the gold in the world for it. Then he pleaded with them to give Little Snow White to him as a gift because he couldn't live without gazing upon her, and he would honor her and hold her in high regard as his most beloved in the world. Well, the dwarfs took pity on him and gave him the coffin, and the prince had it carried to his castle. It was then placed in his room, where he himself sat the entire day and couldn't take his eyes off her. And when he had to leave the room and couldn't see Little Snow White, he became sad. Indeed, he couldn't eat a thing unless he was standing near the coffin. However, the servants, who had to carry the coffin from place to place in the castle all the time, became angry about this, and at one time a servant opened the coffin, lifted Little Snow White into the air, and said: "Why must we be plagued with so much work all because of a dead maiden?" On saying this he shoved Little Snow White's back with his hand, and out popped the nasty piece of apple that had been stuck in Little Snow White's throat, and she was once again alive. As soon as this happened, she went to the prince, and when he saw his dear Little Snow White alive, he rejoiced so much that he didn't know what to do. Then they sat down at the dinner table and ate with delight.

The wedding was planned for the next day, and Snow White's godless mother was also invited to attend. When she now stepped before the mirror, she said:

“Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
who in this land is the fairest of all?”

And the mirror replied:

“You, my queen, may have a beauty quite rare,
but Little Snow White is a thousand times more fair.”

When she heard this, she was horrified and became so afraid, so very afraid that she didn't know what to do. However, her jealousy drove her so much that she wanted to be seen at the wedding. When she arrived, she saw that Little Snow White was the bride. Iron slippers were then heated over a fire. The queen had to put them on and dance in them, and her feet were miserably burned, but she had to keep dancing in them until she danced herself to death.

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SIMPLE HANS

Once a king lived happily with his daughter, who was his only child. Then, all of a sudden, she gave birth to a baby, and no one knew who the father was. For a long time the king didn't know what to do. At last he ordered the princess to take the child and go to the church. Once there, a lemon was to be placed in the hands of the child, and the boy was to walk about and offer it to a man. As soon as boy stopped and chose a man, they would know that he was child's father, and he would be declared the princess's husband. Everything was arranged accordingly, and the king also gave orders to allow only highborn people into the church.

However, there was a crooked little hunchback living in the city who was not particularly smart and was therefore called Simple Hans. Well, he managed to push his way into the church among the others without being noticed, and when the child offered the lemon, he handed it to Simple Hans. The princess was mortified, and the king was so upset that he had his daughter, the child, and Simple Hans stuck into a barrel, which was cast into the sea. The barrel soon floated off, and when they were alone



at sea, the princess groaned and said, "You nasty, impudent hunchback! You're to blame for my misfortune! Why did you force your way into the church? My child's of no concern to you."

"That's not true," said Simple Hans. "He does concern me because I once made a wish that you would have a child, and whatever I wish comes true."

"Well, if that's the case, wish us something to eat."

"That's easily done," replied Simple Hans, and he wished for a dish full of potatoes. The princess would have liked to have something better. Nevertheless, she was so hungry that she joined him in eating the potatoes. After they had satisfied their hunger, Simple Hans said, "Now I'll wish us a beautiful ship!"

No sooner had he said this than they were sitting on a splendid ship that contained more than enough to fulfill their desires. The helmsman guided the ship straight toward land, and when they went ashore, Simple Hans said, "Now I want a castle over there!"

Suddenly there was a magnificent castle standing there, along with servants dressed in golden uniforms. They led the princess and her child inside, and when they were in the middle of the main hall, Simple Hans said, "Now I wish to be a young and clever prince!"

All at once his hunchback disappeared, and he was handsome, upright, and kind. Indeed, the princess took such a great liking to him that she became his wife.

For a long time they lived happily together, and then one day the old king went out riding, lost his way, and arrived at their castle. He was puzzled because he had never seen it before and decided to enter. The princess recognized her father immediately, but he did not recognize her, for he thought she had drowned in the sea a long time ago. She treated him with a great deal of hospitality, and when he was about to return home, she secretly slipped a golden cup into his pocket. After he had ridden off, she sent a pair of knights after him. They were ordered to stop him and search him to see if he had stolen the golden cup. When they found it in his pocket, they brought him back. He swore to the princess that he hadn't stolen it and didn't know how it had gotten into his pocket.

“That’s why,” she said, “one must beware of rushing to judgment.” And she revealed to him that she was his daughter. The king rejoiced, and they all lived happily together, and after the king’s death, Simple Hans became king.

Once upon a time there was a miller who was poor, but he had a beautiful daughter. Now, one day he happened to talk to the king and said, “I have a daughter who knows the art of transforming straw into gold.”

So the king had the miller’s daughter summoned to him right away and ordered her to spin all the straw in a room into gold in one night, and if she couldn’t do this, she would die. Then she was locked in the room where she sat and wept. For the life of her, she didn’t have the slightest inkling of how to spin straw into gold. All of a sudden a little man entered the room and said, “What will you give me if I spin everything into gold?”

She took off her necklace and gave it to the little man, and he did what he promised. The next morning the king found the entire room filled with gold, but because of this, his heart grew even greedier, and he locked the miller’s daughter in another room full of straw that was even larger than the first, and she was to spin it all into gold. Then the little man came again, and she gave him a ring from one of her fingers, and everything was spun into gold.

However, on the third night the king had her locked again in another room that was larger than the other two and filled with straw.

“If you succeed, you shall become my wife,” he said.

Then the little man came again and spoke: “I’ll do everything for you one more time, but you must promise me your firstborn child that you have with the king.”

Out of desperation she promised him what he wanted, and when the king saw once again how the straw had been spun into gold, he took the miller’s beautiful daughter for his wife.

Soon thereafter the queen gave birth, and the little man appeared before her and demanded the promised child. However, the queen offered the little man all that she could and all the treasures of the kingdom if he would let her keep her child, but it was all in vain. Then the little man said, "In three days I'll come again to fetch the child. But if you know my name by then, you shall keep your child."

During the first and second nights the queen tried to think of the little man's name, but she wasn't able to come up with a name and became completely depressed. On the third day, however, the king returned home from hunting and told her, "I was out hunting the day before yesterday, and when I went deep into the dark forest, I came upon a small cottage, and in front of the house there was a ridiculous little man, hopping around as if he had only one leg and screeching:

"Today I'll brew, tomorrow I'll bake.
Soon I'll have the queen's namesake.
Oh, how hard it is to play my game,
for Rumpelstiltskin is my name!"

When the queen heard this, she rejoiced, and when the dangerous little man came, he asked, "What's my name, your Highness?" she responded first by guessing,

"Is your name Conrad?"

"No."

"Is your name Henry?"

"No."

"Is your name Rumpelstiltskin?"

"The devil told you that!" the little man screamed, and he ran off full of anger and never returned.

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SWEETHEART ROLAND

Once upon a time there was a mother who had one daughter of her own and hated her stepdaughter because she was a thousand times more beautiful and better than her own. One time the stepdaughter wore a

beautiful apron that the other daughter liked and coveted so much out of envy that she told her mother she wanted the apron and insisted that she get it for her.

“Be quiet, my dear child,” said the mother. “You shall have it soon. Your stepsister has long since deserved to die, and tonight, I want you to get into the rear of the bed and push her toward the front. Then I’ll come when she’s asleep and chop off her head.”

But the stepdaughter had been standing in a corner and had overheard everything. So she let the wicked daughter climb into bed first so she could lie down on the far side. But after she fell asleep, the other beautiful sister pushed her toward the front and took her place in the rear of the bed. During the night the old woman crept into the room. She felt around to see if someone was actually lying up front. Then she gripped an axe with both hands and began chopping until she chopped off her own child’s head.

After she had left the room, the maiden stood up and went to her sweetheart, whose name was Roland, and knocked at his door.

“Listen!” she cried out. “We must flee in haste. My stepmother killed her own daughter and thinks she actually killed me. When the sun rises and she sees what she’s done, I’ll be lost. So I’ve taken her magic wand to help ourselves along the way.”

Sweetheart Roland stood up, and before they left, they went first to take the dead head of the stepsister and let three drops of blood drip from it onto the floor, one in front of the bed, one in the kitchen, and one on the stairs. Then they ran off.

The next morning, when the mother got up, she called her daughter: “Come, you’ll get the apron now.”

But the daughter didn’t come.

“Where are you?”

“Here I am! On the stairs sweeping,” answered one of the drops of blood.

The old woman went out but saw no one.

“Where are you?”

“Here I am! In the kitchen warming myself,” the second drop of blood replied.

The old woman went into the kitchen, but she found no one there.

“Where are you?”

“Here I am! In bed sleeping.”

The old woman ran into the room, where she saw her own daughter on her bed swimming in blood. She was horrified and realized that she had been deceived. All at once she burst into anger and rushed to the window. Since she was a witch, she could see quite far into the world, and she spotted her stepdaughter fleeing with her sweetheart. They were already far away. So she put on her seven-league boots, and it didn't take her long before she had overtaken them. However, the maiden knew through the magic wand that they were being followed and turned herself into a lake and her sweetheart Roland into a duck that swam on it. When the stepmother arrived, she sat down on the bank of the lake and threw bread crumbs to lure the duck to shore. But it was all in vain, and by nightfall the old woman had to return home without having accomplished anything.

Meanwhile, the maiden and her sweetheart regained their natural forms and continued on their way. At daybreak, however, the witch pursued them once more. Then the maiden changed herself into a beautiful flower growing in the middle of a briar hedge, and her sweetheart was transformed into a fiddler. When the old woman arrived, she asked the fiddler whether she could pluck the beautiful flower.

“Of course,” he answered, “and I'll play a tune while you're doing it.”

So she crawled into the hedge to pluck it, and as she reached the middle of the hedge, he began to play a tune, and she was compelled to dance and dance without stopping so that the thorns tore the clothes from her body and scratched her so badly that blood flowed, and she died from the wounds.

Now they were both free, and Roland said to the maiden: “I want to go to my father and arrange for the wedding.”

“In the meantime I'll turn myself into a red stone and stay here and wait until you come back.”

Roland departed, and the maiden stood in the field as a red stone and waited for her sweetheart a long time, but he didn't return and had forgotten her. When he failed to come back, she grew sad, turned herself into a flower, and thought, “Someone will surely come along and trample me.”

But a shepherd found the flower, and since it was so beautiful, he took it with him and tucked it away in a chest. From that time on, amazing things began to happen in the shepherd's cottage. When he got up in the morning, all the work would already be done: the sweeping, dusting, a fire in the hearth. At noon when he came home, the food was cooked, and the table set, the meal served. He couldn't figure out how all this was happening, for he never saw a living soul in his cottage. Though it pleased him very much, he eventually became frightened and went to a wise woman for advice.

She told him that there was magic behind all this, and he should get up very early some morning and watch for anything that moved in the room. Then, if he saw something, he was to quickly throw a white cloth over it. The shepherd did as she told him, and on the following morning, he saw the chest open and the flower come out. Immediately he threw the white cloth over the flower, and suddenly the transformation came to an end and the beautiful maiden, whom her sweetheart Roland had forgotten, stood before him. The shepherd wanted to marry her, but she said, no, because she only wanted to serve him and clean his house. Soon thereafter she heard that Roland was about to hold a wedding and marry another maiden. It was customary at this event for every person who attended it to sing. So the faithful maiden also went, but she didn't want to sing until at last she was compelled to do so. As she began to sing, Roland recognized her right away, jumped up, and said that she was his true bride, and he didn't want anyone else but her. So he married her, and her sorrows came to an end while her joy began to thrive.

A certain king had a pleasure garden, and in this garden there was a tree that bore golden apples. Soon after the apples became ripe, one was found missing the very first night. The king became furious and ordered his gardener to keep watch under the tree every night. So the gardener commanded his eldest son to guard the tree, but he fell asleep at midnight, and the next night another apple was missing. So the gardener had his second

son stand guard the following night, but he, too, fell asleep at midnight, and in the morning yet another apple was missing. Now the third son wanted to stand guard, but the gardener wasn't satisfied at first. Finally, he relented, and the third son lay down under the tree and watched and watched, and when the clock struck midnight, the air was filled with noise, and a bird came flying. It was made entirely out of gold, and just as it was about to peck off an apple with its beak, the gardener's son stood up and hurriedly shot an arrow at the bird. However, the arrow didn't harm the bird other than costing it a feather as it quickly flew away. The next morning the golden feather was brought to the king, who immediately assembled his councilors, and everyone declared unanimously that a feather like this was worth more than the entire kingdom.

"One feather alone won't help me," said the king. "I want and must have the entire bird."

So the king's eldest son set out and was certain he'd find the golden bird. After he had gone a short distance, he came to a forest, and on the edge of the forest sat a fox. So the prince grabbed his rifle and took aim. But the fox started speaking: "Don't shoot! I'll give you some good advice if you hold your fire. I already know where you want to go. You want to catch the golden bird. This evening you'll come to a village where you'll see two inns facing each other. One will be brightly lit, with a great deal of merrymaking inside. Don't go into that place. Instead, go into the other inn, even though it looks dismal."

But the son thought, "How can an animal give me sensible advice?" and he took his rifle and pulled the trigger. However, his shot missed the fox, who stretched out his tail and dashed quickly into the forest. Then the eldest son continued his journey, and by evening he arrived at the village where the two inns were standing. In one of them there was singing and dancing, while the other appeared rather dismal and shabby. "I'd certainly be a fool," he thought, "if I were to stay at that dismal-looking inn instead of staying at this beautiful one here." So he went into the cheerful inn, lived to the hilt like a king, and forgot the bird and his home.

After some time had passed and the eldest son still hadn't returned home, the second son set out, and he, too, encountered the fox and received

good advice, but when he came to the two inns, he saw his brother at the window of the inn in which there were sounds of carousing. When his brother called out to him, he couldn't resist and wiled his time away in good cheer.

Some more months passed by, and now the youngest son also wanted to set out into the world, but his father refused to let him go. The king was most fond of him and was afraid that he would have a mishap and wouldn't return. However, his son wouldn't leave him in peace so that the king finally permitted his son to depart. At the edge of the forest, he, too, encountered the fox, who gave him the good advice. Since the young prince was good-natured and didn't attempt to harm the animal's life, the fox said: "Climb on my tail, and you'll get there more quickly."

No sooner did the prince sit down on the fox's tail than the fox began to run. And the fox went over sticks and stones so swiftly that the wind whistled through the prince's hair. When they came to the village, the prince got off the tail, followed the fox's good advice, and, without looking around, entered the shabbier inn and spent a quiet night there. The next morning he found the fox on his way once again, and the fox said to him: "If you go straight ahead, you'll eventually come to a castle. In front of this castle there's a whole regiment of soldiers lying on the ground, but don't worry about them, for they'll all be snoring and sleeping. Enter the castle and proceed until you come to a chamber where the golden bird is hanging in a wooden cage. Nearby you'll also find a magnificent golden cage hanging just for decoration. But be careful not to take the bird out of its shabby cage and put it into the good one. Otherwise, you'll be in for trouble."

Upon saying these words, the fox stretched out his tail again, and the prince sat down on it. The fox raced over sticks and stones so swiftly that the wind whistled through the prince's hair. When the young man arrived in front of the castle, everything was as the fox said it would be. He entered the last room, saw the golden bird sitting in its wooden cage and also a golden cage beside it. The three golden apples were lying about the room as well. The prince thought it would be ridiculous to leave the beautiful bird in the plain, ugly cage. So he opened the door, grabbed hold of the

bird, and put it into the golden cage. As soon as that happened, the bird uttered a dreadful cry that caused the soldiers to wake up, and soon they took the prince prisoner and led him to the king.

The next morning he was brought before the court, and after he confessed to everything, he was sentenced to death. However, the king said he would spare his life under one condition: the prince had to bring him the golden horse that ran faster than the wind. If he did, he would receive the golden bird as his reward.

The prince set out, but he was depressed and sighed. All of a sudden, however, the fox stood in front of him again and said: “You see, all this happened because you didn’t listen to me. However, if you listen to me, I’ll give you advice once again, this time how to get the golden horse. First, you must go straight ahead until you come to a castle where the horse is standing in the stable. There will be stable boys lying on the ground out front, but they’ll be snoring and sleeping, and you’ll be able to lead the golden horse out of its stall with ease. But make sure you put the poor wooden and leather saddle on the horse and not the golden one that’s hanging nearby.”

Then the youngest son sat down on the fox’s tail, and the fox raced over sticks and stones so swiftly that the wind whistled through the prince’s hair. Shortly after, everything happened as the fox said it would. The grooms snored and were holding golden saddles in their hands. When he saw the golden horse, he felt sorry for it and thought it would be a shame to put the poor saddle on it. So he decided to give the horse the one that he deserved. Yet, just as he was about to take a good saddle from one of the stable boys, the groom woke up, as did the others. Again he was captured and thrown into prison. The next morning he was sentenced to death again. However, his life would be spared and he would be granted the golden horse and the bird as well if he fetched the marvelously beautiful princess.

So the son sadly set out on his way, and soon the old fox was standing there again.

“Why didn’t you listen to me? You’d have the bird and the horse by now. Nevertheless, I’ll give you advice one more time. Now go straight out, and toward evening you’ll come to a castle. At midnight the princess

will go to the bathhouse to bathe herself. You're to go inside and give her a kiss. By doing this you'll be able to take her with you. But don't allow her to take leave of her parents."

The fox stretched out his tail and raced over sticks and stones so swiftly that the wind whistled through the prince's hair. When he arrived at the golden castle, it was just as the fox had said it would be. At night he gave the princess a kiss in the bathhouse, and she was ready to go with him, but she implored him with tears to let her say farewell to her parents. At first he refused, but when she kept on weeping and fell at his feet, he finally gave in. But no sooner did the princess approach her father than he and everyone else in the castle woke up, and the young man was taken prisoner.

The next morning the king said to him: "You may have my daughter only if you remove the mountain that's lying in front of my window and blocking my view. You have one week to perform this task."

This mountain, however, was so huge, so very huge, that it would have taken all the people in the world to carry it away. And after he had worked for seven whole days and saw how little he had accomplished, he became very worried. However, on the evening of the seventh day, the fox appeared and said, "Go lie down and get some sleep. I'll do the job for you."

The next morning, when the young man awoke, the mountain had vanished. So he went cheerfully to the king and told him that the mountain had been removed, and he was now to give him his daughter. So the king had to do this, and the two of them now set out together.

However, the fox came and said: "Now we must have all three—the princess, the horse, and the bird."

"Yes," said the young man. "If you can do all this, but it will be difficult for you."

"If you only listen, things will work out," the fox replied. "Now when you come to the king, who demanded the marvelously beautiful princess, tell him, 'Here she is.' There will be enormous rejoicing. So mount the golden horse that they must give you and shake hands with everyone and say good-bye. Make sure that the beautiful maiden is the last person, and when you have clasped her hand, swing her up to you in one motion and gallop away."

Everything went as planned, and the fox spoke once more to the young man: “Now, as you approach the castle where the golden bird’s being kept, I’ll remain with the princess before the gate. Then ride into the castle courtyard. They’ll see that the golden horse is the right one, and so they’ll carry out the golden bird. You remain sitting and tell them you want to see if the bird is the right one. As soon as you have the cage in your hand, you race away.”

Everything went well, and as soon as he had the bird, the princess got on the horse again, and they continued to ride through the vast forest. Then the fox came and said he wanted the young man to shoot him dead and cut off his head and paws. However, the young man absolutely refused.

“Well then,” said the fox, “at least I’ll give you one last piece of advice. Beware of two things: don’t buy flesh that’s bound for the gallows, and don’t sit on the edge of a well.”

“That’s not so difficult, if that’s all there’s to it.”

So now the young man continued his journey with the beautiful maiden until he finally came to the village where his two brothers had remained. All at once there was a great commotion and uproar. So he asked what was going on and was told that two men were about to be hanged. When he came closer to the scene, he saw that the men were his brothers, who had committed all sorts of terrible acts and had squandered all their possessions.

“Can’t they be pardoned in any way?” the young man asked.

“No, unless you’re willing to spend your money for these crooks and buy their freedom.”

The prince didn’t think twice about it and paid what they demanded. His brothers were set free, and he continued the journey in their company.

When they came to the forest where they had first met the fox, it was cool and lovely there, and the two brothers said, “Let’s go over to the well and rest awhile. We could also eat and drink.”

The young prince said yes, and during their conversation he forgot the fox’s warning and sat down on the edge of the well, not suspecting any evil-doing. But the two brothers pushed him backward down into the well, took the maiden, the horse, and the bird, and went home to the king.

“We’ve managed to capture all this, and we’ve brought you everything.”

There was great rejoicing, but the horse refused to eat, the bird didn’t sing, and the maiden sat and wept.

Meanwhile, the youngest brother lay down in the well that fortunately was dry, and even though he hadn’t broken any of his arms or legs, he couldn’t find his way out. Meanwhile the old fox came once again and scolded him for not listening because otherwise this would not have happened. “Nevertheless, I can’t help myself and must help you out. Grab my tail and hold on tightly.”

Then the fox pulled him up to the top. When they were above, the fox said: “Your brothers have posted guards who are to kill you if you cross the border.”

So the prince put on the clothes of a poor man and succeeded in reaching the king’s court without being recognized. No sooner was he there than the bird began to sing, the horse began to eat, and the princess stopped weeping. Then the prince appeared before the king and revealed his brothers’ crime and how everything had happened. So the brothers were seized and executed, and he received the princess. Later, after his father’s death, he became king as well.

Many years later the prince went walking through the forest again and encountered the old fox, who implored him desperately to shoot him dead and cut off his head and paws. This time the prince did it, and no sooner was it done than the fox turned into none other than the brother of the beautiful princess and was finally released from a magic spell.

Once upon a time there was a deer about to give birth, and she asked the fox to be the godfather. However, the fox invited the sparrow to be godfather as well, and the sparrow also wanted to invite his special good friend the house dog to be godfather. However, the dog’s master had tied him up with a rope because the dog had returned home very drunk from a wedding. The sparrow thought that this was not a problem and pecked

and pecked at the rope one thread after the other as long as it took for the dog to be released. Now they went together to the godfathers' banquet and enjoyed themselves very much, because there was plenty to eat and drink there. The dog, however, didn't pay attention and drank too much wine again. When they stood up, his head was so heavy that he could barely stand on his four legs. Nevertheless, he staggered part of the way toward home. Finally, however, he fell over and remained lying in the middle of the road. Just then a carter came and wanted to drive over him with his cart.

"Carter, don't do that," the sparrow cried out, "or you'll pay for it with your life!"

However, the carter didn't listen to him. Instead, he whipped the horses and drove the horses right over the dog so that the wheels broke the dog's bones. The fox and the sparrow dragged the godfather home, and when dog's master saw him, he said: "He's dead," and gave him to the carter to bury.

Now, the carter thought that the dog's skin was still useful. So he loaded the dog onto his cart and drove away. However, the sparrow flew nearby and yelled out: "Carter, you'll pay for this with your life! Carter, you'll pay for this with your life!"

The carter was angry at the little bird because he thought he was being taken for a fool. So he grabbed his axe and tried to hit the sparrow, who flew higher into the air. Instead of hitting the sparrow, the carter hit his horse's head so that the horse fell down dead. The carter had to leave it lying there and drive on with the other two horses. Then the sparrow returned and sat down on the head of another horse.

"Carter, you'll pay for this with your life!"

The carter ran toward the bird and yelled: "I've got you!" but as he tried to hit the sparrow, he struck his horse on the head so that it fell over dead. Now there was only one horse left. The sparrow didn't wait long and sat down on the head of the third horse and cried out: "Carter, you'll pay for this with your life!"

But the carter was now so furious that he didn't think about what he was doing and just swung his axe randomly. Now all his three horses had been beaten to death, and he had to leave the cart standing there. Angry

and vitriolic he went home and sat down behind the oven. But the sparrow had flown after him, sat down in front of the window, and cried out: “Carter, you’ll pay for this with your life!”

The carter grabbed his axe and smashed the window, but he didn’t hit the sparrow. Now the bird hopped inside the house, sat down on top of the oven, and cried out: “Carter, you’ll pay for this with your life!”

Crazy and blind with rage he chopped the entire oven to pieces, and as the sparrow flew from one place to another, the carter smashed all the household utensils, mirrors, chairs, benches, table, and the walls of the house. Finally, he grabbed hold of the sparrow and said: “Now I’ve got you!” He stuck the bird into his mouth and swallowed it whole. However, when the sparrow was in the carter’s body, it began to flap its wings, and it fluttered up to the carter’s mouth, stuck its head outside, and cried out: “Carter, you’ll pay for this with your life!”

Well now the carter gave the axe to his wife and commanded; “Wife, strike the bird in my mouth and kill it!”

But the wife missed her mark, and instead she struck her husband in the head so that he immediately fell down the ground dead, while the sparrow flew out and away.

59

PRINCE SWAN

There was once a maiden all alone in the middle of a large forest. Suddenly, a swan came flying up to her. It had a ball of yarn and said: “I’m not a swan. I’m an enchanted prince, and if you unravel the yarn to which I’m attached, then I’ll be released from a spell. But take care that you don’t break it in two. Otherwise, I won’t be able to return to my kingdom and won’t be saved. If you unravel the yarn, you’ll become my bride.”

The maiden took the yarn, and the swan climbed into the sky. The maiden unraveled the yarn easily, and she unraveled and unraveled the entire day so that the end of the yarn could already be seen. However, just then it unfortunately became caught on a thorn bush and broke in two. The maiden was very distressed and wept. Since it was turning night, and

the wind was blowing so loudly in the forest, she became afraid and began to run as fast as she could. And as she was running, she saw a small light and rushed toward it. There she found a house and knocked on the door. A little old woman came out and was astounded to see a maiden standing before her door.

“Oh, my child,” she said. “Where are you coming from so late in the night?”

“Please, may I have a place to sleep for the night and also some food?” she asked. “I’ve lost my way in the forest.”

“This is a difficult situation,” the old woman replied. “I’d gladly give you what you want, but my husband is a cannibal. If he finds you, he’ll eat you. There’s no mercy. But if you remain outside, the wild animals will eat you. So I’ll see if I can help you get through this.”

The old woman let her enter, gave her some food to eat, and then hid her beneath the bed. The cannibal always came home before midnight right after the sun had fully set and left right before sunrise. So it wasn’t long before he entered and said: “I smell, I smell human flesh!” And he searched around the room until he reached under the bed and dragged the maiden out. “Now this will make for a good snack!”

But the old woman pleaded and pleaded for the maiden’s life until he promised to let her live overnight and to eat her for his breakfast. However, the old woman woke the maiden before sunrise.

“Hurry, and get away before my husband awakes. Here’s a golden spinning wheel for you as a gift you’re to cherish. My name is *Sun*.”

The maiden went away and in the evening she came to another house, and the same thing happened there that happened the previous night. At her departure the second old woman gave her a golden spindle and said: “My name is *Moon*.”

On the third evening she came to a third house, where the old woman gave her a golden reel and said: “My name is *Star*.”

And she also informed her that even though the yarn hadn’t been completely unraveled, enough had been unraveled so that Prince Swan had been able to reach his kingdom where he was the king. In fact, he was already married and lived in great splendor on the glass mountain. Then

she said: “You’ll reach the mountain this evening, but a dragon and a lion are lying in front and are protecting it. That’s why you must take this bread and bacon to pacify them.”

And everything happened just as she said. The maiden threw the bread and bacon into the jaws of the monsters, and they let her pass. When she came to the castle gate, however, the guards wouldn’t let her enter. So she sat down in front of the gate and began to spin on her little golden wheel. The queen peered down from above and was pleased by the beautiful little wheel. So she went down and asked if she could have it. The maiden told her that she could have it if she could spend the night next to the king’s bedroom. The queen agreed, and the maiden was led upstairs to a room. Now everything that was spoken in this room could be heard in the king’s bedroom. So when it was night and the king was in his bed, the maiden sang:

“Doesn’t King Swan still think of me?
His faithful Julianne, his bride to be?
She’s come from afar where she’s seen all three,
Sun, moon, and star, and faced two beasts.
Won’t King Swan now wake up at least?”

But the king didn’t hear her because the cunning queen had been afraid of the maiden and had given the king a sleeping potion. So he slept soundly and didn’t hear the maiden and all that she had revealed. In the morning, all her efforts had been lost, and the maiden had to return to the gate and sit down and spin with her second spindle, which also pleased the queen. So the maiden gave it to her with the same condition that she would be allowed to spend the night next to the king’s bedroom, where she once again sang:

“Doesn’t King Swan still think of me?
His faithful Julianne, his bride to be?
She’s come from afar where she’s seen all three,
Sun, moon, and star, and faced two beasts.
Won’t King Swan now wake up at least?”

But the king slept soundly due to the sleeping potion, and so the maiden lost her spindle. On the third morning she sat down with her golden reel and kept winding it. The queen wanted this precious object as well and promised the maiden that she could spend another night next to the king's bedroom. However, the maiden had discovered the queen's deception and asked the king's servant to give the king something else to drink that evening. Then she began to sing again:

“Doesn't King Swan still think of me?
His faithful Julianne, his bride to be?
She's come from afar where she's seen all three,
Sun, moon, and star, and faced two beasts.
Won't King Swan now wake up at least?”

Well, the king awoke when he heard her voice, and he recognized her and asked the queen: “If someone loses a key and then finds it again, which key does one keep, the old or the new?”

The queen replied: “Certainly, the old one.”

“Well then,” he said, “you can no longer be my wife. I've found my first bride again.”

The next morning the queen had to return to her father's realm, and the king married his true bride, and they lived happily together until they died.

60

THE GOLDEN EGG

Once upon a time there were a couple of poor broom-makers, and they had a little sister to support. They had just barely enough to lead a miserable life. Every day they had to go into the forest to search for brushwood, and later after they had bound the brooms, the little sister sold them.

One time they went into the forest, and the youngest brother climbed a birch tree and wanted to chop off the branches. All of a sudden he found a nest, and a dark-colored little bird was sitting in it. He could see something glittering between its feathers, and since the little bird didn't fly away and was also not shy, he lifted the bird's wing and found a golden egg. So he

took it and climbed down the tree. They were delighted by their discovery and brought it to the goldsmith, who told them that it was genuine gold and gave them money for it.

The next morning they went into the forest again and found another golden egg. The little bird was patient and let them take it just like the first time. All this continued for a long time. Every morning they fetched a golden egg and were soon rich. However, one morning the bird said: "From now on I'm not going to lay any more eggs, but bring me to the goldsmith, and you'll all be fortunate."

The broom-makers did what she said and brought the bird to the goldsmith. When it was alone with him, the bird sang:

"Whoever eats my heart
will soon be king and very smart.
Whoever eats my liver, whether young or old,
Will find each morning a bag full of gold."

When the goldsmith heard that, he called for the two young broom-makers and said: "Let me have the bird, and I'll marry your little sister."

The two young men said yes, and the wedding was soon held. Then the goldsmith said: "For my wedding day I want to eat the bird. So you two roast the bird on a stake and be careful that you don't ruin it. Then bring it to me when it's done."

The goldsmith intended to take out the heart and liver and eat them. The two brothers stood at the fire and turned the spit, and when they kept turning it and the bird was almost done roasting, a little piece fell out.

"Hey," said one of the brothers, "I've got to try that!" and he ate it up.

Soon thereafter another little piece fell out.

"That's for me," said the other brother, and he tasted it. They had eaten the little heart and the little liver, and they had no idea how blessed they were by all this.

When the bird had been completely roasted, they carried it to the wedding table. The goldsmith sliced it open and wanted to eat the heart and liver as quickly as possible, but they had both vanished. All at once he became dreadfully angry and screamed: "Who ate the bird's heart and liver?"

The two broom-makers replied: "That must have been us. Two small pieces fell out as we were turning the spit. So we ate them."

"Well, if you've eaten the heart and liver, then you can keep your sister!"

And in his rage he chased them all away.—

[*Fragment.*]

61

THE TAILOR WHO SOON BECAME RICH

Once, during the winter, a poor tailor crossed over the field to visit his brother. Along the way he found a frozen thrush. "Whatever's bigger than a louse," the tailor said to himself, "that's what the tailor carries into his house!" So he picked up the thrush and stuck it into his coat. When he reached his brother's house, he decided to look first through the window to see if they were home. All at once he saw a fat parson sitting near his sister-in-law at the table. There was a roast and a bottle of wine sitting on the table. Meanwhile, the tailor's brother was about to return home. He knocked at the door and wanted to enter. From the outside the tailor saw how the woman quickly hid the parson in a crate, stuck the roast into the oven, and shoved the wine into the bed. Now since his brother had entered, the tailor didn't wait any longer. He went into the house and greeted his sister-in-law and his brother. Then he sat down on the crate in which the parson was hiding.

"Wife, I'm hungry. Do you have anything to eat?" the husband asked.

"No, I'm sorry. There's nothing at all in the house today."

But the tailor pulled out his frozen thrush, and the brother cried out, "My! What are you doing with that frozen thrush?"

"Hey! Don't you know that this thrush is worth a lot of money! It can tell your future and your fortune!"

"Well, then let it tell our future and our fortune."

The tailor placed it next to his ear and said: "The thrush told me that there's a dish full of roast meat in the oven."

The husband went to the oven and found the roast meat.

"What else did the thrush say to you?"

“There’s a bottle of wine in the bed.”

“My! I’d like to have this thrush. Sell it to me.”

“You can have it if you give me this crate that I’m sitting on.”

The brother wanted to give it to him right away, but his wife said, “No, I’m against it. I’m much too fond of this crate. I’m not going to give it away.”

However, her husband said: “What? Are you, dumb or something? What use is this old crate to you?”

So the husband gave his brother the crate for the bird, and the tailor took the crate on a wheelbarrow and began walking on the road. Along the way he said: “I’m going to take the crate and throw it into the water! I’m going to take the crate and throw it into the water!” Finally, the parson began moving inside and said: “You know what’s in the crate. Let me out, and I’ll give you 50 gold coins.”

“All right, I’ll do it for that amount.”

So he let him out and went home with the money. The people were puzzled as to where he had earned so much money, and he said, “Let me tell you. The skins of animals have become very expensive. So I slaughtered my old cow and received a good deal of money in return.”

Since the villagers also wanted to profit from this, they went out and cut the throats of all their oxen, cows, and sheep and carried their fur and skins to the city, where, however, they received precious little money for them because there had suddenly been so many skins and fur for sale. Well, the farmers became infuriated about their loss and threw dirt and some other rubbish at the tailor’s door. However, he put everything into his crate, went to a tavern in the city, and asked the tavern keeper whether he might store the crate at his place for a while because it contained many valuable things and the crate wasn’t safe at his home. The tavern keeper said he’d gladly do it and let the tailor store the crate at the tavern.

Some time later the tailor returned and asked for his crate, and when he opened it to see whether everything was in it, he saw that it was full of dirt. So he threw a violent fit, cursed the tavern keeper, and threatened to take him to court. In response the tavern keeper, who was concerned about his reputation and was afraid about his credit rating, willingly gave

him 100 gold coins. The farmers were once again furious that everything that caused problems for the tailor he managed to turn into profit. So they took the crate and forced him inside. Then they threw the crate into the river and let it float off. The tailor kept quiet for a while until he came to an edge of land that stuck out in the river. Then he cried out very loudly: “No, I’m not going to do it! I won’t do it! Even if the whole world wants it to be done!”

A shepherd heard his shouting and asked: “What is it that you don’t want to do?”

“Oh,” responded the tailor, “there’s a king who has a foolish whim and insists that whoever’s able to swim down the river in this crate is to marry his only daughter, but I’ve made up my mind not to do it even if the entire world wants it.”

“Listen, is it possible that someone else can replace you in the crate and can get the princess?”

“Oh, yes, that’s also possible.”

“Then I’ll replace you.”

So the tailor stepped out of the crate, and the shepherd got in. The tailor closed the crate, and soon after the shepherd went down under in the crate. Meanwhile, the tailor took the shepherd’s entire herd of sheep and drove them home.

The farmers wondered how he happened to return. Moreover, they were puzzled that he now had so many sheep. So the tailor explained to them: “I had sunk into the water, deep, deep down! When I got to the bottom, I found this entire herd and took the sheep back up with me.”

The farmers wanted to fetch some sheep as well, and they all went together to the river. The sky was completely blue on this day with small white clouds, and consequently, when they looked into the water, they cried out: “We already see the lambs at the bottom!”

“I want to be the first one under,” the mayor said. “I’ll look around, and if everything’s all right, I’ll call you.”

As he dove into the river, the water rustled and murmured—*plump!* The others thought that he was calling out to them to “Jump!” So they all jumped in one after another. In the end the entire village belonged to the tailor.

There was once a man who lived in a forest with his three sons and beautiful daughter. One day a golden coach drawn by six horses and attended by several servants came driving up to his house. After the coach stopped a king stepped out and asked him if he could have his daughter for his wife. The man was happy that his daughter would benefit from such a stroke of good fortune and immediately said yes. There was nothing objectionable about the suitor except for his beard, which was totally blue and made one shudder somewhat whenever one looked at it. At first the maiden also felt frightened by it and resisted marrying him. But her father kept urging her, and finally she consented. However, her fear was so great that she first went to her brothers, took them aside, and said, "Dear brothers, if you hear me scream, leave everything standing or lying wherever you are, and come to my aid."

The brothers kissed her and promised to do this. "Farewell, dear sister. If we hear your voice, we'll jump on our horses and soon be at your side."

Then she got into the coach, sat down next to Bluebeard, and drove away with him. When she reached his castle, she found everything splendid, and whatever the queen desired was fulfilled. They would have been very happy together if she had only been able to have accustomed herself to the king's blue beard. However, whenever she saw it, she felt frightened.

After some time had passed, he said to her, "I must go on a long journey. Here are the keys to the entire castle. You can open all the rooms and look at everything. But I forbid you to open one particular room, which this little golden key can unlock. If you open it, you will pay for it with your life."

She took the key and promised to obey him. Once he had departed, she opened one door after another and saw so many treasures and magnificent things that she thought they must have been gathered from all over the world. Soon nothing was left but the forbidden room. Since the key was made of gold, she believed that the most precious things were probably

kept there. Her curiosity began to gnaw at her, and she certainly would have passed over all the other rooms if she could have only seen what was in this one. At last her desire became so great that she took the key and went to the room. "Who can possibly see when I open it?" she said to herself. "I'll just glance inside." Then she unlocked the room, and when the door opened, a stream of blood flowed toward her, and she saw dead women hanging along all the walls, some only skeletons. Her horror was so tremendous that she immediately slammed the door, but the key popped out of the lock and fell into the blood. Swiftly she picked it up and tried to wipe away the blood, but to no avail. When she wiped the blood away on one side, it appeared on the other. She sat down, rubbed the key throughout the day, and tried everything possible, but nothing helped: the bloodstains could not be erased. Finally, in the evening she stuck it into some hay, which was supposed to be able to absorb blood.

The following day Bluebeard came back, and the first thing he requested was the bunch of keys. Her heart pounded as she brought the keys, and she hoped that he wouldn't notice that the golden one was missing. However, he counted all of them, and when he was finished, he said, "Where's the key to the secret room?"

As he said this, he looked straight into her eyes, causing her to blush red as blood.

"It's upstairs," she answered. "I misplaced it. Tomorrow I'll go and look for it."

"You'd better go now, dear wife. I need it today."

"Oh, I might as well tell you. I lost it in the hay. I'll have to go and search for it first."

"You haven't lost it," Bluebeard said angrily. "You stuck it there so the hay would absorb the bloodstains. It's clear that you've disobeyed my command and entered the room. Now, you'll enter the room whether you want to or not."

Then he ordered her to fetch the key, which was still stained with blood.

"Now, prepare yourself for your death. You shall die today," Bluebeard declared. He fetched his big knife and took her to the threshold of the house.

“Just let me say my prayers before I die,” she said.

“All right. Go ahead, but you’d better hurry. I don’t have much time to waste.”

She ran upstairs and cried out of the window as loud as she could, “Brothers, my dear brothers! Come help me!”

The brothers were sitting in the forest and drinking some cool wine. The youngest said, “I think I heard our sister’s voice. Let’s go! We must hurry and help her!”

They jumped on their horses and rode like thunder and lightning. Meanwhile, their sister was on her knees, praying in fear.

“Well, are you almost done?” Bluebeard called from below, and she heard him sharpening his knife on the bottom step. She looked out the window but could only see a cloud of dust as if a herd were coming. So she screamed once again, “Brothers, my dear brothers! Come help me!”

And her fear became greater and greater when Bluebeard called, “If you don’t come down soon, I’ll be up to get you. My knife’s been sharpened!”

She looked out the window again and saw her three brothers riding across the field as though they were birds flying through the air. For the third time she screamed desperately and with all her might, “Brothers, my dear brothers! Come help me!”

The youngest brother was already so near that she could hear his voice. “Calm yourself. Another moment, dear sister, and we’ll be at your side!”

But Bluebeard cried out, “That’s enough praying! I’m not going to wait any longer. If you don’t come, I’m going to fetch you.”

“Oh, just let me pray for my three dear brothers!”

However, he wouldn’t listen to her. Instead, he went upstairs and dragged her down. Then he grabbed her by the hair and was about to plunge the knife into her heart when the three brothers knocked at the door, charged inside, and tore their sister out of his hands. They then drew out their sabers and cut him down. Afterward he was hung up in the bloody chamber next to the women he had killed. Later, the brothers took their dear sister home with them, and all of Bluebeard’s treasures belonged to her.

Once upon a time there lived a poor man and a poor woman who had nothing but a little hut. The husband was a fisherman, and one day, as he was sitting by the water's edge and had cast out his net, he caught a golden fish, and the fish said: "If you throw me back into the water, I'll turn your little hut into a splendid castle, and in the castle there will be a cupboard. When you open it, there'll be dishes of boiled and roasted meat in them, as much as you desire. But you may not tell anyone in the world how you came by your good fortune, otherwise, you will lose it all."

The fisherman threw the golden fish back into the water, and when he came home, a huge castle was standing where otherwise his hut usually stood, and his wife sat in the middle of a splendid room. The man was very pleased by this, but he also wanted to eat something.

"Wife, give me something to eat," he said. "I'm tremendously hungry."

However, his wife answered: "I don't have a thing and can't find anything in this large castle."

"Just go over there to the cupboard."

When his wife opened the cupboard, she found cake, meat, fruit, and wine.

"What more could my heart desire?" His wife was astonished, and then she said: "Tell me, where in the world has this treasure of riches come from all of a sudden?"

"I'm not allowed to tell you. If I tell you, our good fortune will vanish."

After he said this, his wife became only more curious, and she kept asking him and tormenting him and didn't allow him any peace day and night until he finally revealed to her that everything came from a golden fish. No sooner had he said this than the castle and all the rich treasures vanished, and the fisherman and his wife were sitting once again in the old fishing hut.

Now the man had to resume his work all over again, and he fished and fished until he caught the golden fish once more. The fish promised the fisherman again that, if he let it go free, the fish would give him the beautiful castle again and the cupboard full of boiled and roasted meat but only on condition that he remain silent about who granted this favor. Well, the

fisherman held out for a while but eventually his wife tormented him so drastically that he revealed the secret, and in that very moment they sat once again in their shabby hut.

So the husband went fishing again, and he fished and caught the golden fish a third time.

“Listen,” said the fish. “Take me home with you and cut me into six pieces. Give two to your wife to eat, two to your horse, and plant two in the ground. You’ll reap a blessing by doing this. Your wife will give birth to two golden children, The horse will produce two golden foals. And two golden lilies will grow from the earth.”

The fisherman obeyed, and the fish’s prophecy came true. Soon the two golden children grew and became strong young men. “Father,” they said, “we want to set out into the world. We’ll mount our golden horses, and you’ll be able to see from the golden lilies how we are doing. If they are fresh, then we are healthy. If they wilt, then we’re sick. If they perish, then we shall be dead.”

Upon saying this they rode off and came to an inn where there were many people inside, and when the people saw the two golden children on the golden horses, they began to make fun of them. In turn, the young men became angry, and one of them became ashamed, turned around, and rode home. However, the other continued to ride on and came to a forest. But the people outside the forest told him that he shouldn’t enter because it was full of robbers, and they would attack him. But the golden boy wouldn’t let himself be scared by that and said: “I must and shall go through the forest!”

Then he took a bearskin and covered himself and his horse with it so that nothing more of the gold could be seen, and he then rode into the forest. Soon thereafter he heard something calling out in the bushes: “Here’s one!”

Then another voice spoke: “Let him go. What should we do with a bearskin? He’s as poor and empty-handed as a church mouse!”

So this is how the golden young man escaped the robbers and rode into a village where he saw a maiden who was so beautiful that he couldn’t imagine any other maiden as beautiful as she was in the whole world. So he asked her to marry him, and the maiden said yes, and she would remain true to him for the rest of her life. So they held the wedding and were happy. Then the bride’s father came home, and when he saw that his daughter had married a loafer in a bearskin (for he hadn’t taken off his bearskin), he became angry

and wanted to murder the bridegroom. However, the bride pleaded as best she could and told her father that she loved the man in the bearskin very much, and after all, he was her husband! Finally, the father calmed down, and the next morning he got up and wanted to see his son-in-law one more time, and all at once he saw a splendid, golden young man lying in bed. But the bridegroom had dreamed that he should go hunting after a magnificent stag, and when he awoke, he wanted to go into the forest to hunt this stag. His newlywed wife implored him to stay there and was afraid that something might happen to him. However, he said: "I must and shall go off."

Upon saying this he got up and went into the forest. Soon he saw a proud stag standing before him just as in his dream. But when he took aim and was about to shoot, the stag began to flee. The golden man went after him and followed him over ditches and through bushes the entire day and wasn't tired. Yet, the deer evaded him, and the young man soon found himself in front of a witch's house. He called out and asked whether she had seen the stag. She answered, "yes," while the witch's small dog kept barking at him without stopping. So he became angry and wanted to shoot it. When the witch saw this, she changed the young man into a millstone. And at that very same moment the golden lily perished at the golden youth's home. When the other brother saw this, he mounted his golden steed and raced away and came upon the witch. He threatened her with death unless she restored his brother to his natural form. So the witch had to obey, and the two brothers rode home together, the first one to his bride, and the other to his father. In the meantime, the golden lily revived itself, and if the lilies haven't perished, then both of them are still standing.

The White Dove

There was once a splendid pear tree that stood in front of a king's castle, and each year it produced the most beautiful fruit. However, as soon as the pears became ripe, they were taken that very night, and nobody knew who the thief was.

Now, the king had three sons, and the youngest among them was considered simple-minded and was called Simpleton. The oldest was ordered by the king to guard the tree for one year so that the thief could be caught. He did this and watched every night. Soon, the fruit was in full bloom and was full of fruit, and as the pears began to turn ripe, he kept watch even more diligently. Finally, the pears were completely ripe and were to be picked the next day. However, on the last night, the king's son became drowsy and fell asleep, and when he awoke, every single one of the pears was gone. Only the leaves were left.

Then the king commanded the second son to keep watch for a year. However, he didn't fare any better than his older brother. On the last night he couldn't fend off sleep, and the next morning, all the pears had been picked.

Finally, the king ordered Simpleton to keep watch for a year. Everyone at the king's court laughed about this. Nevertheless, Simpleton kept watch, and in the last night he resisted sleep and saw how a white dove came and carried off the pears one by one. As the dove made off with the last one, Simpleton stood up and followed it to the top of a high mountain, where it disappeared into a crack along the cliffs. Simpleton looked around him, and suddenly a little gray man was standing next to him.

"God bless you," said Simpleton.

"God has already blessed me in this very moment through your words," answered the little gray man. "You have released me from a magic spell. Now, if you climb down the cliff, your fortune will be made."

So Simpleton climbed down the rocks. Many steps led him to the bottom, where he saw the white dove trapped and entangled in a spider's web. When the bird caught sight of him, it ripped through the web, and after the last thread had been torn, a beautiful princess stood before him. Simpleton had also released her from a spell, and she became his wife, and he, a rich king, who ruled his country with wisdom.

The Queen Bee

Once two princes went forth in search of adventure, and after they fell into a wild, decadent way of life, they never returned home again. Their

youngest brother, who was called Simpleton, went out to look for them, but when he finally found them, they ridiculed him for thinking that he, so naïve as he was, could make his way in the world when they, who were much more clever, had not been able to succeed.

After a while the three of them traveled together and came to an anthill. The two oldest wanted to smash it and watch the little ants crawl around in fright and carry away their eggs, but Simpleton said, "Leave the little creatures in peace. I won't let you disturb them."

So they continued on their way and came to a lake where a great many ducks were swimming. The two brothers wanted to catch a few and roast them, but Simpleton said again, "Leave the creatures in peace. I won't let you kill them."

Finally, they came to a beehive, and there was so much honey in the hive that it had dripped down the tree trunk. The two older brothers wanted to build a fire beneath it and suffocate the bees to get at the honey. However, Simpleton prevented them again and said, "Leave the creatures in peace. I won't let you burn them."

Soon the three brothers came to a castle, and they saw nothing but stone horses standing in the stables. Not a living soul could be seen. They went through all the halls until they reached the end, where there was a door with three locks hanging on it. In the middle of the door there was a peephole through which one could look into the room, and they saw a little gray man sitting at a table. They called to him once, then twice, but he didn't hear them. Finally, they called a third time, and he got up and came out. However, he didn't say a word. Instead, he just led them to a table richly spread with food, and after they had something to eat and drink, he brought each one to his own bedroom.

The next morning the little gray man went to the oldest brother, beckoned to him, and conducted him to a stone tablet on which were inscribed three tasks that had to be performed if the castle was to be disenchanting. The first task involved gathering one thousand pearls that were lying in the moss of the forest. They belonged to the king's daughter and had to be picked up from the moss before sundown. If one single pearl were to be missing, the seeker would be turned to stone.

The prince went to the moss and searched the entire day, but when the day drew to an end, he had found only a hundred. Consequently, he was turned into stone. The next day the second brother undertook the adventure, but he didn't fare much better than the oldest: he found only two hundred pearls and was turned into stone. Finally, it was Simpleton's turn to search for the pearls in the moss. However, since it was so difficult to find them and everything went so slowly, he sat down on a stone and began to weep. While he was sitting on the stone and weeping, the king of the ants whose life he had once saved came along with five thousand ants, and it didn't take long before the little creatures had gathered the pearls together and stacked them in a pile.

Now, the second task involved fetching the key to the bedroom of the king's daughter from the lake. When Simpleton came to the lake, the ducks whose lives he had once saved came swimming toward him and then dived down to fetch the key from the bottom of the lake.

Next came the third task, which was the hardest. The king had three daughters who lay asleep, and Simpleton had to pick out the youngest and the loveliest. However, they all looked exactly alike, and the only difference between them was that they each had eaten a different kind of sweet before falling asleep: the oldest had eaten a piece of sugar, the second a little syrup, the youngest a spoonful of honey. Just then the queen bee whom Simpleton had protected from the fire came along and tested the lips of all three princesses. At last she settled on the mouth of the princess who had eaten honey, and thus the prince was able to recognize the right daughter. Now the magic spell was broken, and everyone was set free from the deep sleep. All those who had been turned into stone regained their human form. Simpleton married the youngest and loveliest daughter and became king after her father's death, while his two brothers were married to the other two sisters.

The Three Feathers

Once upon a time there was a king who decided to send his three sons off into the world. Whoever would bring him the finest woven linen was to take over the realm after his death. Consequently, he went outside in front

of the castle and blew three feathers into the air so that they would know in what direction they should go, and he told each one to follow the flight of his feather.

One feather flew to the west and was followed by the eldest son. The next to the east was followed by the second son. However, the third feather flew and fell on a stone not far from the palace. So the third son, the Simpleton, had to remain behind. His two brothers made fun of him and said that he should search for the linen beneath the stone.

Meanwhile Simpleton sat down on the stone and wept, and as he swayed back and forth, the stone slid away, and beneath it was a marble slab with a ring on top. Simpleton lifted the slab and discovered some stairs that led below. So he went down and came to a subterranean vault, where he found a maiden sitting and weaving flax. She asked him why his eyes were so wet from tears, and he revealed his sorrows to her and told her that he had to find the finest woven linen and had not been able to set out and search for it. Then the maiden reeled off her yarn, and all at once he saw the most splendid woven linen, and she told him to bring it up to his father.

When he came up from the ground, he had already been gone for a long time, and his brothers had just returned and thought that they had surely brought the finest woven linen back to their father. However, after each one of them showed their linen, Simpleton's turned out to be much finer, and the realm would have been his, but the two brothers were not satisfied and insisted that their father set another condition. So the king demanded the most beautiful carpet and once again blew three feathers into the air, and the third fell on the stone again. So Simpleton was prevented from setting out while the others went to the east and the west.

Simpleton lifted the stone and went down to the vault again and found the maiden weaving a marvelously beautiful carpet out of blazing colors, and when she was done, she said: "I made this for you. Carry it up to your father. No one in the world will have such a magnificent carpet."

So he appeared before his father and once again surpassed his brothers, who had brought the most beautiful carpets from many different countries. And they insisted again that their father set another condition as to who would inherit the realm, and the king now demanded that they must

bring the most beautiful woman back home. The feathers were blown once more, and Simpleton's landed on the stone. So he went beneath the ground and complained to the maiden how his father had once more set a difficult condition. But the maiden said that she would gladly help him. All he had to do was to go farther into the vault, and he would find the most beautiful woman in the world.

Simpleton went down the vault and came to a room glimmering and flickering with gold and jewels, but instead of a beautiful woman, there was a nasty frog sitting in the middle. The frog called out to him: "Embrace me, and immerse yourself!"

But he didn't want to do this. So the frog called out a second time: "Embrace me, and immerse yourself!"

So Simpleton grabbed hold of the frog and carried it above to a pond where he jumped into the water with the frog. However, no sooner did they touch the water than he held the most beautiful woman in his arms. Then they climbed out of the water, and he brought her to his father, and she was a thousand times more beautiful than the women whom the other princes had brought with them. Once again the realm would have belonged to Simpleton, but the two brothers made a racket and demanded that whoever's beautiful woman could jump up to the ring that was hanging in the middle of the hall should inherit the realm. The eldest son's woman could jump only halfway; the second son's woman jumped a bit higher; but the third son's woman jumped right up to the ring. So the two elder brothers finally had to agree that Simpleton would inherit the realm after their father's death, and when the father died, Simpleton became king and ruled with wisdom for a long time.

The Golden Goose

Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons. However, the youngest was a simpleton. One day the eldest son said: "Father, I want to go into the forest and chop wood."

"Let it be," the father said. "Otherwise you'll come home with a bandaged arm."

But the son didn't pay attention to his father and thought he knew how to take care of himself. He put some cake in his pocket and went into the forest, where he met a little old gray man who said: "I'm so hungry. Give me a piece of the cake that you have in your pocket."

However, the clever son responded: "Why should I give you a piece of my cake? Then I'll have nothing for myself. Get out of here!"

The son went off with his axe and began to chop down a tree. It didn't take long, however, for him to make a slip with the axe, and he cut himself in the arm. So he had to go home and have his arm bandaged. This was all because of the little old gray man.

Some time later the second son went into the forest, where the little man asked him for a piece of cake, too. He also refused and consequently struck himself in the leg so that he had to be carried back home. Finally, Simpleton went out into the forest, and the little man spoke to him just as he had to the others and asked for a piece of cake.

"You can have the entire thing," said Simpleton and gave it to him.

Then the little man spoke: "Chop this tree down, and you'll find something."

Simpleton began hacking away, and when the tree fell, a golden goose was sitting there. He took the bird with him and went to an inn, where he wanted to spend the night. He didn't want to stay in the large room. Rather, he wanted a room for himself alone. Once there he set the goose down in the middle of the room. The innkeeper's daughters had seen the goose and were curious and would have liked to have had a feather from the goose. Then the eldest daughter said: "I'll go upstairs, and if I don't return soon, then come after me."

Upon saying this she went to the goose, but no sooner did she touch the feather than she found herself attached to the goose. Now, since she didn't come back downstairs, the second sister went to look after her, and as soon as she saw the goose, she couldn't resist the desire to pluck a feather. The eldest sister tried her best to warn her not to do this, but nothing helped. Her sister grabbed hold of the goose and was soon attached to the feather. Now, after the third daughter had waited long enough below, she finally went upstairs, and her sisters called out to her

and warned her for heaven's sake not to come near the goose. However, she didn't listen to them and was set on having one of the feathers and got stuck to it.

The next morning Simpleton took the goose in his arm and went off. The three daughters were tightly attached to the goose and had to follow him. When they came to a field, they met the parson, who cried out at them: "Phooey! Naughty girls! What are you doing running after this young fellow, in public no less? Shame on you!"

Upon saying this he grabbed one of the girls by the hand and tried to yank her away. However, as soon as he touched her, he became stuck to her and now had to run along behind them.

Shortly after this happened, the sexton came and cried out: "Hey, parson, where are you off to in such a hurry? We still have a christening today!"

The sexton ran up to him, grabbed him by the arm, and became attached. As the five of them marched one after the other after Simpleton, two farmers with their hoes came from the field. The parson called them over to help detach themselves, but no sooner did they touch the sexton than they got stuck, and so now there were seven who ran after Simpleton with the goose.

Soon he came to a city ruled by a king who had a daughter so serious that nobody could get her to laugh. Consequently, the king issued a decree declaring that whoever made the princess laugh would have her for his bride. When Simpleton heard this, he went to the king's daughter and took along the goose with the group of people attached to the bird. As soon as the princess saw this parade, she began to laugh boisterously and couldn't stop. Therefore, Simpleton demanded to have her for his bride, but the king made all kinds of excuses and said Simpleton would first have to bring him a man who could drink up all the wine in a cellar. So Simpleton went into the forest to the spot where he had chopped down the tree, and he saw a man sitting there with a sad face. So Simpleton asked him what had caused him to have such a heavy heart.

“Oh! I’m so thirsty and can’t get enough to drink. I’ve already emptied a barrel of wine, but that’s only a like a drop on a hot stone!”

“Well, I can help you,” Simpleton said. “Come with me. You’ll be able to drink until you are full.”

Simpleton led him to the king’s cellar, and the man set to work on the large barrels. He drank and drank until his lips began to hurt him, and before the day was over, he had drunk up everything in the cellar.

Now Simpleton demanded his bride, but the king was annoyed that a common fellow whom everyone called Simpleton should carry off his daughter, and so he set a new condition: Simpleton had to produce a man who could eat a mountain of bread. So Simpleton returned to the forest, and there was a man sitting at the spot of the tree that he had cut down, and this man was tightening a belt around his waist and making an awful face.

“I’ve eaten an oven full of coarse bread, but what good is that when I’m still enormously hungry? I don’t feel a thing in my body and must tighten my belt if I’m not to die of hunger.”

As soon as Simpleton heard this, he was cheerful and said: “Get up and come with me. You’ll eat until you’re full.”

Simpleton led the man to the king, who had all the flour of the entire kingdom gathered and baked into an enormous mountain, but the man from the forest took a place in front of it, and he caused the entire mountain to vanish in a day and a night. Once again, Simpleton asked for his bride, but the king sought a way out again and demanded a ship that could sail on water and on land. If he produced this ship, then he could have the princess right away. So Simpleton went into the forest once more and met the little gray man to whom he had given his cake.

“I’ve drunken and eaten for you,” the little man said, “and now I’ll give you the ship. I’m giving you all this because you were so kind and took pity on me.”

So he gave Simpleton the ship that sailed on land and on water, and when the king saw this, he could no longer prevent him from marrying his daughter. Then the wedding was celebrated, and Simpleton inherited the realm and lived a long time happily with his wife.

Once upon a time there was a king who had the most beautiful wife in the world, and her hair was pure gold. They had a daughter together, and she was just as beautiful as her mother, and her hair was just as golden. One day the queen became sick, and when she felt she was about to die, she called the king to her and made a request: if after her death he wanted to marry again, he should only take someone who was as beautiful as she was and who had golden hair like hers. Once the king promised her that, she died.

For a long time the king was so distressed that didn't think about a second wife. Finally, his councilors urged him to remarry. So messengers were sent to all the princesses in the world, but none of them were as beautiful as the dead queen. Nor could they find such golden hair anywhere in the world.

Now one day the king cast his eyes on his daughter, and when he saw that her features were very similar to those of her mother and that she also had such golden hair, he thought, "Since you won't find anyone as beautiful in the world, you must marry your daughter." And right then he felt such a great love for her that he immediately informed his councilors and the princess of his decision.

The councilors wanted to talk him out of it, but it was in vain. The princess was totally horrified about his godless intention. However, since she was smart, she told the king that he first had to provide her with three dresses, one as golden as the sun, one as white as the moon, and one as bright as the stars and then a cloak made of a thousand kinds of pelts and furs, and each animal in the kingdom had to contribute a piece of its skin to it.

The king had such a passionate desire for her that everyone in his realm was ordered to work. His huntsmen had to catch all the animals and take a piece of their skin. Thus a cloak was made from their fur, and it didn't take long before the king brought the princess what she had demanded.

Now the princess said that she would marry him the next day. However, during the night, she collected the gifts that she had received from

her fiancé from another kingdom: a golden ring, a little golden spinning wheel, and a little golden reel, and the three dresses, all of which she put into a nutshell. Then she blackened her face and hands with soot, put on the cloak made of all kinds of fur, and departed. She walked the whole night until she reached a great forest, where she was safe. Since she was tired, she climbed into a hollow tree and fell asleep.

She continued to sleep until it became broad daylight. As it so happened, the king, her bridegroom,² was out hunting in the forest. When his dogs came to the tree, they started to sniff and run around it. The king sent his huntsmen to see what kind of animal was hiding in the tree. When they returned to him, they said that there was a strange animal lying in it, and they had never seen anything like it in their lives. Its skin was made up of a thousand different kinds of fur, and it was lying there asleep. Then the king ordered them to catch it and tie it on the back of the wagon. The huntsmen did this, and as they pulled it from the tree, they saw it was a maiden. Then they tied her on the back of the wagon and drove home with her.

“All Fur,” they said, “you’ll do well to work in the kitchen. You can carry wood and water and sweep up the ashes.”

Then they gave her a little stall beneath the steps.

“You can live and sleep there.”

So she had to work in the kitchen, where she helped the cook, plucked the chickens, tended the fire, sorted the vegetables, and did all the dirty work. Since she did everything so diligently, the cook was good to her and sometimes called All Fur to him in the evening and gave her some of the leftovers to eat. Before the king went to bed, she had to go upstairs and pull off his boots, and as soon as she would pull one off, he would always throw it at her head. And so All Fur led a miserable life for a long time. Ah, you beautiful maiden, what shall become of you?

At one time a ball was held in the castle, and All Fur thought, “perhaps now I could see my dear bridegroom once again.” So she went to the cook and asked him to allow her to go upstairs for a while to see the splendor from the doorway.

² Evidently the princess had never met her fiancé (bridegroom).

“Go ahead,” said the cook, “but you can’t stay longer than half an hour. You’ve got to sweep up the ashes tonight.”

So All Fur took her little oil lamp, went into her little stall, and washed the soot off her so that her beauty came to light again like flowers in springtime. Then she took off the fur cloak, opened the nut, and took out the dress that shone like the sun. When she was fully dressed, she went upstairs, and everyone made way for her, for they believed that she was nothing less than a distinguished princess who had just come into the ballroom. The king immediately offered her his hand and led her forth to dance. And as he was dancing with her, he thought, “this unknown princess resembles my dear bride,” and the longer he gazed at her, the more she resembled her so that he was almost certain it was her. When the dance ended, he wanted to ask her. However, as she finished the dance, she curtsied and disappeared before the king could begin to speak. Then he asked the guards, but nobody had seen the princess leave the castle. She had quickly run to her little stall, taken off her dress, blackened her face and hands, and put on the fur cloak once again. Then she went into the kitchen and started to sweep up the ashes.

“Let it be until morning,” the cook said. “I want to go upstairs and take a look at the dance. Make a soup for the king, but don’t let any hairs fall in, otherwise you’ll get nothing more to eat.”

All Fur cooked a bread soup for the king, and then at the end, she slipped the golden ring that the king had given to her as a present into the soup. When the ball came to an end, the king had his bread soup brought to him, and it tasted so good that he was convinced that he had never eaten one so good. However, when he had finished, he found the ring at the bottom of the bowl. As he looked at it carefully, he saw that it was his wedding ring and was puzzled.³

He couldn’t grasp how the ring came to be there, and so he had the cook summoned, and the cook became angry with All Fur.

“You must have certainly let a hair fall into the soup. If that’s true, you’ll get a beating!”

³This was the ring that he had sent to her as a gift.

However, when the cook went upstairs, the king asked him who had cooked the soup because it had been better than usual. So the cook had to confess that All Fur had made it, and the king ordered him to send All Fur up to him. When she came, the king said: "Who are you and what are you doing in my castle? Where did you get the ring that was in the soup?"

Then she replied:

"I'm nothing but a poor child whose mother and father are dead
I am nothing and am good for nothing except for having boots
thrown at my head.
I also know nothing about the ring."

Upon saying that she ran away.

Some time later there was another ball, and once again All Fur asked the cook's permission to go upstairs. The cook allowed her but only for half an hour, and then she was to return and cook the bread soup for the king. So, All Fur went to her little stall, washed herself clean, took out the dress as silvery as the moon and cleaner and more sparkling than fallen snow. When she appeared upstairs, the dance had already begun. The king offered his hand to her again and danced with her. He no longer doubted that she was his bride, for nobody in the world except her had such golden hair. However, when the dance was over, the princess had already departed once again, and despite all his efforts, the king couldn't find her, and he hadn't even spoken a single word with her.

Indeed, she was All Fur again with blackened hands and face. She stood in the kitchen and cooked the bread soup for the king while the cook went upstairs to watch the dance. When the soup was done, she put the golden spinning wheel into the bowl. The king ate the soup, and it seemed even better this time. When he found the golden spinning wheel at the bottom, he was even more astounded because he had at one time sent it to his bride as a present. The cook was summoned, and then All Fur, but once again she replied that she knew nothing about it, and that she was only there to have boots thrown at her head.

When the king held a ball for the third time, he hoped his bride would come again, and he wanted to make sure to hold on to her. All

Fur asked the cook again to let her go upstairs, but he scolded her and said: “You’re a witch. You always put something in the soup and can cook it better than I do.”

However, since she pleaded so passionately and promised to behave herself, he let her go upstairs again for half an hour. Thereupon she put on the dress that sparkled as bright as the stars in the night and went upstairs and danced with the king. He thought he had never seen her more beautiful. As they were dancing, however, he slipped a ring onto her finger and ordered the dance to last for a very long time. Nevertheless, he couldn’t hold onto her, nor could he speak a single word to her, for when the dance was over, she mingled with the people so quickly that she vanished before he turned around.

All Fur ran to her little stall, and since she had been away longer than half an hour, she undressed quickly. In her hurry she couldn’t blacken herself completely so that a finger remained white. When she went into the kitchen, the cook was already upstairs, and she quickly cooked the bread soup and put the golden reel into it.

Just as he had found the ring and the golden spinning wheel, the king also found the reel. Now he knew for sure that his bride was nearby, for nobody else could have possessed the presents. All Fur was summoned and wanted once again to avoid the king and run away. However, as she tried to run off, the king caught sight of the white finger on her hand and held her tight. He found the ring that he had slipped onto her finger and tore off her fur cloak. Then her golden hair toppled down, and she was his dearly beloved bride. Now the cook was richly rewarded, and the king held the wedding and they lived happily until their death.

66

HURLEBURLEBUTZ

Once a king got lost during a hunt, and suddenly a little white dwarf appeared before him.

“Your majesty,” he said, “if you give me your youngest daughter, I’ll show you how to get out of the forest.”

The king consented out of fear, and the dwarf helped him find his way. As he took leave of the king, he cried out: "I'll be coming to fetch my bride in a week."

When the king reached home, he was sad about his promise because his youngest daughter was his favorite. His daughters noticed how sad he was and wanted to know what the cause of his worry was. Finally, he had to tell them that he had promised the youngest of them to a little white dwarf in the forest and that the dwarf would be coming to fetch her in a week. However, they told him to cheer up, for they would lead the dwarf on a wild goose chase.

When the day came for the dwarf's arrival, they dressed a cowherd's daughter in their clothes and sat her down in their room.

"If someone comes to fetch you, you're to go with him!" they ordered, and they themselves left the house.

No sooner had they left than a fox entered the castle and said to the maiden, "Sit down on my furry tail, Hurleburlebutz! Off to the forest!"

The maiden sat down on the fox's tail, and he carried her out into the forest. When they came to a beautiful clearing, where the sun was shining very bright and warm, the fox said, "Get off and take the lice out of my hair!"

The maiden followed his orders, and the fox laid his head on her lap so she could louse him. While she was doing this, the maiden said, "When I was in the forest yesterday about this time, it was more beautiful!"

"What were you doing in the forest?" the fox asked.

"Oh, I was tending the cows with my father."

"So, you're not the princess! Sit down on my furry tail, Hurleburlebutz! Back to the castle!"

The fox carried her back and said to the king, "You've deceived me. That was a cowherd's daughter. I'll come again in a week and fetch your daughter."

At the end of the week the princesses dressed a gooseherd's daughter in splendid garments, sat her down, and went away. Then the fox came again and said, "Sit down on my furry tail, Hurleburlebutz! Off to the forest!"

When they arrived at a sunny spot in the forest, the fox said once more, "Get off and take the lice out of my hair!"

As the maiden was lousing the fox, she sighed and said, "I wonder where my geese are now?"

"What do you know about geese?"

"Oh, I take them to the meadow every day with my father."

"So, you're not the king's daughter! Sit down on my furry tail, Hurleburlebutz! Back to the castle!"

The fox carried her back and said to the king, "You've deceived me again. That was the gooseherd's daughter. I'm going to come again in a week, and if you don't give me your daughter, you'll be in for trouble."

The king became frightened, and when the fox returned, he gave him the princess.

"Sit down on my furry tail, Hurleburlebutz! Off to the forest!"

She had to ride on the fox's tail, and when they got to a sunny place, he said to her, "Get off and take the lice out of my hair!"

However, when he laid his head in her lap, the princess began to cry and said, "I'm a king's daughter, and yet I must louse a fox! If I were sitting at home now, I'd be looking at the flowers in my garden!"

Then the fox knew that he had the right bride and turned himself into the little white dwarf. He was now her husband, and she had to live with him in a little hut and cook and sew for him. This lasted a good long time, and the dwarf did everything he could to please her.

One day the dwarf said to her, "I've got to go away, but three white doves will soon come flying here. When they swoop down to the ground, catch the middle one. Once you've got it, cut off its head right away. But pay attention and make sure you've got the middle dove, or else there'll be a disaster."

The dwarf departed, and it didn't take long for the three white doves to come flying toward her. The princess paid close attention and grabbed the middle one. Then she took a knife and cut off its head. No sooner was the dove lying on the ground than a handsome young prince stood before her and said, "A fairy cast a spell over me causing me to lose my human form for seven years. Then I was to fly by my wife as a dove between two other doves, and she would have to catch me and cut off my head. If she didn't catch me, or if she caught another and I flew by, then everything would be

lost, and I would never be saved. That's why I asked you to pay attention, for I'm the white dwarf, and you're my wife."

The princess was delighted, and together they went to her father. When he died, they inherited the kingdom.

67

THE KING WITH THE LION

A young prince sat with his bride-to-be and said: "I'm going to give you a ring and my picture and want you to carry these things to remember me and to remain true to me. My father is deathly ill and has asked me to come to him. He wants to see me one more time before he dies and I become king. So I want you to go home now."

Upon saying this the prince rode off and found his father on his deathbed. Right before he died, he asked his son to marry a particular princess after his death. The prince was so depressed and loved his father so much that, without thinking about it, he said yes, and right after that the king closed his eyes and died.

After he was acclaimed king and the mourning period ended, he had to keep his word and asked permission to court the other princess who had been promised to him. Meanwhile, the first bride had heard that the prince was courting another princess, and she grieved so much that she almost died. Her father asked her why she was so sad and told her all she had to do was to ask him for what she wanted and her wish would be granted. So the princess reflected for a moment, and then she asked for eleven young women who completely resembled her in size as well as in stature. So the king had his men search for the eleven young women throughout his entire kingdom, and when they were all together, she dressed herself in hunter's clothes and had the eleven dressed the same way so that all twelve of them were completely alike. Shortly thereafter, she rode to the king, her former bridegroom, and requested a position for herself and the others as hunters. The king didn't recognize her, but because they were such handsome people, he gladly granted the request and welcomed them to his court.

Now the king had a lion, and nothing could be kept from him. This lion knew all the secrets of the court. One evening the lion said to the king: “You believe you’ve employed twelve hunters, but they’re actually twelve young women.”

The king refused to believe him, but the lion added: “Have peas spread out in your anteroom one time. Men have a heavy step, and if they walk over the peas, none of the peas will move. But women, they skip and shuffle, and the peas roll beneath their feet.”

The king liked this plan, but one of the king’s servants loved the hunters and had overheard all this. So he ran to the young women and said: “The lion thinks that you’re women and wants to have peas spread out in the anteroom to test you.”

Consequently, the princess ordered her eleven young ladies to use all their might and step firmly on the peas. When it turned morning and the peas were all spread out, the king summoned the twelve hunters, but they had such a firm and strong gait that not one single pea moved.

That evening the king reproached the lion and accused him of lying. In response the lion said: “They covered up who they really are. Now, just have twelve spinning wheels set up in the anteroom, and they’ll show how pleased they are. No man would ever do that.”

The king followed the lion’s advice once more and had the spinning wheels set up in the room. However, the servant revealed to the hunters what was happening so that the princess ordered the young ladies once more not to look at the spinning wheels at all. So that’s what they did, and the king refused to believe the lion any more. He became more and more fond of the hunters, and when he went out hunting, they had to go along with him.

One time, when they were out in the forest, news arrived that the prince’s bride was coming and that she would soon be there. When the prince’s real bride heard this, she fainted. The king thought that something had happened to his dear hunter. He ran over and wanted to help him. As he took off his glove, he noticed that she was wearing the ring that he had given to his first bride, and moreover, when he saw the picture that she was carrying in her necklace, he recognized her and immediately notified

the other bride to return to her realm because he already had a wife, and when one recovers an old key, one doesn't need a new one. Soon after, the wedding was celebrated, and it was clear that the lion had not lied, and he once again found favor in the king's eyes.

THE SUMMER AND THE WINTER GARDEN

A merchant wanted to go to a fair and asked his three daughters what he should bring back for them. The eldest said: "A beautiful dress."

The second: "A pair of pretty shoes."

The third: "A rose."

But it was difficult to find a rose because it was midwinter. However, since the youngest was the most beautiful daughter and was so extremely fond of flowers, the father replied that he would see whether he could find a rose and would make every effort to do so.

When the merchant was returning home after the fair, he carried a splendid dress for the eldest and a pair of beautiful shoes for the second daughter, but he hadn't been able to obtain a rose for the youngest daughter. Each time he had entered a garden and had asked for roses, the people had made fun of him and asked him whether he really believed that roses grew in snow. He was very sorry about that, and as he was pondering whether there might be something that he could bring home for his favorite child, he reached a castle, and there was a garden on one side in which it was half summer and half winter. On one side the most beautiful small and large flowers were blooming, and on the other side, everything was bare and deep snow lay on the ground. The man got off his horse, and since he noticed an entire hedge full of roses on the summer side, he was glad and went over there. Then he plucked a rose, got on his horse, and began riding away. He had ridden only a short distance when he heard something running behind him and panting. So he turned around and saw a large black beast that shouted: "Return my rose to me, or I'll kill you! Return my rose to me, or I'll kill you!"

The man replied: "Please, let me keep the rose. I'm supposed to bring it to my daughter. She is the most beautiful maiden in the world."

“If you like. But in exchange, I want you to give me your beautiful daughter as my wife.”

In order to get rid of the beast, the man said, yes, and thought he wouldn't come and demand his daughter, but the beast yelled after him: “I'm coming to fetch my bride in one week.”

Now the merchant brought each one of his daughters what she had wished. All of them were delighted, and the youngest daughter was the most pleased by the rose. After a week had passed, the three sisters were sitting at the dinner table when all of a sudden someone with heavy footsteps came up the stairs and knocked at the door.

“Open up! Open up!” he yelled.

So they opened the door, but they were truly horrified when a large black beast entered.

“Since my bride didn't come and the time is up, I've come to fetch her myself!”

Upon saying that he went up to the youngest daughter and grabbed her. She began to scream, but that didn't help at all. She had to go off with him, and when her father came home, he found that his dearest child had been kidnapped.

Meanwhile the black beast carried the beautiful maiden into his castle, which was quite wonderful and beautiful. There were musicians, who had begun playing, and below was the garden that was half summer and half winter. And the beast did everything to make her feel comfortable, and one could read from her eyes how pleased she was. They ate together, and she had to ladle out the food for him, otherwise he wouldn't eat. The beast thought she was precious, and eventually she became very fond of the beast.

One day she said to him: “I've become very anxious, and I don't know why, but I feel as though my father were ill, or that perhaps one of my sisters is sick. Couldn't I see them just one time?”

So the beast led her to a mirror and said: “Look into the mirror,” and when she looked into the mirror, it was as if she were at home. She saw her room and her father, who was really sick from heartbreak. Indeed, he felt guilty that a wild beast had kidnapped his daughter and had probably been devoured by him. If he had known how well she was, he wouldn't have been so depressed. She also saw her two sisters at the father's bedside,

and they were weeping. All this troubled her heart, and she asked the beast whether he might let her return home for several days.

“Go to your father, but promise me that you’ll return within a week.”

She promised him, and as she was leaving, he called after her: “Don’t stay any longer than one week.”

When she returned home, her father rejoiced that he was able to see her one more time, but the illness and the sorrow had eaten away at his heart too much. Consequently, he couldn’t regain his health and died after a couple of days. So his daughter couldn’t think of anything else due to her grief, and before her father was buried, she went to his corpse and wept with her sisters, and they consoled each other. Finally, when she thought about her dear beast once again, more than a week had gone by. All of a sudden she became really anxious, and she felt as if he were also sick, and she immediately set out and went directly to his castle. When she arrived there once again, the castle was completely silent and sad. The musicians weren’t playing, and everything was draped in black. The garden was now completely winter and covered by snow. And when she went to look for the beast, he was gone. She searched all over the place but couldn’t find him. Now she was doubly distressed and didn’t know how to console herself. Sadly she went into the garden and saw a heap of cabbage heads. The ones at the top were already old and rotten. She spread them around, and when she had turned over a few, she saw her dear beast, who had been lying under them, and he was dead. Quickly she fetched some water and continually poured water on him. All of a sudden, he jumped up and was suddenly changed into a handsome prince. A wedding was held, and the musicians immediately began playing. The summer side of the garden became splendid again, the black drapes were torn down, and they lived there happily ever after.

Once upon a time there was an old castle in the middle of a great, dense forest. An old woman lived there all by herself; and she was a powerful sorceress. During the day she turned herself into a cat or a night owl, but in the evening she would return to her normal human form. She had the

ability to lure game and birds, which she would slaughter and then cook or roast. If any man came within a hundred steps of the castle, she would cast a spell over him, so that he wouldn't be able to move from the spot until she broke the spell. If an innocent maiden came within her magic circle, she would change her into a bird and stuff her into a wicker basket. Then she would carry the basket up to a room in her castle where she had well over seven thousand baskets with rare birds of this kind.

Now, once there was a maiden named Jorinda, who was more beautiful than any other maiden in the kingdom. She was betrothed to a handsome youth named Joringel. During the time before their marriage, they took great pleasure in each other's company. One day they went for a walk in the forest so they could be alone and talk intimately with one another.

"Be careful," Joringel said, "that you don't go too close to the castle."

At dusk the sun shone brightly through the tree trunks and cast its light on the dark green of the forest. The turtledoves were singing mournfully in the old beech trees, and at times Jorinda wept. Then she sat down in the sunshine and sighed, and Joringel sighed too. They became very sad as if they were doomed to die, and when they looked around them, they became confused and didn't know how to get home. The sun was still shining half above and half behind the mountains. When Joringel looked through the bushes and saw the wall of the old castle not very far away, he became so alarmed that he was nearly frightened to death, while Jorinda sang:

"Oh, my bird, with your ring of red,
sitting and singing your tale of woe!
You tell us now that the poor dove is dead.
You sing your tale of woe—*oh-oh, oh-oh!*"

Just then, as Joringel looked at Jorinda, she was turned into a nightingale singing "*oh-oh, oh-oh!*"

A night owl with glowing eyes flew around her three times, and each time it cried, "*To-who! To-who! To-who!*"

Joringel couldn't budge. He stood there like a stone unable to weep, to talk, or to move hand or foot. When the sun was about to set, the owl flew into a bush and then immediately returned as a haggard old woman,

yellow and scrawny, with large red eyes and a crooked nose that almost touched her chin with its tip. She muttered something to herself, caught the nightingale, and carried it away in her hand. Joringel was still unable to speak, nor could he move from the spot. The nightingale was gone. Soon the woman came back and said with a muffled voice, "Greetings, Zachiel. When the moon shines into the basket, let him loose, Zachiel, just at the right moment."

Then Joringel was set free, and he fell on his knees before the woman and begged her to give Jorinda back to him, but she said he would never get her back again and went away. Joringel shouted. He wept, he moaned, but it was all in vain. "Oh, now what's to become of me?"

Joringel went off and eventually came to a strange village, where he tended sheep for a long time. He often went around and around the castle and always kept his distance. Finally, he dreamed one night that he had found a flower as red as blood, and in the middle of it was a pearl. He plucked the flower and went with it to the castle: everything that he touched with the flower was released from the magic spell. He also dreamed that he managed to regain his Jorinda with the flower.

When he awoke the next morning, he began searching all over the mountains and valleys for the flower in his dream. He searched for nine days, and early on the ninth day he found a flower as red as blood. In its middle was a large dewdrop as big as the finest pearl. He carried this flower day and night until he reached the castle. When he came to within a hundred steps of the castle, he didn't become spellbound but was able to get to the gate. Overjoyed by that, Joringel touched the gate with the flower, and it sprang open. So he entered, crossed the courtyard, and listened for the sound of birds. Finally, he heard them and went toward the room where the sorceress was feeding the birds in their seven thousand baskets. When she saw Joringel, she became angry, very angry. She began berating him and spitting poison and gall at him, but she could only come within two feet of him, and he paid no attention to her. Instead, he went and examined the baskets with the birds. Since there were hundreds of nightingales, he didn't know how he'd be able to find his Jorinda again. While he was examining the baskets, he

noticed that the old woman had stealthily picked up one of them and was heading toward the door. Quick as a flash he ran over and touched the basket with the flower, and immediately thereafter, he touched the old woman as well. Now she could no longer use her magic, and consequently Jorinda appeared before him. She threw her arms around his neck and was just as beautiful as before. After Joringel had turned all the other birds into young women, he went home with his Jorinda, and they lived together in happiness for a long time.

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OKERLO

A queen put her child out to sea in a golden cradle and let it float away. However, the cradle didn't sink but drifted to an island inhabited only by cannibals. When the cradle drifted toward the shore, a cannibal's wife happened to be standing there. Upon seeing the child, who was a beautiful baby girl, she decided to raise her and later give her to her son, who would wed her one day. But she had a great deal of trouble hiding the maiden carefully from her husband, Old Okerlo, for if he had laid his eyes on her, he would have eaten her up, skin and bones.

When the maiden had grown up, she was to be married to the young Okerlo, but she couldn't stand him and cried all day long. Once when she was sitting on the shore, a young, handsome prince came swimming up to her. When it was clear they each took a liking to the other, they exchanged vows. Just then the old cannibal's wife came, and she got tremendously angry at finding the prince with her son's bride. So she grabbed hold of him and said, "Just wait! We'll roast you at my son's wedding."

The young prince, the maiden, and Okerlo's three children had to sleep together in one room. When night came, Old Okerlo began craving human flesh and said, "Wife, I don't feel like waiting until the wedding. I want the prince right now!"

However, the maiden had heard everything through the wall, and she got up quickly, took off the golden crown from one of Okerlo's children, and put it on the prince's head. When the old cannibal's wife came in,

it was dark. So she had to feel their heads and took the boy who wasn't wearing a crown and brought him to her husband, who immediately devoured him.

Meanwhile, the maiden became terribly frightened, for she thought, "As soon as day breaks, everything will be revealed, and we'll be in for trouble." So, she got up quietly and fetched seven-mile boots, a magic wand, and a cake with a bean that provided answers for everything. After that she departed with the prince. They were wearing the seven-mile boots, and with each step they took, they went a mile. Sometimes they asked the bean, "Bean, are you there?"

"Yes," the bean said. "I'm here, but you'd better hurry. The old cannibal's wife is coming after you in some other seven-mile boots that were left behind!"

The maiden took the magic wand and turned herself into a swan and the prince into a pond for the swan to swim on. The cannibal's wife came and tried to lure the swan to the bank, but she didn't succeed and went home in a bad mood. The maiden and the prince continued on their way.

"Bean, are you there?"

"Yes," the bean said. "I'm here, but the old woman's coming again. The cannibal explained to her how you duped her."

The princess took the wand and changed herself and the prince into a cloud of dust. Okerlo's wife couldn't penetrate it and again had to return empty-handed, while the maiden and the prince continued on their way.

"Bean, are you there?"

"Yes, I'm here, but I see Okerlo's wife coming once more, and she's taking tremendous steps!"

The maiden took the magic wand for the third time and turned herself into a rosebush and the prince into a bee. The old cannibal's wife came and didn't recognize them because of their changed forms. So she went home.

But now the maiden and the prince couldn't regain their human forms because the maiden, in her fear, had thrown the magic wand too far away. Yet their journey had taken them such a long distance that the rosebush now stood in a garden that belonged to the maiden's mother. The bee sat on the rose, and he would sting anyone who tried to pluck it. One day the



queen herself happened to be walking in the garden and saw the beautiful flower. She was so amazed by it that she wanted to pluck it. But the little bee came and stung her hand so hard that she had to let go of the rose. Yet she had managed to rip the flower a little, and suddenly she saw blood gushing from the stem. Then she summoned a fairy to break the enchantment of the flower and the bee, and the queen then recognized her daughter again and was very happy and delighted. Now a great wedding was held, and a large number of guests were invited. They came in magnificent array, while thousands of candles flickered in the hall. Music was played, and everyone danced until dawn.

“Were you also at the wedding?”

“Of course I was there. My hairdo was made of butter, and as I was exposed to the sun, it melted and was muddled. My dress was made from a spider’s web, and as I went through some thorn bushes, they ripped it off my body. My slippers were made of glass, and as I stepped on a stone, they broke in two.”

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PRINCESS MOUSESKIN

A king had three daughters, and he wanted to know which one loved him most. So he summoned them to him and began asking. The oldest daughter said she loved him more than the whole kingdom. The second said she loved him more than all the jewels and pearls in the world. But the third said she loved him more than salt. The king was furious that she compared her love for him to such a meager thing. Consequently, he handed her over to a servant and ordered him to take her into the forest and to kill her.

When they reached the forest, the princess begged the servant to spare her life. Since he was devoted to her, he wouldn’t have killed her anyway. Indeed, he said he would go with her and do her bidding. But the princess demanded nothing except a garment made out of mous-eskin. When he fetched it for her, she wrapped herself in the skin and went straight to a neighboring kingdom. Once there she pretended to

be a man and asked the king to employ her. The king consented, and she was to be his personal servant. In the evening, whenever she pulled off his boots, he always tossed them at her head. One time he asked her where she came from.

“From the country where one doesn’t toss boots at people’s heads.”

Her remark made the king suspicious. Finally, the other servants brought him a ring that Mouseskin had lost. It was so precious that they thought she had stolen it. The king called Mouseskin to him and asked how she had obtained the ring. Mouseskin could no longer conceal her true identity. She unwrapped the mouseskin, and her golden hair streamed down. As she stepped out of the skin, he could see that she was beautiful, indeed so beautiful that he immediately took off his crown, put it on her head, and declared her to be his wife.

When the wedding was celebrated, Mouseskin’s father was also invited to attend. He believed that his daughter had died a long time ago and didn’t recognize her. However, at the dinner table all the dishes put before him were unsalted, and he became irritated and said, “I’d rather die than eat such food!”

No sooner had he uttered those words than the queen said to him, “Well, now you say you can’t live without salt, but when I said I loved you more than salt, you wanted to have me killed.”

All at once, he recognized his daughter, kissed her, and begged her forgiveness. Now that he had found her again, she was more dear to him than his kingdom and all the jewels in the world.

The master went to shake the pear, but the pear refused to fall.
The master sent the servant out to shake the pear and make it fall.
But the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the guard dog out
to bite the servant with his snout.
But the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the big stick out
to hit the dog right on his snout.
But the stick did not hit at all,
the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the fire out
to burn the stick down to a crisp.
But the fire did not burn at all,
the stick did not hit at all,
the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the water out
to snuff the little fire out.
But the water did not snuff at all,
the fire did not burn at all,
the stick did not hit at all,
the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the little calf out
to lap the water up.
But the calf did not lap at all,
the water did not snuff at all,
the fire did not burn at all,

the stick did not hit at all,
the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the butcher out
to kill the little calf.
But the butcher did not kill at all,
the calf did not lap at all,
the water did not snuff at all,
the fire did not burn at all,
the stick did not hit at all,
the dog did not bite at all,
the servant did not shake at all,
the pear refused to fall.

The master sent the henchman out
to go and hang the butcher.
Now the butcher wants to kill the calf,
the calf wants the water to lap,
the water wants the fire to snuff,
the fire wants the stick to burn,
the stick wants the dog to hit,
the dog wants the servant to bite,
the servant wants the pear to shake,
and the pear is ready to fall.

Once upon a time there was a shoemaker who had three daughters. One day when the shoemaker was out, a well-dressed nobleman came with a splendid carriage and servants, and he appeared to be very rich. He fell in love with one of the beautiful daughters, who thought herself fortunate to have found such a rich gentleman, and she gladly agreed

to ride off with him. As they were on their way, it turned dark, and he asked her:

“The moon’s shining very bright.
My horses are dashing into the night.
Sweet love, are you having any doubts?”

“No, why should I have any doubts? I’m well taken care of by you,” but indeed she did feel a certain uneasiness. When they were in a large forest, she asked him if they would soon be there.

“Yes,” he said. “Do you see the light in the distance? That’s my castle.”

At last they arrived, and everything was very beautiful. The next day he said to her that he had to leave her for a few days because he had to take care of some important and urgent business. However, he wanted to leave all the keys with her so she could see the whole castle and what treasures she, as mistress, now possessed. When he was gone, she went through the entire castle and found that everything was beautiful. She was completely satisfied until she came to the cellar, where an old woman was sitting and scraping out intestines.

“My goodness, granny, what are you doing there?”

“I’m scraping intestines, my child. Tomorrow I’ll be scraping yours, too!”

The maiden was so terrified by her words that she dropped the key she was holding into a basin of blood, and she couldn’t wash the blood off the key.

“Now your death is certain,” said the old woman, “because my master will be able to see you were in the chamber, and no one is allowed to enter here except him and me.”

(One must indeed know that this was the way her two sisters had lost their lives before her.)

Just then a hay wagon began to drive away and leave the castle. The old woman told her the only way she could save herself was by hiding under the hay and driving off in the wagon. And this is what the maiden did. In the meantime, the nobleman returned home and asked where the maiden was.

“Oh,” said the old woman, “since I had no more work for today, and since she was due to be slaughtered tomorrow, I decided to kill her. Here’s

a lock of her hair. The dogs ate up the heart, the warm blood, and all the rest. I'm scraping out the intestines.”

The nobleman was glad that she was dead. Meanwhile, she arrived in the hay wagon at a nearby castle, where the hay was supposed to be delivered. She climbed out of the hay and told everything she knew. Then she was asked to remain, and after some time had passed, the lord of this castle invited all the gentry of the surrounding region to a great feast. Since the nobleman from the castle of murder had also been invited, the maiden changed her features and clothes so she wouldn't be recognized.

Once they were all there, everyone had to tell a tale. When it was the maiden's turn, she told the particular story that concerned the nobleman and made his heart tremble with fear, and he wanted to force his way out. However, the lord of the castle had planned ahead of time to have the authorities ready to take our fine count to prison. His castle was destroyed, and all the treasures were given to the maiden for her own. Afterward she married the lord's son in the house where she had been so well received, and they lived together many, many years.

74

JOHANNES WATERSPRING
AND CASPAR WATERSPRING

A king insisted his daughter was not to marry and had a house built for her in the most secluded part of a forest. She had to live there with her ladies in waiting, and no other human being was allowed to see her. Near the house in the woods, however, there was a spring with marvelous qualities, and when the princess drank from it, she consequently gave birth to two princes. They were identical twins and named after the spring—Johannes Waterspring and Caspar Waterspring.

Their grandfather, the old king, had them instructed in hunting, and as they grew older, they became big and handsome young men. When the day arrived for them to set out into the world, each received a silver star, a horse, and a dog to take on the journey. Once they came to a forest, they immediately saw two hares and wanted to shoot them, but the hares asked

for mercy and said that they would like to serve them and that they could be useful and help them whenever they were in danger. The two brothers let themselves be persuaded and took them along as servants.

Soon after they came upon two bears, and when they took aim at them, these animals also cried out for mercy and promised to serve them faithfully. So the retinue was increased, and now they came to a crossroad, where they said, "We've got to separate here, and one of us should go to the right, and the other should head off to the left."

Before doing this, each of them stuck a knife in a tree at the crossroad so that they could determine by the rust whether the other was faring well and whether he was still alive. Then they took leave from another, kissed one another, and rode off.

Johannes Waterspring came to a city that was quite still and sad because the princess was to be sacrificed to a dragon that was devastating the entire country and could be pacified only by this sacrifice. It was announced that whoever wanted to risk his life and kill the dragon would receive the princess for his bride. However, nobody had volunteered. They had also tried to trick the monster by sending out the princess's chambermaid, but the dragon realized what was happening right away and did not take the bait.

Johannes Waterspring thought, "You must try your luck. Perhaps you'll succeed." And so he set out with his company and headed toward the dragon's nest. The battle was fierce: the dragon spewed forth fire and flames and ignited all the grass around them so that Johannes Waterspring certainly would have suffocated if the hare, dog, and bear had not stamped out and subdued the fire. Finally, the dragon succumbed, and Johannes Waterspring cut off its seven heads and then sliced its seven tongues, which he stuck into his sack. Now, however, he was so tired that he lay down right at that spot and fell asleep. While he was sleeping, the princess's coachman arrived, and when he saw the man lying there and the seven heads next to him, he thought, "You've got to take advantage of this. So he stabbed Johannes Waterspring to death and took the seven heads with him. He carried everything to the king and said he had killed the monster. Indeed, he had brought the seven heads as evidence, and the princess became his bride.

In the meantime Johannes Waterspring's animals had set up camp nearby after the battle and had also slept. When they returned to their master, they found him dead. As they were looking, they saw how the ants, whose mound had been stamped on during the battle, were spreading the sap from an oak tree on their dead ones, and these ants immediately came back to life. So the bear went and fetched some of the sap, and he spread it on Johannes Waterspring. Shortly thereafter Johannes was completely well and healthy and thought about the princess for whom he had fought. So he rushed to the city, where her marriage to the coachman was being celebrated, and the people were saying that the coachman had killed the seven-headed dragon. Johannes Waterspring's dog and bear ran into the castle where the princess tied some roast meat and wine around their necks and ordered her servants to follow the animals and to invite their owner to the wedding. So now Johannes Waterspring showed up at the wedding just as the platter with the seven dragon heads was being displayed. These were the heads that coachman had brought with him, but now Johann Waterspring pulled out the seven tongues from his sack and placed them next to the heads. Consequently, he was declared the real dragon slayer and became the princess's husband, while the coachman was banished.

Not long thereafter Johannes went out hunting and followed a deer with silver antlers. He hunted the deer for a long time but could not catch it. Finally, he met an old woman, who turned him and his dog, horse, and bear into stone.

Meanwhile Caspar Waterspring returned to the tree in which he and his brother had stuck their knives and saw that his brother's knife had rusted. He immediately decided to search for his twin and rode off. Soon he came to the city where his brother's wife was living. She thought he was her real husband because he looked just like him and was delighted by his return and insisted that he stay with her. But Caspar Waterspring continued traveling until he found his brother and animals, all turned into stone. Soon after he forced the old woman to break the magic spell, and then the brothers rode toward their home. Along the way, they agreed that the first one to be embraced by the princess should be her husband. Well, it turned out to be Johannes Waterspring.

One day a rich man went for a walk along the river. All at once he saw a small casket swimming by. He grabbed hold of the casket, and when he opened the cover, he saw a small child lying inside. So he took the child home and had him raised in his house. However, the rich man disliked the boy, and one time he took the boy with him in boat on the river. Once the boat was in the middle of the river, he swam to shore, and left the child alone in the boat. The boat continued floating down the river until it passed the mill, and the miller saw the child. The miller took pity on the child, fetched him from the boat, and raised him in his house.

One day the rich man happened to come by, recognized the child, and carried him away. Soon thereafter he gave the young man a letter to bring to his wife, and the letter read: "As soon as you read this letter, you are to kill the person who delivered it."

However, as the young man was traveling through the forest, he met an old man who said to him: "Show me the letter that you're carrying in your hand."

The old man took the letter, turned it around once, and gave it back to the young man. Now the letter read: "You are immediately to offer our daughter as wife to the young man delivering this letter."

And this is what happened, and when the rich man heard about this, he became furious and said: "Well, this wedding's not going to happen so quickly. Before I give you my daughter, you must bring me three feathers from the bird Phoenix."

So, the young man set out on his way to the bird Phoenix and met the old man again on the same spot in the forest.

"Keep walking for the entire day," he said. "In the evening you'll come to a tree. Two doves will be sitting on it, and they'll tell you how to proceed."

That evening, when the young man came to the tree, two doves were sitting on it. One of the doves said: "Whoever searches for the bird Phoenix must walk the entire day. In the evening he'll come to a gate that's locked."

Then the second dove said: "There is a gold key that lies underneath this tree, and it will open the gate."

The young man found the key and later used it to open the gate. Two men were sitting there, and one of them said: "Whoever searches for the bird Phoenix must travel a great distance over the high mountain, and then he'll finally come to a castle."

On the evening of the third day he finally reached the castle, where a wise little lady sat and said: "What do you want here?"

"Oh, I'd like to get three feathers from the bird Phoenix."

"Your life is in danger," she said. "If the bird Phoenix becomes aware of your presence, he'll eat you up skin and hair. Nevertheless, I'll see if I can help you get the three feathers. He comes here every day, and I must comb him with a narrow comb. So now quick, get under the table."

After he did this, young man was then covered completely by a cloth.

Meanwhile the bird Phoenix came home, sat down at the table, and said: "I smell, I smell human flesh!"

"Oh, what! You see, don't you, that nobody's here!"

"Comb me now!" the bird Phoenix responded.

The wise little lady combed the bird Phoenix, and as she was doing this, he fell asleep. When he was sound asleep, she grabbed a feather, pulled it out, and threw it beneath the table. All at once he woke up: "Why are you tearing my hair like that? I dreamed that a human came and pulled out one of my feathers."

She calmed him down, and so it went, two more times. When the young man had the three feathers, he set out for home and was now able to obtain his bride.

A long time ago there lived a king who never wanted to marry. Now one day he stood at a window and watched some people entering the church. Among them was a maiden who was so beautiful that he immediately abandoned his resolution. So he had the maiden summoned to him and

chose her for his wife. After one year had passed, she gave birth to a prince, and the king didn't know whom to ask to be the godfather. Finally, he said: "The first man I meet, no matter who it is, I'll ask him to be the godfather."

He went out, and the first person he met was a poor old man, and he asked him to be the godfather. The poor man agreed but requested that he be the only one to carry the child into the church, that the church was to be locked, and that nobody be allowed to observe the ceremony. All this was granted. However, the king had an evil, curious gardener, and when the old man carried the child into the church, he sneaked after him and hid himself among the benches. Soon he watched the old man carrying the child before the altar and blessing him. The old man seemed to be someone who understood secret powers, and he gave the child the gift of realizing everything he wished for.

The evil gardener immediately thought how advantageous it would be for him if he had the child. So one day when the queen went for a walk and carried the child in her arm, the gardener tore it away from her, smeared her mouth with the blood of a slaughtered chicken, and accused her of killing and eating her child in the garden. So the king had her thrown into prison, while the gardener sent the child far away to a forester in the woods. He was supposed to raise the child, and it was there that the prince learned all about hunting. Moreover, the forester had a beautiful daughter by the name of Lisa, and the two young children became very fond of one another. Lisa revealed to him that he was a prince, and that he had the power to realize every wish he made.

After some time had passed, the gardener came to the forester, and when the prince saw him, he immediately wished the gardener to become a poodle, and his dear Lisa, a carnation. He stuck her on himself, and the poodle had to run alongside the prince. Then he went to his father's court, where he entered the royal service as hunter, and soon he became the king's favorite hunter because he could shoot any kind of animal in the forest. All the prince had to do was to wish, and the animals came running to him. Despite all the services he rendered the king, the prince did not ask to be compensated. He only asked for a room for himself that he kept locked, and he insisted on taking care of meals for himself. All this seemed strange

to his fellow hunters, especially his refusal to receive wages, so that one of his comrades followed him and looked through the keyhole. All at once he saw the new hunter sitting at a table next to a beautiful maiden, who was his dear Lisa, whom he changed into her natural form whenever he was in the room. She kept him company whenever they were alone, and whenever he went out, she became a carnation again and stood in a glass of water.

The hunters thought that he must have a great amount of wealth and broke into his room when the prince went out hunting. However, they found absolutely nothing, only the carnation on the window sill. Since the flower was so beautiful, they brought it to the king, who became so very fond of it that he demanded it from the hunter. However, the young hunter refused to give it to him, even for all the money in the world, because the flower was his beautiful Lisa. Finally, when the king insisted on having it, the hunter revealed everything that had happened and that he was his son. When the king heard this, he rejoiced with all his heart. The queen was released from the prison, and the faithful Lisa became the prince's wife. The godless gardener was compelled to remain a poodle for the rest of his life and was often kicked by the servants when he lay underneath the table.

77

THE CARPENTER AND THE TURNER

A carpenter and a turner wanted to see who could make the best piece of work. The carpenter made a dish that could swim by itself, while the turner made wings that he could use to fly. Everyone said that the carpenter's masterpiece was better. So the turner took his wings, put them on, and flew out of the country. He flew the entire day until he came to another country, where a prince saw him flying and asked to borrow the pair of wings. Since the prince promised to pay him well, the turner gave him the wings, and the prince flew to another kingdom. There he saw a tower illuminated by many lights. He decided to swoop down to the ground and find out what the occasion was. When he learned that the most beautiful princess in the world lived there, he became very curious. In the evening he flew through an open window and was able to be with the princess but

not for very long, for they were betrayed, and the prince and princess were sentenced to die at the stake.

However, the prince had taken his wings with him, and as the flames flared, he tied the wings on and flew with the princess to his homeland, where he descended to the ground. Since everyone had been sad during his absence, he revealed his true identity and was elected king.

After some time had passed, the father of the maiden who had been carried away by the prince made it known that whoever brought back his daughter would receive half his kingdom. When the prince learned about this, he gathered together an army and brought the princess to her father, who was forced to keep his promise.

78

THE OLD GRANDFATHER AND THE GRANDSON

Once upon a time there was an old man who could barely walk. His knees trembled, and he didn't hear or see much. Moreover, he had lost all his teeth. When he sat at the dinner table, he could barely hold the spoon. He spilled the soup on his napkin, and the food continued to flow from his mouth. His son and his son's wife felt disgusted by this, and therefore, the grandfather finally had to take a place behind the oven in the corner of the room. They gave him his food in a clay bowl. In addition, it was never full, and he would look morosely over to the table, his eyes filled with tears. One time his trembling hands could not grasp the bowl tightly enough, and it fell to the ground and broke. The young wife scolded him, while he said nothing and only sighed. So they bought a wooden bowl for a penny, and now he had to eat out of it.

One time, as they were sitting at the dinner table, the little four-year-old grandson collected small wooden sticks on the floor.

"What are you doing there?" his father asked.

"Oh," the child answered, "I'm making a little trough so mother and father can eat out of it when I'm older and bigger."

Then the husband and wife looked at each other for a while. Finally, they burst into tears and immediately brought the old grandfather to

the table. From then on they let him eat with them and also said nothing whenever he happened to spill a few things.

79

THE WATER NIXIE

A little brother and a little sister were playing near a well, and as they were playing, they both fell into the water. A water nixie was there and said: "Now I've got you, and now be good children and work nice and hard for me!"

Then she gave the maiden some dirty, tangled flax to spin and also a hollow bucket to fetch water. The young boy had to chop down a tree with a blunt axe, and all they got to eat were dumplings as hard as rocks. Eventually, the children lost their patience, and one Sunday, they waited until the nixie was in church and then ran away. After the church service was over, the nixie saw that the chickens had fled the coop, and she set out after them as fast as she could. The children saw her coming from afar, and the maiden threw a brush behind her. The brush changed into a huge mountain of bristles with thousands and thousands of thorns. The nixie had great difficulty in climbing over them. When the children saw her, the boy threw a comb behind him that changed into a huge mountain with thousands and thousands of spikes, but the nixie was able to grab hold of them and climb over the mountain. Now the maiden threw a mirror behind her that formed a glass mountain that was so very, very slippery that the nixie couldn't climb over it. So she thought: "I'd better go home and fetch my axe and split the mountain in two." However, by the time she had returned and had smashed the glass, the children had long since made their escape, and the water nixie had to return to tread water in her well.

80

THE DEATH OF LITTLE HEN

Some time ago little hen went with little rooster to the nut mountain. They enjoyed themselves and ate nuts together. One time, however, little hen found such a large nut that she wasn't able to swallow the kernel,

and it got stuck so firmly in her throat that she feared she might choke to death.

“Little rooster!” she screamed. “Please run as fast as you can and fetch me some water, otherwise I’ll choke to death.”

Little rooster ran as fast as he could to the well and said: “Well, you must give me some water. Little hen’s lying on the nut mountain, and she’s about to choke to death!”

“First run to the bride,” the well answered, “and get some red silk for me.”

“So little rooster ran to the bride and said, “Bride, I need some red silk from you. The silk is for the well, who’ll give me some water to take to little hen, who’s lying on the nut mountain, where she’s swallowed a large kernel and is about to choke to death.”

The bride answered: “First run and fetch me my wreath that got caught on the branch of a willow.”

So little rooster ran to the willow, pulled the wreath from the branch, and brought it back to the bride. In return the bride gave him some red silk, and little rooster brought it to the well, who gave him water in exchange. Then little rooster brought the water to little hen, but by the time he had reached her, she had choked to death and lay there motionless and dead. Little rooster became so sad that he uttered a loud cry, and all the animals came and mourned for her. Six mice built a little wagon that was to carry little hen to her grave. When the wagon was finished, the mice harnessed themselves to it, and the little rooster was to drive the wagon. Along the way they encountered the fox, who asked: “Where are you going, little rooster?”

“I’m off to bury my little hen.”

“May I ride with you?”

“Yes, but since you’re so heavy, take a seat in the back.

If you sat up front, my horses would fall, and the wagon would crack.”

So the fox sat down in the back. Then the wolf, the bear, the stag, the lion, and all the animals in the forest took a seat in the back. Thus they continued their journey until they came to a brook.

“How shall we get across?” asked little rooster.

A straw was lying near the brook and said: “I’ll lay myself across the book. Then you can drive over me.”

However, as soon as the six mice touched the bridge, the straw slipped and fell into the water, and the six mice went tumbling after and drowned. So the situation was just as bad as it had been before, but a piece of hot coal came along and said: “I’m large enough. I’ll lay myself across, and you can drive over me.”

Then the piece of coal also laid itself across the water, but unfortunately it grazed the surface a little. Soon it started hissing, and before long it was extinguished and died. When a stone saw that, it took pity on little rooster and offered its help. It lay down across the water, and now little rooster himself pulled the wagon across. When he reached the other side and was already on land with dead little hen, he wanted to help the others in the back out of the wagon, but there were too many of them, and the wagon slipped backward, causing everyone to fall into the water and drown. So little rooster was all alone with dead little hen, and he dug a grave for her. Then he laid her in it and made a mound on top. Afterward he sat down on the ground and grieved until he, too, died. And then everyone was dead.

81

THE BLACKSMITH AND THE DEVIL

Once upon a time there was a blacksmith who enjoyed life: he squandered his money and carried on many lawsuits. After a few years, he didn’t have a single cent left in his pouch.

“Why should I torture myself any longer in this world?” he thought. So he went into the forest with the intention of hanging himself from a tree. Just as he was about to stick his head into the noose, a man with a long white beard came out from behind a tree carrying a large book in his hand.

“Listen, blacksmith,” he said. “Write your name down in this large book, and for ten long years you’ll have a good life. But after that you’ll be mine, and I’ll come and fetch you.”

“Who are you?” asked the blacksmith.

“I’m the devil.”

“What can you do?”

“I can make myself as tall as a fir tree and as small as a mouse.”

“Then show me. Seeing is believing,” said the blacksmith.

Thereupon the devil made himself as tall as a fir tree and as small as a mouse.

“That’s good,” said the blacksmith. “Give me the book, and I’ll write down my name.”

After the blacksmith had signed his name, the devil said, “Now, just go home, and you’ll find chests and boxes filled to the brim, and since you’ve not made much of a fuss, I’ll also visit you once during this time.”

The blacksmith went home, where he found all his pockets, boxes, and chests filled with gold coins, and no matter how much he took, they never became empty or even reduced in the least.

So he began his merry life once again, invited his comrades to join him, and was the happiest fellow in the world. After a few years had passed, the devil stopped by one day, as he had promised, to see how things were going. On his departure he gave the blacksmith a leather sack and told him that whoever jumped into this sack would not be able to get out again until the blacksmith himself took him out. Indeed, the blacksmith had a great deal of fun with it. When the ten years were over, however, the devil returned and said to him, “Your time is up, and now you are mine. Get ready for your trip.”

“All right,” said the blacksmith, who swung his leather sack over his back and went away with the devil.

When they came to the place in the forest where the blacksmith had wanted to hang himself, he said to the devil, “I want to make sure that you’re really the devil. Make yourself as large as a fir tree and as small as a mouse again.”

The devil was prepared and performed his feat. But just as he changed himself into a mouse, the blacksmith grabbed him and stuck him into the sack. Then the blacksmith cut off a stick from a nearby tree, threw the sack to the ground, and began beating the devil, who screamed pitifully and ran back and forth in the sack. Yet, it was all in vain: he couldn’t get out.

Finally, the blacksmith said, “I’ll let you go if you give me the sheet from your large book on which I wrote my name.”

The devil refused at first, but eventually he gave in. The sheet was ripped out of the book, and the devil returned home to hell, annoyed that he had let himself be duped and beaten as well. Meanwhile, the blacksmith went home to his smithy and continued to live happily as long as it was God’s will. Finally, he became sick, and when he realized death was near, he ordered two long nails and a hammer to be put into his coffin. This was done just as he had instructed, and after he died, he approached the heaven’s gate and knocked. However, Saint Peter refused to open the gate because the blacksmith had lived in league with the devil. When the blacksmith heard this, he turned around and went to hell. But the devil wouldn’t let him enter, for he had no desire to have the blacksmith in hell, where he would only make a spectacle of himself.

Now the blacksmith was angry and began to make a lot of noise in front of hell’s gate. A little demon became curious and wanted to see what the blacksmith was doing. So he opened the gate a little and looked out. Quickly the blacksmith grabbed him by the nose and nailed him solidly to the gate of hell with one of the nails he had with him. The little demon began to screech like a wildcat, so that another demon was drawn to the gate. He, too, stuck his head out, and the blacksmith was alert: he grabbed this one by the ear and nailed him to the gate next to the first little demon. Now both of them began to let out such terrible cries that the old devil himself came running. When he saw the two little demons nailed solidly to the gate, he became so terribly angry that he wept and jumped about. Then he ran up to heaven to see the dear Lord. Once there he told the Lord that He had to admit the blacksmith into heaven. There was nothing anyone could do to stop the blacksmith, the devil said. So the blacksmith would continue to nail all the demons by their noses and ears, and he the devil would no longer be master in hell. Well, the dear Lord and Saint Peter quickly realized that if they wanted to get rid of the devil, then they would have to let the blacksmith enter heaven. So now the blacksmith sits in heaven nicely and peacefully, but I don’t know how the two little demons were able to free themselves.

THE THREE SISTERS

Once upon a time there was a rich king who was so rich that he believed his wealth would last forever. Therefore, he wallowed in luxury and gambled on a golden board with silver dice. All this continued for some time until he squandered his wealth and was forced to mortgage his cities and castles one after the other. Finally, nothing was left except an old castle in the forest. He moved there with his queen and three daughters, and their lives were miserable: they had only potatoes to eat for their daily meal.

One day the king decided to go hunting to see if he could perhaps shoot a hare. After filling his pocket full of potatoes, he went off to a nearby forest that nobody dared enter because terrible stories had been told about what one might encounter there, such as bears that ate people, eagles that hacked out eyes, and wolves, lions, and all kinds of cruel beasts. However, the king was not in the least afraid and went straight into the forest. At first he didn't see anything except huge and mighty trees, and everything was quiet beneath them. After he had walked around for a while, he became hungry and sat down underneath a tree to eat his potatoes. All of a sudden a bear came out of the thicket, trotted straight toward him, and growled, "How dare you sit under my honey tree! You'll pay for this!"

The king was horrified and handed the bear his potatoes to appease him. But the bear began to speak and said, "I don't want your potatoes. I'm going to eat you yourself. But, if you give me your oldest daughter, you can save yourself! If you do this, I'll give you a hundred pounds of gold in the bargain."

Since the king was afraid of being eaten, he said, "You shall have her. Just let me go in peace."

The bear showed him the way out of the forest and growled after him, "In a week's time I'll come and fetch my bride."

As he went home, the king felt more at ease and was convinced that the bear would not be able to crawl through a keyhole. So from then on everything at the castle was to be shut tight. He ordered all the gates to be locked, the drawbridges to be lifted, and told his daughter not to worry.

But just to be on the safe side and to protect his daughter from the bear bridegroom, he gave her a little room under the pinnacle high up in the castle. She was to hide there until the week was over.

Early on the seventh morning, however, when everyone was still asleep, a splendid coach drawn by six horses came driving up to the castle. It was surrounded by numerous knights clad in gold, and as soon as the coach was in front, the drawbridges dropped down by themselves, and the locks sprung open without keys. The coach drove into the courtyard, and a young, handsome prince stepped out. When the king was wakened by the noise and looked out the window, he saw the prince had already fetched his oldest daughter from the locked room and was lifting her into the coach. He could just call after her:

“Farewell, my maiden dear.
I see you’re off to wed the bear.”

She waved to him with her little white handkerchief from the coach, and then they sped off into the magic forest as if the coach were harnessed to the wind. The king felt very bad about having given his daughter to a bear. He was so sad that he and the queen wept for three days. But on the fourth day, after he had done enough weeping, he realized that he couldn’t change what had happened and went down into the courtyard. There he found a chest made out of smooth wood, which was very difficult to lift. Immediately he remembered what the bear had promised him. So he opened it and found a hundred pounds of glittering and glistening gold.

When the king saw the gold, he felt consoled. He reacquired his cities and kingdom and began leading his former life of luxury once more. Soon after, he was obliged to mortgage everything all over again, and he retreated to his castle in the forest and had nothing to eat but potatoes. Yet the king still had a falcon, and one day the king took it hunting with him and went out into the field to get something better to eat. The falcon soared high into the sky and flew in the direction of the dark magic forest, which the king no longer dared enter. Right after the falcon flew into the woods, an eagle shot out and pursued the falcon, which returned to the king, who tried to fend off the eagle with his spear. But the eagle grabbed

the spear and broke it like a reed. Then the eagle crushed the falcon with one claw and dug into the king's shoulder with the other.

"Why have you disturbed my kingdom in the sky?" the eagle cried out. "Either you give me your second daughter for my wife, or you shall die!"

"All right," the king said. "You shall have my second daughter, but what will you give me for her?"

"Two hundred pounds of gold," the eagle said. "In seven weeks I'll come to fetch her."

Then the eagle let him go and flew off into the forest. The king felt bad about having also sold his second daughter to a wild beast and didn't dare tell her anything about it. Six weeks passed, and in the seventh the princess went out one day on the lawn in front of the castle to water the linseed. All at once a splendid parade of handsome knights came riding up, and at their head was the handsomest knight of all, who dismounted and cried out:

"Up you go, my maiden dear.
Come wed the eagle. No need to fear!"

And before she could answer him, he had already lifted her onto his horse and raced off with her into the forest, flying like a bird. Farewell! Farewell!

The king and queen waited a long time for the princess to come back to the castle, but no matter how long they waited, she didn't return. Then the king finally revealed that he had promised her to an eagle when he had once been in trouble, and the eagle must have fetched her. After the king got over his sadness somewhat, he remembered the eagle's promise, went down to the lawn, and found two golden eggs, each weighing one hundred pounds. "Money is a sign of piety," thought the king, and he dismissed all gloomy thoughts from his mind. He resumed his merrymaking once more and lived luxuriously until he ran through the two hundred pounds of gold. Then the king returned to the castle in the forest, and the last of the princesses had to boil the potatoes.

The king didn't want to hunt any more hares in the forest or any more birds in the sky, but he did desire to eat some fish. So the princess had to

weave a net, which he took with him to a pond not far from the castle. A small boat was there, and he got in and threw the net into the water. On his very first try he caught a bunch of beautiful flounders with red speckles, but when he wanted to row ashore with his catch, the boat wouldn't budge, and he couldn't get it to move, no matter how much he tried. All of a sudden an enormous whale came puffing up to him and cried out, "Who said you could catch the subjects of my realm and take them away with you? This will cost you your life!"

As the whale said this, he opened his jaws as if he were going to swallow the king and the little boat as well. When the king saw his terrible jaws, he completely lost his courage and recalled that he had a third daughter.

"Spare my life," he cried out, "and you shall have my third daughter!"

"That's fine with me," roared the whale. "I'll also give you something for her. I don't have gold. That's not good enough for me. But the floor of my sea is plastered with precious pearls. I'll give you three sacks full of them. In the seventh month I'll come and fetch my bride."

Then he dived down into the water, while the king rowed ashore and brought the flounders home. Yet, when they were baked, he refused to eat any of them, and when he looked at his daughter, the only one left and the most beautiful and loveliest of them all, he felt as if a thousand knives were cutting his heart. Six months passed, and the queen and princess didn't know what was wrong with the king, for he didn't smile once during all that time. In the seventh month the princess was in the courtyard in front of a man-made well and drew a glass of water. Suddenly a coach with six white horses and men clad entirely in silver came driving up. A prince stepped out of the coach, and he was more handsome than any other prince she had ever seen in her life. He asked her for a glass of water, and when she handed it to him, he embraced her and lifted her into the coach. Then they drove back through the gate over the field toward the pond.

"Farewell, you maiden dear.

You're bound to wed the whale down there."

The queen stood at the window and watched the coach as it moved off in the distance. When she was unable to find her daughter, her heart



was saddened, and she called her and looked for her everywhere. But the daughter was nowhere to be seen or heard. When the queen was certain the princess could not be found, she began to weep, and now the king revealed to her that a whale must have fetched their daughter, for he had been forced to promise their daughter to him. Indeed, that was the reason he had been so sad. The king wanted to comfort his wife and told her about the great treasure they would now get for the princess. However, the queen didn't want to hear anything about it and said her only child was more dear to her than all the treasures of the world.

During the time that the whale prince had carried off the princess, his servants had carried three tremendous sacks into the castle, which the king found at the door. When he opened them, he found they were full of big, beautiful, and precious pearls, just as large as the fattest peas imaginable. All of a sudden he was rich again and richer than he had ever been before. He reacquired his cities and castles, but this time he didn't resume his luxurious way of living. Instead, he became quiet and thrifty. Whenever he thought about what had happened to his three dear daughters with the wild beasts and that perhaps they had already been eaten up, he lost all zest for life.

Meanwhile, the queen couldn't be consoled and wept more tears for her daughters than all the pearls the whale had given them. Finally, she became more calm and peaceful, and after some time she was happy again, for she gave birth to a handsome baby boy. Since God had given them the child so unexpectedly, he was named Reinald the Miracle Child. The boy grew big and strong, and the queen often told him about his three sisters, who were being held prisoners by three beasts in the magic forest. When he turned sixteen, he demanded some armor and a sword from the king, and when he received all this, he decided to embark on an adventure. So he blessed his parents and set forth.

He went straight toward the magic forest and had only one thing on his mind—to search for his sisters. At first he wandered around in the great forest for a long time without encountering a human being or a beast. But after three days he saw a young woman sitting in front of a cave and playing with a young bear cub, while another very young one was lying on her lap.

Reinald thought she must surely be his oldest sister. So he left his horse behind him and approached her.

“Dearest sister,” he said, “I’m your brother Reinald, and I’ve come to visit you.”

The princess looked at him, and since he resembled her father very strongly, she didn’t doubt his words, but she was frightened and said, “Oh, dearest brother, hurry and run away as fast as you can if you value your life. When my husband the bear comes home and finds you here, he’ll show you no mercy and will eat you up.”

But Reinald said, “I’m not afraid, and I won’t leave you until I know how you are and what things are like for you.”

When the princess saw that he was resolute, she led him into the dark cave that was like the dwelling of a bear. On one side was a heap of leaves and hay on which the old bear and his cubs slept, and on the other side was a magnificent bed with red covers trimmed with gold. That belonged to the princess. She told him to crawl under the bed and handed him something to eat. It didn’t take long before the bear came home.

“I smell, I smell the flesh of a human being,” he said and wanted to stick his hand under the bed.

But the princess cried out, “Be quiet! Who would ever come here?”

“I found a horse in the forest and ate it,” he growled, and his nose was still bloody from eating the horse. “Where there’s a horse, there’s a man, and I smell him.”

Again he wanted to look under the bed, but she gave him such a kick in the side that he did a somersault, went back to his place, put his paw in his mouth, and fell asleep.

Every seventh day the bear was restored to his natural form. He became a handsome prince; his cave, a splendid castle; the animals in the forest, his servants. It was on such a day that he had fetched the princess. Beautiful young women had come to meet her from the castle. There had been a glorious festival, and she had gone to sleep full of joy, but when she had awakened, she had found herself lying in the bear’s dark cave, and her husband had been turned into a bear growling at her feet. Only the bed and everything she had touched had remained in its natural condition and

hadn't been changed. Thus she lived six days in suffering, but on the seventh she was comforted. She didn't grow old because only one day a week counted in her life, and she was content with her existence. She had given her husband two sons, who also became bears for six days and regained their human form on the seventh day. She stuffed their straw bed with the most delicious food all the time, including cake and fruit, and they lived off this food the entire week. Moreover, the bear obeyed her and did whatever she wanted.

When Reinald awoke, he lay in a silken bed. Servants waited on him and dressed him in the finest clothes, for his visit fell right on the seventh day. His sister entered with the two handsome princes and his brother-in-law the bear. They were glad about his arrival. Everything was magnificent and glorious, and the entire day was filled with pleasurable and joyous things. But, in the evening the princess said, "Dear brother, now it's time for you to depart. At daybreak my husband will become a bear again, and if he finds you here tomorrow, he won't be able to control his natural instincts and will eat you up."

Then the bear prince came and gave him three bear hairs and said, "Whenever you're in trouble, just rub these hairs, and I'll come to your aid."

Then they kissed each other and said farewell. Reinald climbed into a carriage drawn by six horses and drove off. He went over hill and valley, up and down mountains, through deserts and forests, shrubs and hedges without stopping to rest until the sky began turning grey at dusk. Then Reinald suddenly lay on the ground, and the horses and carriage disappeared. At sunrise he saw six ants galloping away, drawing a nutshell behind them.

Reinald realized he was still in the magic forest and wanted to search for his second sister. Again he wandered about aimlessly and lonely for three days without accomplishing anything. But on the fourth day he heard a big eagle come swooping down to settle in a nest. Reinald hid in the bushes and waited for the eagle to fly away. After seven hours it soared into the air again. Then Reinald emerged from the bushes, went over to the tree, and cried out, "Dearest sister, are you up above? If so, let me hear your voice. I'm Reinald, your brother, and I've come to visit you!"

Then he heard a voice calling down to him, "If you're Reinald, my dearest brother, whom I've never seen, come up to me."

Reinald wanted to climb the tree, but the trunk was too thick and slippery. He tried three times in vain. Suddenly a silken rope ladder dropped down, and he climbed it until he reached the eagle's nest, which was strong and secure like a platform on a linden tree. His sister sat under a canopy made out of rose-colored silk, and an eagle's egg was lying on her lap. She was keeping it warm in order to hatch it. They kissed each other and rejoiced, but after a while the princess said, "Now, hurry and see to it that you get out of here, dearest brother. If the eagle, my husband, sees you, he'll hack your eyes out and devour your heart as he's already done with three of your servants, who were looking for you in the forest."

"No," said Reinald. "I'm staying here until your husband is transformed."

"That will happen but only in six weeks. If you can hold out that long, go and hide in the tree. It's hollow on the inside, and I'll drop food down to you every day."

Reinald crawled into the tree, and the princess let food down to him every day. Whenever the eagle flew away, he climbed up to her. After six weeks the eagle was transformed, and once more Reinald awoke in a bed that was like the one at his brother-in-law the bear's place. Only here it was more splendid, and he lived with the eagle prince in great joy. On the seventh evening they said their farewells. The eagle gave him three eagle feathers and said, "If you're in trouble, rub them, and I'll come to your aid."

Then he gave him servants to show him the way out of the forest. But when morning came, they suddenly disappeared, and Reinald was all alone on top of a high rocky cliff in a terrible wilderness. He looked around him, and in the distance he saw the reflection of a large lake, which glistened from the sun's rays. He thought of his third sister, who might be there. So he began to climb down the cliff and work his way through the bushes and between the rocks. He needed three days to do this, and he often lost sight of the lake, but on the fourth day he succeeded in getting there. Once he was on the bank, he called out, "Dearest sister, if you're in the water, let me hear your voice. I'm Reinald, your brother, and I've come to visit you."

But no one answered, and everything was very quiet. He threw bread crumbs into the water and said to the fish, “Dear fish, go to my sister and tell her that Reinald the Wonder Child is here and wants to see her.”

But the red-speckled flounders snapped up the bread and didn’t listen to his words. Then he saw a little boat and immediately took off his armor. He kept only his sword in his hand as he jumped into the boat and rowed off. After he had gone a long way, he saw a chimney made of rock crystal jutting out of the water, and there was a pleasant smell rising up from it. Reinald rowed toward it and was convinced that his sister was living down below. So he climbed on top of the chimney and slid down. The princess was greatly startled when she suddenly saw a pair of wriggling legs followed shortly by a whole man, who identified himself as her brother. She rejoiced with all her heart, but then she turned sad and said, “The whale has heard that you’ve wanted to visit me, and he’s declared that if you come while he’s a whale, he’ll not be able to control his desire to eat you up. Moreover, he’ll break my crystal house, and I’ll also perish in the flood of water.”

“Can’t you hide me until the time comes when the magic loses its power?”

“Oh, no. How can I do that? Don’t you see that the walls are all made out of crystal, and you can see through them?”

Nevertheless, she thought and thought, and finally she remembered the room where the wood was kept. She arranged the wood in such a careful way that nobody could see anything from the outside, and it was there that she hid the Wonder Child. Soon after, the whale came, and the princess trembled like an aspen leaf. He swam around the crystal house a few times, and when he saw a little piece of Reinald’s clothing sticking out of the wood, he beat his tail, snorted ferociously, and if he had seen more, he would surely have destroyed the house. He came once a day and swam around it until the magic stopped in the seventh month. Suddenly Reinald found himself in a castle right in the middle of an island, and the castle surpassed even the splendor of the eagle’s castle. Now he lived with his sister and brother-in-law for a whole month in the lap of luxury. When the time was over, the whale gave him three scales and said, “When you’re in trouble, rub them, and I’ll come to your aid.”

The whale brought him to the bank, where his armor was still lying on the ground. The Wonder Child moved around in the wilderness for seven more days, and he slept seven nights under the open skies. Then he caught sight of a castle with a steel gate that had a mighty lock on it. In front of the gate was a black bull with flashing eyes. It was guarding the entrance, and Reinald attacked it. He gave the bull a powerful blow on its neck, but the neck was made of steel, and the sword broke as if it were glass. He tried to use his lance, but it broke like a piece of straw. Then the bull grabbed him with its horns and threw him into the air so that he got caught in the branches of a tree. In his desperation Reinald remembered the three bear's hairs and rubbed them in his hand. All at once the bear appeared and fought with the bull. He tore the bull to pieces, but a bird came out of the bull's stomach, flew high into the air, and rushed off. But Reinald rubbed the three eagle's feathers, and suddenly a mighty eagle came flying through the air and pursued the bird, which flew directly toward a pond. The eagle dived at the bird and mangled it, but Reinald saw the bird drop a golden egg into the water. Now he rubbed the three fish scales in his hand, and immediately a whale came swimming up, swallowed the egg, and spat it out onto the shore. Reinald picked it up and cracked it open with a stone. There he found a little key that fit the steel gate. As soon as he just touched the gate with the key, the gate sprang open by itself, and he entered. All the bars on the other doors slid off by themselves, and he went through seven doors into seven splendid and brightly lit rooms. In the last room a maiden was lying asleep on a bed. She was so beautiful that he was completely dazzled by her. He sought to wake her, but it was in vain. Her sleep was so deep that she seemed to be dead. In his rage he struck a black slate standing next to the bed. At that very moment the maiden awoke but fell right back to sleep. Now he took the slate and threw it onto the stone floor so that it shattered into a thousand pieces. No sooner did this happen than the maiden opened her eyes wide, and the magic spell was broken. She turned out to be the sister of Reinald's three brothers-in-law. Because she had rejected the love of a godless sorcerer, he had sentenced her to a deathlike sleep and changed her brothers into animals. They were to remain that way so long as the black slate remained untouched.

Reinald led the maiden out of the castle, and as they passed through the gate, his brothers-in-law came riding up from three different directions. They had been released from the magic spell, and with them came their wives and children. Indeed, the eagle's bride had hatched the egg and carried a beautiful baby girl in her arms. Now all of them traveled to the old king and queen. The Miracle Child brought his three sisters home. Soon he married the beautiful maiden, and their wedding provided great joy and pleasure to everyone,

Now the cat's run home, for my tale is done.

83

THE POOR MAIDEN

Once upon a time there was a poor little maiden. Her mother and father had died, and she no longer had a house in which she could live, and a bed in which she could sleep. She had nothing more in the world than the clothes on her back, and she carried a small piece of bread in her hand that someone who had taken pity on her had given to her. Despite all this, the maiden was good and pious.

As she set out on her way, she encountered a poor man who asked her so desperately for something to eat that she gave him the piece of bread. Then she continued on her way and met a child who said to her: "My head is freezing. Please give me something that I can tie around it."

So the maiden took off her cap and gave it to the child. And after she had walked a bit farther, she came across another child without a bodice. So she gave him hers. Further on she met another child who asked her for a little dress, and she took off her own dress and gave it to her. Finally she came to a forest, and it had already become dark. Then, yet another child came and asked for her undershirt, and the pious maiden thought: "It's pitch black. You can certainly give away your undershirt," and so she gave it to the child. All of a sudden the stars fell from heaven and turned into pure shining hard coins, and even though she had given away her undershirt, she had another one on her made from the finest linen. So

she gathered the coins in the undershirt and became rich for the rest of her life.

Once there lived a king and a queen, and the queen had a terribly evil mother-in-law. One day the king went to war, and the old queen had her daughter-in-law locked up in a damp cellar along with her two little sons. After some time had passed, the mother-in-law said to herself, "I'd really like to eat one of the children."

So she called her cook and ordered him to go down into the cellar, take one of the little sons, slaughter him, and cook him.

"What kind of sauce would you like?" asked the cook.

"A brown one," said the old queen.

The cook then went down into the cellar and said, "Ah, your highness, the old queen wants me to slaughter and cook one of your sons this evening."

The young queen was deeply distressed and said, "Well, why don't we take a pig? Cook it the way she wants, and say that it was my child."

The cook did just that and served the pig in a brown sauce to the old queen as though it were a child. Indeed, she ate it with great relish. Soon thereafter the old queen thought, "the child's meat tasted so tender that I'd like to have the second as well." So, she called the cook and ordered him to go down into the cellar and slaughter the second son.

"What kind of a sauce should I cook him in?"

"Oh, in a white one," said the old queen.

The cook went down into the cellar and said, "Ah, the old queen has ordered me now to slaughter your second little son and cook him, too."

"Take a suckling pig," the young queen said, "and cook it exactly as she likes it."

The cook did just that and set it in front of the old queen in a white sauce, and she devoured it with even greater relish than before.

Finally, the old queen thought, “Now that the children are in my body I’d like to eat the young queen as well.” The old queen called the cook and ordered him to cook the young queen.

[Fragment: The cook slaughters a doe the third time. However, the young queen has trouble preventing her children from screaming. She doesn’t want the old queen to hear them and realize they are still alive, and so on.]

85

FRAGMENTS

Snowflower

A young princess was called Snowflower because she was white like snow and was born during the winter. One day her mother became sick, and the princess went out to pluck herbs that might heal her. As she went by a big tree, a swarm of bees flew out and covered her entire body from head to foot. But they didn’t sting or hurt her. Instead, they carried honey to her lips, and her entire body glowed through and through with beauty.

The Princess with the Louse

Once upon a time there was a princess who was so clean, indeed, the cleanest in the entire world, that nobody ever saw the least bit of dirt or stain on her. However, one time a louse was found sitting on her head, and this was regarded as such a true miracle that nobody wanted to kill the louse. Instead, people decided to nourish it with milk so that it would grow. So, this is indeed what happened, and the louse grew until it was finally as large as a calf. When the louse died later, the princess ordered it to be skinned, and a dress was to be made out of its fur. Soon thereafter a man came to court the princess, and she demanded that he was first to guess the animal that had provided the fur for her dress before she would marry him. Since he couldn’t do this, and nor could other suitors, they all had to leave the palace. Finally, a handsome prince came who was able to solve the riddle in the following way.—

Prince Johannes

This is a tale about his melancholy and nostalgic wanderings, about his flight with the spirit, about the red castle, about his numerous trials and tribulations until he was finally allowed to glimpse the beautiful princess of the sun.

The Good Cloth

Two daughters of a seamstress inherited a good old cloth, and whenever anything was wrapped in it, the cloth turned the object into gold. This cloth provided them with enough to live on, and they also did some sewing to earn a little extra money. One sister was very smart, the other very stupid. One day the oldest went to church, and a Jew came down the street calling, "Beautiful new cloth for sale! Beautiful cloth to trade for old cloth! Anyone want to trade?"

When the stupid sister heard that, she ran out to him and traded the good old cloth for a new cloth. This was exactly what the Jew had wanted, for he knew all about the power of the old cloth. When the older sister came home, she said, "We're doing poorly with our sewing. I've got to get some money. Where's our cloth?"

"It's good that I've done what I've done," said the stupid sister. "While you were gone, I made a trade for a brand-new cloth."

[After this the Jew is turned into a dog, the two maidens into hens. Eventually, the hens regain their human form and beat the dog to death.]

Once the fox came to a meadow where there was a flock of nice, plump geese. Then he laughed and said, "Ho, I've come just at the right moment. You're sitting there together so nicely that all I have to do is eat you up one by one."

The geese began cackling in fright and jumped up. They screamed for mercy and begged piteously for their lives. However, the fox said: “No mercy! You’ve got to die.”

Finally, one of the geese plucked up her courage and said, “Well, if we poor geese must surrender our innocent young lives, then show us some mercy by granting us one last prayer so that we won’t have to die with our sins. After that we’ll line up in a row so that you’ll continually be able to pick out the fattest among us.”

“All right,” said the fox. “That’s a fair and pious request. I’ll wait until you’re done.”

So the first goose began a good long prayer and kept saying, “*Ga! Ga!*” Since she refused to end her prayer, the second didn’t wait for her turn and also began saying, “*Ga! Ga!*” (And when they all will have finished praying, the tale will be continued to be told, but in the meantime they’re still saying their prayers.)