

# THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

AND OTHER OLD FAIRY STORIES



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## THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

A POOR wood-cutter lived with his wife and three daughters in a little hut on the borders of a lonely forest. One morning, as he was setting out for his work, he said to his wife: "Let my eldest daughter bring my dinner into the wood, otherwise I shall not finish my day's work in time. Lest she should lose her way," he continued, "I will take a bag full of millet with me, and strew the seeds along the path."

At midday, when the sun was shining directly over the wood, the girl set out with a large jug of soup. But the sparrows, the larks and the finches, the blackbirds and siskins, had already pecked up all the millet, and the maiden could not find the track. None the less she still pursued her way, till the sun went down and night came on. The trees rustled in the darkness, the owls screamed, and the poor girl was in great distress.

Suddenly she saw in the distance a light shining amongst the trees. "There must be people living yonder," she said; "perhaps they will give me a night's rest"; and she walked quickly towards the little house. She soon arrived there, guided by the light from the window, and, knocking at the door, was answered by a rough voice that called out: "Come in."

The maiden stepped over the dark threshold, and tapped at the door of the room. The same voice cried out again: "Come in," and on opening the inner door she saw a grey-haired old man sitting by the table, his chin resting on his hands, and his long white beard flowing over the table until it almost touched the ground. By the stove lay three animals--a little hen, a cock, and a pretty dappled cow. The maiden told the old man of her trouble, and begged him to give her a night's shelter. Without answering her he turned to the animals and said:

"Pretty chicks and dappled cow  
What shall be our answer now?"

"Duks," answered the animals, which was as much as to say-- "Let her stay." Then the old man spoke: "Here you may have food and shelter, so go out into the kitchen and cook some supper."

The maiden found in the kitchen an abundance of everything, and cooked a good meal for herself; but she did not once give a thought to the animals. She carried the dishful of food to the table, sat herself down by the old man and ate a hearty meal.

When she had satisfied her hunger she said: "I am tired now; where is a bed on which I can sleep?"

The animals answered:

"With him you're glad to eat and drink;  
For us no crumb you spare:  
Of others' needs you do not think--  
Now for the night prepare!"

Then the old man said: "Go upstairs now, and there you will find two beds; shake them, and make them up with fine linen."

The maiden mounted the stairs, and when she had made up the beds she lay down on one of them and fell fast asleep, without waiting to see if the old man needed anything further. After a little while he too came up to his room, looked at the girl asleep, and shook his head. Then he opened a trap-door and let down the bed into the cellar below.

Meanwhile, the wood-cutter returned home late in the evening and reproached his wife for having allowed him to go hungry the whole day. "It is no fault of mine," she answered; "I sent the maiden at noon with your dinner. She must have lost the way; but no doubt she will be back again to-morrow." However, before daybreak the wood-cutter was obliged to start out to the forest, and this time he asked that his second daughter should bring him his dinner. "I will take a bag with lentils in it," he said; "the Seeds are larger than the millet, and she will see them better, and so cannot miss the way."

Towards noon the maiden started with her Father's dinner in a basket, but missed the track, for all the lentils had disappeared; the birds of the wood, as on the day before, had pecked up all the seeds and had not left one anywhere. The girl wandered about in the forest until night fell, when she too saw the light, and came to the old man's house; knocked and went in and asked for food and lodging. The same old man, with the long white beard, gave her no answer, but again questioned the animals in these words:

"Pretty chicks and dappled cow  
What shall be our answer now?"

"Duks," replied the animals just as before--and everything happened in the same manner as on the previous day. The girl cooked a good meal, and then sat down and ate and drank with the old man and never troubled about the poor animals. When she inquired about a bed on which to sleep, they said:

"With him you're glad to eat and drink;  
For us no crumb you spare:  
Of others' needs you do not think--  
Now for the night prepare!"

As soon as the maiden was sound asleep the old man went upstairs, shook his head sadly as he looked at her, and let her down into the cellar below.

On the third morning the wood-cutter spoke to his wife:  
"Send our youngest child with my dinner to-day. She has always been so good and obedient, she will surely keep to the right road, and not lose herself like her sisters, who wander hither and thither like wild bees when they are swarming."

But the Mother would not listen to this. "Must I also lose my dearest child?" she asked.

"Do not fear," he replied, "the maiden will not lose herself: she is too clever and sensible. I will take an abundance of peas with me to strew on the ground; they will show her the right path better, as they are larger than lentils."

But at midday, when the maiden set out to the forest with the basket on her arm, she knew not which way to turn, as the birds had already eaten up all the peas. The poor girl was full of distress and kept thinking how hungry her Father would be, and how sad her Mother, if she were away too long. At last, as night came on, she also saw the light and came to the house in the wood. She went in and asked gently whether she might spend the night there, and the old man with the long white beard once more questioned his animals:

"Pretty chicks and dappled cow  
What shall be our answer now?"

"Duks," said they all together.

Then the maiden went over to the stove where lay the animals, and she fondled the little cock and hen, stroking their smooth feathers and softly scratching the dappled cow between her horns. And when at the bidding of the old man she had prepared a good supper and put it ready on the table, she said: "I will not sup until these good animals have eaten too. Outside there is plenty of food, and I will first see to them."

So she went and fetched some barley and scattered it before the cock and hen, and she brought an armful of sweet hay for the cow. "Taste and eat, you dear animals," she said, "and when you are thirsty you shall have a drink of fresh water." Then she brought in a large basin full of water, and the cock and hen sprang on to the brink, dipped in their beaks, and then lifted up their heads, as birds do when drinking, while the dappled cow also took a long draught. When the animals were satisfied, the girl sat down at the table near the old man and ate what he had left. Before long the



little cock and hen had their heads tucked under their wings, and as the cow began to blink her eyes the maiden said, "Shall we not now go to rest?" And the old man cried"

"Pretty chicks and dappled cow  
What shall be our answer now?"

The animals answered quickly, "Duks":

"With him you would not eat or drink  
Until our meals were found.  
For us poor animals you think--  
Now may your sleep be sound."

So the maiden went upstairs, shook out the feather-beds and made them up with fresh linen. When all was ready the old man too came upstairs and lay down in one bed, his white beard nearly reaching to his feet. The young girl lay down on the other and soon fell asleep.

She slept soundly till midnight, when she suddenly awoke to hear a number of strange noises in the house. The corners of the house were creaking and cracking, the doors sprang open and struck against the walls, and the beams shook so that it seemed as if they must be wrenched from their sockets, while the stairs seemed crumbling to pieces. At last there was a great crash, as if the whole roof had fallen in.

When the maiden found that she was not hurt, and that all was quiet again, she lay still in her bed and once more fell asleep.

But in the morning when she awoke, what a sight met her eyes! She lay in a great room, and all around her everything shone as with kingly splendour. On the walls were golden flowers springing from a green silken background, the bed was made of ivory and the coverings were of red velvet, while on a chair near at hand lay a pair of pearl-embroidered slippers. The maiden thought that she was in a dream, but as she was wondering three richly-clad servants entered the room and asked her what were her commands. "Only leave me," she answered, bewildered. "I will get up at once and cook the old man's breakfast for him, and see to the pretty little cock and hen and the pretty dappled cow."

She thought the old man must already be up, but when she went to look at the bed what was her astonishment to see another and a strange man lying there. While she stood looking at him and seeing with surprise that he was young and handsome, he awoke, raised himself up and said: "I am a king's son, and was changed by a wicked witch into a grey-haired old man and obliged to live in this wood. I was only allowed to have my three servants with me, one being changed into a hen, another into a cock, and the third into a cow. The spell was never to be broken until a maiden should come to us with so kind a heart that not only would she care for the needs of men but also for those of animals, and such an one have you been. At midnight, through you, we were all set free, and the little house in the wood has become once more my kingly palace."

As soon as they were ready the prince sent the three servants away to the young girl's cottage to bring her Father and Mother to the wedding feast.

"But where are my two sisters?" asked the maiden.

"I have shut them up in the cellar," answered the prince, "and to-morrow they shall be led into the wood to be servants to a charcoal-burner, until they have learnt thoughtfulness and kindness towards poor animals."

## THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR

ONE fine summer morning, a little tailor sat at his open window, on a table at work. He was very cheerful, and sewed diligently.

A farmer's wife came down the street, crying, "Good jam for sale! good jam for sale!" The voice had a lively sound to the ears of the little tailor, so he put his soft head out of the window and cried, "Come here, my good woman, come here; this is the place to sell your goods."

The woman ascended the three steps with her heavy basket, stood before the tailor, and showed him how much she had. As soon as he saw the contents, he rose from his table, and, putting down his nose to smell, he exclaimed, "This jam smells so good that I must have four ounces, and if it is a quarter of a pound, it is of no consequence." The woman, who had hoped to sell a large quantity, gave him what he wished for, but went away quite angry and discontented.

"Now bless the jam," cried the tailor; "it will give me strength and energy for my work." Then he fetched the bread from his cupboard, cut off a piece the whole width of the loaf, and spread the jam upon it. "That will not taste bitter," he said; "but before I take even a bite, I must finish this waistcoat." Then he placed the bread on a chair near, and sewed away, for very joy making ever larger stitches.

In the meantime, the smell of the jam rose to the wall, where numbers of flies were clustered together; so tempting was it, that they flew down in swarms just to taste.

"Hallo! who invited you?" cried the tailor, as he drove away the unbidden guests.

But it was of no use. The flies did not understand his language; they would not be sent away, but returned again in larger companies than ever. Then ran the little tailor "head over heels," as people say, and, pulling from under his work-table a piece of cloth, he said, "Wait and see what I will give you"; then he struck it unmercifully amongst them.

When he stopped, he counted no fewer than seven lying with their legs stretched out quite dead. "Am I such a churl," he exclaimed, "that I must admire my own bravery alone? No, no, the whole town shall hear about it." And the little tailor, in great haste, cut out a waist-belt, on which he stitched these words, "Seven at one stroke." "This town," said he again, "indeed, the whole world shall hear of it." And his heart waggled with pride like a lamb's tail.

The tailor bound the girdle round his waist, and determined to go out into the world. Before starting, he searched in every corner of the house to discover if there was anything he could take with him, but found only an old cheese, which he stuck in his pocket. As he passed out, he saw before the door a bird caught in the bushes; this he also placed in his pocket with the cheese. Then he set out on his journey, tripping lightly along. The road he took led him up a high mountain. When he reached the summit, there sat an enormous giant, who looked at him in a friendly manner. The brave little tailor went straight up to him, and said, "Good morning, comrade. Upon my word, you have a grand prospect of the world stretched out before you. As for me, I am travelling in search of adventures--will you go with me?"

The giant looked quite disdainfully at the little tailor, and exclaimed, "You conceited little imp! You contemptible fellow!"

"Stop," cried the tailor, "not so fast"; and unbuttoning his coat, he pointed to the words on his girdle. "If you can read, that will show you what sort of a man I am." The giant read, "Seven at one stroke!" and thinking it must be seven men whom the tailor had killed, he began to feel more respect for him.

"Well, now, I will prove you," said the giant. "Look here, can you do this?" and he took up a large stone and squeezed it till water came from it.

"Oh, that is nothing," exclaimed the tailor, "it is but play to me"; and taking out the soft cheese from his pockets, he squeezed it till the whey ran from it, crying out at the same time, "beat that, if you can."

The giant knew not what to say; the strength of the little tailor quite astonished him. However, he took up another stone, and threw it to such a height in the air that it was impossible to see where it went. "Now, you little imp-- do that, if you can!"

"Well thrown! Certainly, that is clever," said the tailor; "but the stone will fall somewhere. I will throw one up that shall not come down again." He put his hand in his pocket, and, drawing out the bird, threw it up into the air.

Overjoyed at regaining its freedom, the bird rose immediately, and spreading its wings, was soon far out of sight.

"What do you think of that, comrade?" he asked.

"You can throw very well, certainly," replied the giant; "but I should like to see if you can draw a heavy weight as easily as you can throw."

He led the little tailor to an enormous oak which had fallen to the ground. "Now, then," he said, "if you are as strong as you say, just help me to carry this tree out of the forest."



"Most willingly," replied the little man. "You take the trunk on your shoulders, and leave me the leaves and the boughs; they are the heaviest."

The giant lifted the trunk on his shoulders, but the cunning little tailor seated himself among the branches; and the giant, who could not look behind him, had therefore to carry the whole tree and the tailor into the bargain, without knowing it.

Our little friend was so merry as he went along, that he could not help whistling and singing. The giant, however, had not gone far when he began to stagger under his heavy load. "I cannot move a step further," he cried. "Don't you hear, I shall let the tree fall."

At this, the tailor sprung lightly down, seized the tree with both hands, and exclaimed, "Well, you can't be so very strong, not to be able to carry such a tree as this."

They left the tree, and walked on together till they came to a cherry-tree laden with ripe fruit. The giant seized the topmost branch, and bending it down, placed it in the tailor's hand, and told him to eat as many as he liked. But the little man had not strength enough to hold the branch, so up it sprang again, carrying the little tailor high into the air and letting him fall on the other side, but without hurting him at all. "What," said the giant, "had you not strength enough to hold such a twig as this?"

"My strength did not fail me," he replied. "Do you suppose a man who could kill seven at one stroke would find this a difficult task? I sprung over the tree because I saw a number of hunters shooting in a wood close by. Now, you do the same; I should so like to see you spring over."

The giant made an attempt, but he could not clear the tree, he only entangled himself in the branches; so that in this, also, the tailor gained the upper hand.

Then the giant said to him, "As you are such a clever little fellow, you had better come home with me to my cave and stay the night."

The tailor was quite ready to accompany him, and when they reached the cavern, there sat two other giants before a blazing fire, each with a large roast sheep in his hands, eating his supper. The little tailor seated himself, and thought, "Well, this is a sight worth coming out into the world to see." The giant then showed him a bed in which he could sleep, but, when he laid himself down, it was so large that he got up again, and, creeping into a corner, curled himself round and went to sleep.

At midnight the giant, thinking his visitor was fast asleep, rose up, and taking a heavy iron bar, struck a blow at the bed, which broke it right through. "Ah," thought he, "I must have killed the little grasshopper, and got rid of his cunning tricks now." But the next morning, when the giants went out into the wood, and were not thinking of the tailor, he walked up to them as brave as ever, and looking as fresh and merry as a bird. The giants were so alarmed at the sight of him come to life again, as they thought, that they took to their heels and were soon out of sight.

Then the little man journeyed on, always following his nose, till after wandering a long time, he arrived at the entrance-court of a king's palace. Feeling very tired, he lay down on the grass, and soon fell fast asleep.

While he lay there, the people passing read on his girdle, "Seven at one stroke." "Ah," exclaimed one, "what can a great warrior like this want here in time of peace? He must be a great hero." So they went and told the king, and suggested to him that in case a war should break out, it would be a great advantage to secure the services of such a wonderful and clever man at any price.

The king listened to this counsel, and sent one of the gentlemen of the court to tell the little man, as soon as he awoke, that he wished to enlist him in his service.

The messenger remained by him, and waited till he at last opened his eyes and stretched his limbs; then he delivered his message.

"Ah," exclaimed the little man, "that is exactly what I came for; I wish to be enlisted in the king's service."

Then was he received at the palace with high honours, and handsome apartments prepared for his use.

But the military men at the court were jealous of the little tailor, and wished him thousands of miles away. "What will become of us," they said to another, "if we should quarrel with him, or attempt to fight him? If he can kill seven at one blow, there will soon be an end of us all." So they formed a resolution, and went together to the king, and resigned their commissions, saying, "They could not associate with a man who could kill seven men at one blow."

The king was vexed at the idea of losing all his old and tried servants on account of this stranger, and began to wish he had never seen the tailor.

But how to get rid of him he knew not, for he might kill them all and place himself on the throne. The king reflected long and deeply on the subject, till at last a plan suggested itself. So he sent for the tailor, and told him that, as he was such a great hero, he wished to make a proposal to him.

"In a forest not far from here," he said, "two giants dwell, who have committed so many dreadful deeds of robbery, murder, and violence, that no one will venture near where they live, for fear of losing his life. Now, if you can vanquish and destroy these dreadful giants, I will give you my only daughter in marriage, and the half of my kingdom as her dowry; and I will send an escort of one hundred knights with you, to assist you in any way you wish."

"Well," thought the tailor, "that is a reward worth trying for, especially for such a man as I am. It is an offer not met with every day."

So he replied to the king, "Yes, sire, I will overcome the giants; but the hundred knights will be of no use to me. I, who have slain seven at one blow, am not likely to be afraid of two."

Then the tailor set out, the hundred knights following him; but when they reached the borders of the wood, he told them to remain there till he returned, as he would rather go alone to attack the giants.

Then he sprang into the forest, and looked cautiously around. After awhile he saw the two giants lying fast asleep under a tree, and snoring so loudly that the branches above them were shaken, and moved up and down.

The little tailor was not idle; he ran quickly, and filled both his pockets full of stones. Then he climbed up into the tree, and, sliding out to the end of a branch under which the sleepers lay, let fall upon the chest of one of the giants one stone after another.

It was a long time before even this could disturb him, but at last he woke, and, pushing his companion roughly, exclaimed, "What do you mean by knocking me about like this?"

"You are dreaming," said the other; "I never touched you." Presently they were both asleep again.

Then the little tailor threw a heavy stone on the other giant, who woke up in a rage and cried, "You are striking me now; what do you mean by it?"

"I never struck you," he growled.

They quarreled till they were tired, and then lay down to sleep again.

As soon as their eyes were closed, the tailor began again at his game, and choosing the largest stone he could find, threw it with all his strength on the chest of the first giant.

"This is really too bad," cried he, springing up in a fury and striking his comrade against the tree so violently that it trembled.

The other returned him as good as he gave, and a regular combat followed. So furiously did they fight, that they uprooted the large trees near them to use as weapons, the earth shook under their feet, and the conflict only ended when they both lay dead on the ground.

Down sprang the little tailor, and drew his sword; then, giving a few thrusts in the breasts of the giants, he went out of the forest, and returned to the knights, who were waiting for him.

"The deed is done," he said; "I have made an end of them both. It was no easy task, I can tell you, for in their struggles for life they rooted up trees for weapons; but all this was useless against one who has killed 'seven at a stroke.'"

The soldiers would not believe him, till he led them into the wood, where they found the giants weltering in their blood, and the trees they had rooted up lying near them.

The little tailor returned to the court, and presented himself before the king to claim the promised reward; but the king regretted having promised, and all his anxiety now was to get rid of the little hero.

"Ere I can give you my daughter and half of my kingdom," said the king, "you must perform one more heroic deed. There is in my forests a fierce unicorn, who spreads destruction wherever he is found. You must kill him also."

"One unicorn will be nothing, after two giants," he replied.

So he started off again to the forest, taking with him a rope and an axe. He had not long to wait. The unicorn very quickly made his appearance, and as soon as he saw the tailor, sprang forward to pin him to the ground.

"Softly, softly," he cried; "that cannot be done so easily."

Then he stood still, and waited for the animal to come nearer, and on seeing him preparing to make a final spring, the tailor jumped lightly behind the trunk of the tree, at which the unicorn ran with all his force, and stuck his horn so fast in the trunk that he had not strength to pull it out.

"I have just caught my bird," said the bold little man; and coming forth from behind the tree, he first fastened the rope round the neck of the unicorn, and with the axe cut the horn out of the tree, and then led the animal into the presence of the king. But the king even now would not grant the promised reward, without requiring a third feat of valour. He made a bargain that the tailor should kill a wild boar, that did great

mischief in the forest, and said that the king's hunters should assist him.

"Oh, certainly," replied the tailor; "that will be child's play for me." So he set out immediately for the forest, but left the hunters outside, to their great delight, for the wild boar had often hunted them, and they had no wish to join in the tailor's enterprise. As soon as the wild boar caught sight of the tailor, he flew at him, with gleaming tusks. But our hero was too quick for him; he sprang into a little chapel that stood near, and out through the window on the other side. The boar was soon after him; but as he entered through the door, the tailor ran round quickly to close it, and the wild boar found himself a prisoner, for he was much too heavy and excited to jump through the window. The little tailor presented the wild boar to the king, who this time was obliged to keep his promise.

So the wedding was performed with great pomp, but very little rejoicing, and thus was a tailor made into a king.

Some little time after the young queen heard her husband talking in his sleep, and saying, "Work away, youngster; finish that waistcoat, and sew the seams of the trousers, or I will lay the yard measure about your ears."

When this sort of talk had occurred several times, she told her father of her trouble, and asked him to send away a husband who was only a tailor. The king tried to comfort her by saying, "This evening leave your chamber door unlocked, and as soon as your husband is fast asleep my servants shall enter and bind him and carry him away to a ship, in which he shall sail to distant lands."

The young wife was overjoyed at hearing of this scheme. But the king's equerry had overheard the conversation, and as he liked this young man, he discovered to him the whole of the plot.

"I'll soon settle that," said the little tailor.

When night came, and as soon as the queen thought her husband slept, she rose quietly and opened the door. But the tailor, who had only pretended to sleep, exclaimed in a loud voice, "Be quick, youngster, and finish that waistcoat, and

stitch those trousers, or you will soon have the yard measure about your ears. I have killed seven at a blow; I have destroyed two giants; I have hunted a unicorn, and taken a wild boar captive; and shall I be afraid of those who stand outside my chamber door?"

As soon as the servants heard this, they were in a great fright, and fled as if a wild host were at their heels; and from that time no one in the kingdom could be prevailed upon to take part against him, and so the tailor remained a king for the rest of his life.

## THE GOBLIN AND THE GROCER

THERE was once a regular student, who lived in a garret, and had no possessions. And there was also a regular grocer, to whom the house belonged, and who occupied the ground floor. A goblin lived with the grocer, because at Christmas he always had a large dish full of jam, with a great piece of butter in the middle. The grocer could afford this; and therefore the goblin remained with the grocer, which was very cunning of him.

One evening the student came into the shop through the back door to buy candles and cheese for himself; he had no one to send, and therefore he came himself; he obtained what he wished, and then the grocer and his wife nodded good evening to him, and she was a woman who could do more than merely nod, for she had usually plenty to say for herself. The student nodded in return as he turned to leave, then suddenly stopped, and began reading the piece of paper in which the cheese was wrapped. It was a leaf torn out of an old book, a book that ought not to have been torn up, for it was full of poetry.

"Yonder lies some more of the same sort," said the grocer; "I gave an old woman a few coffee berries for it; you shall have the rest for sixpence, if you will."

"Indeed I will," said the student; "give me the book instead of the cheese; I can eat my bread and butter without cheese. It would be a sin to tear up a book like this. You are a clever man, and a practical man; but you understand no more about poetry than that cask yonder."

This was a very rude speech, especially against the cask; but the grocer and the student both laughed, for it was only said in fun. But the goblin felt very angry that any man should venture to say such things to a grocer who was a householder and sold the best butter. As soon as it was night, and the shop closed, and every one in bed except the student, the goblin stepped softly into the bedroom where the grocer's wife slept, and took away her tongue, which, of course, she did not then want. Whatever object in the room he placed this tongue upon immediately received voice and speech, and was able to express its thoughts and feelings as readily as the lady herself could do. The goblin laid the tongue upon the cask, in which lay a quantity of old newspapers.

"Is it really true," he asked, "that you do not know what poetry is?"

"Of course I know," replied the cask; "poetry is something that always stands in the corner of a newspaper, and is sometimes cut out; and I may venture to affirm that I have more of it in me than the student has, and I am only a poor tub of the grocer's."

Then the goblin placed the tongue on the coffee mill; and how it did go, to be sure! Then he put it on the butter tub and cash box, and they all expressed the same opinion as the waste-paper tub; and a majority must always be respected.

"Now I shall go and tell the student," said the goblin; and with these words he went quietly up the back stairs to the garret where the student lived. He had a candle burning still, and the goblin peeped through the keyhole and saw that he was reading in the torn book, which he had bought out of the shop. But how light the room was! From the book shot forth a ray of light which grew broad and full, like the stem of a tree, from which bright rays spread upward and over the student's head. Each leaf was fresh, and each flower was like a beautiful female head; some with dark and sparkling eyes, and others with eyes that were wonderfully blue and clear. The fruit gleamed like stars, and the room was filled with sounds of beautiful music. The little goblin had never imagined, much less seen or heard of, any sight so glorious as this. He stood still on tiptoe, peeping in, till the light went out in the garret. The student no doubt had blown out his candle and gone to bed; but the little goblin remained standing there nevertheless, and listening to the music which still sounded on, soft and beautiful, a sweet cradle-song for the student, who had lain down to rest.

"This is a wonderful place," said the goblin; "I never expected such a thing. I would like to stay here with the student"; and then the little man thought it over, for he was a sensible little sprite. At last he sighed, "But the student has no jam!" So he went downstairs again into the grocer's shop, and it was a good thing he got back when he did, for the cask had almost worn out the lady's tongue; he had given a description of all that he contained on one side, and was just about to turn himself over to the other side to describe what

was there, when the goblin entered and restored the tongue to the lady.

But after what he had seen, the goblin could no longer sit and listen quietly to the wisdom and understanding downstairs; so, as soon as the evening light glimmered in the garret, he took courage, for it seemed to him as if the rays of light were strong cables, drawing him up, and obliging him to go and peep through the keyhole; and, while there, a feeling of vastness came over him such as we experience by the ever-moving sea, and it brought tears into his eyes. He did not himself know why he wept, yet a kind of pleasant feeling mingled with his tears. "How wonderfully glorious it would be to sit with the student under such a tree"; but that was out of the question, he must be content to look through the keyhole, and be thankful for even that. There he stood on the cold landing, with the autumn wind blowing down upon him through the trap-door. It was very cold; but the little creature did not really feel it till the light in the garret went out, and the tones of music died away. Then how he shivered, and crept downstairs again to his warm corner, where it felt home-like and comfortable. And when Christmas came again, and brought the dish of jam and the great lump of butter, he liked the grocer best of all.



Soon after, in the middle of the night, the goblin was awoke by a terrible noise and knocking against the window shutters and the house doors, and by the sound of the watchman's horn; for a great fire had broken out, and the whole street appeared full of flames. Was it in their house, or a neighbour's? No one could tell, for terror had seized upon all. The grocer's wife was so bewildered that she took her gold earrings out of her ears and put them in her pocket, that she might save something at least. The grocer ran to get his business papers, and the servant resolved to save her black silk mantle. Each wished to keep the best things they had. The goblin had the same wish; for, with one spring, he was upstairs and in the student's room, whom he found standing by the open window, and looking quite calmly at the fire, which was raging at the house of a neighbour opposite. The goblin caught up the wonderful book which lay on the table, and popped it into his red cap, which he had held tightly with both hands. The greatest treasure in the house was saved; and he ran away with it to the roof, and seated himself on the chimney. The flames of the burning house opposite illuminated him as he sat, both hands pressed tightly over his cap, in which the treasure lay; and then he found out what feelings really reigned in his heart, and knew exactly which way they tended. And yet, when the fire was extinguished, and the goblin again began to reflect, he hesitated, and said at last, "I must divide myself between the two; I cannot quite give up the grocer, because of the jam."

And this is a representation of human nature. We are like the goblin; we all go to visit the grocer "because of the jam."

## THE BREMEN TOWN MUSICIANS

AN ass who had carried sacks to the mill for his master during many long years felt his strength fail at last, so that he could no longer work for his living. His master thought of getting rid of his old servant, that he might save the expense of food. But the ass discovered his intentions, and determined to run away.

So he took the road to Bremen. "There," said he, "I can be a musician."

He had not travelled far when he saw a hound lying on the road, and gasping for breath as if he were tired of running.

"Why are you panting so, friend?" asked the ass.

"Ah," he replied, "now that I am old, and get each day weaker and weaker, I can no more go to the hunt, and my master has ordered me to be killed, so I have run away; but how I am to earn my living I don't know."

"Will you go with me?" said the ass. "I am going to be a musician in Bremen; I think you and I could easily earn a living by music. I can play the lute, and you can beat the drum."

The dog was quite contented, and so they both walked off together.

Not long after they saw a cat sitting in the road with a face as dismal as three wet days.

"Now, what has come across you, old whiskers?" asked the ass.

"How can one be merry when one has a collar on?" said the cat; "now I am getting old, and my teeth are become stumps, I cannot catch mice, and I like to lie behind the stove and purr, but when I found they were going to drown me and my wife, I ran away as fast as I could; my experience has cost me dear, and now what am I to do?"

"Go with us to Bremen," said the ass; "you are accustomed to perform night music, I know, so you can easily become a street musician in the town."

"With all my heart," said the cat, so he walked on with them.

The three fugitives came to a farmyard, and on the gate stood a cock screaming with all his might.

"Your crow goes through one's head," said the ass. "What is the matter?"

"I have prophesied fine weather because it is Lady Day; but the housekeeper has no pity, for I heard the cook say that she shall want me to put in the soup. So this evening my head will be cut off, therefore I shall scream at the top of my voice as long as I can."

"Listen, Red Comb," said the ass; "would you like to run away with us? We are going to Bremen, and you will find something better there than to be made into soup; you have a fine voice, and if we all play together it will have a good effect."

The cock readily fell in with this proposal, and they all four went away together.

They could not, however, reach Bremen in one day, and evening came on just as they entered a wood, where they meant to pass the night.

The ass and the dog laid themselves under a large tree, but the cat and the cock settled on the branches. The cock flew to the summit of the tree, where he felt himself quite safe.

Before they slept, the cock, who from his high position could see to all points of the compass, discovered in the distance a tiny spark burning, and calling to his comrades, told them he was convinced that they were not far from a house in which a light was shining.

"Then," said the ass, "we must rouse up and go on to this light, for there is plainly a harbour of refuge for us." The dog said he should be glad of a little piece of meat or a couple of bones.

So they were soon on their way to the place where the light shone, and it grew larger and brighter as they approached, till they saw that it came from a robber's den. The ass, who was the tallest, went near and looked in.

"What is to be seen, old grey horse?" said the cock.

"What do I see?" answered the ass; "why, a table laid out with plenty to eat and drink, and robbers sitting at it and enjoying themselves."

"That would do for us," said the cock. "Yes, yes," the ass replied, "if we were only there." Then the animals consulted as to what they had better do to drive the robbers away; at last they fixed upon a plan.

The ass was to place his forefeet on the window-sill, and the dog to stand on his back. The cat was to climb on the dog, and the cock was to fly up and perch on the cat.

As soon as this was accomplished, they all began to perform their music together. The donkey brayed, the hound barked, the cat



mewed, and the cock crowed with such a tremendous force through the window into the room that the window rattled.

The robbers, hearing such a horrible outcry, thought it could only be caused by ghosts, and fled in great terror to the wood behind the house. Then our four comrades placed themselves at the table, and took whatever was before them, which the robbers had left, and ate as if they had been hungry for a month.

When the four musicians had finished they put out the light, and each sought a sleeping-place most easy and suitable to his habits. The ass laid himself down on the dust-heap, the dog behind the door, the cat rolled herself up on the hearth among the warm ashes, while the cock perched on the beam in the roof; and as they were all tired with their long journey, they were soon fast asleep.

About midnight the robbers from a distance saw that the light was out and all quiet; then their chief said:

"I do not think there has been any cause for fear."

Then he called one of their number, and sent him to the house to see if it was all right.

The messenger, finding everything still, went into the kitchen to strike a light, and seeing the glaring fiery eyes of the cat looking like a live coal, held a match towards them, that he might set fire to it. But puss, not understanding such sport, flew up, spit at him, and scratched his face. This frightened him so terribly that he rushed to the door, but the dog, who lay there, sprang out upon him, and bit him in the leg.

In the court he ran against the donkey, who gave him a kick with his hind-foot, while the cock on the beam, aroused by the noise, became alive and brisk in a moment, and cried out as loudly as he could, "Cock-a-doodle-doo."

Then ran the robber, as fast as he could, back to his chief.

"Ah me!" he said, "in that house is a horrible witch, who flew at me, and scratched me down the face with her long fingers. Then by the door stood a man with a knife, who stabbed me in the leg, and out in the court lay a black monster, who struck me a violent blow with his wooden leg, and up in the roof sat the judge, who cried, 'Bring the scoundrel here.' On that I made off as fast as possible."

From the moment that they heard this, the robbers never again entered the house, and the four musicians found themselves in such good quarters that they would not leave, and the last heard of them was that they were still there.

## THE TABLE, THE ASS, & THE CUDGEL

ONCE upon a time lived a tailor who had three sons, and only one goat. The goat had to be well fed, and the boys used to take her by turns every day to the meadow. One day the eldest son took her into the churchyard, in which she not only enjoyed the fresh green grass, but frisked about quite merrily. In the evening, when it was time to go home, the boy said to her, "Have you had enough?" and the goat replied:

"I am so full  
I could not pull  
Even a blade of grass.  
Baa, baa!"

"Then come home," said the youth; and he took hold of the rope, led her to the stable, and tied her up.

"Well," said the father, "has the goat had good fodder?"

"Yes, father; she has eaten till she can eat no more."

But the father, wishing to make sure, went to the stable himself, and stroking his favorite, said: "Nanny, have you had enough to-day?" But the goat replied:

"In the churchyard all day  
I could frisk and play,  
But there was not a leaf to eat.  
Baa, baa!"

"What do I hear?" cried the tailor, rushing out and calling to his boy. "You said the goat had eaten as much as she liked, and she has been starved."

And in great anger he took up the yard measure and drove him with blows from the house.

On the next day it was the turn of the second son to take the goat out, and he soon found a nice spot near a garden wall full of sweet fresh grass, which the goat ate till there was not a blade left.

In the evening, when it was time to go home, the boy asked the goat whether she had had enough.

"I have eaten so much,  
I can eat no more.  
Baa, baa!"

was the goat's reply, so the boy led her home, and, taking her to the stable, tied her up.

"Well," said the father, "how has the goat fared to-day?"

"Ah!" replied the youth, "she has eaten so much she can eat no more."

But the tailor, remembering the previous evening, went again into the stable, and asked the goat the same question.

"How could I eat  
When there was no meat,  
Not even a tiny leaf?  
Baa, baa!"

"You dreadful child," cried the tailor, "to leave such a useful animal to starve!" He ran to the house, and, after beating the boy with his yard measure, he drove him also from the house.

The turn of the youngest son came the next day, and he was determined to give the goat a feast this time. So he took her to a bank where delicious wild-flowers and young leaves grew, and left her to enjoy herself.

When he came to fetch her in the evening, he asked, "Have you had enough to-day, Nanny?" She replied:

"I am so full  
That I could not pull  
Even a blade of grass.  
Baa, baa!"

"Then come home," he said; and after leading her to the stable, he tied her up, and went in to his father, and told him how well he had fed the goat; but the tailor could not trust him, and upon going out into the stable and asking the goat, the wicked animal replied:

"How can I be full?  
There was nothing to pull,  
Not even a blade of grass.  
Baa, baa!"

"Oh dear," cried the tailor, "what dreadful boys, one as bad as the other! he shall not stay here to make a fool of me." He beat the boy with the yard measure in his rage so dreadfully that he rushed out of the house and ran away.

Now the tailor remained at home alone with his goat, and the next morning he went into the stable himself, and said to her: "Come, my precious animal, I will take you out to-day myself." So he took her a little distance to some green hedges, near which grew bright tender grass, of which goats are very fond, and said: "This time you can enjoy yourself to your heart's content."

He left her there till the evening, and then he asked, "Have you eaten as much as you like, Nanny?" She replied:

"More than enough  
Of the nicest stuff:  
I could not eat any more  
Baa, baa!"

So he led her home, and tied her fast in the stable. He had not, however, gone far from the door when he turned back, and again asked her if she was satisfied. To his surprise, she said:

"I sprang over the ground,  
Not a leaf to be found.  
Baa, baa!"

When the tailor heard this, he was startled, and saw at once that he had punished his three sons unjustly. "You ungrateful animal!" he cried. "It would be a slight punishment to you to send you away as I did my sons. But wait a bit. I will mark you in such a manner that you will never dare to show yourself again amongst honest tailors." So he seized a razor, soaped the head of the goat, and shaved it as smooth as the back of his hand; and then, as a blow from the yard measure would have been too great an honour, the tailor fetched a whip, and gave the goat two or three such cuts with it that the

animal rushed out, and ran away with all its might.

The tailor, being now quite alone in his house, began to feel very miserable. He would have been glad to have his three sons home again, but he knew not where to find them.

The eldest had apprenticed himself to a joiner, and acquired the knowledge of the trade so quickly that his master was quite pleased with him. When the time came for him to travel, his master gave him a table. It was nothing to look at, for the wood was of the most common sort, but it possessed one good quality. If any one addressed it and said, "Table, prepare for dinner!" immediately the table obeyed, and quickly covered itself with a snowy cloth, on which stood plates, knives, and forks, with dishes and tureens full of good things to eat, and in glass goblets the bright sparkling red wine which makes glad the heart.

The young apprentice thought that with such a table he could want nothing else in the world. Travel where he might, whether through wood or meadow, he had only to take his table from his back, place it on the ground, and say, "Table, prepare thyself!" and immediately it was ready, and covered with all that heart could wish.



At last it came into his mind that he would return to his father, whose anger must have been appeased by this time; and with such a table as he possessed, he was sure to receive a welcome. He therefore turned his steps homewards, and towards evening came to an inn by the roadside, which was full of guests. They asked him in, and invited him to sit and eat with them.

The young joiner said, "Do you think I am going to be satisfied with such a supper as that? No. Wait a bit; you shall be my guests."

The host laughed, and thought his visitor was making jokes; but he unfastened the little table from his back, placed it on the floor of the room, and said, "Table, prepare thyself!" In a moment the table was covered with a most splendid supper, as good as, and even better than, the landlord could have provided. The smell was pleasant to the noses of the guests.

Then the joiner said, "Dear friends, seat yourselves; you are quite welcome." And when they saw that he was really in earnest, they did not allow themselves to be asked twice, but took their places at the table, and used their knives and forks bravely. Their surprise was increased when they observed that as soon as a dish was empty, it was instantly replaced by a full one.

The landlord stood in a corner watching the affair, but he thought, "If I had such a cook as that, it would make the fortune of my house."

The joiner and his guests spent a great part of the night enjoying themselves, but at last they went to their rooms; and the young man carried his table with him, and placed it against the wall. But the landlord's thoughts gave him no rest all night. At last he remembered that he had in his lumber-room an old table just like it in appearance; so he rose and went very quietly to fetch it, and changed the tables.

The next morning the youth, after paying for the night's expenses, packed up his table and went his way, quite unaware of having a false one.

About noon he reached home, and the old tailor welcomed him back with great joy. "Well, my son," he asked, "and what have you been learning?"

"Father," he replied, "I am a cabinetmaker, and can work well at my trade."

"It is a good business," said the tailor; "but how much have you gained by it?"

"The best thing I have gained," he said, "is that little table."

The tailor examined it on all sides, and then said, "That cannot certainly be of much value; why, it is old and nearly worn out."

"Ah," said the son, "but it is a table that covers itself. When I stand up and say, 'Table, prepare thyself!' it will instantly prepare a splendid dinner, with plates, knives, forks, glasses, and dishes of various kinds, and rich wines that will rejoice your heart. You go and invite all our friends and relations to dinner, and you will soon discover what my table can do."

The tailor hastened to follow his son's advice; and when the company were all assembled, expecting a splendid feast, the young man placed his table in the centre of the room, and said, "Table, prepare thyself!" But the table did not move; it stood there as empty as any other table, for it did not understand what was said to it.

When the poor young man discovered that he had been deceived, and his table changed for another, he stood before the company covered with shame. His relations laughed at him, and had all to go home again to get something to eat and drink. After this disgrace and disappointment, the father went back to his needle and thimble, and the son was obliged to work with a master joiner.

The second son had apprenticed himself to a miller, and when his time was up his master said:

"You have worked so well while you have been with me that I mean to make you a present of a wonderful donkey; but I must tell you that he can neither draw a cart nor carry a sack."

"Then he will be of no use to me," said the youth.

"But," said his master, "he drops gold from his mouth. You have only to lay a cloth on the ground, and lead the donkey on it, and say, 'Brieklebrit!' and immediately pieces of gold will drop from his mouth."

"That is a fine thing," said the young man, and, thanking his master, he bade him farewell, and started on his travels.

He soon discovered the value of his donkey, and wherever he went, he had the best of everything that money could buy, for his purse was always full.

After he had been for some time travelling he began to think of home. "For," he said to himself, "if I can return with plenty of money, my father will forget his anger and receive me kindly."

It happened that he came at last to the same inn at which his brother's table had been changed. He led his donkey by the bridle, and the landlord wished to take the animal to the stable; but the young man said, "Don't trouble yourself, landlord. I always tie up old Grizzle myself, for I like to know where he is."

The landlord wondered at first, and then he thought that a guest who tied up his donkey himself had not much to spend; but when the stranger put his hand in his pocket, and, pulling out two gold pieces, said he should like a good supper prepared for him, the landlord opened his eyes wide, and ran to order the best he had in the house.

After dinner the young miller asked for his bill, and the host charged two more gold pieces than it really amounted to. The young man, after searching in his pockets, found he had not enough to pay. "Wait a moment, landlord," he said, "I will soon fetch some more"; and he rose up hastily, carrying the tablecloth with him.

The landlord, who could not understand these movements, was curious. So he slipped out and followed his guest, whom he saw enter the stable, and fasten the door behind him; but he found a hole formed in the door, through which he peeped. Then he saw the stranger stretch out the tablecloth on the ground, lead the donkey on it, and heard him cry, "Bricklebrit!" At the same moment the animal began to pour a shower of gold pieces from his mouth, which fell on the earth like rain. "Oh my word!" cried the landlord, "these ducats are soon coined. Such a purse of gold wouldn't be bad."

The young man paid his reckoning and went to bed; but the innkeeper slipped into the stable during the night, led away the gold-coiner, and tied up another donkey in its place. Early the next morning the young man rose, led the donkey away, and thought he had his gold ass with him. He reached home about noon, and received a kind reception.

"And what trade have you been learning, my son?" asked his father.

"I am a miller, dear father," he replied.

"And what have you gained by your travels?" was the next question.

"Only a donkey."

"We have donkeys enough here already," said his father. "Now, if you had brought a goat, it might have been useful."

"Yes," said the youth, "so it might; but not so valuable as the animal I have brought--it is not like a common animal. Why, father, it can coin money. If I say 'Bricklebrit,' there will fall quite a shower of gold from its mouth on a cloth which I lay under it. Let me show you," he continued. "Send for all our relations to come here, and I will give them each money enough to make them rich people."

"That is good news," said the father; "and if this happens, I shall be able to give up stitching, and lay my needle aside for ever." And away he went to invite his relations.

As soon as they had assembled, the young miller cleared a place on the floor, and spread the cloth over it. Then he went out, and brought the donkey into the room. "Now, pay attention," he exclaimed, at the same time saying "Bricklebrit," more than once; but no gold pieces fell, the animal not understanding what was said to him. The poor young miller's face fell. He knew now that he had been cheated. He could therefore only, with every apology, send his relations away as poor as they came. His father also was obliged to continue his sewing and cutting out, and the young man obtained work at a miller's close by.

The third brother had bound himself apprentice to a turner, and as this is a difficult trade to learn, he remained longer than his brothers had done. They wrote to him, however, and told him how the innkeeper had stolen from them such valuable possessions.

At last the young brother was free to travel, and his master offered him as a farewell gift a bag, and said: "I give you this as a reward for your industry and steady conduct, and there is a stick in the bag."

"I can carry the bag on my shoulders," replied the youth, "and it will be of great service to me; but what do I want with the stick--it will only make it heavier?"

"I will tell you," replied his master. "If any one attempts to ill-treat you, you have only to say, 'Now, stick, jump out of the bag,' and immediately it will spring upon the shoulders of your assailant, and give him such a thrashing that he will not be able to move for days afterwards--unless you stop it--for the stick will go on till you say, 'Now, stick, into the bag again.'"

The youth, on hearing this, thanked his master for his present, and started on his travels. He found it very useful, for if any one ventured to molest him, he had only to say, "Out of the bag, stick," and out it sprang upon the shoulders of the offender, beating him sharply and quickly, and although he felt the pain, he could not see who struck him.

One evening the young turner arrived at the inn where the landlord had robbed his brothers. He went in, and, laying his bag on the table, began to talk of the wonderful things he had seen and heard in the world during his travels. "Indeed," he said, "some have found tables which could spread themselves with a great feast when ordered to do so, and others have possessed donkeys who could coin gold from their mouths, besides many other wonderful things, which I need not describe; but they are nothing when compared with what I carry in my bag."

The landlord pricked up his ears. "What! could nothing in the world be compared to the contents of that bag?" thought he. "No doubt, then, it is full of precious stones, and I ought in fairness to have it with my other two prizes. All good things go in threes."

When bedtime came, the young man stretched himself on a bench, and placed the bag under his head for a pillow. The landlord waited in another room till he thought the visitor was fast asleep, then he approached softly, and tried in the most gentle manner to pull the bag from under the sleeper's head, intending to put another in its place. But the traveller was not asleep. He lay watching the innkeeper's movements, and just as he had nearly succeeded in pulling away the bag, he cried out suddenly, "Stick, stick, come out of your bag." In a moment the stick was on the thief's shoulders, thumping away on his back, till the seams of his coat were ripped from top to bottom. In vain he cried for mercy; the louder he screamed, so much the stronger were the blows he received, till at last he fell to the ground quite exhausted.

Then the youth bade the stick desist for a time, and said to the innkeeper, "It is useless for you to cry for mercy yet. Where are the table and the golden ass that you stole? You had better go and bring them here, for if they are not given up to me, we will begin the same performance over again."

"Oh, no, no!" cried the landlord feebly; "I will give everything up to you directly, if you will only make that little imp creep back into the bag."

"I will do so," said the young man; "and I advise you to keep to your word, unless you wish for another thrashing. Into your bag, stick," he continued; and the stick obeyed, so the innkeeper rested in peace till the next day, when still smarting with the chastisement he had received, he gave up the stolen goods to the owner of the bag.

The youth arrived at his father's house with the table and the donkey, and was received very joyfully. The tailor asked him about his trade, and whether he had brought home anything worth having. "I have a bag, and a stick in it, dear father," he replied.

"That was scarcely worth the trouble of bringing," said his father, "for you can cut as many as you like in any wood."

"Ah, but not like mine, father; why, I have only to say, 'Out of the bag, stick,' and it will jump out and thrash any one who attempts to interfere with me, till they cry for mercy. Through this stick I have recovered the table and the donkey which the thievish innkeeper stole from my brothers. Let them both be sent for, and then invite our relations to visit us; I can not only give them a splendid feast, but fill their pockets with gold also."

The tailor was half afraid to believe all these promises, after having been already so deceived, yet he went out and invited his relations to assemble at his house. Then the young turner laid a cloth on the floor of the room, led the ass upon it, and said, "Now, dear brother, speak to him."

"Bricklebrit!" exclaimed the young miller. At the word, down fell the gold pieces on the cloth as thick as rain, and continued to fall till every one had gathered up as much as he could possibly carry. After this, the donkey was led away, and the youngest brother placed the table in the middle of the room, and said to his eldest brother, "Dear brother, it is your turn to speak now."

No sooner had the young cabinetmaker exclaimed, "Table, prepare the dinner," than the most splendid dishes appeared upon it, with the richest wines, and every necessary for a feast; and you may fancy how they all enjoyed themselves. Never before had there been such an entertainment in the tailor's house! After this, the tailor locked up in a drawer his needle

and thread, his yard measure, and his goose, and lived the remainder of his days with his three sons.

But where is the goat all this while, whose deceit caused the tailor to turn his sons out of doors? She was so ashamed of her bald head that she ran and hid herself in a fox's hole, till the hair should grow again.

When the fox came home at night, he saw a pair of great eyes shining upon him out of the darkness like fire. In a great fright he rushed back, and ran away as fast as he could. On the way he met a bear, who, seeing the fox in such a terror, exclaimed:

"Whatever is the matter, brother? Why, you look quite scared!"

"Oh," he answered, "there is a dreadful animal at the bottom of my den, who glared at me with such fiery eyes."

"We'll soon drive him out," said the bear, quite boldly, as he walked to the hole and looked in; but no sooner did he catch a glimpse of those burning eyes than his terror caused him to take to his heels as the fox had done.

On his way home a bee met him, and, observing that his hair stood on end, she said to him, "Why, Grandpapa Bear, what is the matter? You have such a woeful face. And where is all your fun gone?" "It is all very fine talking about fun," replied the bear; "but if you had seen the horrid monster with glaring eyes in the fox's den, you wouldn't have had much fun left in you; and the worst is, we can't get him out." Then said the bee, "I pity you, Bear, very much, and I know I am only a poor, weak little creature, that you great animals scarcely notice when we meet. Yet I believe I can help you in this matter." And away she flew into the fox-hole, and, perching herself on the goat's head, stung her so fiercely that she rushed out quite frantic, crying, "Baa, baa!" and has never been heard of since.

## THE JEW IN THE BRAMBLE BUSH

A RICH man once had a servant who always served him honestly and faithfully. He was the first to rise in the morning and the last to go to bed at night, and if any difficult work arose, which no one else could manage, he was ready to undertake it. Added to this, he never complained, but was contented with everything, and always merry.

At the end of his first year of service his master paid him no wages, for he said to himself, "It is the most prudent way, and I shall save the money. He will remain in my service, I know, and work as pleasantly as ever."

The servant made no complaint, and during the second year continued to work well and faithfully, yet at the end he was kept without any wages. Still he worked on the third year, and then the master put his hand in his pocket, but drew it out empty. At last the young man spoke.

"Master," he said, "I have served you well for three years, and now I want to go out and see the world; will you give me what it is right for me to have?"

"Yes," answered the greedy old man; "you have served me with the greatest willingness, and I am ready to reward you liberally." He put his hand into his pocket as he spoke, and drew out three pence, and, counting them into the servant's hand, he said: "There are three pence--one for each year--and those are as liberal wages as you would get from any master."

The young man, who knew very little of the value of money, took up his earnings, and said to himself: "Now that my pocket is full, I need not trouble myself any longer with hard work."

Away he went, over hill and dale, singing and dancing with joy at his freedom, till he came to a road with thick bushes on one side.

Out of these bushes stepped a little man, who said to him: "Where are you going, you merry fellow? Cares don't appear to trouble you much."

"Why should I be sad?" answered the youth. "Have I not three years' wages jingling in my pocket?"

"How much is your wonderful treasure?" asked the dwarf.

"How much? Why, three bright pennies, good coin, rightly told."

"Listen," said the stranger, in reply: "I am a poor, destitute man, too old to work; but you are young, and can easily earn your living: will you give me those three pennies?"

The young man had a kind heart, and could not help pitying those who were old, so he offered him the money, and said: "Take it, in heaven's name; I shall never miss it."

The little man took the money, and said: "I see you have a kind and generous heart, therefore I will grant you three wishes--one for each penny--and each wish shall be fulfilled."

"Aha!" cried the youth, "you are a magician, I see. Well, if what you say is true, I will wish first for a gun which shall hit everything at which I aim; secondly, for a fiddle which, when I play it, shall oblige every one to dance who hears it; and thirdly, that whoever I make a request to shall not be able to refuse me."

"All these you shall have," said the little man. Then he thrust his hand into the bush, separated the branches, and there lay a beautiful fiddle and gun, all in readiness, as if they had been ordered.

He gave them to the young man, and said: "Whatever request you may make, no man on earth will be able to refuse."

"What more do I want now?" said he, as the little man left him. And he continued his way, feeling more light-hearted and merry than ever. In a short time after this he met a Jew with a long beard like a goat's, who stood listening to the song of a bird perched on the branch of a tree.

"How wonderful," he cried, "that such a little creature should have such a powerful voice! I wish it was mine. Oh, if I could only sprinkle a little salt on its tail, and bring it down!"

"If that is all," cried the youth, "the bird shall soon come down." And, raising his gun, he aimed so correctly that the bird fell into the hedge of thorns beneath the tree.

"Go and fetch out your bird, you knave!" said he to the Jew.

"Mine?" he replied. "Oh, I will get the bird out for myself as you have hit it."

Then he laid himself on the ground, and began to work his way into these bushes till the thorns held him fast. The young man, seeing him in this position, felt inclined to tease the Jew, so he took up his fiddle and began to play.

In a moment the Jew was on his legs, dancing and springing in the bush, and the longer the violin continued to play, the faster the Jew danced; and as the thorns tore his shabby coat, pulled out his long beard, and at last scratched him all over terribly, he cried out: "Master, master, stop playing! leave off playing! I don't want to dance."

But the youth would not listen or stop, for he thought: "You have fleeced others often enough, my friend, and now you shall see how you like it yourself;" and as he played the Jew



danced higher and higher, till his rags were torn off and hung on the bush.

"Ah, woe is me!" cried the Jew. "Master, master, I will give you whatever you ask me--even a purse full of gold--if you will leave off playing."

"If you are really going to be so generous," said the young man, "I will stop me music; but indeed I must praise your dancing: your style is perfection." So saying he put up his fiddle, took the purse of money the Jew had promised him, and went on his way.

The Jew stood and watched him till he was out of sight; then he screamed after him as loud as he could: "You miserable musician! you wretched fiddler! wait till I can catch you alone; I will hunt you then till you lose the soles of your shoes, you ragamuffin! I dare say you were not worth sixpence till you got all that money out of me." And so he went on calling him all the dreadful names he could think of. At last he stopped for want of breath, and, making his way quickly to the next town, he went before the magistrate.

"My lord judge," he said, in a woeful voice, "I have been robbed and cruelly treated on the king's highway, by a rascally fellow who met me on the road. The very stones on the ground might pity me for what he made me suffer: my clothes torn to rags, my body all scratched, and my little bit of savings taken with my purse--bright golden ducats, each as beautiful as the other. For the love of heaven, let the man be put in prison."

"Was it a soldier," asked the judge, "who cut you about in this manner with his sword?"

"No, no," replied the Jew, "he had not even a dagger with him; but he had a gun on his shoulder and a violin which hung round his neck; the rascal can easily be recognised."

So the judge sent his people out to find the offender, and it was not long before they met him walking along quite wearily, and upon searching they found upon him the purse of gold. When he was brought before the judge, he said: "I never touched the Jew, nor his gold, but he gave me the purse of his own free will because I stopped my fiddling when he asked me, and said he could not endure it."

"Heaven defend us!" cried the Jew; "his lies swarm like flies on a wall."

But even the judge refused to believe the young man's assertion. "It was not likely," he said, "that the Jew would act so foolishly."

Therefore the good servant was condemned to be hanged for having committed a robbery on the king's highway. As he was being led away to the scaffold the Jew screamed after him, "You dog of a fiddler! you thief! you are justly paid out."

The young man calmly ascended the steps to the scaffold, but on the last step he turned round and said to the judge: "Grant me but one request before I die."

He replied: "You must not ask for your life; any other request I will accede to."

"I shall not ask for my life," replied the prisoner; "I only request to be allowed once more to play on my violin."

The Jew raised a loud outcry. "I beg, I entreat you not to allow it; pray, pray don't!" he almost howled in his terror.

But the judge said: "Why should we not grant him this short pleasure? it is the last he will have, therefore it is granted."

Indeed, the judge could not have refused the young man, because of the power which had been given him by the dwarf in the wood. No sooner was permission granted, however, than the Jew cried: "Oh, oh! bind me tight, tie me fast."

But it was too late: the young man had quickly turned his violin round, and at first chord the man who was going to bind the Jew let the rope fall, the judge, the clerk, and the officers of the court began to move and to tremble, and presently, as the full tones of the violin struck out, they all jumped up and began dancing with all their might; even the hangman dropped the rope and joined in the dance, and he and the judge and the Jew were the chief performers.

Soon the sounds of the fiddle reached the market-place, and many who came from curiosity to listen were soon among the dancers, fat and lean, young and old, capering madly away among the rest. Even the dogs who ran by stood upon their hind-legs and began dancing about; and the longer he played the faster they all danced and the higher they sprang in the air, till at last they knocked each other's heads together and began to scream and cry out. At length the judge, quite out of breath, cried: "I will give you your life if you will stop your fiddling."

The young man on hearing this was quite ready to stop his playing, and, hanging his violin again on his neck, he stepped down from the ladder, and approaching the Jew, who lay panting on the ground, he said: "You rascal! now confess where you got that purse of money that you gave me, or I will begin fiddling again."

"Oh me, oh me, I stole it, I stole it," cried the Jew, "and you earned it honestly."

Then the judge had the Jew led to the scaffold and hanged as a thief.

## THE VAGABONDS

"LITTLE hen," said a young cock to his wife one day, "this is the time for nuts. Let us go to the mountains and feast ourselves before the squirrel takes them all away."

"Yes, that will be a happy time," said the hen.

So they started off together to the mountains very early in the morning, and stayed till evening.

Now, I cannot say whether they had eaten too much, or if they had become proud; at all events, they could not walk home, so the cock made a little carriage of nut shells. No sooner was it finished than the hen seated herself in it, and said to the cock, "You can harness yourself to the carriage and draw me home."

"Very likely," he replied, "that I should allow myself to be harnessed like a horse and draw you; it would be better to walk home than that. No, I mean to be coachman and sit on the box, but I'm not going to draw you."

While they were contending, a duck came by. "You thieves," she quacked, "what are you doing in my nut mountains? Be off quickly, or you will get the worst of it," and she gave the cock a tremendous peck with her beak.

But the cock was not going to stand that. He flew at the duck, and beat her so with his spurs, that she was obliged to beg for mercy, and at last allow herself to be harnessed to the little carriage as a punishment.

The cock sat on the box and drove at a furious rate, crying out, "Get on, duck! get on!"

After travelling some distance they overtook two foot-passengers--a pin and a needle. "Halt! halt!" they cried; "do help us, we are so tired that we cannot go a step farther. Night is coming on, the roads are so dusty, and we cannot sit down. We stopped at the tailors' public-house, and stayed too long over the beer."

The cock, seeing that they were only thin people, who would not require much room, allowed them to enter the carriage, only making them promise not to step on the hen's feet.

Late at night they reached a roadside inn, and, because it was night, would not go any farther, and by this time the duck was so tired that her legs were unsteady, and she waddled terribly. So they stopped at the inn. The landlord made many objections at first--his house was already full, and he thought these new-comers did not look quite respectable.

However, the cock flattered the old landlord, and promised that whatever eggs the hen and the duck might lay while they stayed should be his. So the landlord gave them shelter, and glad enough they were of a night's rest.

Early in the morning, however, just as day began to dawn, and while every one else was asleep, the cock and hen awoke, and, seeing the egg which she had laid, they made a good breakfast on it, and threw the shell into the kitchen fire. Then they went to the needle, who still lay asleep, stuck it in the cushion of the landlord's arm-chair, and stuck the pin in his towel.

Then they flew away with the greatest indifference through the open window, and across the heath.

The duck, who preferred the open air, had roosted in the outer court, and was awoke by the rustle of wings. Rousing herself quickly, she plumed her feathers, and espying a stream near, partly flew and partly waddled down to it, for to swim home would be far better than drawing the carriage.

A few hours after this the landlord arose and prepared to wash himself; but on taking up his towel to wipe his face, the point of the pin made a long red scratch right across from one ear to the other.

Then he went into the kitchen to light his pipe. As he stooped to put in a match, out popped a piece of burnt egg-shell into his eye.

"To-day everything goes to my head!" said he, and sank down into his grandfather's arm-chair, which stood near; but he started up again more quickly than he had sat down, for the

needle in the cushion pricked him terribly.

Then was the landlord very angry, and began to suspect his guests who had arrived so late the night before. He went out to look for them, and found they were gone. Then he took an oath that he would never again admit such knaves into his house, who ate a great deal, paid nothing, and, above all, instead of thanks, performed knavish tricks.

## RED JACKET; OR, THE NOSE TREE

THERE were once three poor soldiers, who, after having fought hard in the wars, set out on their road home, begging their way as they went.

They had journeyed on a long way, sick at heart with their bad luck at thus being turned loose on the world in their old days, when one evening they reached a deep gloomy wood, through which they must pass; night came fast upon them, and they found that they must, however unwillingly, sleep in the wood; so to make all as safe as they could, it was agreed that two should lie down and sleep, while a third sat up and watched, lest wild beasts should break in and tear them to pieces; when he was tired he was to wake one of the others and sleep in his turn, and so on with the third, so as to share the work fairly among them.

The two who were to rest first soon lay down and fell fast asleep, and the other made himself a good fire under the trees and sat down by the side to keep watch. He had not sat long before, all on a sudden, up came a little man in a red jacket, "Who's there?" said he. "A friend," said the soldier. "What sort of friend?" "An old broken soldier," said the other, "with his two comrades, who have hardly anything left to live on; come, sit down and warm yourself, and partake of what we have." "Well, my worthy fellow," said little Red jacket, "I will do what I can for you; take this and show it to your comrades in the morning." So he took out an old cloak and gave it to the soldier, telling him that, whenever he put it over his shoulders, anything he wished for would be fulfilled; then the little man made a bow, and walked away.

The second soldier's turn to watch now came, and the first soon laid himself down to sleep; but the second man had not sat by himself long before up came the little man in the red jacket again. The soldier treated him in a friendly way, as his comrade had done, and the little man gave him a purse, which he told him was always full of gold, let him draw as much as he would.

Then the third soldier's turn to watch came, and he also had little Red Jacket for his guest, who gave him a wonderful horn that would draw crowds around it whenever it was played; and make every one forget his business to come and dance to its

beautiful music.

In the morning each told his story and showed his treasure; and, as they all liked each other very much and were old friends, they agreed to travel together to see the world, and for a while only to make use of the wonderful purse. And thus they spent their time very joyously, till at last they began to tire of this roving life, and thought they should like to have a home of their own. So the first soldier put his old cloak on and wished for a castle. In a moment it stood before their eyes; fine gardens and green lawns spread round it, and flocks of sheep and goats, and herds of oxen were grazing about; and out of the gate came a fine coach with three dapple grey horses to meet them and bring them home.

All this was very well for a time; but being old soldiers, they could not stay at home always, so they got together all their rich clothes and horses, and servants, and ordered their coach with three horses, and set out on a journey to see a neighbouring king. Now this king had an only daughter, and as he took the three soldiers for kings' sons, he gave them a kind welcome. One day, as the second soldier was walking with the princess, she saw him with the wonderful purse in his hand; and having asked him what it was, he was foolish enough to tell her: though, indeed, it did not much signify, for she was a witch and knew all the wonderful things that the three soldiers brought. Now this princess was very cunning and artful; so she set to work and made a purse so like the soldier's that no one would know one from the other, and then asked him to come and see her, and made him drink some wine that she had got ready for him, till he fell fast asleep. Then she felt in his pocket, and took away the wonderful purse, and left the one she had made in its place.

The next morning the soldiers set out home, and soon after they reached their castle, happening to want some money, they went to their purse for it, and found something indeed in it; but to their great sorrow, when they had emptied it, none came in the place of what they took. Then the cheat was soon found out; for the second soldier knew where he had been, and how he had told the story to the princess, and he guessed that she had betrayed him. "Alas!" cried he, "poor wretches that we are, what shall we do?" "Oh!" said the first soldier, "let no grey hairs grow for this mishap; I will soon get the purse back." So he threw his cloak across his shoulders and wished himself in

the princess's chamber. There he found her sitting alone, telling the gold that fell around her in a shower from the purse. But the soldier stood looking at her too long, for the moment she saw him she started up and cried with all her force, "Thieves! thieves!" so that the whole court came running in and tried to seize him. The poor soldier now began to be dreadfully frightened in his turn, and thought it was high time to make the best of his way off; so without thinking of the ready way of travelling that his cloak gave him, he ran to the window, opened it, and jumped out; and unluckily in his haste his cloak caught and was left hanging, to the great joy of the princess, who knew its worth.

The poor soldier made the best of his way home to his comrades, on foot and in a very downcast mood; but the third soldier told him to keep up his heart, and he took his horn and blew a merry tune. At the first blast a countless troop of foot and horse came rushing to their aid, and they set out to make war against their enemy. Then the king's palace was besieged, and he was told that he must give up the purse and the cloak, or that not one stone should be left upon another. And the king went into his daughter's chamber and talked with her; but she said, "Let me try first if I cannot beat them some way." So she thought of a cunning scheme to overreach them, and dressed herself out as a poor girl with a basket on her arm; she then set out by night with her maid, and went into the enemy's camp as if she wanted to sell trinkets.

In the morning she began to ramble about, singing ballads so beautifully, that all the tents were left empty, and the soldiers ran round in crowds and thought of nothing but hearing her song. Amongst the rest came the soldier to whom the horn belonged, and as soon as she saw him she winked to her maid, who slipped slyly through the crowd and went into his tent where it hung, and stole it away. This done, they both got safely back to the palace. The besieging army went away; the three wonderful gifts were all left in the hands of the princess; and the three soldiers were as penniless and forlorn as when the little man found them.

Poor fellows! they began to think what was now to be done. "Comrades," at last said the second soldier, who had had the purse, "we had better part; we cannot live together; let each seek his bread as he can." So he turned to the right, and the other two to the left; for they said they would rather travel

together. Then on he strayed till he came to a wood (now this was the same wood where they had met with so much good luck before); and he walked on a long time till evening began to fall, when he sat down tired beneath a tree, and soon fell asleep.

Morning dawned, and he was greatly delighted, on opening his eyes, to see that the tree was laden with the most beautiful apples. He was hungry enough, so he soon plucked and ate first one, then a second, then a third apple. A strange feeling came over his nose; when he put the apple to his mouth something was in the way; he felt it: it was his nose, that grew till it hung down before him. It did not stop there, but still it grew and grew. "Mercy!" thought he, "when will it have done growing?" And, indeed, it had by this time reached the ground as he sat on the grass, and thus it kept creeping on till he could not bear its weight, or raise himself up; and it seemed as if it would never end, for already it stretched its enormous length all through the wood.

Meantime his comrades were journeying on, till on a sudden one of them stumbled against something. "What can that be?" said the other. They looked, and could think of nothing that it was like but a nose. "We will follow it and find its owner, however," they said; so they traced it up, till at last they found their poor comrade lying stretched along under the apple-tree. What was to be done? They tried to carry him, but in vain. They caught an ass that was passing by, and raised him upon its back; but it was soon tired of carrying such a load. So they sat down in despair, when up came the little man in the red jacket. "Why, how now, friends?" said he, laughing; "well, I must find a cure for you, I see." So he told them to gather a pear from a tree that grew close by, and the nose would soon come right again. No time was lost, and the nose was soon brought to its proper size, to the poor soldier's joy.

"I will do something more for you yet," said little Red Jacket; "take some of those pears and apples with you; whoever eats one of the apples will have his nose grow like yours just now; but if you give him a pear all will come right again. Go to the princess and get her to eat some of your apples; her nose will grow twenty times as long as yours did; then look sharp, and you will get what you want of her."

Then they thanked their old friend very heartily for all his kindness, and it was agreed that Nosey, as his comrades now nicknamed him, should undertake the task. So he dressed himself up as a gardener's boy, and went to the king's palace, and said he had apples to sell, such as were never seen there before. Every one that saw them was delighted and wanted to taste, but he said they were only for the princess; and she soon sent her maid to buy his stock. They were so ripe and rosy that she soon began eating, and had already eaten three when she too began to wonder what ailed her nose, for it grew and grew, down to the ground, out at the window, and over the garden, nobody knows where.

Then the king made known to all his kingdom, that whoever would heal her of this dreadful disease should be richly rewarded. Many tried, but the princess got no relief. And now the old soldier dressed himself up very sprucely as a doctor, who said he could cure her; so he chopped up some of the apple, and to punish her a little more gave her a dose, saying he would call to-morrow and see her again. The morrow came, and of course, instead of being better, the nose had been growing all night, and the poor princess was in a dreadful fright. So the doctor chopped up a very little of the pear and gave it to her, and said he was sure that would do good, and he would call again the next day. Next day came, and the nose was, to be sure, a little smaller, but yet it was bigger than when the doctor first began to meddle with it.

Then he thought to himself, "I must frighten this cunning princess a little more before I shall get what I want of her"; so he gave her another dose of the apple, and said he would call on the morrow. The morrow came, and the nose was ten times as bad as before.

"My good lady," said the doctor, "something works against my medicine, and is too strong for it; but I know by the force of my art what it is; you have stolen goods about you, and if you do not give them back, I can do nothing for you." But the princess denied very stoutly that she had anything of the kind.

"Very well," said the doctor, "you may do as you please, but I am sure I am right, and you will never be cured if you do not own it. Then he went to the king, and told him how the matter stood.

"Daughter," said he, "send back the cloak, the purse, and the horn, that you stole from the right owners."

Then she ordered her maid to fetch all three, and gave them to the doctor, and begged him to give them back to the soldiers; and the moment he had them safe he gave her a whole pear to eat, and the nose came right. And as for the doctor, he put on the cloak, wished the king and all his court a good day, and was soon with his two brothers, who lived from that time happily at home in their palace, except when they took airings in their coach with the three dapple grey horses.

## THE STRAW, THE COAL & THE BEAN

IN a village there lived an old woman, who one day gathered some beans from her garden to cook. She had a good fire on the hearth, but, to make it burn more quickly, she threw on a handful of straw. As she threw the beans into the pot to boil, one of them fell on the floor unobserved by the old woman, and not far from a wisp of straw which was lying near. Suddenly a glowing coal bounced out of the fire, and fell close to them. They both started away, and exclaimed, "Dear friend, don't come near me till you are cooler. Whatever brings you out here?"

"Oh," replied the coal, "the heat luckily made me so strong, that I was able to bounce from the fire. Had I not done so, my death would have been certain, and I should have been burnt to ashes by this time."

"Then," said the bean, "I have also escaped with a whole skin; for had the old woman put me in the pot with my comrades, I should without mercy have been boiled to broth."

"I might have shared the same fate," said the straw, "for all my brothers were pushed into the fire and smoke by the old woman. She packed sixty of us in a bundle, and brought us in here to take away our lives, but luckily I slipped through her fingers."



"Well, now what shall we do with ourselves?" asked the coal.

"I think," answered the bean, "as we have been so fortunate as to escape death, we may as well be companions, and, in order to avoid any further misfortune happening to us here, let us travel away together to some more friendly country."

This proposal was gladly accepted by the two others; so they started on their journey together. After travelling a little distance, they came to a stream, and as there was no bridge of any sort, they all stood on the bank, wondering how they should ever get to the other side.

Then the straw took courage, and said, "I will lay myself across the stream, so that you can step over me, as if I were a bridge."

So the straw stretched himself from one shore to the other, and the coal, who from his nature is rather hot-headed, tripped out quite boldly on the newly-built bridge. But when he reached the middle of the stream, and heard the water rushing under him, he was so alarmed that he stood still, and dared not move a step farther. The straw began to burn, broke in pieces from its weight, and fell into the brook. The coal, with a hiss, slid after him into the water, and gave up the ghost.

The bean, who had cautiously remained behind on the shore, could not contain himself when he saw what had happened, and laughed so heartily that he burst. Now would he have been in the same plight as his comrades; but, as good luck would have it, a tailor, who was out on his travels, came to rest by the brook, and noticed the bean. He was a kind-hearted man, so he took a needle and thread out of his pocket, and, taking up the bean, sewed him together. The bean thanked him very much, but unfortunately the tailor had only black thread to sew with, and, in consequence, since that time all beans have a black mark down their backs.

## SNOW-WHITE AND ROSE-RED

ONCE upon a time there lived in a lonely cottage, surrounded by a garden, a poor widow. In the garden grew two rose-trees; one of which bore white roses, the other red.

Now, the widow had two daughters, who so much resembled the rose-bushes that she gave the name of Snow-white to one, and to the other Rose-red.

These two children were the best, the most obedient, and most industrious children in the world. Snow-white was quiet and gentle; Rose-red was fond of running about the fields and meadows, in search of flowers and butterflies.

Snow-white would often stay at home with her mother, help her with the housework, and then read to her after it was done. The two children were very fond of each other, and whenever they walked out together they would hold each other's hand, and when Snow-white would say, "We will never leave each other," her sister would reply, "No, never, as long as we live."

The mother added, "Whatever is given to one of you must be shared with the other."

They frequently rambled together alone in the wood, to gather berries; and not a creature ever did them any harm, but all were quite friendly with them.

No danger ever threatened them, even if they stayed in the forest till nightfall. They would lie down on the mossy bed, and sleep safely till morning, and their mother knew there was no cause for fear.

Once, when they had remained in the wood all night, they did not awake till the rising sun had reddened the eastern sky, and as they opened their eyes they saw near them a beautiful little child, whose clothes were white and shining. When he saw they were awake, he looked kindly at them, and, without a word, vanished from their sight.

When they looked around, they found that they had been sleeping on the edge of a precipice, down which they must have fallen, had they moved in the dark. Their mother said it must have been one of the angels who watch over good children.

Snow-white and Rose-red kept their mother's cottage so neat and clean that it was quite a pleasure to look at it. Every morning, in summer, Rose-red took care always to place a bouquet of fresh flowers by her mother's bed, in which was a flower from each of the rose-trees. In winter Snow-white lighted the fire, filled the kettle, and placed it over the bright blaze, where it shone and glittered like gold, for it was of burnished copper, and was always kept bright.

In the evening, when the snow was falling, and the door closed and locked, they would seat themselves round the fire, in the bright, snug little room, and knit busily, while their mother would put on her spectacles, and read to them.

One evening there came a knock at the door, and the mother said: "Rose-red, open it quickly; no doubt some poor traveller, lost in the snow, wants shelter." Rose-red went and unbolted the door, when instead of a poor man a great bear pushed his great black head in.

Rose-red screamed aloud, and started back, and Snow-white hid herself behind her mother's bed.

The bear, however, began to speak very gently: "Do not fear," he said; "I will not hurt you. I only want to warm myself by your fire, for I am half frozen."

"Poor bear," said the mother; "come in and lie down by the fire, if you want to; but take care not to burn your furry coat."

Then she called out: "Snow-white and Rose-red, come here; the bear is quite gentle; he will do you no harm."

So they both came near to the fire, and by degrees got over their fright.

The bear said: "Dear children, will you sweep off the snow from my fur?"

So they got the broom, and cleaned the bear's skin, till it looked quite smooth, and then he stretched himself at full length before the fire, grunting now and then, to show how contented and comfortable he felt. In a very short time they

lost all fear of their unexpected guest, and even began to play with him. They jumped on his back, rolled him over on the floor, tapped him with a hazel twig, pulled his thick fur, and when he growled they only laughed.

The bear allowed them to do as they liked, only saying, when they were too rough with him: "Leave me my life, dear children, and don't quite kill your old sweetheart."

When bed-time came, the mother said to him: "You can stay here by the fire all night, if you like. I will not turn you out in this dreadful weather; and here you will at least be sheltered from the cold."

In the morning, when they all rose, the two children let the bear out, and he trotted away over the snow into the wood.

After that he came each evening at the same hour, laid himself on the hearth, and allowed the children to play with him just as they pleased. They became so used to his visits that no one thought of bolting the door till the black fellow arrived. The winter passed, and spring was again covering the meadows and forest trees with her robe of green, and one morning the bear said to Snow-white: "I am going away now, during the summer, and you will not see me again till the end of autumn."

"Where are you going, dear bear?" asked Snow-white.

"I must go to the forest," he replied, "to hide my treasures from those wicked dwarfs. In winter these treasures are safe under the frozen earth, but now, when the sun has warmed and softened the ground, it is easy for them to break it and dig up what I have buried, and when once anything valuable is in their hands it is not easy to recover it."

Snow-white felt quite sorrowful when the bear said good-bye, but as he passed out of the door the latch caught his fur and tore a little piece off. Snow-white thought she saw something glittering like gold under the skin, but she was not sure, for the bear trotted away very quickly, and was soon lost to sight amongst the trees. Some time after this the mother sent the children into the forest to gather brushwood, and they found a large tree which had fallen to the ground. As they stood looking at it they saw something jumping up and down on

the other side of the trunk; but they could not think what it was till they went nearer, and then they saw a little dwarf with a shrivelled face, whose long white beard had been caught in the cleft of the tree. The dwarf was jumping about like a puppy at the end of a string, but he could not get free. He glared at the children with his red fiery eyes, and cried:

"Why do you stand there staring, instead of offering to assist me?"

"Poor little man," said Rose-red, "how did you do this?"

"You stupid goose!" he replied angrily. "I wanted to split up the tree that I might get some shavings for our cooking. A great coal fire burns up our little dinners and suppers; we don't cram ourselves with food as your greedy people do. I drove my wedge into the tree and it seemed all right, but the horrid thing was so slippery that it sprang out again suddenly, and the tree closed so quickly that it caught my long white beard, and now holds it so fast that I cannot pull it out. See how the milk white-faced creatures laugh!" he shouted. "Oh, but you are ugly!"

Notwithstanding his spiteful words and looks, the children wished to help him, and they went up to him and tried to pull out the beard; but all to no purpose.

"I will run home and call somebody," said Rose-red.

"What?" snarled the dwarf, "send for more people! Why, there are two too many already, you sheep-headed madcaps!"

"Don't be impatient," said Snow-white; "I think we can manage to release you."

She took her scissors out of her pocket as she spoke, and cut the dwarf's beard off close to the trunk of the tree. No sooner was he at liberty than he caught hold of a bag full of gold which was lying among the roots, grumbling all the time about the dreadful children who had cut off his magnificent beard, a loss which nothing could repay him. He then swung the bag across his shoulders, and went away without one word of thanks to the children for helping him.

Some time after this Snow-white and Rose-red went out one day to catch fish. As they came near the banks of the stream they saw something like a large grasshopper jumping about, as if it were going to jump into the water. They ran forward, and recognised the dwarf.

"What are you doing here?" asked Rose-red. "Why do you wish to jump into the water?"

"Do you think I am such a fool as that?" he cried. "Don't you see how this dreadful fish is dragging me?"

The little man had been angling, but, unfortunately the wind caught his beard, and entangled it in the line, so that when a large fish came up and swallowed the bait he had not strength to extricate himself, and the fish, in its efforts to escape, was dragging the dwarf into the water. He held tightly by the reeds and rushes that grew on the bank, but with very little effect, and the children were only just in time to save him from being dragged in by the fish. They both pulled him back with all their might, but as long as the beard remained entangled in the line their efforts were useless, and they could not disentangle it. There remained no other means of saving him than by cutting off his beard, and this time so much of it that only a short piece remained.



When he saw this the dwarf was in a dreadful rage; he screamed out: "Is it your custom, you wretches! to disfigure people's faces in this way? Not satisfied with cutting off a large piece the other day, you must now deprive me of nearly all. I dare not show myself such a fright as this. I wish you were obliged to run till you had lost the soles off your shoes."

He lifted a bag of pearls which he had hidden among the rushes, and, throwing it on his shoulder without another word, slunk away and disappeared behind a stone. It happened on another occasion that the mother of the two maidens sent them to the town to purchase needles, thread, and ribbon. Their way lay across a heath, on which here and there great rocks lay scattered. Presently they saw a large bird hovering over a certain spot on the heath, till at last he pounced down suddenly to the earth, and at the same moment they heard terrible cries and piteous lamentations close to them. The children ran to the place, and saw with great alarm that a large eagle had got their old acquaintance the dwarf in his talons, and was carrying him away. The good-natured children did all they could; they held the little man fast to pull him back, and struggled so fiercely with the eagle, that at last the bird relinquished his prey and set him free.

But he had no sooner recovered from his fright than the ungrateful little wretch exclaimed, "What do you mean by catching hold of me so roughly? You clawed at my new coat till it is nearly torn off my back, awkward little clowns that you are!"

Then he took up his sack of precious stones, and slipped away among the rocks. The maidens were accustomed to his ingratitude, and did not care for it. So they went on their way to the town, and made their purchases.

On their return, while crossing the heath, they came unexpectedly again upon the dwarf, who had emptied his sack of precious stones in a quiet corner. The evening sun shone brightly on the glittering jewels, which sparkled and flashed out such beautiful colours in the golden light that the children stood and gazed in silent admiration.

"What are you standing there gaping at?" asked the dwarf, his usually grey face quite red with rage. He was going on with his spiteful words, when suddenly a terrible growl was heard, and a large black bear rushed out of the thicket.

The dwarf sprang up in a great fright, but he could not escape to a place of concealment, for the bear stood just in his way. Then he cried out piteously in his agony: "Dear Mr. Bear, do spare my life! I will give you all my treasures, and those jewels that you can see lying there, if you will only grant me my life. Such a weak little creature as I am would scarcely be a mouthful for you. See, there are two nice little tender bits--those two wicked maidens. They are as fat as young quails. Just eat them instead of me."

But the bear paid no attention to his complaints. Without a word he lifted up his left fore-paw, and with one stroke laid the ugly, wicked little wretch dead on the ground.

The maidens, in a fright, were running away; but the bear called to them: "Snow-white, Rose-red, don't be afraid. Wait, and I will go home with you."

They instantly recognised his voice, and stood still till he came up to them; but as he approached, what was their astonishment to see the bearskin suddenly fall off, and instead of a rough bear there stood before them a handsome young man, with beautiful, gold-embroidered clothes!

"I am a king's son," he said; "and that wicked dwarf, after robbing me of all I possessed, changed me into a bear, and I have been obliged to wander about the woods, watching my treasures, but not able to catch the dwarf and kill him till to-day. His death has set me free, and he has met with a well-deserved fate."

Not many years after this Snow-white was married to the prince, and Rose-red to his brother, with whom he had shared the riches and treasures which the dwarf had stolen. Their mother lived for many years in great happiness with her children. The two rose-trees were brought to the castle and planted in the garden near the windows of the two sisters; and every year they bore the same beautiful red and white roses.

THE END