

TALES *of*
WONDER
and MAGIC

KATHARINE
PYLE





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The little dog scratched a hole in the ground and buried her clothes. FRONTISPIECE. *See page 277.*

TALES OF WONDER AND MAGIC

By Katharine Pyle

THE CHRISTMAS ANGEL

AS THE GOOSE FLIES

NANCY RUTLEDGE

IN THE GREEN FOREST

WONDER TALES RETOLD

TALES OF FOLK AND FAIRIES

TALES OF WONDER AND MAGIC

TALES OF WONDER AND MAGIC

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED

BY

KATHERINE PYLE



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TALES OF WONDER AND MAGIC

WHITE AS SNOW, RED AS BLOOD, AND
BLACK AS A RAVEN'S WING

AN IRISH STORY

THE King and Queen of Ireland had one dear son and his name was Jack, and he was always out hunting, in fair weather or foul. One day he set out, and the world was white with snow. He walked on and on, but nothing could he see to shoot until toward evening he saw a great black raven.

“That’s not much in the way of game,” said Jack to himself, “but all ravens are robbers, and better out of the world than in it.” So he drew his bow and shot, and the raven fell down dead on the snow, and the blood ran out of it.

Jack stood and looked at it. “Those are

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pretty colors," he said. "White and red and black! Never will I marry until I find a maiden as white as snow and as red as blood and with hair as black as a raven's wing."

When he went home, he said to his father, "Father, I am thinking of getting married."

"That is a good hearing," said the King. "You are old enough, and I would like to hold a child of yours on my knee before I die."

"But," said his mother, "who is it you are thinking of marrying?"

"I do not know as yet," said Jack, "but this one thing I do know: she must be as white as snow, as red as blood, and with hair as black as a raven's wing."

"Then you will never find her," said the Queen.

"That is as it may be, but I am going to set out into the world to seek her, and unless I can find such a one, I will never marry at all."

The King and Queen were sorry when they heard that. They tried to persuade him to think of this girl or that or the other, whom they knew of, each one of them a beauty, but for all the praises they gave them Jack had no

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wish for any one of them ; not one of them was as white as snow and as red as blood and as black as a raven's wing.

“Very well,” said the King at last ; “you 're a willful fellow. Go if you must, and when you return we 'll talk of this further.”

He then gave Jack a hundred golden guineas to line his pockets, and sent him forth with his blessing.

Jack walked along and walked along, and after a while he came to a miserable poor hut, and in the doorway sat an old woman weeping. Jack felt sorry for her, and he stopped and began to question her.

“What ails you, mother,” he asked, “that you weep so bitterly ?”

“I am weeping because my son is dead, and I have not enough to give him a Christian burial,” answered the old woman.

“That is a sad story,” said Jack. “And how much would it take to give him a Christian burial ?”

“It would cost a hundred guineas, no more, no less.”

“That is exactly how much I have,” said

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Jack. "Take it, in Heaven's name," and he gave the woman the hundred guineas his father had given him. After that he walked along all the more lightly because his pockets were empty.

He had not gone far when he came to a cross road, and there was a little old red man sitting on a stone.

"Good-day, King's son," said the little old man.

"Good-day," answered Jack; "though I do not know you, nor how you happen to know me."

"Oh, I know that and more," answered the little old man. "I know that you are journeying out into the world in search of a bride, and that you will have no one unless she be as white as snow and as red as blood and has hair as black as a crow's wing."

"Then since you 're so wise, maybe you can tell me whether there is such a girl in the wide world, and where I can find her," said Jack.

"There is such a one, and she is the Princess of the East, and she lives far enough from here, but if you 'll take me as a servant, I 'll show you where to go to seek her."

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Jack was very willing to take him as a servant, and the only trouble about that was that he had no money to pay him wages. Just a little while ago he had given away every bit of it.

But that mattered little, the small red man said. He would just as lief serve without wages as with them.

So the little man slipped down from the stone and went along the road with Jack.

After they had traveled a short way and a long way, they came to a dark gloomy castle, and the little old red man asked Jack whether he knew what place it was.

“I do not,” answered Jack, “but I’ve seen places I liked better.”

“This is the castle of the giant who owns the Cloak of Darkness,” said the little old red man.

“Then I’ll be journeying farther,” said Jack, “for I’ve heard of that giant. A very fierce and terrible creature he is, and I have no wish to meet him.”

But the little old man would not hear of this. “If we are to win the Princess, we must have that Cloak of Darkness,” said he, “and here and now is our chance to get it.” And

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without more ado he lifted the knocker and thundered on the door.

At once the door opened and there stood the giant of the Cloak of Darkness, and he was indeed a terrible creature to look upon.

“Who are you who venture here, and what seek you at my castle?” bellowed the giant.

Jack trembled in his boots at the bellowing, but the small man seemed no whit afraid. He spoke up to the giant as boldly as though he had been twice the giant’s size.

“We are two travelers, and we have stopped here because we are in need of supper, and a bed to sleep on,” said he.

When the giant heard this he laughed a great terrible laugh. “Then you are like me,” he said. “I too am in need of supper and a bed. Your flesh shall be my supper, and your bones the bed I lie on.”

“I ’m none too sure of that, but come on and we ’ll see which is the better man,” said the red servant. So the little old man drew his sword, and it was a very short sword indeed; and the giant drew his sword, and it was a great long one, as long as a tall tree is. Then

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began a battle between them, and it would have seemed as though the little red man would have no chance at all against the giant, but every time the giant struck at him the small one jumped aside so that the sword never even touched him; but every time the little man struck at the giant his sword grew longer and longer, and at last it stretched and grew until it reached all the way up to the giant's breast. Then the little man thrust with it, and thrust right through the giant's heart, so that he fell down dead.

After that Jack and the little red servant entered into the castle and ate and rested there for the night, and before they set out the next morning the red one hunted around until he found the Cloak of Darkness, and he rolled it up into a small bundle and carried it along with him. "For," said he, "as I told you, we will need it later if we are to win that Princess of the East."

Well, they trudged along and trudged along a short way and a long way until they came to another castle, and it was larger and darker and gloomier even than the other.

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“Do you know who lives here?” asked the little servant.

“I do not,” answered Jack, “but I do not like the looks of it.”

“It belongs to the giant with the Purse of Plenty,” said the red man.

“Then I, for one, will push on farther,” said Jack. “I’ve heard of that giant, and that he is twice as terrible as the other, and I have no wish to meet him.”

“All the same we’ll not push on farther, but will spend the night here,” said the small servant. “We have need of that same Purse of Plenty, and I mean to have it, giant or no giant”; and with that he struck upon the door so loudly and fiercely that it might have been the giant himself knocking. Jack was in a terrible fright, but the wee man showed no fear whatsoever.

Scarce had he finished knocking when the door opened and a giant stepped out of it, and if the other giant was terrible to look at, this one was twice as much so, for he had two heads to stare at instead of one.

“Who are you who come knocking at my

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door," cried the giant, "and what do you wish of me?"

"We are two poor travelers," answered the servant, "and what we wish for is supper and a bed to sleep on."

"That is what I am wanting myself," said the giant, "and by your leave I'll have it. You shall be my supper, and your bones the soft bed I lie on."

"That may or may not be," said the small man. "Now draw your sword and let us see which of us will sup to-night."

When the giant heard that he laughed aloud, and drew his sword, and struck at the little red man, intending to cut him in two as he might a cockchafer. But the little red man jumped aside nimbly, so that the sword-blow never touched him.

Then he himself drew his sword, and now it had two blades, and it grew longer and longer and longer until it reached all the way up to the giant's neck. Then with one blow he cut off both the creature's heads at once, and that so neatly that they seemed to skip from his shoulders of themselves.

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After that Jack and the little red man entered into the giant's palace and hunted around and found all sorts of good things to eat and drink, and they feasted to their hearts' content, and then went to bed and slept quietly.

The next day, before they set out, the small servant searched the rooms until he found the Purse of Plenty, and then he slipped it into his pocket. "It will come in handy later on," said he to his master.

Well, they traveled on again and they traveled on again until at last they came to another castle, and it was higher and darker and gloomier than either of the others. "And by the same token, whoever lives here must be twice as fierce and terrible as either of the other giants," said Jack.

"You are right about that," answered the little red man, "for he who lives in this castle is the giant of the Sword of Light."

"Yes, I have heard of that giant," said Jack, "and I'll be traveling on, for I have no wish to stay in his neighborhood, so fearsome he is."

"No, but wait a bit," said the small servant.

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“That Sword of Light is exactly the thing we must have if we are to win the lovely Princess, and I mean to get it from the giant.”

With that, and before Jack could stop him, he seized hold of the knocker and thundered on the door so that Jack was well-nigh deafened.

At once the door was thrown open and the giant of the Sword of Light came out, and he was a terrible one to look upon, I can tell you.

He had three heads on his shoulders, and his eyes were like balls of fire, and his hair as stiff as pokers. “Who are ye who venture here so boldly, and what seek ye at my castle?” roared the giant.

“Oh, we are just two humble travelers,” answered the little red man, “and we come here seeking a bite of supper and a soft bed to sleep on.”

When the giant heard that he roared with laughter so that the castle shook with the sound of it. “I’m in need of a supper and a bed to sleep on myself,” cried he. “You shall be my supper, and your bones my bed to sleep on.” With that he drew the Sword of Light from its scabbard, and that sword is so bright

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that whenever it is drawn its light flashes all the way around the world, and it is so sharp that nothing on earth can stand against it.

And now it would have gone hard with the small red servant if he had not had the Cloak of Darkness, but he quickly wrapped it around him, and at once he disappeared from view. The giant struck about him right and left with the Sword of Light, but he never touched the small red servant for he could not see him. As for the small man, he jumped about this way and that, all the time keeping out of the way of the giant, and then presently, as soon as he had time, he drew his own sword, and in less than a second he had driven it through the giant's heart so that the creature fell down dead and stirred no more.

"That is a good riddance," said the small man; "and now we will spend the night here." With that he rolled up the Cloak of Darkness again, and took the Sword of Light and slipped it in its scabbard, and he and Jack went on into the castle and spent the night very pleasantly, eating and drinking and sleeping.

The next morning, before they set out, the

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red servant went out to the giant's stable and took the two handsomest steeds that were there, and fine horses they were, I can tell you. They were shod with gold, and they were fleeter than wind, for when they went the wind itself was left behind, and they thought nothing of leaping over a high mountain in three bounds. Jack and the small man rode the horses to a smithy near by, and had them shod with gold, and the servant paid for the shoeing from the Purse of Plenty. Then they set out, and it was no time at all before they came to the palace where the Princess of the East lived.

Jack began looking about for a gate to enter by, but the servant said, "Not so. Over the wall is the way for us to enter."

The wall was thirty feet high and had spikes on top of it a yard long, but Jack and the small man had only to lift their bridles, and their horses flew over it as though they were birds. A great crowd of soldiers and attendants came running out from the castle to see what manner of strangers these were who had flown over the wall in this marvelous way, and who rode horses shod with gold.

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Then the little red servant took out the Purse of Plenty, and scattered money about by handfuls, and not silver money, either, but good red gold. He scattered so much that there was a pocketful for every one who cared to gather it, and not a soul there — not even the fine courtiers themselves — scorned to do this.

It was not long before the news of this stranger who flew over walls and scattered gold like water was brought to the Princess, and down she came from the castle to have a look at him.

“Who are you, and whence come you, and what is the desire that brings you hither?” asked she of Jack.

“I am a King’s son, and I come from far away,” he answered, “and it is my wish to court you and win you for a wife that has brought me here.”

“Well, any one who chooses has leave to court me,” said the Princess, “but before you begin I will have to tell you something. Whenever any one comes for that purpose, I set him three tasks. He who can do these tasks shall have me for a bride, but whosoever fails shall have his head cut from his shoulders. Now that

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you have heard this, do you still wish to court me?"

"I do," answered Jack.

"Very well! then we'll say no more about it at present," said the Princess.

She then ordered a grand fine feast to be prepared, and when it was ready she and Jack went in to it and sat on two fine grand thrones at the head of the table, and there were all sorts of good things to eat, and music to listen to, but Jack ate little and listened less, he was so busy all the time looking at the Princess; and the more he looked at her the more he liked her.

After the feast was over the Princess took Jack out to see her rose garden, and on every rosebush there was a head. "Do you know how many rosebushes there are in this garden, Jack?" she asked of him.

"I do not," answered the Prince.

"Then I will tell you. There are three hundred and sixty-five rosebushes. On each of three hundred and sixty-four rosebushes there is a head, and they are the heads of the lads who came to court me, and who failed to perform the tasks I set them. On one rosebush

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alone there is no head, and I hope to see yours flowering there before long, Jack," she said.

"And that's a hope I don't share with you," answered Jack; and his heart quaked within him. All the same, he had no thought of giving up trying for the Princess.

That evening there was another fine feast, and the Princess ate well, and was very merry. Just before supper was ended she took a beautiful gold comb from her hair and showed it to the lad.

"Do you see this comb, Jack?"

Yes, he saw it.

"Then I will tell you what your first task shall be. To-night I am going out from the palace, and I'll be wearing this comb. I will be neither on the earth, nor in the sea, nor yet in the air, but what you must do is to get this comb out of my hair somehow, and this you must do between midnight and cockcrow. Moreover, you must have it ready to give back to me in the morning." Then she said good night to Jack and left him.

Jack went out in the garden to walk about a bit, and his heart was heavy within him, for

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he did not know how he was to get the comb from the Princess, and every time he saw a rosebush his heart sank lower.

Presently the little old red man came out and joined him. "What ails you that you are so down in the mouth?" he asked. "What was it the Princess said to you at supper?"

Jack told him of the task the Princess had set him. "And how I'm to get the comb I'm sure I can't think," said he, "and as far as I can see, I'm like to lose my head over this business."

"It may not turn out as badly as you fear," said the small servant. "Leave it all to me, and I will have the comb for you in the morning. All you have to do is to go to bed and sleep."

Then the little red man went in and put on the Cloak of Darkness, and went and stood beside the Princess' door.

Just on the stroke of twelve the Princess came out of the door wrapped in a long, dark cloak, and with the comb shining in her hair. She stole down the stairway and the little red man kept close behind her step for step, but this she did not know because she could not

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see him. She went out into the courtyard at the back of the castle and stood on a great square slab of stone, and the little servant stood on the slab beside her. The Princess stamped three times, and the third time she stamped the stone sank down and down with the two of them on it until it came to the lower regions under the earth, to the land of the Demons, and there was the King of the Demons waiting for the Princess. She stepped from the stone, as did also the little red man, and the stone returned to its place.

The Demon made the Princess welcome, and they sat down side by side and chatted together, and she told him that another lad had come to court her, and that by the next evening the last rosebush in her garden would have a head on it, and they made merry over the thought of it.

Just before morning the Princess rose to go, and then the little man slipped the comb from her head without her knowing it, and followed close after her up a back way and into the palace. Then the Princess returned to her chamber and the little man to his, and he was greatly pleased over his night's work.

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The next morning Jack and the Princess had breakfast together, and the Princess's look was troubled, for she had missed her comb by that time, and did not know what had become of it.

“Well,” said she to Jack, “and how about the task I set you? Have you the comb to give me?”

“Oh, yes, I have it,” said Jack; “and you'll have to set me a harder task than that if my head is to grow on the rosebush.” And with that he handed her the comb.

The Princess wondered, but she thought it had somehow slipped from her hair without her knowing it, and that he had found it.

“You're a clever lad, Jack,” she said. “But you'll have to be more clever than that to-night if you're to keep your head on your shoulders.” Then she went on talking with him pleasantly.

That evening there was another fine feast, and Jack and the Princess sat and ate together. Just before they finished the Princess said, “Now I will tell you what your second task shall be. Do you see this diamond ring on my finger?”

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“Yes, I see it.”

“To-night I’ll go out from the palace between midnight and cockcrow, and I’ll be neither on the earth nor in the sea nor sky, and your task shall be to get the ring from my finger in that time, and have it for me in the morning.”

Then the Princess said good night and left him, and Jack went out into the garden to walk about, for his heart was troubled within him. The little red man came to him and tried to cheer him up a bit, and asked what the Princess had said to him.

“Oh, she said I must get the diamond ring from her finger between midnight and cockcrow, and how I am to do it I have no notion, and I can tell you my head feels loose on my shoulders.”

“Maybe it’s tighter than you think,” said the red man. “I think I can manage this matter for you. Do you go to bed and sleep, and I will have the ring for you in the morning.”

Jack felt a bit comforted when he heard this and went back to the castle and to bed, but the small servant put on the Cloak of Darkness

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and hid himself beside the door of the Princess' chamber as before.

Presently, just on the stroke of midnight, out came the Princess. She hastened down the staircase with the small man close behind her, and into the courtyard. There she stepped on the square stone as before and stamped three times, and when the stone sank down to the lower regions, you may believe the small servant was close beside her.

The Demon was waiting for the Princess, and he took her hand and kissed her, and then they sat down side by side and talked together lovingly.

“The lad had the comb for me this morning,” she said, “and somehow I must have dropped it; so that is one task he has done, but to-morrow morning he is to have the diamond ring from off my finger to give me, and that will not be so easy.” Then she leaned her head on the Demon's shoulder, and he put his arm around her, and her hand hung down over the arm of her chair. The ring was loose on her finger, and while she was listening to the Demon the small man slipped the ring from her finger

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without her noticing it, and hid it under the Cloak of Darkness.

Presently the Princess got up to go, and then she noticed the ring was gone from her finger, and she was in a terrible fright. "My ring! My ring!" she cried. "It is gone from my finger. I must have lost it since I came here, for I had it when I left my chamber."

She and the Demon hunted everywhere for it, but they could not find it, for the small man had it in his hand under the Cloak of Darkness. Then, as it was almost cockcrow, the Princess had to go, and the small man followed close behind her back to the upper regions and into the castle.

The next morning Jack and the Princess had breakfast together, and Jack was the merry one, but the Princess had scarce a word to say for herself. At last she asked him whether he had the ring for her.

"Oh, yes," said Jack, "I have it. You must set me a harder task than that if my head is to flower on the rosebush!" And then he laid the ring before her on the table.

When the Princess saw the ring she began to

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tremble, but presently she put on a smile. "Well, you 're a cleverer lad than I thought you, Jack," said she; "but the third task is still before you, and I may still have your head in the rose garden;" and then she got up and left him.

That evening she and Jack had supper together, and the Princess said, "Now I will tell you what the third task is. To-night I will be out from the castle, and I'll be neither on the earth nor in the sea nor yet will I be in the air, and you must cut off the fingers that hold me between midnight and cockcrow, and there's no mortal sword that can do that cutting." Then she went away to her chamber.

Jack was troubled, but he thought here too the little red man might help him, and he went out in the garden to wait till the servant could come to him. Presently he came. "Well, what is it this time?" he asked. "What is this third task the Princess has set you?"

"Oh, it is a hard one, and there's no mistake about that, and unless you can help me, I'll be losing my head after all."

"And what is this task?" asked the small red servant.

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Jack told him.

“Well, there’s no doubt but what this is a harder task than the others, but still I have done harder things than that. Go to bed and sleep quietly, and to-morrow you may have a Princess promised to you as a wife.”

Jack went to bed and slept as the small man bade him, but the small man himself kept watch at the door of the Princess’s chamber as before, with the Cloak of Darkness wrapped about him, but this time he carried with him the Sword of Light hidden under the cloak.

Just before midnight the Princess came forth, and the red servant could see she was all of a tremble. She hurried down and took her place on the stone, and the small man was beside her. She stamped three times and down they sank to where the Demon was waiting for her.

The Demon kissed her, and they sat down together, and he asked her what was the task she had set for the lad. When she told him the task was to cut off the fingers that held her, the Demon liked it none too well.

“You might have left me out of this business,”

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said he, "for I can tell you I don't like the way it is going. Still I suppose I am safe enough, for as you know there's not a mortal sword that can cut or hew me."

They talked for a while longer, and then the Princess stood up to go, but just as the Demon took hold of the Princess to kiss her, the little red man flashed out his Sword of Light and cut off the Demon's fingers. Then how the Princess screamed! and she could not tell how it had happened, either, for she could see no one in the room with them. As for the Demon, he was bawling and stamping and hunting about for his fingers, but he could not find them, for the little red servant had picked them up and hidden them under the Cloak of Darkness. The Princess was obliged to go back to the palace, and she could not even stay to help him hunt for them, for it was near morning and the cocks were crowing.

When it was day and Jack had awakened, the little servant brought him a silver napkin, and in it were wrapped the Demon's fingers. "Take this to the Princess," he said, "and claim her for your bride, and she cannot say

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no to you now, for this is the last of the tasks she was to set you."

The lad took the napkin, and his heart was as light as a feather within him.

As for the Princess, she was sad and heavy when she met the lad at breakfast. "Well," said she, "have you done the task I set you?"

"Yes," answered Jack, "I have, and here is what you asked for;" and he unrolled the napkin before her.

When the Princess saw the fingers in the napkin, she screamed aloud with rage and terror, and she would have liked to tear the lad's eyes out. But all the same she had given her promise to marry him, and marry him she must. A grand feast was prepared, finer than any of the others, and Jack and the Princess sat together side by side, and when he took her hand in his, she still did not forgive him, and Jack was not quite easy in his heart.

The feast lasted for three days, and after it was over Jack and the Princess were married. And you might have thought that was the end of it and that Jack and the Princess would live happy forever after, but not so.

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As soon as he had a chance, the little man drew Jack aside into a room where none could overhear them, and in his hand he had seven stout rods made of blackthorn.

“Jack,” said the little man, “do you know who I am?”

“No,” said Jack, “I haven’t a notion except that you have made yourself my servant and helped me out of a pretty pickle.”

“Then I will tell you,” said the red man. “I am the spirit of the man for whom you paid a hundred guineas to give him a Christian burial. That was a good deed and you have had your reward, and now I must leave you. But before I go I will give you a bit of advice. Take these rods of blackthorn and break them over your wife’s shoulders, one each night for seven nights. If you do this, you will live happy forever after; but if you fail to do it, you will rue it bitterly.”

Jack took the rods and promised to do as the servant bade him, and then the small man vanished, and what became of him Jack did not know unless he had gone on to Paradise.

That very night, when Jack and the Princess

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went into their chamber, Jack locked the door, and then he took out a rod from behind him and began to beat the Princess. The Princess cried and wept and begged and entreated him to give over, but Jack kept on beating her till the rod broke over her shoulders, and just as it broke a smoke came out of the Princess's nostrils, and that smoke was one seventh of the Demon's wickedness going out of her.

The next night Jack broke a second rod over her shoulders, and another seventh of the wickedness went out of her. So it was, night after night. Every night he beat her, and every night another part of the wickedness went out of her, and on the seventh night the very last of it was driven out, and the Princess was herself again.

Then she threw herself into Jack's arms and kissed him and vowed she would be a good and faithful wife to him, and Jack never had cause to lift a finger against her again, but they lived together in mutual love and happiness forever after.



Jack kept on beating her till the rod broke over her shoulders. *Page 28.*

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AN EAST INDIAN STORY

THERE was once a king who had two sons. The elder was a very stingy Prince; he would neither give nor lend to any one. The younger, on the contrary, was a waster who could never say no to any one, and spent all he had without ever taking thought of the morrow.

In time the old King died, leaving everything he had to his sons without making any division between them.

The elder was very much dissatisfied with this arrangement. "Come," said he to his brother, "let us divide between us what our father left. Then you can squander your share as you please, but I intend to save mine, for I have no idea of being brought to poverty."

The younger brother readily agreed to this. They divided the inheritance between them,

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but somehow, in the division, the elder one seemed to get the best of everything. The younger did not quarrel over that, however.

After that they separated, and each one lived his own life as he wished. The elder saved and hoarded as was his nature, and grew richer every day, but the younger spent with a free hand, and denied neither himself nor his friends anything.

After a while the younger Prince had spent all he had, and then he journeyed to the palace where his elder brother lived to ask help of him.

The older Prince was but ill-pleased to see him. "So you have already wasted all your money," said he. "I knew it would be so. This one time I will help you because you are the son of our father, but in return you must promise you will never come here again to trouble me."

The young Prince was obliged to agree to this, and the elder then gave him four pieces of golden money, no more, no less. With this the young Prince was obliged to be content, though it was little enough to live on. He went away from his brother's palace, and he had not

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journeyed far when he met a man carrying a cat, and the cat was so thin and miserable looking that it was pitiful.

“Is your cat for sale?” asked the Prince.

“Yes, it is,” answered the man.

“And what is the price of it?”

“I can only sell it for gold, for it is a very fine cat.”

“Very well,” said the Prince, “I will buy it;” and he paid the man one of the pieces of money his brother had given him.

He went on a little farther and he met a man with a dog, and the dog was no less miserable looking than the cat. The Prince felt pity for it.

“Is your dog for sale?” he asked.

“Yes, I will sell it.”

“How much do you ask for it?”

“I will sell it for a piece of gold money.”

The Prince gave the man a second of his pieces of money and took the dog in exchange.

A little while after he saw a merchant with a parrot, and then a faker with a snake, and both of these creatures he also bought because he thought they looked as though they were ill-treated, and now all his money was gone.

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“My poor friends,” said the Prince, “I had meant to do you a good turn by buying you, but now I have no food for either myself or you. It seems you are worse off than ever.”

“Do not let that trouble you, dear Prince,” said the snake. “My father, who lives over in the jungle beyond the city, is the king and ruler over all the serpents. He is very rich and powerful. Let us go to him, and he will gladly reward you for saving me from the faker, for he was a very cruel man.”

This advice sounded good to the Prince. He at once set out into the jungle, and the snake directed him which way to go. The dog and cat followed close behind, and the parrot fluttered from branch to branch overhead.

After traveling for some time, the Prince and his companions came to a great heap of ruins, and here the snake bade them pause: “This is where my father lives,” said he. “Do you wait here while I go forward and prepare him for your visit. If you came upon him suddenly, he might strike you before I had time to tell him who you were, and you might die.”

“Very well,” said the Prince. “Do you go,

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and I and the others will wait here until you return."

The snake at once slipped away among the ruins, and it was not long before he returned.

□ "My father will now see you," he said. "He is very grateful to you for saving me from the faker, and will offer to reward you with all sorts of treasures, but you must refuse them. Ask him for the little old ring he wears, and take nothing else, for it is worth more than all the rest of his riches put together."

The Prince promised to do as the snake bade him, and then followed it through the ruins until they came to the large gilded and painted chamber where the Serpent King lived. This Serpent King was of enormous size, and wore a golden crown upon his head.

After he had heard his son's story he made the Prince welcome, and began to thank him for what he had done for his son. "You have saved him from a miserable life," said he. "I am not ungrateful, and I intend to reward you. In my treasure chamber are riches beyond all dreaming. Take as much of them as you choose. I grudge you nothing, and there

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is nothing you can ask of me that I will not give you."

"I thank you," answered the Prince, "but I have no need of treasures, and it was from pity I bought your son, and not for a reward."

"Nevertheless, I wish to show my gratitude," said the Serpent King. "I beg of you to help yourself to my treasures, — gold or jewels, I care not how much you take."

Again the Prince refused. "Indeed, I am in need of nothing."

Then for the third time the Serpent King urged him to accept some reward.

"Very well," said the Prince at last, "I see you will not be content unless I take something from you, so give me the little old ring you wear, as a token of friendship between us."

When the Serpent King heard this he was furious, and hissed so loudly that the Prince trembled with fear. "Who has told you to ask for the Ring of Fortune?" he cried. "All the rest of my treasures are as nothing beside this, and if I had not promised you whatever you might ask for, you should never have it."

However, the Serpent had given his word,

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and he was obliged to let the Prince have the ring.

The Prince slipped it on his finger, and then he hastened away from the ruins, for he was afraid of what the Serpent King might do to him.

No sooner was he safely out of the jungle than he said to the snake, "This is a very foolish thing you have made me do. I might have had enough treasure to make me rich for life, and now I have nothing but this little old ring that appears to be made of very common metal and quite worthless."

"Do not judge so quickly," replied the snake, "for that ring has very wonderful powers. It is able to give you whatever you may ask for. Now do as I tell you, and you will soon see the wisdom of your choice. Make a clean square place on the ground and plaster it over as one does in making a holy place. Lay the ring in the center of it and sprinkle it with sour milk. Then ask for anything you may wish, and it will be yours."

"This is a very strange story," said the Prince, "and I can hardly believe it." Still he made a

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holy place as the snake directed him and laid the ring in the center of it and sprinkled it with sour milk. Then, as he was very hungry, he said, "I wish for all sorts of good things to eat and drink."

At once a feast appeared before him. The food was of the most delicious kind, the dishes were of gold, and richly carved, and there were napkins of the finest linen fringed and embroidered with silver. The Prince could hardly express his wonder and admiration.

"You were indeed right," said he to the snake. "Not the greatest king in all the world possesses a treasure as great as this ring."

He then ate and drank to his heart's content, sharing everything with his three companions.

After they had made an end of eating, the dishes disappeared, and the Prince put the ring upon his finger and he and his companions journeyed on again.

He had no wish to return to the city where his brother lived, so they traveled in an opposite direction, and after a while they came to a strange country bordering on the seashore and ruled over by a very great and powerful King.

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This King had one beautiful daughter, and she was so lovely that there was not her like in all the world. Many princes and great rulers had sought her in marriage, but the King had declared that no one should have her but he who was able to build a golden palace in the sea in one night. Whoever could do this should not only receive the Princess in marriage, but one half of the kingdom as well; but whoever failed in the task should have his head cut off.

Many had tried, but none had succeeded, and the King had made a necklace of the heads of those who failed, and had hung it beside the castle gate as a warning to all rash adventurers.

But the young Prince was not at all frightened by the sight of these heads. He knocked boldly at the palace gates and asked to speak with the King. At once the guards brought him before their master, and the Prince said he had come to build the golden palace for the King, and that he wished to set about the matter that very night.

“Rash youth,” said the King, “have you not seen the necklace of heads that hangs beside the gateway? Do you value your life

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so little that you are willing to lose it for nothing?"

"I do not think I will lose it," answered the Prince. "I make no doubt but that I will be able to build the palace, and to build it in one single night as you require."

"Very well," said the King. "If you are determined to make the attempt, I will not forbid you, but you will certainly lose your head, even as others have done before you."

The King then commanded that the Prince should be taken to the seashore, and that a guard should be set around him, so that if he failed in the attempt, he should not be allowed to escape without paying the penalty.

The Prince, however, had no thought of escaping. He trusted in the power of the ring and had no doubt but that as soon as he wished it, the palace would appear. He bade his faithful animals keep watch and rouse him just before dawning, and then he spread his cloak on the ground and lay down and went quietly to sleep.

The guards who were set to watch him were amazed. "This young man must wish to die,"

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they said. "He has not even made the first attempt to build the castle, and takes no thought of how the hours of the night are slipping away."

Just before dawning, the animals awakened the Prince. The dog barked in his ear, the cat scratched him gently, the parrot pulled him by the sleeve, and the snake twisted about his arm and pinched him.

The Prince yawned and rose up, stretching his arms. He then set about making a square clean place as before. He plastered it over and laid the ring in the center of it. He then sprinkled it with some sour milk with which he had provided himself and said, "I wish a golden palace to be built in the sea immediately. I wish it to have golden turrets and domes, and a golden stairway leading up from the water. I also wish it to be furnished throughout with golden furniture and hangings, and I wish it to be in every respect the most magnificent palace in all the world."

Immediately, as the Prince wished, the golden palace appeared in the sea, and it was in every way exactly as he had asked.

The guards who had been set to watch him

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could hardly believe their eyes when they saw a golden palace arise out of the sea. "Look! Look!" they cried. "Most wonderful! It must be a magic palace!"

Almost at the same time the King in his royal palace awakened, and at once he went to the window to look out across the sea. What was his amazement to see, instead of the stretch of water, a most magnificent palace with golden domes, and turrets that glittered in the sun. It was so very beautiful that he could not refrain from crying out with wonder and admiration.

He at once made haste to dress and hurried out to find the Prince. As soon as he came near where the Prince was, he began to call to him. "You have done what seemed impossible. Never before have I seen such a beautiful palace. The Princess and the half of my kingdom are yours, and gladly will I give them to you in exchange for the palace."

"No," answered the Prince, "I have no wish for either the Princess or the kingdom. The Golden Castle is mine and I intend to live in it myself."

He then beckoned to a golden boat that lay

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beside the steps of the palace. At once, and with no one to row it, the boat shot across the water to where the Prince stood. The Prince stepped into it, followed by his three companions, and it returned to the golden steps with him, and then he landed.

The King was greatly disappointed. He now wished very much to have the Prince for a son-in-law. He bade his daughter dress herself in her finest robes and her richest jewels and come with him to visit the Prince.

The Princess was not loath to do this, for she wished very much to see inside the palace. She dressed herself finely as her father commanded and then went with him to the palace.

No sooner did they come to the room where the young Prince was, and no sooner did he look upon the Princess, than he fell violently in love with her, for never before had he seen such a beauty, and he wished to marry her at once.

This pleased the King greatly. The Princess was quite willing, for she had fallen in love with the Prince even as he had with her. So a feast was made ready as soon as possible, and

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the Prince and Princess were married with the greatest pomp and magnificence.

For some time afterward the young people lived together in happiness, but after a while the Princess lost all her cheerfulness and became very sad and mournful. The Prince could not tell what ailed her. One day he found her weeping.

“My dear Princess,” he said to her, “why are you so sad and mournful? Do you no longer love me? Or is there something you wish for that is lacking in our palace?”

“There is nothing lacking,” answered the Princess, “and indeed I love you better every day we live together.”

“Then what ails you, my dear one?”

The Princess again began weeping. “I am weeping,” said she, “because everything you have here in the palace is golden and I wish to be golden too, for that would be so beautiful. Oh, my dear husband! Is there not some way by which I also may be turned to gold?”

“Yes,” answered the Prince, “that can easily be done; and since it seems you are no longer happy as you are, I am willing to oblige you.”

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He then cleared a square place and prepared it as before, and laid the ring in the center of it and sprinkled it with sour milk."

"I wish," said he, "that the Princess may become golden."

At once the Princess was turned into gold, every bit of her — her head and body and hands and feet — even her nails and hair and eye-lashes became gold.

"Now are you content?" asked the Prince.

"Oh, I am so happy that I can hardly contain myself. But that is a very wonderful ring that you have, and I am well pleased to know of its power." So saying, the Princess went away to look at herself in a mirror and to admire her golden beauty.

Not long after this the Princess was combing her hair, and three hairs caught around the comb and were pulled out. "It is a pity there is no poor person here in the castle to whom I can give these hairs," said the Princess, "for they are véry valuable."

She did not wish to throw away that much gold, so she took a piece of paper and made a box of it. In this she coiled the three hairs

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and set it afloat on the sea. "It may be they will fall into the hands of some one who needs them," thought the Princess to herself.

Now a light wind was blowing, and it carried the paper box on and on over the waves until it came to the borders of another country ruled over by another King. There the box drifted ashore, and there it was picked up by a servant from the palace close by. The servant examined the box and wondered over the golden hairs it contained. They seemed to him so very beautiful that he carried them back to the palace and showed them to the King, and the King in turn showed them to the Prince, his son.

No sooner did the Prince see the hairs than he fell desperately in love with the Golden Princess to whom they belonged, even though he had never seen her. "I feel sure that only a Princess could have such hair," said he, "and that she must be the most beautiful creature in all the world, and unless I can see her and win her for a bride, I feel sure I shall die of longing."

Indeed, this desire to see the Princess was so

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great that he became very ill, and not all the physicians in the kingdom were able to cure him. The King was greatly troubled; he feared the Prince would indeed die with longing as he said. He therefore sent out a proclamation that any one who would find the Princess and bring her to his palace should name his own reward. Whatever it was it should be given him, even to the half of the kingdom.

Now there lived not far from there an old wise woman who was very crafty. She came to the palace and asked to see the King, and when she was brought before him she said, "Oh, King, I am willing to undertake this matter, and I feel sure I can find the Princess with the golden hair and bring her to the Prince. But first I wish to make sure that in such a case I shall receive a reward as you have promised."

"What I have promised I have promised," replied the King, "and if you succeed in this matter you shall have whatever you ask for."

"Very well," said the wise woman, "then I will undertake it." She then told the King that she would need, for the adventure, a golden boat with four strong rowers trained to obey

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every motion she made without her having to speak to them. She also would need in the boat a large cradle made of all sorts of different colored silks, and silken ropes to swing it by. All these things the King gave her, and then the old woman set out in search of the Princess.

The rowers rowed on and on, and after a long long time they came within sight of the Golden Castle, and as soon as the wise woman saw it she knew that it must be there that the Princess of the Golden Hair lived.

She made the rowers draw up the boat beside the steps, and then she hastened up the steps and went into room after room of the castle until she came to the place where the Princess was sitting.

As soon as she saw the Princess she gave a cry of joy, and ran to her and put her hands on her head as is the custom with relatives, and then she took the Princess in her arms and kissed her.

The Princess was very much surprised at having a strange old woman come into the palace and treat her in this way, and she tried to push her away. But the more the Princess

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tried to push the old woman away, the closer the old woman held her.

“Oh, my dear niece!” cried she, “do you not know me? I am your old aunt.”

“No,” answered the Princess, “I do not know you, and I did not know I had an aunt.”

“What!” cried the wise woman, pretending to be very much surprised, “has your father never spoken of me?”

“No, he has not.”

“Ah, well! It is a long time since he and I parted.” The old woman then told the Princess a long story of how she and the Princess’ father were brother and sister, and of how they had played together as children, and of how she had journeyed away to live in a far-off kingdom while the Princess was still a very little girl. She told it so cleverly that the beauty could not but believe it, and in the end she made her pretended aunt welcome, and they sat down and talked together pleasantly.

The pretended aunt asked the Princess a great many questions about the palace and how she lived, and why there were no servants to be seen anywhere.

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“We have no need of servants,” answered the Princess, “because my husband has a ring that has very wonderful powers, and it supplies us with everything we want. He has only to ask for anything, and it appears.”

“That is a very wonderful story,” said the wise woman. “And where does your husband keep his ring?”

“Oh, he wears it always on his hand.”

The wise woman then asked where the young Prince was and whether he were at home.

“No, he has gone hunting with my father, dear aunt. They often go hunting together.”

“And does he take the ring with him when he goes hunting?”

“Yes; it never leaves his finger except when he is working magic with it.”

The pretended aunt shook her head. “That is very dangerous,” she said. “Suppose something should happen to him while he is hunting and the ring should be lost! That would be a great misfortune to both of you. He should leave the ring at home with you, and then it would be safe, and you would have it here at need.”

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“That is very true,” answered the Princess. “I had not thought of that. I will ask him to leave it with me the next time he goes hunting.”

The wise woman was well satisfied with this and rejoiced in her heart, for she believed the Prince would do as the Princess wished in the matter, and after the Princess had the ring in her possession she felt sure she could lure her away with her.

She and the Princess sat together talking for a long time, and before the Prince came home the wise woman begged the Princess not to tell him she was there. “I have many fine robes,” said she, “but they are in another boat that is following not far behind. When it arrives I will dress myself in a way that is suitable, and then you shall present me to the Prince.”

To this the beauty agreed, and so when her husband came home she told him nothing about the visit from her pretended aunt.

The next day the Prince was going hunting again, and before he set out the Princess begged him to take off the magic ring and leave it with her. This he was loath to do, but she entreated him so anxiously to let her keep it that at last

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the Prince could refuse her no longer. He took off the ring and placed it in her hand.

No sooner had the Prince left the palace than the old wise woman hastened to the Princess and asked her whether her husband had left the ring with her.

“Yes,” answered the Princess, “here it is, and I intend to put it on a ribbon and hang it about my neck so that I may not lose it.”

“That is a wise plan,” said the pretended aunt. She then began to talk to the Princess of the beautiful boat in which she had come thither, and of the strong rowers, and of the many-colored cradle that hung from silken ropes and swung with every breath of wind.

The Princess became very curious to see these fine things, and the pretended aunt easily persuaded her to come down with her to the boat and to enter into it. She showed the Princess where the cradle was hung, and while the Princess was admiring it, the wise woman motioned the rowers to row away from the palace steps and away across the sea; and this they did.

The Princess was so busy examining the

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cradle that it was some time before she noticed that they were moving onward and that the palace was far behind. Then she was very much surprised and troubled.

“Where are we going?” she asked of the wise woman. “I do not think my husband would like me to leave the palace. I must return at once.”

“Presently! Presently!” answered the pretended aunt. “But first lie down in the cradle and see how pleasantly it rocks with the motion of the boat.”

“Only for a moment, then,” said the Princess, and she lay down in the cradle.

At once, by her magic arts, the wise woman threw her into a deep sleep and she then took the ring from the ribbon around the Princess’ neck and put it upon her own finger.

The Princess slept until they arrived at the kingdom whence the wise woman had come. She then aroused the Princess and bade her leave the boat and follow her.

“Where are we, and why have you brought me hither?” asked the Princess.

“I have brought you hither to marry you to

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one of the finest young Princes in the world, and one who is dying for love of you.”

The Princess was horrified. “I can never love any one but my own dear husband, and I will always be true to him and never marry any one else.”

The old woman obliged the Princess to come with her before the King, however, and when he saw how very beautiful she was he was amazed. He sent for his son, and the young Prince came in haste. As soon as he saw the Golden Princess he wished to take her hand and tell her how he loved her, but she would not allow him to touch her nor would she listen to him.

“Very well,” said the King. “I see you do not love the Prince as yet, but you soon will. We will wait for a month, and then you shall marry him whether you wish it or not.”

It was in vain the Princess wept and entreated and implored. “What I have said, I have said,” declared the King, “and nothing can change me.”

The Princess was then led away to the apartments prepared for her, but the old wise woman

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kept the ring, for that was the reward she demanded of the King, and she would not accept anything else.

Now while all this was happening, the Prince of the Golden Palace returned from hunting, and was very much surprised not to see his Princess waiting on the golden steps to greet him, for this had always been her custom. He called her, but there was no answer; he hastened from room to room of the palace, searching everywhere. When he could not find her he was in despair. "Some one has stolen her," he cried, "and surely she is lost to me forever."

"Master, do not be so desperate," said the parrot. "What are my wings for except to serve you. There was an old woman who came here while you were away, though you did not know it. I make no doubt but that she has stolen the Princess. Now I will fly abroad far and near, and never will I return until I find her."

"And I," said Puss, "will go with you, for after you have found the Princess, my wit and claws may be of use to her."

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“But how will you cross the sea? And how will you cross the rivers that divide the kingdoms?”

“I also will go with you,” said the dog, “and I will swim the sea and rivers, for that I can do, and puss shall ride upon my back dry-footed.”

To this the parrot agreed, and the three set off together.

They journeyed on and on for a long time, hither and yon, until at last they came to the very kingdom to which the old woman had carried the Princess, and there, through an upper window of the palace, the parrot saw the gleam of golden hair.

At once he called to the dog and cat, “Surely that is the Princess sitting there at an open window. Do you wait and I will go and see whether it is certainly she, and then I will return and tell you.”

The parrot flew up to the palace window and lighted on the sill. The Princess had been weeping, but when she saw him she gave a cry of joy.

“Oh, my dear parrot, is the Prince here?” she cried. “Has he come to save me?”

“No, Princess,” answered the bird, “he could not travel so fast and far as we, so he is

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waiting mournfully at the Golden Palace for us to return. Give me the Ring of Fortune that I may carry it back to him, and then he can wish you with him again.”

At these words the Princess began to weep more bitterly than ever. She told the parrot how she had been lured away, and how the wise woman had stolen her ring from her while she was asleep.

“You must manage to get the ring back into your possession,” said the parrot, “for until you have it, we can do nothing.”

“That is impossible,” wept the Princess. “The old woman keeps the ring in her mouth both night and day. No one is allowed even so much as to see it.”

“This makes the matter more difficult,” said the parrot. “I will have to consult the others about it.”

He then flew back to where the dog and cat were waiting and told them all the Princess had said.

“Did I not say you would need me?” said Puss. “I will manage to steal into the palace and to the chamber of the Princess, and then I can arrange some way to make the old woman

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give up the ring. Meanwhile do you return to the Princess and hide yourself behind the curtains in her room, for I may need your help.”

It did not take the cat long to find a way to enter the palace, and she then slipped along the passages and up the stairways to the chamber where the Princess was.

The Princess was no less glad to see Puss than she had been to see the parrot. The cat prowled about the room and soon found several rat holes back of the hangings.

“Now listen, Mistress,” said the cat. “To-day you must ask them to prepare you some boiled rice for your supper. When it is brought to you do not eat it all. Save a portion of it and scatter it on the floor near the rat holes. Be sure to do this, for I have a plan in my head by which I hope to save you.”

The Princess promised to do as the cat said, and when, a little later, the wise woman came to visit her, the Princess asked to have rice for her supper. When the rice was brought she ate only a little of it, and then, when no one was looking, she scattered the rest of it on the floor near the rat holes.

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All this while the cat and the parrot remained hidden behind the curtains.

That night, according to her custom, the wise woman slept in the Princess's chamber.

When all was still, and no one waking but the guard outside the door, the rats came out from their holes and began to eat the rice the Princess had scattered about. This was what Puss was waiting for. At once she pounced from behind the curtains and caught the largest and fattest of the rats. Holding it in her teeth she climbed upon the old woman's bed and tickled the old woman's nose with the rat's tail. This made the old woman sneeze, and when she sneezed, the ring flew out of her mouth and rolled across the floor.

The parrot was on the watch; it caught up the ring in its beak and flew out of the window with it, while the cat made haste to slip out of the palace the way she had come in and rejoin the dog, who was waiting below.

Meanwhile the wicked old wise woman was like one distracted. The sneeze had awakened her, and as soon as she awoke she discovered the ring was gone from her mouth. She did

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not know what had become of it and hunted everywhere, but she could not find it. She shook and trembled and raged against the Princess, but rage as she might, it did not bring back the ring, for it was gone.

The parrot flew on and on with the ring till his breath failed and his wings flagged, but by morning he was back at the Golden Palace. He flew through a window into the room where the Prince was, and dropped the ring on the table before him.

When the Prince saw the ring he could hardly believe his eyes, and it seemed as though his heart would leap out of his bosom with joy. He at once prepared a square place as before and laid the ring in the center of it. He sprinkled it with sour milk and wished that his own dear Princess would return to him, and at once, in a twinkling, there she stood before him in all her golden beauty.

She and the Prince fell upon each other's necks, weeping with joy, and from that time on they lived together in love and happiness, and the Prince never again allowed the Ring of Fortune to go out of his possession.

THE THREE SISTERS

A GEORGIAN TALE

THERE was once a widower who had three daughters, and they were all so pretty that it did one's heart good just to look at them.

After a while the man married again, and that was a bad thing for the girls, for their stepmother hated them. Every day she lived she hated them worse, and she did everything she could to injure them in the eyes of their father. Often she begged him to send them away out of the house. Sometimes he said he would, and sometimes he said he would n't, but it always ended in his keeping the girls at home with him.

One day the stepmother shut herself up in the kitchen alone and made some large thin cakes, very hard and brittle. Just before her husband came home she went to bed, and took

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the cakes into the bed with her, and hid them under the covers.

As soon as she heard him come in she began to sigh and groan.

“What is the matter with you?” asked the man. “Are you ill that you groan so?”

“Oh I am very ill indeed,” answered the woman; and she rolled over on the cakes so that they crackled under her.

“What is that crackling noise?” her husband asked.

“It is the sound of my heart cracking at the thought of your daughters. Unless you can get rid of them, and that quickly, I shall certainly die.” Then she rolled over again, and the cakes crackled more loudly than ever.

The man was frightened. He thought, “I never heard any one’s heart crackle before. It seems I will have to get rid of the girls, after all, or else lose my wife.” Then he said to her, “Take comfort, dear one. To-morrow I will take the girls away and manage somehow so that they shall never trouble you again.”

After that he went out and walked and walked until he came to an apple tree loaded

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with ripe apples. He dug a deep pit under this tree and covered the hole over, first with branches and afterward with stones and earth. Then he returned home again. "I will take the girls out for a walk to-morrow," he told his wife, "and I have arranged it so that they will not come home again, — not any more forever."

When the woman heard this, she became quite merry, and rose out of bed and went about her work as usual.

The next day the man said to his daughters, "Come! I am going to take you for a walk. I know where there is an apple tree loaded down with fine ripe apples. We will go there and gather some, and you shall eat to your hearts' content."

The girls were delighted. They set out with their father, and went along until they came to the apple tree. Here the girls would have begun to gather the apples at once, but their father bade them wait a bit. "Do you stand here," he said, "while I go and shake the tree. Then when I give the word do you all run in at once and see who can gather the most apples."

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To this the girls agreed. They stood and waited while their father went under the tree and shook it. The apples were so ripe they fell like a hailstorm.

“Now! Now!” he cried. “See who will be the first to gather them.”

The girls all ran forward at once, and when they came over where the pit was, the branches gave way, and they all fell into it, with the apples rattling down with them.

At first they did not know what had happened to them. One moment they were up in the sunlight, and the next moment they were down in a deep hole. They began to call to their father to come and pull them out, but he did not answer them, nor did he come to their succor, for as soon as they had fallen into the pit he had run away home as fast as he could. He could not bear to stay and listen to their cries.

For a long time the girls called to him, and then they began to suspect that he had deserted them. “This is our stepmother’s doings,” they cried. “Never would our father have treated us in this way except for her.”



“Now! Now!” he cried. “See who will be the first to gather them.” *Page 62.*

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After a while they became hungry, and they gathered the apples and divided them amongst themselves. Each had the same number. The two older girls at once ate all their apples, every one of them, but the youngest hid three of hers to keep for another time.

For some time the girls were satisfied with what they had eaten, and then they became hungry again. They grew hungrier and hungrier, and still no one came to succor them.

“Unless we have food to eat, we will surely perish,” said the eldest sister.

“That is true,” said the next younger, “and indeed I see no help for us.”

“There are three of us here in the pit,” rejoined the eldest, “and all of us are like to die. Now if one of us would give herself to be eaten, then two might still remain alive until help came. And is it not better that one should die rather than all of us?”

The youngest sister was horrified when she heard this. “What you say is against the laws of God,” she cried. “If we did this evil thing, he would surely punish us. See! Here are three apples that I saved and kept hidden

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away. Let us eat these and still live a while longer.”

The elder sisters rejoiced when they saw the apples, and each snatched one and ate it greedily, and the youngest ate the third.

But after a time they were hungry again, and the second sister said, “What our eldest sister said was very true. It is indeed better that one should die rather than all three. Let us now decide which one of us shall be eaten.”

But again the youngest sister cried out against the idea. “Wait!” said she, “I will kneel down and pray to God to help us, and it may be he will hear me and save us from the wickedness you propose.”

She then kneeled down and prayed that one of her hands might be changed into a pickaxe, and the other into a shovel.

As she prayed, so it was done to her. One hand became a pickaxe and the other a shovel. At once the girl began to dig into the side of the pit. She dug and dug until she came to a mouse-hole, and in this was stored a quantity of nuts and grain.

The girls ate, and were satisfied, and after the

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youngest had rested awhile, she began to dig again. This time she dug for a long time. She dug and dug until she came right under the King's stable, under the place where the food for the horses was kept. She dug up through the floor of the feed room, and a great heap of nuts and raisins and other good things fell down into the hole so that the girls could eat all they wanted. For the King's horses were not fed on common food the way common people's horses are, but with all sorts of delicious things.

After this the girls feasted every day on good things from the feed room. The stablemen could not think what became of all the horses' food, for the hole was over in a corner where it was dark, and no one noticed it. The stablemen locked the door and windows of the stable, but still the food disappeared. At last they went to the King and complained about it, and he set a guard about the stable, and that did no good either. The horses that had been so fat and glossy became quite thin and poor, because there was not enough left for them to eat.

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At last the youngest girl said to her sisters: "Now we have taken enough from the stable. I fear if we take more, the horses will starve. I must begin to dig again."

She dug and dug; she dug a long time, and then she came up through the ground beside the hut of a poor old woman. She looked in through the window, and no one was there, for the old woman had gone to Mass and she had left everything dirty and out of order. On the table near the door were two loaves of fresh-baked bread.

The girl called her sisters, and they went in and each took a piece of bread; they were so hungry they could not resist doing this. After they had eaten they set to work and swept and scrubbed, — put everything in order. Then they went back into the hole again.

When the old woman returned from Mass she was very much surprised to find her house all swept and set in order. She was greatly pleased, and when she found that a portion of the bread had been taken in payment she did not grudge it.

The next day the same thing happened. The

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old woman went to Mass as usual, and while she was away the sisters came and ate of her bread and then cleaned the house and made all tidy.

When the old woman came home she was more surprised than ever. She wondered who had done all this. "To-morrow I will stay at home and see," said she. So the next day she rolled herself up in a piece of matting and leaned behind the door.

The sisters came as usual, and thinking no one was there, they ate some bread and set about their cleaning. Then the old woman dropped the matting from about her and stepped out from behind the door.

She looked at the sisters, and they were so beautiful that she thought at first they must be angels. But when she saw they were frightened at the sight of her, she knew they were human beings like herself.

Then she spoke to them kindly and made them welcome, and invited them to sit with her at the table and eat. This the sisters were glad to do, and after they had made an end of eating, the old woman was so pleased with

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them that she begged them to stay there with her always, and be to her as daughters, and she promised she would love them and care for them as though she were their mother.

To this the girls gladly agreed, and after that they lived there with the old woman and were well content. But when any of the neighbors came to the house, the old woman hid the girls away under three baskets, for they were so beautiful she feared some one might try to steal them away from her.

For a time all went well, and then the sisters began to tire of the food the old woman gave them, and to think of the delicious nuts and raisins they used to eat when they were living under the King's stable. Their mouths watered when they remembered how good those things had tasted. At length, one day when the old woman was away, the three sisters returned into the hole and followed it back to the King's stable. Here they came out and began to eat; but they were so busy cracking the nuts and enjoying the good things they forgot to keep watch, and two of the King's attendants heard them, and crept up and caught them

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before they could escape. The attendants took the girls before the King and said to him, "Your Majesty, here are the robbers who have been stealing the food from your horses. We caught them in the stable eating the nuts and raisins, and they had cracked so many nuts the shells were heaped up all about them."

The King looked at the girls and was amazed at their beauty. Never had he imagined any one could be as lovely as they, and he knew he could never be happy unless he could have one or other of them for a wife. But first he wished to find out whether they were clever as well as beautiful, so he spoke to the eldest sister and said, "Tell me: if I should take it into my head to make you my queen, what clever thing could you do that is worth the doing?"

"I will tell you what I could do," said the girl. "I could weave such an enormous carpet that your entire army could rest on it and still only half of it would be unrolled." For she thought within herself, "The King does not need such a carpet; he will never prove my boast."

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But in this she was mistaken. "That would indeed be a wonderful thing," said the King. "Let flax be brought in, and let us see if you can really weave me such a carpet."

The girl was frightened. The flax was brought as the King commanded, but she could do nothing with it. She began to weep and wail, and at last was obliged to confess that what she had said was not true.

The King was offended and sent her away from before him with reproaches.

Then he turned to the second sister and said, "Now tell me, what could you do if I made you my Queen?"

The second sister answered, "I could cook enough food in an egg-shell for you to feed your whole army, and after that there would still be food left over."

"That is even a more wonderful thing to promise," said the King, and he commanded that an egg-shell should be brought, and bade the girl cook a meal in it for the army as she had said she could do.

But the girl was no more able to do this than her sister had been able to weave the carpet.

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She was obliged to confess it. The King was very angry and sent her away from before him, as he had sent the other.

Then he turned to the youngest sister, and she was the most beautiful of all, so that his heart yearned for her. "Now tell me, what could you do for me if I were to marry you?" he asked.

"I could bear you golden-haired children," replied the third sister.

This answer pleased the King the best of all, and he determined to make the girl his wife. They were married with great ceremony, and afterward her sisters came to live with her in the palace, for she loved them so dearly she could not bear to be parted from them, and the King was willing to forgive them for her sake.

The older girls were not grateful to their sister, however. They pretended to be delighted over the good fortune that had come to her, but in reality they were filled with envy and jealousy. They hated her because she had been chosen to be a Queen instead of one of themselves, and also because the King trusted her word after theirs had been proved false.

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Nevertheless for some time all seemed to go well in the palace. The King and his young Queen loved one another dearly and were very happy together. But after a while it became necessary for the King to go on a long journey. Before he set out he spoke to the older sisters and bade them guard the young Queen carefully.

“It may be,” said he, “that a child will be born to us while I am away. If this should happen, and if the child should be a boy, hang up a sword above the gateway that I may see it from afar, and rejoice; and if it be a girl, hang a spindle over the gate, for then, too, I will be glad.”

Then he kissed his wife farewell and rode away.

Now not long after he had gone, a beautiful boy was born to the Queen, and his hair was of pure gold, even as she had promised the King. Only her sisters were with her at the time. They would allow no one else to enter the room. When they saw how beautiful the child was, and that it had golden hair, they were furious and hated their sister more than ever because

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her word had come true. They waited until the Queen was asleep, and then they stole the child away and put him in a box they had made and threw it in the river to float away, whither they cared not. They did not dare to kill the child, but they hoped he would soon perish from cold and hunger. Then they returned to the palace and hung a pestle over the gateway, and put a little dog in the cradle where the Prince had lain.

As soon as the Queen awoke, she asked for her babe. Then the sisters showed her the puppy and told her that was her child. The Queen could not believe them. She wept and reproached them bitterly, saying they had stolen her child, but this they would not admit.

“How can you say such a thing?” they cried. “How can you believe we would do such an evil deed? Indeed this is your child and no other. As to all this about a babe with golden hair, that is only a dream of yours.” The younger sister could do nothing against them, for it was two against one.

Not long after this the King came riding home. When he came near the palace he looked

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to see whether either a sword or a spindle were hanging over the gateway. What was his amazement to see there a pestle: No sooner had he entered the palace than the two sisters came hurrying to meet him, and immediately he demanded of them the reason for a pestle being hung above the gate.

The sisters began to weep. "Alas! Alas! that we should have to tell it," they wept. "Our sister promised you golden-haired children and instead she has given you only a puppy."

The King was thunderstruck. He could hardly believe them, but they led him to the cradle and showed him the little dog, and then he could doubt no longer. However, he believed that some wicked magic must have wrought this thing, and that it was not the fault of his wife. He forgave her and loved her as dearly as ever, but he was grieved to the heart that such a thing should have happened.

The sisters, however, were well content. Nothing was heard of the young Prince, and they believed he had perished as they wished.

Such, however, was not the case. The box in which they had placed him had floated on

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down with the river without accident until at last it came to a place where there was a mill. Here it became wedged in the mill-wheel, so that the wheel could no longer turn.

The miller who owned the mill came out to see what had happened to his wheel, and there he found, wedged in it, a box, and a beautiful, golden-haired babe asleep in the box.

The man was delighted. He and his wife had always longed for children, but had never had any. He carried the child home to his wife, and they rejoiced over it, and determined to keep it and love it and care for it as though it were their own child. So the Prince lived in the mill house, and as he grew older he played with the children round about, and knew no other than that he was the miller's son.

Now some time after the child had been stolen away, the King arranged to go a-hunting, and again he bade the older sisters guard the Queen carefully while he was away, and to allow no harm to come near her, and they promised to do all he commanded.

“And remember,” said the King, “if a child should be born to us while I am away, hang

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a sword over the gateway if it is a boy, but hang a spindle there if it is a girl.”

This also the sisters promised to do, and then the King kissed his wife and set out on the chase.

While he was gone a second golden-haired son was born to the Queen, and this child, too, the sisters stole away and put in a box and set it adrift on the river, and they put a kitten in the cradle in place of the child. Then they went out and again hung a pestle over the doorway.

When the King came riding home, the first thing he did was to raise his eyes to the gateway, and there he saw the pestle hanging. Then his heart was filled with rage. He sprang from his horse and hastened into the palace and demanded why a pestle once more hung above the gateway.

Weeping, the two evil sisters led him to the cradle and showed him the kitten. “This is the golden-haired child your wife promised you,” they cried. “Tell us, are her promises any truer than were ours?”

When they said this, the King became beside

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himself with shame and anger. He commanded the young Queen should be wrapped in a bullock skin and led forth and fastened to a post in front of the palace, and that every one who passed that way should make a mock of her; and as he commanded, so it was done. The young Queen was dressed in a bullock's hide, and led out into a public place, and there chained to a post, and every one who passed by scowled and pointed and cried shame upon her.

But the second Prince had not perished any more than the first had. When the two sisters set him adrift on the river, the box he was in floated down and down with the stream, until it came to the mill and was caught in the mill-wheel just as the other box had been. Again the miller came out to see why his wheel would not turn, and there he found the box and in it the golden-haired child so like the one he had found before that it would have been hard to tell them apart.

He made haste to lift the child from the box and carry it home to his wife. "Look!" said he. "Heaven has sent us a second son to bless our old age." Then they rejoiced over

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the child, and they kept him and loved him as dearly as though he were their own flesh and blood.

Time passed on, and the two young Princes throve and waxed in strength and beauty. They grew as much in one week as other children grow in a year, so that they were the wonder of all who saw them.

Now it so chanced that one day the King came riding by that way, and he saw the two brothers playing beside the mill. He was amazed when he saw them, not only because of their strength and beauty, but because they were so like himself.

He called to them and they came running toward him, and as they came they caught off their caps from their heads. Then the King marveled more than ever, for both the boys had hair of pure gold.

They stood before him, and he began to question them as to who they were and they told him they were brothers, and sons of the miller who lived close by.

Then the King thought within himself, "If my Queen had kept her promise, I might have

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had two such golden-haired sons as these"; and he was very sorrowful.

He bade the lads come to the palace the next day, for he wished to talk with them further. "And if you please me," said he, "I will make you my pages and keep you always near me."

The young Princes rejoiced when they heard this, and gladly promised they would come, and then the King rode on his way with bent head and a thoughtful heart.

The next day the miller's wife made the lads fine for their visit to the palace, and they set out together, very eager and light of heart. They journeyed along briskly, and so, after a while, they came to the city and the public place in front of the palace. There, to their surprise, they saw a beautiful woman chained to a post, and she was very noble and queenly looking, though she was clothed in nothing but a bullock's hide, and her golden hair that fell down all about her. The two young Princes pitied her, and they went over toward where she sat, intending to question her.

But no sooner did the Queen see them than she gave a loud cry, and began to weep aloud,

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for she recognized them at once as her sons, both because of their golden hair, and because they looked exactly like the King.

The Princes could not understand why she should begin to weep at the sight of them, but she called them to her and told them who she was and why she was chained there, and she also told them they must be the sons who had been lost to her so many years.

When the Princes heard all this they believed her, and their hearts yearned over her. "We will go to the King," they said, "and tell him all you have said, and we make no doubt but that he will listen to us and free you and take you back again to be his Queen." Then they left her and went on into the palace, and the Queen's heart was full of happiness because her sons had been restored to her.

When the lads entered the palace, they were quickly brought before the King, for he was expecting them. They paid their respects to him, and then the older of the two went down into the kitchen and took from the cook a pheasant that he was basting. He brought it into the King's hall and began to baste it before

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the fire there. He turned it this way and that, and as he turned it he talked. He told the whole story of the Queen, and how she had been cheated by her wicked sisters and what had been done to her, and the people all stood around and listened.

When he had made an end he said, "And if this is true, the chains that hold her will fall apart, and she will be free and will come back into the palace."

No sooner had he said this than out in the courtyard the fetters fell away from the Queen, and she came running in, clothed as she was in the bullock's hide and her mantle of golden hair.

Then the second son took the pheasant from his brother and turned it before the fire, and as he turned it he said, "All that you have heard is true and more than true. If it is as I say this pheasant will become alive again and be covered with feathers and fly away."

At once, as he said, the pheasant slipped from the spit, and became alive and covered with glistening feathers, and flew away.

Then the King knew that the boys had spoken

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truth, and the Queen was blameless. Then he took her in his arms and wept over her and kissed her, and his heart was fit to break with joy because these noble children with their golden hair were his.

Afterward the miller and his wife were brought to the court and lived there for many years with great honor. But the two wicked sisters were punished as they deserved, which was only right and justice, but the King and Queen and the two Princes lived happy forever after.

THE GOLDEN HORSE, THE MOON LANTERN, AND THE BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS

A SWEDISH TALE

THERE were once two brothers named Peter and Jack. Peter was the older and Jack was the younger. Their father and mother had died while they were still quite small. They had no home, and they wandered about, living on such food as charitable people gave them.

One day in their wanderings they came to a ditch; they crossed over and found themselves in a cornfield. Never had they seen such grain. The stalks towered high above them, they were so gigantic. The boys were hungry for they had eaten nothing all day, and they broke off a few heads and began to eat the grains.

Suddenly they heard a sound of shouting. They looked up and saw a great, fierce-looking

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giant striding across the grain field toward them. He was scowling terribly, and in his hand he flourished a cudgel.

“What do you mean by stealing my grain and trampling down my cornfield?” shouted the giant.

Peter was so frightened he could do nothing but stutter, but Jack answered up bravely, “Indeed, we meant no harm. We only took a few grains because we were so hungry, and we could not trample down the grain field even if we wish it. The stalks stand too high above us.”

Suddenly the giant put on a smiling look and became quite friendly. “Well, well! Perhaps there is no harm done, after all. And if you are hungry come home with me, and I will give you all the food you can eat. My larder is full, and you shall have the best of all that is in it.”

“That is good,” said Peter, plucking up courage. “Gladly will I go with you, for it is a long time since I have had a full stomach.”

“No, but wait a bit,” said Jack. “First let me speak with you, Peter.” Then he drew

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his brother aside and whispered in his ear. "Peter, be careful what you do. I do not like the looks of this giant. I am sure he intends us some mischief. Let us get away from him as quickly as we can. Worse evils can befall us than to be hungry."

But Peter would not listen to him. "Let me alone," said he. "Go back across the ditch if you are frightened; but as for me, I am going with the giant and nothing you can say shall dissuade me."

"Very well, then, I will go with you," said Jack. "If harm is to befall you, I will share it."

The two brothers then went back to the giant and told him they were ready to go with him.

"Good," said the giant, whose name was Grimgruff. "My house is not far from here. Follow me, and we will soon be there."

He strode back across the cornfield, and the two brothers followed him, running between the cornstalks that towered above them, and very soon they came to the giants' house.

"Come in! Come in, and welcome," cried

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the giant. He led the two lads in and shut the door behind them. Then he began bawling for his wife. "Wife! Wife! Come quickly. I've brought guests home with me. Get out the best in the larder to set before them."

The giant's wife came in a hurry, and an ugly one she was to look at, so coarse and heavy, and with only one eye, in the middle of her forehead.

As soon as she saw the boys she began smiling. She got out all sorts of good things from the larder and set them out on a table in a small room beyond the kitchen.

"Sit down and eat," said the giant. "To all the best that we have you are welcome."

The boys sat down at the table as he bade them, and ate till they could eat no longer. Then the giantess carried away the dishes, and the giant too went out and locked the door behind him, so that the boys were fastened in.

"Brother," said Jack, "did you notice the giant locked us in here?"

"What if he did?" said Peter. "My stomach is full of good victuals, and that is all I ask for."

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Then he lay down on a settle in the corner and went fast asleep.

But Jack could not make himself so easy. He crept over to the door and found a crack in it, and when he put his eye to this crack he could see into the next room. There the giant was sitting at a table and before him was a whole ox and loaves of bread as big as barrels.

“Listen!” said the giant to his wife. “Those are fine large boys I brought home with me. We will fatten them up a bit and then we will bid our neighbors in and make a feast of them.”

When Jack heard this he was horribly frightened, but he still crouched there close to the crack, watching and listening.

The giant fell to eating, crunching and smacking his lips. He ate the whole of the ox, bones and all, and twelve loaves of bread also. Then he began to bawl to his wife for water.

“Where is the water?” he shouted. “Where is the water? You know I always drink after I have eaten.”

His wife began to excuse herself. “It was too dark for me to see to go to the well,” she answered.

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“Then you should have taken my Moon Lantern,” shouted the giant. “Go now and get it. You know where it is hanging.”

The giantess went over to a closet and took down from a shelf a most beautiful golden lantern that shone like the full moon, so that all the kitchen was filled with its brightness, and carrying it in her hand, she went out to the well to get the water.

Jack stole over to where Peter lay on the settle and wakened him and told him all he had seen and heard.

Peter began to shake and shiver. “What shall we do about it?” he chattered. “We will have to escape out of here somehow, for I cannot bear the thought of being eaten.”

“Hush!” whispered Jack. “Wait until I see what further happens.” He crept back to the door and peeped through the crack again.

Presently the giantess returned with the water. The giant drank deep, and then he arose and stretched himself.

“Now I will saddle my Golden Horse and ride out for a bit,” he said. “While I am gone do you let the boys out to run about the house.

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They will eat better and fatten up sooner if they have some freedom; but do not let them escape, whatever you do.”

“Trust me to keep an eye on them,” said the giantess; and then the giant went on out, banging the door behind him.

Presently the giantess came over and opened the door of the room where the boys were. “Come out! Come out!” she told them. “Walk about a bit and try to get hungry, so that in the morning you can eat a good breakfast.”

The two boys came out from the room, but Peter was so frightened that he did nothing but stand in a corner of the kitchen and shake and shiver; but Jack walked all about and looked at everything.

When it was bedtime the giantess made the boys climb into a great high bed and she herself lay down on the floor in front of it. Soon she went to sleep and snored aloud. The rafters shook with the sound of her snoring.

Jack waited for a while, and then he slipped out of bed very quietly and tiptoed over to where he had seen a fire-steel lying beside the

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hearthstone. He picked it up and brought it over and laid it above the giantess, for he knew that as long as there was a fire-steel over her she would not be able to waken. Then he called to Peter to come quickly, for now was the time for them to escape before the return of the giant.

Peter slipped from the bed, trembling, and Jack opened the door, and they ran out into the night together. They did not stay or linger until they had safely passed through the cornfield and were over on the other side of the ditch.

There they saw a house, and late though it was, Jack went boldly up to the door and knocked. The farmer who lived there stuck his head out of the window and asked them who they were and what they wanted.

“We are two poor boys who have escaped from the giant’s house over beyond the ditch and the cornfield,” answered Jack. “We have come here to ask shelter for the night.”

As soon as the farmer heard this he made haste to come down and open the door to them. “You are very fortunate to escape from the

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Giant Grimgruff," the farmer told them. "He is a very fierce and terrible creature, and eats boys as though they were so many radishes. But you are quite safe here, for the giant has no power over on this side of the ditch, but only on the other side of it. You may sleep here in the kitchen to-night, and to-morrow you can do some work for me, and I will give you your breakfasts in return for it."

The brothers thanked the farmer and lay down in the kitchen near the fire and went to sleep.

In the morning the farmer took them out to the fields and showed them what he wanted them to do. The field was quite close to the ditch. "Do not be afraid of the giant's seeing you here," said the farmer. "As long as you are on this side of the ditch, he cannot harm you; but whatever happens, do not let him lure you over to the other side, or it will go ill with you."

The brothers promised to heed what he told them, and then they set to work and the farmer went away and left them.

They had not been working long before a

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bright light shone about them. They looked up, and there was the giant riding down through the grain field on his Golden Horse, and the horse shone in the sunlight so that it was dazzling, for every hair upon it was of pure gold.

The giant drew up close to the side of the ditch and began to talk to them and cajole them.

“Why did you run away and leave me?” he cried. “Was I not kind to you? Did I not give you good food to eat and a comfortable bed to sleep on?”

“Yes, you did all that,” shouted Peter. “You gave us good food and a soft bed to lie on because you wanted to fatten us and make of us a feast for your friends.”

“How could you think such a thing!” cried the giant. “No, no; I love stout, lusty lads like you. Come back, and I will tell you what I will do for you. Over in my house I have a beautiful Princess. Her eyes are like jewels, her cheeks like roses, and her hair of spun gold. She sits there in a cage, waiting for her true love to come and open it for her. If

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you will come back with me, whichever one of you opens the door shall have her for a bride.”

But the lads were not to be enticed. “Once we fell into your power, but never again shall you lure us with you,” Jack answered. “Not even for the sake of a Princess are we willing to be eaten.”

The giant stayed there for a long time, begging and enticing them with all sorts of promises, but the lads turned a deaf ear to him; they would not even answer, and at last the giant rode off in a rage, muttering threats against them.

The brothers stayed with the farmer for some days, working for him, and then, when he had nothing further for them to do, they set out again on their wanderings.

They journeyed on, one foot before the other, for a short way and a long way, and then they came to a fine grand palace, and the King of all that country lived there.

They knocked at the door and asked whether there was any work they could do.

“Yes,” said the King’s steward, “we need

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a stableboy, to help with the horses; and if this lad" — and he pointed to Jack — "cares to do it, he can stay here and we will pay him good wages."

"And what about my brother?" said Jack.

At that the steward shook his head. He did not like the looks of Peter. He looked lazy, and he looked ill-tempered, and the steward did not want him about the palace.

"And that suits me well enough," said Peter. "I have no love for work, anyway. I would rather be jogging along and eating such food as is given me for nothing." And then, without even so much as a good-by to his brother, off he set; and that was the last Jack saw of him for many a long day to come.

But as for Jack, he stayed there and worked about the stable, and he was so cheerful and pleasant and industrious that he won the good will of every one. Even the King took notice of him, and after a while he brought the lad in from the stable and made a courtier of him. From that time on Jack became the King's favorite above all others.

Now after some time had passed Peter came

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back again to the palace, and he was very ragged and miserable looking, for the world had not treated him kindly. He knocked at the kitchen door and asked to see his brother.

As soon as Jack heard that Peter was there, he came running down in all his fine clothing, and he was so glad to see his brother he hardly knew how to make him welcome enough. He asked Peter all about his journeyings, and Peter told him. Then it was Peter's turn to ask what Jack was doing, and when he heard how Jack had prospered, and had become a courtier and was now the King's prime favorite, his heart was fit to break with rage and envy.

“And is there no place here that you can get for me?” asked Peter.

Well, Jack would ask the King about it.

He went to the King and told him all about his brother, and the King said he would take Peter in as a stableboy, just as Jack had been in the first place.

Now instead of being grateful for this, Peter was more enraged than ever against his brother. He could not bear it that Jack should be so high above him and the King's favorite,

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while he himself was only a stableboy. But Jack never guessed that. He used to come out to the stable to sit and talk with his brother and make much of him.

Now the King had a favorite horse that he prized above all others, it was so beautiful. Often he came to the stable to admire it and pat and caress it. One day when he was looking at it, he said to the courtiers who were with him, "Tell me: Do you think in all the world there is another horse as beautiful as this is?"

Before the courtiers could answer, Peter, the stable lad, spoke up quickly. "I know a steed so beautiful and shining that this horse of your Majesty's is as nothing beside it, and every hair upon this horse I speak of is of pure gold."

"Where have you seen such a horse?" inquired the King.

"It belongs to a giant named Grimgruff, who lives far away on the borders of your Majesty's kingdom. Both my brother and I have seen it, and if he truly wished to please you, I am sure he would get it for you."

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“Is this true?” asked the King, turning to Jack.

“I have indeed seen such a horse,” answered the favorite, “but as to getting it from the giant, that is a different matter.”

“Nevertheless, if it is at all possible, I wish you to try; for now that I have heard of it, I will never be content until I have it in my stable.”

“I can but make the attempt,” said Jack, “and if I fail, it will not be for the lack of trying.” So the next day he set out on his adventure.

As for the elder brother, when he heard Jack had gone, he was filled with joy, for he believed his brother would never return, and he hoped in time to take his place in the King’s favor.

After Jack left the palace, he traveled along briskly enough, one foot before the other, until after a while he came to the place where the kind farmer lived, and here he stopped in for a friendly word and a bit of advice.

At first the farmer hardly knew him, he had grown so tall and handsome, and was dressed so

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finely. But when he found Jack was the same lad he had befriended beforetime, he made him welcome and wanted to hear all about his adventures.

Jack told him how he had been lucky enough to get work at the palace, and how he had risen from being a stableboy to being a courtier, and was now the King's favorite.

"And what brings you by this way again?" asked the farmer.

"Oh, my brother Peter is stableboy now, and he told the King of the Golden Horse that belongs to the giant, and now nothing will content the King but for me to try to get it for him."

"That is not an easy task," said the farmer, "and yet it should not be impossible. Over in yon corner is a coil of rope. Take it, for you will need it. You must manage to get near the stable where the horse is kept without the giant's seeing you. Tie a rock to the end of the rope and throw it in through the stable window. Then you can climb up the rope and enter the stable. Set the door wide open and mount the Golden Horse and then off and away with you.

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Once fairly started, no one in the world can ever overtake or stay you."

Jack thanked the farmer kindly for his advice. As soon as it was dark enough, he took the rope and stole away to the giant's house. He managed to approach the stable without being discovered, and tying a stone to the end of the rope, he threw it in through the window. After that he made short work of climbing into the stable. He set the doors open and mounted the Golden Horse. Then away he went like the wind. None could have ridden faster.

The noise of the hoofs awakened the giant, and he jumped out of bed and ran out of the house. "Hie, there! Hie, there! Bring back my Golden Horse!" he shouted. "Stop, thief! Stop! Stop, I tell you!"

But Jack never paused nor tarried. When he reached the ditch the horse flew over it at a single bound, and by morning Jack was back again at the King's palace with the Golden Horse between his knees.

When Jack rode into the stable yard on the giant's Golden Charger, his elder brother was

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like to die of rage and chagrin ; but he pretended to be glad, and praised Jack to the skies for his cleverness and daring.

As for the King, he was delighted. He could not wonder enough over the horse's beauty and brightness, and from that time on he would ride no other steed. Jack had been a favorite before, now he was twice as much so. The elder brother could hardly bear it ; his heart was ready to burst with envy.

One day the King came to the stable to admire his Golden Horse and caress it.

"Tell me," said he to the courtiers who were with him, "in all the world is there a treasure to equal my Golden Charger?"

Then before the courtiers could answer, Peter the stable lad spoke up quickly.

"I know a wonder that not only equals but far surpasses the Golden Horse."

"What is this wonder you speak of?"

"It is the Moon Lantern, and it also belongs to the giant Grimgruff." Then he told the King of the golden lantern, and of how he and his brother had both seen it. "And if your dear favorite wished, he could get it for you

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easily enough," he said, "and, moreover, I am sure he would do so if he cared to please you."

"Is it true that there is such a lantern?" the King asked Jack.

"Yes, there is such a lantern; and, moreover, I have seen it."

"And would it be possible for you to get it for me?"

"It might be possible, but it would be a very difficult and dangerous adventure."

"Nevertheless, I wish you to try; for since I have heard of the lantern, all my other treasures and possessions are as nothing to me without it."

Jack was willing, and the next morning he set out once more for the giant's house. But on the way he stopped in to see the friendly farmer and ask his advice.

"Well," said the farmer, after he had greeted Jack and made him welcome, "and what is it brings you back this time?"

"Oh, it is the Moon Lantern. My brother told the King about it, and now he will never be contented until he owns it."

"This is even a more dangerous adventure

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than the other," said the farmer. "Moreover, now the giant has grown suspicious and is watching for you. Nevertheless, it may be that you will come through safely. To-night you must go and hide yourself near the giant's well. After he has eaten his supper he will send his wife out with the Moon Lantern to draw water for him. You must be on the watch, and when she leans over to draw the water, you must catch her by the heel and throw her into the well. I will give you a cloak to wrap around the lantern to hide its light, and once you are safely back to this side of the ditch, the giant will not be able to catch you or take it from you."

Jack thanked the farmer for his advice and took the cloak, and when it was dark he managed to steal up to the giant's house and hide himself near the well without being discovered.

There he waited for a long time, until the giant had finished his supper. Then Jack could hear him bawling, "Where is the water? Where is the water? You know I always drink after I have eaten."

"It was too dark to go and fetch it," answered the giantess.

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“What have I told you? What have I told you? Take the Moon Lantern, and it will light the way for you.”

Presently the door opened, and the giant's wife came out grumbling with the Moon Lantern in her hand.

When she got to the well, she set the lantern down beside it and leaned over to draw up the water. Then Jack stole out and caught her by the heel and threw her into the well. After that he wrapped the cloak around the lantern to hide its brightness and ran away with it.

The giant waited and waited for his wife to bring him the water, and then he set out to look for her. When he came to the well and saw her feet sticking out of it and found the lantern was gone, he knew well enough who had stolen it. He set out in pursuit of Jack, bawling horribly, but already the lad had crossed the ditch, and the giant was unable to catch him.

When Jack returned to the palace with the Moon Lantern, the King did not know how to make enough of him. Never had he seen anything as beautiful as the lantern. If Jack had

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asked for everything in the King's treasure-house, the King would scarce have refused him.

As for Peter, he was ready to burst with envy and rage against his brother. All day he did nothing but plot and plan as to how to injure him.

Again one day the King came to the stable to caress and admire his Golden Charger. He saw the stable lad Peter standing there, and he said to him, "Now I have not only the Golden Horse but the Moon Lantern also. Is there anything left in the world for me to desire?"

"Yes, there is," answered Peter boldly. "Over in the giant's house there is a Princess more beautiful than any one can imagine. Her eyes are like jewels, and her cheeks like roses, and every hair on her head is of pure gold. Unless you can possess her you have missed the world's greatest treasure, and if your favorite only wished to please you, he could easily get her for you."

The King called the younger brother to him. "Is all this true about the beautiful Princess?" he inquired. "Peter the stable boy tells me there is one in the giant's house, so lovely that she is the world's greatest treasure."

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“I believe that is true,” answered the lad, “but I myself have never seen the Princess.”

“Do you think you could get her for me?”

“I do not know, but I can try if you so desire it, but it will be a very dangerous adventure.”

“I do desire it,” answered the King, “for now that I have heard about the Princess I feel as though I could never be happy without her.”

So the next day Jack set out again in the direction of the giant’s house, and now the elder brother was sure he would never return from the venture.

Jack went straight to the wise farmer and told him what the King required. “The Golden Horse and the Moon Lantern I won for him, and now he wants me to bring him the Beautiful Princess also, and I fear that will be a difficult and dangerous matter.”

“It will indeed,” answered the farmer, “and I am not at all sure that you will come safely out of this adventure, but what I can do I will do to help you in this matter.”

He then told the lad that the giant kept the

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Beautiful Princess locked in a cage up in a high tower. "And none may unlock that cage," said the farmer, "but the one the Princess is to marry. I can hardly think you are that one, and if the giant should find you while you are trying to open it, he will certainly kill you. If I were you, I would return to the King and tell him it is impossible to win the Princess for him."

"No," said Jack, "I am determined to make the venture, and nothing you can say shall dissuade me."

"Very well," said the farmer. "What must be must be. It may be Heaven will favor you."

By the farmer's advice Jack stayed there with him until evening, and then he stole over to the giant's house and hid himself in some bushes near the door. He lay hidden all through the night, and the next morning also until he saw the giant leave the house and stride away over the hills and out of sight and hearing. Then he went into the house and hunted about until he found the steps that led to the tower. He went on up them, up and up until he came to the tower, and there was a room, and in the

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room was a golden cage, and in the cage was a Princess more beautiful than anything the lad had ever dreamed of. Never had he imagined the world held such loveliness. If he had looked at her long, he would have loved her, but that he dared not do, for he had come there to win her for the King and not for himself.

As soon as the Princess saw the lad, she cried aloud with amazement. "Who art thou to venture here so boldly?" she asked. "Dost thou not fear the giant will destroy thee?"

"The giant is far away by this time," answered Jack, "and before he returns I hope to have freed thee. It must be now or never."

Then he went close to the door of the cage and examined it, and saw it was fastened with a heavy lock of solid gold, and the key was missing from the keyhole. He put his hand on the lock, and no sooner did he touch it than it fell away and the door swung open.

Then the Princess came out and said to the lad, "You have opened the door and set me free, and that is what no one but my own true love and destined husband could do. Now

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I will be yours and you shall be mine, and nothing on earth shall part us."

But the lad answered, "Not so. I came here to win you for my master and not myself. He is a great king, rich and powerful and fit to marry a princess. Moreover I would be an unfaithful servant if I wished it otherwise. Come! Let us be going before the giant returns to catch us."

When the Princess heard this she became very sad. "What must be must be," she answered, "and I will go with you to the King, your master. All the same, I misdoubt that any one but you, dear lad, shall be my husband."

Then they left the tower and departed safely, and by the time the giant returned they were far away beyond the ditch, and out of his power entirely. When the giant discovered this, and found that he had lost not only his Golden Horse and his Moon Lantern but the Beautiful Princess also, he swelled and swelled with rage until he burst, and that was the end of him.

But the lad traveled back to the castle with

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the Princess, and when the King saw her he could not wonder enough at her beauty. He came toward her to take her hand, but before he could touch her the bars of the golden cage rose about her, so he could not even approach her. Moreover, the door of the cage was locked and the King could not unfasten it, try as he might with both hand and sword.

Then the lad touched the lock, and immediately it fell apart and the door opened.

The King was amazed. "How is this?" said he, "I cannot force the door open, and yet for you it opens at a touch of your finger."

Then the lad, who was very truthful, told the King what the farmer had said to him.

The King listened carefully, and after the lad had made an end of the telling, the King said to him, "If this be true (and indeed I scarce can doubt it), then Heaven wills that you and no other shall be her husband."

He then ordered a grand feast to be prepared, and Jack and the Princess were married with great magnificence.

But Peter was so mad with rage and envy that he left the palace and went away out into

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the world, and no one ever knew what became of him. Jack sorrowed for him and hunted for him a long time. But he never found him.

Jack and his bride journeyed away after a time to the country of the King who was the Princess's father, and there they lived in the greatest love and happiness forever after.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

A WELSH TALE

A FISHER lad and his mother once lived upon the borders of a wide lake. Every day the lad went down to the lake to fish, and he found a good sale in the village near by for all he could catch.

One time he had cast his nets all morning without catching anything. At noon he sat down to eat the food his mother had given him.

Suddenly the surface of the lake was curiously disturbed and out from the depths of it arose a beautiful lady. She was dressed all in rose color and wore many jewels, and she floated on the waters as softly and quietly as though she were some great flower. In her hand she held a golden comb, and she began to comb her hair, bending over to look at her reflection in the water.

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The fisher lad gazed at her entranced. Never had he imagined such a beauty.

After the lady had finished combing her hair, she bound it up and fastened it with strings of jewels. She then seemed about to disappear under the water, but the fisher lad called her, begging and entreating her to come and share his meal.

The lady answered, "Hard baked is thy bread; I have no wish to share it, and I am hard to catch." She then sank down into the water and was lost to sight.

The lad returned home distracted with love for the Lake Lady. He told his mother all that had happened. "Unless I can see her again," he cried, "unless I can talk with her and eat with her I will drown myself in the lake, for life without her is not worth living."

His mother did her best to quiet him. "Here is no such desperate matter," said she. "If she has come to you once, no doubt she will appear again. Your baked bread was too hard for her. Well and good! To-morrow I will give you a cake of dough. Perhaps that will lure her to you."

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The next day the lad hurried down to the lake, carrying with him the cake of dough his mother had made for him. All morning he sat and watched, and toward noon the water was again disturbed, and the Lake Lady rose from out of it. She floated there again as beautiful as a lily and combed her hair and bound it up. Then the fisher lad called to her, "Fair one, Fair one, float hither! Here is a cake of soft dough I have brought you. Come sit by me and eat it, and we will talk together."

But the Lake Lady answered, "Unbaked is thy bread; I have no wish to share it, and I am hard to catch."

And she disappeared under the waters.

The lad returned to his mother quite desperate.

"Now what shall I do?" he cried. "She would not come to me when I called her; she would not eat the dough I carried her because it was unbaked. Unless I can lure her to me, I will surely die of longing."

"Do not be so distracted," said his mother. "She would not eat the bread because it was too hard, nor the dough because it was uncooked.

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To-morrow I will give you a half-baked loaf. It may be that will bring her to you."

The next day the lad went down to the lake, carrying with him the slack-baked loaf wrapped in a clean napkin. For the third time the lady came up out of the water and combed her hair and bound it up. When she was about to disappear, the lad called out to her piteously, begging her to come and eat with him. And this time the lady answered, "Now I will come to thee. Soft is the bread thou bringest. Gladly will I eat it."

She then floated over to the shore and came and sat down by the side of the fisher lad. He gave her the bread and she ate of it. He was half mad with joy. When he looked at her closely she seemed to him more beautiful than ever. Her feet were as white as silver, and she wore green sandals curiously tied above the instep.

After she had eaten and was about to depart, the lad told her how dearly he loved her, and that life was worth nothing to him without her, and asked her whether she would marry him.

"Willingly would I marry thee," said the lady,

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“but that must be as my father chooses. Still, if I tell him I wish thee for a husband, I do not think he will say no to me.”

“And who is thy father?” asked the lad.

The lady told him that her father was king over all the lake and the streams that emptied into it. There under the water was his palace and he was the owner of flocks and herds innumerable and of untold riches.

When the lad heard that, his heart sank within him, for he did not think a king would ever give permission for his daughter to marry a poor fisher lad.

The lady, however, encouraged him. Her father loved her so dearly that he had never refused her anything she asked him. “Nor do I think,” said she, “that he will refuse me this time either. I will go now and talk with him.”

The lady then arose, but before she went she bade the fisher lad tie the latchet of her sandal, for it had come unfastened. This he did, knotting it carefully. The lady then bade him wait for her there and disappeared down under the water.

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The lad stayed where he was, shaken by hope and fear. After what seemed to him a long time, the surface of the lake was disturbed, and up from it arose a kingly looking old man with a long white beard that fell down below his girdle. He wore a golden crown on his head, and his robe was stiff with jewels. With the old man came his two daughters, and they were both exactly alike. There was not the difference of an eyelash between them. One was the lady the lad had lured to him from the water, and one was her sister, but which was which he could not for the life of him decide.

The King of the Lake led his daughters across the lake to where the lad was standing and said to him, "My son, you have asked one of my daughters to marry you. She wishes to have you for a husband, and I do not forbid it. Only first you must tell me which of these two is the one you love. Unless you can do this you may not have either, but they must return again with me down under the lake, and you will never see them again."

The lad looked from one to another of them, and he did not know which to claim as his



The lad looked from one to another of them, and he did not know which to claim as his bride. *Page 116.*

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bride. Then she who was on the old man's right hand put forward her foot, and he saw the knot of her sandal was the knot he had tied. Quickly he put out his hand to her and answered boldly, "This is my true love, and it is she and she alone I would have for a bride."

The old man appeared pleased at this answer. He said, "You have chosen rightly, and by this I know how truly you love her. Go home and prepare for the wedding, and in three days from now I will bring her to you." He and his daughters then disappeared again into the lake.

The youth returned home full of joy and told his mother all that had occurred. At once they set about preparing for the marriage. A feast was made ready, and the neighbors were bidden to it from far and wide.

On the third day, as the old man had promised, he came to the hut where the fisher lad lived, leading the bride by the hand. With him he brought great flocks and herds of fat sheep and fine cattle. These and the jewels she wore were his daughter's dowry.

All went merrily. The young couple were

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married, and there was much feasting and laughter.

Just before the old man departed, he took his new son-in-law aside and spoke to him in private. "I have given you my daughter for your bride," said he, "and she will make you a true and faithful wife if you treat her properly. But I must caution you never to strike her without due cause. If you should do so, you would cause her great unhappiness; and if you strike her three times without cause, she will be obliged to leave you and return to the lake, and you will never see her again."

The young husband was greatly surprised that the Lake King should think it necessary to say this. "How could I ever strike her, when I love her so tenderly?" he cried. "That is a thing that could never happen."

"It is well spoken," answered the old man; "but remember what I have said." He then departed back to the lake and the young man saw him no more.

After the marriage the young people lived together for some years in great love and contentment. In due time a little son was born

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to them, — a strong and handsome babe, and now it seemed as though there were nothing left for them to desire.

One day there was to be a christening in the neighborhood, and the young husband and wife were bidden to attend it. The time came for them to set out, and the horses were led up to the door. Suddenly the wife remembered she had left her gloves in her chamber and asked her husband to get them for her.

“I will get them,” he answered, “and as we are late already, do you go out and mount your horse so that we may start the sooner.”

He went up and found the gloves, but when he returned, his wife was still waiting where he had left her. “Come, come!” he cried, “we shall be late;” and he playfully struck her on the shoulder with the gloves.

The lady looked at him sadly. “Now you have struck me once without cause,” said she. “Remember what my father told you. If it should happen twice again, I would be obliged to leave you.”

The young man was amazed. He had not thought his playfulness would be treated as such

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a serious matter. "Forgive me," he said. "I meant nothing by it, but it shall never happen again."

Then he and she mounted their horses and rode away together, but the husband was very thoughtful.

When they reached the place where the christening was to be, they found a number of people already gathered, and there was much talk and laughter. But while all others were gay, the lady was very sad and wept, wiping away the tears as they fell.

Her husband, who was sitting behind her, leaned forward and touched her on the shoulder. "Why are you weeping while all others are glad and rejoice?" he asked.

"I weep because another soul is starting out into life to toil and suffer," answered his wife. "And now you have struck me a second time without cause. Once more, and I must leave you forever."

The husband was astounded. He did not see how she could speak so gravely of the touch he had given her. Still he made up his mind to take warning and be more careful in future.

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For a long time he bore this in mind and never touched her except to caress her. Then one time they went to a funeral together. There everything was sorrow and weeping. Only the lady's eyes shone with joy, and she laughed as though with pleasure.

Her husband thought she had forgotten where they were. He touched her on the arm to recall her. "Hush! Hush!" he whispered. "How can you laugh while all others are grieving?"

"I laugh because another soul has entered into eternal happiness," said she. "But now you have struck me for the third time without cause, and I must leave you." So saying she arose quickly and silently and went out before her husband could stop her.

He followed her as soon as he could, but she had already set out for home. He mounted and rode after her, but did not overtake her.

When he reached their dwelling, the fields and byre seemed strangely still and empty. His mother came out to meet him weeping and wringing her hands.

"What has happened?" she cried. "Thy

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wife returned, and at once and without a word to me she called the flocks and herds together and set out towards the lake. All the animals followed her. Even the black heifer that was killed yesterday came down from the nail where it hung and followed after her.”

At that the young husband seemed to go distracted. He pushed his mother aside and ran along the path that led to the lake. The path wound up a hill. When he reached the top of the hill he could see the lake stretched out before him. There was his dear wife walking steadily toward it. The flocks and herds followed close after her. He could even see the black heifer, now well and whole like the others.

He called to her, begging and beseeching her to wait for him, but the lady never turned her head. She walked straight on to the edge of the lake, and the waters divided before her. On into it she went, the flocks and herds close behind her, and then the waters closed together again and all were lost to view.

The young husband hastened down to the lakeside and stood there for a long time, call-

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ing and beseeching his wife to return to him, but there was no answer. The lake lay smooth and silent, its surface unbroken by even a ripple.

Not until daylight had faded did he return to his deserted home. There the old mother met him with tears, and they spent the night together lamenting.

The next day the young husband returned to the lakeside, and the day after and for many days following he returned there, but he never saw the Lake Lady.

Years passed by, and in time the young man married again, and this time it was a maiden from the village whom he married.

On his wedding night the old grandmother, who had the child sleeping in the room with her, was awakened by a sound of weeping. She sat up and looked about her and then, by the light of the moon that shone in through the window, she saw the Lake Lady bending over the bed where the child lay.

The old woman spoke to her, but she made no answer. Still weeping, she laid her hand on the child's forehead and bosom, and then she with-

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drew in silence and vanished, but where, the old woman could not tell. The child did not awaken, and his grandmother never told her son that she had again seen the Lake Lady. She kept a deep silence in the matter, and never again was the lady seen by any mortal eyes.

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A YOUNG Indian and his wife had died and gone to the Happy Hunting Grounds, leaving behind them one child, a little boy named Eagle Plume. The child, thus left alone, soon forgot all his mother's care and teachings. He lived always like an animal, never washing or caring for himself, sleeping in a nest of grasses or a hollow tree, as the weather demanded, and eating only roots and berries, or such small game as he could catch with his hands.

He grew up tall and strong and active, but he was so dirty and unkempt, that no one would have anything to do with him. He lived mostly in the forest by himself, seldom returning to the village and his people.

One time he came back after a long and wearying hunting trip, and without saying a

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word to any one threw himself down in the shade of a lodge to sleep.

He was awakened after some hours by a sound of voices. A number of the girls of the village had gathered under a tree near by and were talking and laughing together.

Presently their talk turned on the young men of the tribe. Each girl spoke for the one she liked best, praising him above the others for his strength, or cunning, or skill in hunting, or for his knowledge of magic.

After they had been talking thus for some time, a girl named Laughing Water, who was always full of fun, cried, "Now we have each spoken for our choice. But why has no one spoken for Eagle Plume? Is he not the finest of them all? So clean and graceful and so gentle in his manners. I am quite sure we all wish to claim him, but we are too shy."

There was a burst of laughter at this, but the daughter of the chief, the beautiful Black Raven, did not laugh. "You do wrong to make fun of Eagle Plume," she said in a clear, quiet voice.

"Every one knows he has never had any one

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to care for him or teach him how to behave. I believe if he washed himself and dressed in a proper manner, he would be as handsome and fine looking as any one."

"I believe you must be in love with him," cried one of the other girls. "Do you mean to ask your father to give him to you for a husband?"

There was another burst of laughter.

"No, I know my father would not let him come to our lodge, and I myself would not wish to belong to Eagle Plume as long as he looks as he does, but if he would wash himself and stay with the tribe and behave like other people, I would be very willing to marry him."

The other girls were silent, staring at her with wonder or scorn, and without saying anything further Black Raven rose and left them. She returned to her father's lodge, and set about her household tasks, and as she worked she thought over what she had said, and regretted nothing of it.

As for Eagle Plume, he lay motionless in the shadow until the girls had all gone. Then he arose from where he lay and set off for the river.

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He walked for some distance until he came to a place where the water gathered in a deep pool. Here he washed himself; he also washed his clothing and dried it in the sun. After that he arranged his hair and put an eagle's plume in it and dressed himself in his clean clothes, and at once he appeared so handsome and graceful that there was not a man in the village who could equal him in beauty.

Eagle Plume returned toward the village by a longer way than that by which he had come. This path led him past a spring where the maidens often came to fill their water-skins.

Some one was stooping beside the spring now and filling a skin with water.

She looked up as Eagle Plume drew near, and the young man saw that it was Black Raven. She gazed up at him, wondering. She did not know who this handsome stranger was, for she did not recognize him as Eagle Plume. Not until he spoke to her and called her by name did she know him.

“Black Raven,” said he. “I heard what you said of me when you and the others were talking under the tree. Is it indeed true that you

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would be willing to take me for a husband if I dressed and behaved as do the other young men of the village?"

"Yes, it is true," answered Black Raven. "But I do not know whether my father would give his consent."

"I will not ask him now," said Eagle Plume. "I will go away and do something to make me worthy of you, and then I will return and try to win you. Will you wait for me until that time?"

"Yes, I will wait for you, and every day I will pray to the Sun to help you," answered Black Raven, and as she spoke a great love for the young man rose in her heart.

"I will go, but I will also return," said Eagle Plume, "for I know your prayers will be heard, and some time we will share a lodge together."

So saying, Eagle Plume turned and left her, disappearing in the shadows of the deep forest beyond, and Black Raven returned to her father's lodge, silent and thoughtful.

All that day and the next Eagle Plume journeyed on, traveling always toward the West, and at the end of the second day he came to the

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edge of the forest and entered into a fertile valley. Here a stream that flowed down between the hills spread into a wide pond, and in the midst of the pond rose a large beaver lodge.

Eagle Plume decided to spend the night in this valley. He gathered great armfuls of the long grass that grew on the beaver dam and made a bed for himself. He also covered himself over as well as he could with the grasses, for the night was cold. He was just falling asleep when he was aroused by some sound, and looking up he saw a stranger standing beside him in the dusk.

Eagle Plume sprang to his feet and looked at the stranger wonderingly. He was a young man of about the same age and height as Eagle Plume; he was richly dressed and his features were fine and noble, but there was something very curious about his appearance, — a sort of lustrous whiteness that Eagle Plume could not understand.

The stranger spoke to the young Indian in a gentle and friendly tone.

“My father saw you making a bed beside the pond,” he said, “and has sent me to invite you

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to spend the night in our lodge. The wind is cold, and the grasses make a poor covering.”

Eagle Plume was surprised to hear there was a lodge so close by that he could be seen by the people living in it. He had looked all about him when he entered the valley, and had seen no signs of any human dwelling.

“Gladly will I go with you to the lodge,” said he, “but where is it? I see nothing of it.”

“It is near by. Follow me, and I will lead you to it.” So saying, the stranger turned and walked out on the ice that had formed upon the pond for some distance out from the shore. Wondering, Eagle Plume followed him. Soon they came to the edge of the ice. Before them lay the black cold water, with the beaver’s lodge rising out of the midst of it.

“My father lives in that lodge,” said the stranger, pointing to the beaver house. “In order to reach it, we will be obliged to dive down under the water. But do not be afraid. Follow me, and no harm will come to you.”

So saying, he dived into the water and disappeared. Eagle Plume hesitated. The waters looked black and cold indeed, but he was brave

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and daring, and almost at once he too plunged boldly into the pond.

At first the chill of the waters caught his breath, but after a few strokes the water gave way before him, and he came out into a pleasant warmth and light.

He opened his eyes and looked about him. He had come up through a pool into the center of the beaver lodge. About the pool dry earth sloped up to the walls of the lodge. His conductor had already stepped out of the water, and Eagle Plume followed him. He found that in spite of having come through the water, he and his clothing were perfectly dry; not even the soles of his moccasins were wet.

Three other people besides himself and his conductor were in the lodge. These people were an old man, an old woman, and another young man so like Eagle Plume's companion that he knew they must be brothers.

These people were all very handsome and noble looking, but now Eagle Plume knew why the stranger had such a curious white appearance. He as well as all three of the others was completely covered with very fine, soft, short, white

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fur, and as Eagle Plume looked from one to another, he felt convinced that they were not Indians such as he knew, but beaver people who had taken on human form at their own wish and by means of some magic.

As he stepped from the pool, the old man came forward and made him welcome, and bade him be seated on one of the beds that were ranged along the wall. The beds were covered with very handsome and richly colored robes, and against the walls, and from the roof, hung countless bags of magic, some very beautiful and strangely embroidered, and others worn and poor looking.

There was a low opening at one side of the lodge, and through this the water of the pond flowed in, bearing with it all sorts of chips and pieces of bark and wood. These circled slowly around in the current of the pool and then floated on out into the night again with the flowing water. But one large beaver cutting remained always in the center of the pool, turning around and around and never floating away as did the others.

The old man began talking to Eagle Plume,

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and the young man listened politely, but he was growing very hungry, and would have been glad to see some preparations being made for supper.

At last the old woman interrupted her husband, "Our guest has come a long way, and no doubt is hungry as well as tired."

"Aie! Aie!" cried the old man. "How forgetful I am. He shall be fed."

He arose and drew forward a pot that stood beside the wall, and set it over a fire that was burning on the far side of the lodge. He bent over the pool and took from it a handful of the floating bark and chips. These he broke into the pot, at the same time singing some curious song of magic, of which Eagle Plume could not understand the words. After this he sat down again on the bed. "Supper will soon be ready," he said calmly, and went on with his talk.

Eagle Plume, who was growing hungrier and hungrier, felt very much disappointed. He had no wish to eat bark and wood, but it seemed that was all he was to have offered to him.

Not long after the old woman arose and took the pot from the fire. "The supper is ready," said she.

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The old man motioned Eagle Plume toward the pot.

“Eat, my son,” said he. “Help yourself freely. We ourselves have already fed.”

Out of politeness Eagle Plume dipped his hand into the pot. What was his amazement to find it was full of the most delicious pemmican; when he tasted it he found it better than any he had ever eaten.

He ate till he was satisfied, and then he and the others all went to bed, and his sleep was warm and sound among the rugs of the beaver's lodge.

The next day Eagle Plume wished to set out again upon his wanderings, but this his host would not agree to.

“We do not often have guests,” said he. “Stay here with us for a while, and you may learn more than you would from many years of journeyings.”

To this Eagle Plume agreed. He was curious to see more of the life the beavers lived, and he also wished to learn something of the magic that he was sure was hidden in the many pouches he saw hanging in the lodge.

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Several times during the day the young beaver men dived down into the pool and disappeared. When they returned they brought news of the outside world. They always were perfectly dry when they stepped out of the pool, in spite of having come through the water.

Toward evening they returned for the last time and reported that the whole surface of the pond was covered with ice. They had been unable to break their way up through it.

“Hai-aie!” exclaimed the old man. “That is well! Now our guest will be obliged to remain with us for the rest of the winter.”

Eagle Plume also was well content. Even in the short time he had been there he had become convinced that the beavers knew more magic than even the wisest man in his own tribe.

In the days that followed the young Indian learned many curious things from the beavers. They spent the most of the day in making long prayers or singing sacred songs to their magic, and after a while Eagle Plume began to learn something of the uses of these prayers and songs.

One thing only troubled Eagle Plume. As

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the days passed by, he found that he also was becoming covered with fine short white fur like his hosts. The fur kept him very warm, but he did not know how he could return to the village and his people unless he could rid himself of this covering. How could he expect Black Raven to marry him if he remained furry like an animal?

Gradually the winter slipped away. Spring was approaching. One day the young beavers dived down into the pool, and when they returned they reported that the ice was breaking away, and that they had been able to swim to the shore.

“Hai-ai!” cried the old man. “Then soon our guest will be leaving us. I will go outside and see what are the signs of spring.”

He dived down into the pool, and his two sons followed him. The old woman and Eagle Plume were left alone in the tent. At once the old woman drew close to him and began talking to him in a low, eager voice.

“Listen, my son,” said she. “It is as my husband says. Soon you will be leaving us. You have been kind and respectful to me, and

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I wish to do you a good turn. Before you go he will offer you as a farewell gift your choice of any magic or medicine that is in the lodge. Do not be tempted by anything he may offer. Ask for the old beaver cutting that floats in the middle of the pond. It is full of magic and is more powerful than all the other magics put together. He will try to persuade you to choose something else, but you must not be deceived—” She would have said more, but at this moment the waters of the pool were disturbed, and the beaver chief rose out of them, his sons following him. The old man looked suspiciously from his wife to the young Indian, but the woman busied herself with some household task and pretended not to notice his look.

“It is true that the ice has broken,” said the old man. “Soon the beavers will be gathering for their work. We can no longer keep our guest with us.” He then turned to Eagle Plume. “You shall not go from us empty-handed,” said he. “See all these beautiful magics and medicines there are in the lodge. Choose from among them any one you please. Whichever you choose shall be yours.”

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Eagle Plume pretended to consider. He looked from one to another of the pouches that hung on the wall. Then, suddenly pointing to the pool, he said, "I will take that beaver cutting."

The old beaver scowled. "Why should you want that useless old piece of wood?" he asked. "No! No! Take one of these beautiful bags of medicine, and I will teach you the prayers and songs that belong to it so that you can make much magic."

"No," said Eagle Plume, "I will choose the beaver cutting."

The old chief began to argue with him. "Why are you so foolish? What could you do with that piece of wood? I intend to do you a favor, and to teach you magic that will make you great among your tribe. Do you see that beautiful pouch hanging over your bed? That contains very powerful magic. Take that, and I will teach you the songs and prayers that belong to it."

Eagle Plume was greatly tempted by the pouch. It was indeed very beautiful, and he had no doubt but what the old man spoke truth of

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it when he said that it contained very powerful magic. Suddenly he caught the eyes of the old woman. She shook her head slightly, and with one finger she motioned toward the floating piece of wood.

“You told me to choose whatever I wished,” cried Eagle Plume boldly, “and I have asked for the beaver cutting. That is what I wish to have, and that only.”

Sweat broke out on the old man’s forehead. He began to beg and plead with Eagle Plume. “Do not ask for that piece of wood,” he begged. “Take anything else — anything that my lodge contains. Only choose and it is yours.”

Eagle Plume waited till the old man was silent. “I will take the beaver cutting,” he repeated.

The old man cried aloud at this, as though with great grief. “You have asked for it four times,” he said, “and that is the sacred number. I can no longer refuse it to you. And now I will tell you you have chosen wisely. That beaver cutting is the most powerful magic I possess. But there are forty prayers and forty songs that go with it, and you cannot carry it away

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until you learn them. You will have to stay with us a month longer that I may teach them to you."

So Eagle Plume remained with the beavers another month, and by the end of that time he had learned the forty prayers and songs that belonged with this magic cutting, and was ready to set forth.

"Now I will tell you one other thing," said the old man. "After you leave, you must not look back. If you look back the beaver cutting will leave you and return to me, and you can never regain it. Hang it about your neck under your shirt and let no one see it. If you do this and if you do not look back, great good fortune will be yours."

Eagle Plume thanked the old man for his advice.

He hung the beaver cutting about his neck so that it hung down under his shirt, and bidding the beavers farewell he stepped down into the pool. The waters rose higher and higher about him till they were over his head. He dived down into them and struck out for the shore.

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When he rose to the surface, he found himself close to the place where he had made his bed of grasses some months before. A few moments later he stepped out on dry land.

At once he felt the most violent desire to look back at the beaver's lodge. The wish to do so was so great that it was like pain. It seemed as though all the magics left in the lodge were calling him. He felt the wish was stronger than he could resist.

Suddenly Eagle Plume remembered the beaver cutting. He took it in his hand and muttered a prayer, and at once all desire to look behind him ceased. He fixed his eyes on the forest beyond and strode on toward it at a rapid pace.

It had taken Eagle Plume two days to reach the valley. He hoped to return to the village in the same time. But he had forgotten the changes brought about by the spring weather. On his way through the forest to the valley he had been obliged to wade a stream. The water was then up to his armpits. Now when he came to the stream again, he saw the melting snows had swollen it to a raging torrent.

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Eagle Plume stood on the bank looking at it gloomily. It was impossible to wade it. To try to swim was dangerous, and yet he was unwilling to wait until the stream had fallen low enough for him to cross.

Again he remembered the beaver cutting.

He took it from his bosom and laid it on the ground, and began the prayers and songs of magic he had learned in the beaver's lodge.

As he prayed and sang, the cutting began to grow and swell and take shape. By the time he had made an end of his chanting, the piece of wood had become an enormous white beaver, with flame-colored eyes.

"Aie! aie!" cried Eagle Plume. "Now help me with your magic. I can neither wade nor swim through this torrent. How can I cross to the other side?"

"You must make a raft," replied the beaver. "I will cut the trees and you must bind them together. In this way you may cross without fear."

At once the beaver set to work gnawing at trees. One after another they fell as his magic teeth cut through them. Fast as Eagle Plume

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could work, the beaver worked still faster. After a time the raft was done.

“Take me up in your hands and lift me from the earth,” said the beaver.

Eagle Plume did so, and at once the beaver changed back into a piece of wood, and Eagle Plume hung it about his neck as before. He crossed the stream on the raft without trouble, and again journeyed forward.

The next day he came to the edge of the forest and within sight of the village, but he dared not venture further. He feared to have the people see him, covered as he was with fur. He again took out the cutting and made his prayers and chantings.

Again it turned into a beaver. Eagle Plume asked how he could get rid of the fur that covered him.

“Go to yonder hill and sit there, until you see some one approaching,” replied the beaver. “Then cover yourself with a blanket so they cannot see you, and call to them to take a message from you to the chief of the tribe. They are to tell him to make four sweat lodges for you. When the lodges are made let them return and

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tell you. Go and pray in these lodges as the beaver man taught you, and all the fur will drop from you.”

Eagle Plume took up the beaver and it again became a piece of wood. He hung it about his neck and did as it had instructed him. He went over and sat upon the hill until he saw two or three of the young men of the village coming toward him. Eagle Plume muffled himself in his blanket and called to them to listen to him but not to come too near.

The young men halted where they were, looking with wonder at the man who sat there all crouched together, with his face covered, and dressed in such magnificent robes.

“Listen!” cried Eagle Plume. “I am Eagle Plume, and I have wandered far and learned great magic with which to instruct the village. Go to your chief, the father of Black Raven, and tell him to build for me four sweat lodges. When they are finished let me know. Then I will come and pray in them, and afterward I will show the tribe great things.”

When the young men heard this they wondered more than ever, but Eagle Plume spoke

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with such authority they dared not disobey him. They hastened back to the village and recounted to the chief all that Eagle Plume had said to them.

The chief listened in silence. When they had made an end of speaking, he said, "It is well. I will do as Eagle Plume desires."

At once he had four sweat lodges built, and stones heated and placed in them. He then sent word to Eagle Plume to come; that the lodges were ready.

Eagle Plume arose from where he sat, and with the blanket still held before his face, he made his way through the village. Crowds had gathered to see him pass, but there was such a feeling of awe about his muffled figure that none dared to touch him or speak to him.

Eagle Plume entered the first of the lodges and threw aside his robes. He poured water on the hot stones, and as the steam arose he made his magic and sang the sacred songs the old beaver man had taught him. As he sang the fur came off from his face and neck as far down as his breast but no farther. When he had made an end of his prayers and songs he

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wrapped his blanket about him again, and went on to the next lodge.

After he had left the first lodge, the people went into it and looked about. They were greatly surprised to find a heap of fine, silvery white fur lying there on the floor.

In the second lodge Eagle Plume again made his magic and offered up prayer, and the fur dropped off from his arms and his body as far down as the loins. In the third sweat lodge he prayed for the third time, and the fur fell off from him as far down as his knees; and in the fourth lodge he prayed and sang for the fourth and last time, and all the rest of the fur came off him and left his body fair and smooth and shining.

Then Eagle Plume came out from the lodge, and the people who were waiting were amazed at the sight of his beauty and strength and grace. Not a maiden there but would have been glad to have him for a husband.

But Eagle Plume did not so much as glance at them except as his look passed over them in his search for Black Raven. When he saw her he went to her side and took her by the hand.

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“I have learned much wisdom and magic,” said he, “and I have also learned to dress and live as other men, and this I have done for the sake of Black Raven, and because I wished to have her for a wife.”

When the chief heard this he was glad. “Go to my lodge, my children,” said he. “The lodge and all that is in it are yours.”

So Eagle Plume and Black Raven went away to the lodge while the people stared after them, and they entered in and took possession and were married and Black Raven bore many children to Eagle Plume, and Eagle Plume became the greatest man in all the tribe, respected by his companions and feared by all his enemies.

THE ENCHANTED WATERFALL

A JAPANESE STORY

THERE was once a good and dutiful youth named Urishima who worked hard and long every day to support his parents, who were old and quite helpless, but work as he might, he was only able to supply them with the poorest sort of food and clothing.

His mother was quite content with this and was always cheerful, but his father did nothing but complain from morning till night, and was always reproaching his son because he could not do better for him.

“I do not know how it is,” he would say. “When I was young, I was able to supply my parents with everything they wished, and here my son gives me nothing but the poorest sort of food, and not even a cup of sâki.¹ If I could

¹ A Japanese drink, of which they are very fond.

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only have a cup of good sâki now and then, I would be content. I think it is very hard that we have to live so miserably. I would never have allowed my father to go without his cup of sâki, however poor I was."

When the father talked in this way, Urishima felt very sad. He would go out and work harder than ever, but for all his work he could earn but a small sum each day.

One time the son went into the forest to cut wood. He went to a place where he had often gone before. He gathered together a great load of wood, as much as he could possibly carry, and bound it around with a cord. The day was hot and the sweat ran down his forehead. He was thirsty, too, but he knew there was no spring or stream anywhere near.

He stopped to rest and wipe the sweat from his forehead before starting homeward with his load. He wiped away the sweat with his sleeve. Suddenly, as he stood there, he heard the sound of a waterfall close by. Urishima was very much surprised. Often as he had been there, he had never heard or seen any water anywhere near.

A JAPANESE STORY

He went a little farther into the wood and came to a high heap of rocks. They had always been dry before, but now a stream of shining water poured down over them. It seemed like magic.

However, magic or not, the water looked cool and clear. So he took a cup he had brought with him and filled it and lifted it to his lips to drink. What was his amazement to find the cup was filled, not with water at all, but with the most delicious sâki. Urishima could hardly believe it, but it was so. Filling the cup to the brim, he hastened home with it to his father.

When he entered the house, his father looked at him with a frown and immediately began to complain. "Why have you left your work so early? Where is the wood you were to have brought home? How can you expect to succeed in the world if you only work an hour or so and then come home to rest?"

"My father, taste this sâki," cried Urishima, "and tell me whether it is not good."

"Sâki!" cried the old man. "What do you mean? Where have you been able to get any sâki?"

THE ENCHANTED WATERFALL

He took the cup from his son's hands and set it to his lips. He tasted and looked surprised. He tasted again, smacking his lips. Then his face beamed with delight. "My dear son," cried he, "where did you get this? Never before in my life have I tasted such delicious sâki. I do not believe even the Emperor himself has better."

Urishima told his father the whole story. The old man found it hard to believe. "You have always been a truthful lad," said he, "and yet I can hardly think this thing is possible! If, however, it is really so, it is nothing less than a miracle."

"It is indeed the truth I have told you," answered his son, "though I myself find it hard to believe."

The old man continued to sip the sâki. While there was still quite a quantity left in the cup a neighbor came in, and the old man invited him to taste it.

The neighbor tasted and was delighted with it. "Where did you get this?" he asked. "Was it a present from some great nobleman? I could not buy any such in the shops."

A JAPANESE STORY

The old man repeated to the neighbor the story that Urishima had told him.

“This is a strange story,” said the man. He turned to Urishima and questioned him closely.

The boy repeated the story exactly as he had told it before, and as it had happened. The neighbor became very thoughtful, and soon after he went away.

A little later another neighbor came in and heard the story and tasted the sâki, and then another and another. Before long, the story spread through the village, and any one who could make any excuse came in to taste the sâki and question Urishima. By evening the sâki was all gone, and the last of the people who came in could only smell the empty cup and judge by that of how very good the sâki must have been.

The next morning the old man aroused Urishima very early. “My son,” said he, “take this pitcher, the largest we have in the house, and go out to the waterfall and fill it with sâki. We will have a great many visitors to-day, and I would feel ashamed if we were not able to offer each one of them a drink.”

Urishima arose, dressed himself, and took the

THE ENCHANTED WATERFALL

pitcher, and hastened away to the forest. It was so early that the village appeared to be sleeping as he went through it, but as he approached the waterfall he saw that some one was there before him. It was the neighbor who had been the first to taste the sâki. He had just arrived at the waterfall, and he had brought with him a pitcher even larger than the one Urishima carried. Before he could fill it, another neighbor came hastening through the forest, and then another and another and still more. They all carried pitchers and pots and buckets, and anything they had that would hold the most.

Urishima hid behind the rocks to look and listen.

The first neighbors who arrived looked rather ashamed as they saw each other.

“Well,” said the one who had come first, “I see we are here on the same errand. And why should we not have some of the sâki as well as the old man? Urishima does not own the waterfall.”

“That is true,” said another.

And — “True! True!” cried the others.

A JAPANESE STORY

One of the last to come, a bustling and lively little man, hastened forward and would have filled his pitcher at once, but the others withheld him. "It is not your turn," they cried. "You came last, and yet you expect to drink first."

"But look! your pitcher is a great deal larger than mine, and so is his, and his," — and the little neighbor pointed to others of the villagers. "If you fill all those large pitchers first there may be nothing left for us who only expect to take a little."

The men began to argue and dispute among themselves, but at last it was decided that the neighbor who had come first should fill his pitcher first, and then the others, according to the order in which they had come.

The first comer now stepped briskly forward to the waterfall.

He filled his pitcher, and lifting it, he took a deep drink from it. At once a look of surprise and then of disappointment and then of anger appeared upon his face. He spat out a mouthful on the ground.

"What is the matter?" asked the neighbors who were watching him. "Is not the sâki good?"

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“Sâki! This is not sâki.”

“Not sâki! What is it, then?”

“Water! What else should one expect to get from a waterfall?”

“But Urishima told us —”

“That Urishima is a rascal. If we had not all been simpletons we would not have believed him. And yet he told his tale so seriously any one might have been deceived.”

“You mean it is only water?”

“Yes.”

“Not sâki at all?”

“No.”

The other villagers now made haste to fill their pitchers at the waterfall, but when they drank they found that not any one of them had anything but water in his pitcher, and not very good water at that.

They were furious. “He has deceived us!” they cried. “He has made a mock of us. No doubt he is comfortably in bed at this very moment and laughing at us for our pains.”

This thought made them so angry that they began to think how they could punish him. “Let us go and get him and give him a good

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beating. No, let us duck him. Yes, we will drag him here to the waterfall and duck him. He shall see that this is not so fine a joke as he thought. We will half drown him in his 'sâki.' ”

Urishima, hearing them as he stood behind the rocks, was terrified. He was afraid to stay where he was, and walking very softly, he tried to make off through the forest. He would have done better to have stayed hidden, for suddenly one of the neighbors caught sight of him, and raised a shout. “There he goes! There he goes, the sâki drinker. Catch him! Duck him! Throw him into his own waterfall!”

The men ran after the boy and surrounded him and dragged him back to the waterfall.

“Indeed, indeed, I did not deceive you,” cried Urishima. He was trembling all over, and half weeping. “It was here I filled my cup — at this very waterfall — and it was sâki and not water that I drew from it, as you yourselves can testify.”

“Very well,” said the first neighbor. “If you did it once, you can do it again. Fill your pitcher from the waterfall. If sâki flows into

THE ENCHANTED WATERFALL

it, well and good; but if water, then you shall be punished as you deserve.”

Trembling, Urishima filled his pitcher as they bade him and handed it to the neighbor. The man lifted it up and drank from it. A look of wonder came over his face. “The boy spoke the truth,” he cried. “It is indeed sâki, and that of the best.”

One after another the neighbors drank from the boy's pitcher and were convinced it was indeed full of sâki.

But only Urishima was able to obtain that drink from the waterfall. When the others tried again, their pitchers still only filled with water. Nor was Urishima himself able to fill their pitchers with sâki for them. It was only in his own pitcher that the water became that most delicious drink.

The neighbors now looked upon the good son with the greatest respect. They went home with him to his father and recounted to the old man all that had happened. They also told him he had a very wonderful son and ought to prize him as he deserved.

After that Urishima lived on quietly in the

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village as before, though there was much talk about his wondrous power. He could draw a pitcher full of sâki from the waterfall every day, but only once a day could he do this. If he filled the pitcher more than once, he obtained only water. In time the rumors of his wonder-working power came to the ears of the Emperor himself. One day a great train of magnificently dressed courtiers and noblemen appeared in the little village and stopped before the house where Urishima lived. In the midst of them rode no less a person than the Emperor himself. He commanded the boy to show them the way to the waterfall and to draw a cup of sâki for the Emperor to taste.

This the lad did, and when the Emperor tasted the sâki and found all he had heard was true, he was filled with wonder and admiration. He took Urishima home with him to his palace and made him a great nobleman, and kept him always close to his own person, and from then on Urishima lived beloved and honored by all, and his old father and mother never had a wish that he was not able to gratify.

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

AN IRISH TALE

THERE was once a king in Ireland named Ædh Cúruca, and he had three daughters. The name of the eldest was Fair, and the name of the next was Brown, and the name of the youngest was Trembling. They all looked alike, and they were all beautiful, but Trembling was the loveliest of the three. For that reason Fair and Brown were jealous of her, and would not let her go with them either to church or fairing. They kept her in the kitchen, and she had only rags to wear and scraps to eat.

Thus they lived for seven years, and at the end of that time the son of the King of Omany saw Fair, and he fell in love with her, for she was the most beautiful woman in the world when Trembling was away, and Brown was the next most beautiful.

AN IRISH TALE

One day Fair and Brown were to go to Mass, and they made themselves fine, for the son of the King of Omany was to be there. After they had washed and arranged their hair and put on their best dresses they set out, and Trembling was left to cook the dinner against the time they came home.

Now there was a little old brown woman who had care of the hens, and Trembling had often been kind to her. This little old henwife had magic powers, though no one knew it.

After the older sisters had set out she came to Trembling, and says she, "Would you not like to go to church, too?"

"Yes, I would like to go," answered Trembling, "but how could I do that with nothing but rags to wear?"

"And what kind of a robe would you wear if you had your choice?" asked the henwife.

"I would have a white satin dress that shone like silver, and green shoes to my feet."

"Then you shall have them, and you shall have a horse to ride on as well," said the henwife.

The old woman went down to the henhouse and took a cloak of magic that she had hidden

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

there, and put it on. When she went back to the kitchen she wished for a satin robe as bright as silver, and green shoes, and she wished that a snow-white steed with a silver saddle and bridle should be standing at the door.

At once all these things appeared as if out of nowhere at all. The henwife told Trembling these things were for her, and she helped Trembling to dress herself and mount upon her horse, and she put a honey bird on Trembling's right shoulder and a honey finger on her left shoulder, and then she was so lovely that she shone like a star for beauty.

Away she rode to the church, and she lighted down and went inside. Every head turned to look at her, and when the king's son saw her — the son of the King of Omany — his heart turned right over in his bosom, and Fair was entirely forgotten in the love that came over him for the beautiful stranger.

He had meant to speak to her when they came out from church, but just before Mass was over, Trembling slipped outside and mounted her horse and rode away again, before any one could stop her.

AN IRISH TALE

When the King's son came out from Mass, he could not see her anywhere. He would have been sick for sorrow over that, but he hoped the stranger would be at Mass again the next week, and he meant to be there to meet her.

When Trembling reached home the dinner was cooked, and the henwife took away her fine robe and her horse and gave her her rags again.

Presently, with a great clattering and noise of talking, in came Fair and Brown, and Trembling was basting the meat at the time.

“And have you brought any news home with you?” she asked.

“Oh, there was a most beautiful lady at church, and all eyes were for her, and the son of the King of Omany looked at no one else,” said Brown; but Fair only tossed her head and would not say anything.

Fair and Brown had white robes made, as much as possible like those the stranger had worn, and they begged and begged till their father gave each of them a fine white horse to ride, and Trembling got nothing but an extra word or so.

The two elder sisters looked fine enough when

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

they next went to Mass, but they had no honey birds and honey fingers on their shoulders, so they did not shine with beauty as Trembling had done.

After they had gone, the old henwife came to Trembling again.

“Would you like to go to Mass again all finely dressed as you were before?”

“That I would,” answered Trembling.

“And what sort of a robe and a horse will you have this time?”

“I would like a black satin robe, and red shoes to my feet, and a black horse so sleek and shining that you can see your face in his hide, and I would like him to have a golden saddle and a golden bridle.”

“You shall have all of that,” answered the old woman.

She went away and got the cloak of magic, and when she came back she put it on, and wished for Trembling a black satin dress, and red shoes, and a shiny black horse to ride, and as soon as she wished for the things they appeared.

She helped Trembling dress, and mount on

AN IRISH TALE

the horse, and she set the honey bird on her right shoulder and the honey finger on her left, and now Trembling was even more beautiful than she had been the first time, and away she rode to Mass.

When she came to the church, every one turned around to look at her, and the King's son could scarcely stay where he was he wanted so much to be beside her. The moment she slipped out of the church he hurried after her, but she was too quick for him. She sprang on her horse and rode away, and though he ran after her for more than a mile he could not catch her.

When he went home he was so sad he was like to be ill with his sadness, and with his longing for the beautiful stranger.

Trembling had no dinner to cook that day either. The old henwife had it all ready when she came home. The old woman took away the fine clothes and the black horse and gave Trembling her rags again, and when the two older sisters came home there was Trembling basting the meat, and looking as though she had never been out of the kitchen.

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

“What is the news to-day?” she asked.

Brown told her all about the stranger who had come to Mass again that day, and even Fair could not forbear from talking about her. “She must be some queen, or the daughter of some king,” said she.

The two older sisters had black satin robes made for themselves, and red shoes, and they begged and teased until their father gave a black horse to each of them. That was the way they rode to Mass the next time, but they had no honey birds nor honey fingers, so they were not beautiful the way Trembling had been.

After they had gone, the old henwife came to Trembling for the third time. “And how would you like to be dressed to-day?” she asked.

“I would like a dress that is rose red from the waist down and silver white from the waist up, and I would like a grass-green cloak to wear with it and a hat with a green, a white and a red feather in it, and I would like a pair of shoes with green toes and white in the middle, and with red heels and backs.”

“And what sort of a horse will you have to ride?”

AN IRISH TALE

“A white horse with diamond-shaped spots of green and gold.”

The henwife gave her all these things and put a honey bird on her right shoulder and a honey finger on her left shoulder, and she gave her a little bird to sit on the horse's head. As soon as Trembling mounted the horse the bird began to sing, and never stopped from the moment they left home until they were safe back again.

When Trembling reached the church, she did not go inside, but waited just outside the door. All the same every head was turned to catch a glimpse of her, and every ear was filled with the sweet sound of the bird's singing. Many princes and fine lords were in the church that day, for the fame of Trembling's beauty had gone abroad throughout the land, and every one was anxious to catch a glimpse of her and have a word with her.

No sooner was the Mass over than Trembling sprang into the saddle and rode away. All the people came pouring out from the church, to look after her, but the son of the King of Omanyra was out before any of them, and he ran so swiftly that he overtook Trembling and

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

caught her by the foot. He ran beside her so for over a mile, all the while begging her to stop and talk with him a bit, but Trembling would not look at him or speak, for she was afraid of what might come to her from her sisters.

So the mare went faster and faster, and the bird sang louder and louder, and at the end of two miles the king's son was obliged to stop for loss of breath. All the same he had been able to pull the shoe off from Trembling's foot, and when she rode on and left him he still had it in his hand.

When Trembling reached home she was so vexed and troubled that the old henwife did not know what had happened to her.

"Why look you so pale and troubled?" said she. "What has come over you?"

"Oh," said Trembling, "I've lost one of the shoes from off my foot, and I fear some trouble will come from it."

"Never mind about that," said the henwife. "This may be more good luck than bad. Strip off your fine things and get to your cooking, for your sisters will soon be here."

So Trembling took off her fine clothes and put

AN IRISH TALE

on her rags again, and when her sisters came home there she was, basting the meat, with a black smudge across one of her cheeks.

“Well, and was the fine lady at Mass again to-day?” she asked.

Oh, yes, she had been there, and finer and more beautiful than ever. All the men were crazy over her.

Moreover the son of the King of Omany had stolen the shoe from off her foot, and now he vowed and declared that he would never marry any but the one to whom the shoe belonged, and who could wear it.

When Trembling heard that saying she was glad and she was sorry. She was glad because the king's son loved her so, and she was sorry because she did not know what her sisters might do if they guessed she was the one who owned the shoe.

But the king's son lost no time in starting out to find the beauty. He set out traveling through all the land in search of her, taking the shoe with him. Every girl in the kingdom wanted to have a try at wearing it, but it fitted none of them. For some it was too short, and for some

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it was too narrow. Some could get the shoe half over the foot, but the most of them could barely get their toes into it.

At last the king's son came round to the house of Trembling's father. The older sisters were crazy to have a try at wearing the shoe, but when the king's son came to the door they locked Trembling into a closet, for they did not want him to see her.

The king's son alighted from his horse and came in, and the two sisters were ready for him. First Fair took the shoe and tried it on, but she could not get her heel down into it. Then Brown took it and tried it on her foot, but it squeezed her toes so that she had to cry out for the pain of it.

"I can see that the shoe belongs to neither of you," said the king's son. "But is there not some one else in your house who would like to have a try at it?"

The elder sisters were about to answer no, but Trembling called through the crack of the door, "Here am I in the closet, and it may be the shoe will fit my foot."

The sisters were very angry, but they were

AN IRISH TALE

obliged to let her out. Then she took the shoe and slipped it on, and it fitted her exactly. After that she took the mate to it out from under her rags and put it on too, and then she stood before the king's son, so beautiful and gentle looking that the prince's heart melted within him.

He took her by the hand and kissed her on the mouth, and he said, "You are indeed my own true love, and you and you only shall be my bride."

So the king's son and Trembling were married, and the wedding lasted for a year and a day, and there was great rejoicing.

Now after a while it came time for Trembling's child to be born, and she sent for her sister Fair to come and be with her at that time.

Fair was glad enough to come, for Trembling was now a fine princess living in a castle, and Fair hoped to get some of the good things that were hers to give. After Fair came to the castle she was always kissing her sister and making much of her, and Trembling had no thought but that Fair loved her and wished well to her in every way.

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

In due time the child was born, and it was a little girl, so beautiful that she was the wonder of all who saw her.

One day Fair said to Trembling, "Let us go and take a walk on the cliffs by the sea, for it is a fine day, and it will be pleasant there."

To this Trembling agreed, thinking no evil.

She and Fair went out to the cliffs and walked there, and Fair put Trembling between her and the sea. They walked along, always closer and closer to the edge, and when they came to where the cliffs were highest and the sea deepest Fair pushed Trembling over the edge, so that she fell down into the sea, and a great whale came and swallowed her up, and sank down under the waters with her.

Fair went back to the castle and dressed herself in Trembling's clothes, and put on Trembling's jewels, and arranged her hair as Trembling had been used to wear hers, and then she looked almost exactly like Trembling, only not so beautiful.

A little later the prince came to the apartment to see his wife and his little daughter, and Fair greeted him tenderly just as Trembling

AN IRISH TALE

always had done, and with the same words Trembling had been used to use.

The king's son looked at her, doubting and troubled, for though she looked like Trembling and wore her clothes and jewels, her eyes were hard and cold, and not gentle and timid as Trembling's eyes had been.

"Are you my dear wife Trembling?" he asked of her. "Or are you Fair?"

"Oh my dear husband! How can you ask such a thing! I am Trembling, and Fair has gone back to Ballyshannon. Our father fell ill, and they sent for her in haste, so I gave her a horse, and she has ridden home again."

The king's son believed her and yet he did not believe her, and he went away troubled instead of staying to talk with her and make much of her as he had always done with Trembling.

Now there was a little boy about the castle who had charge of the cows, and it was his duty to drive them out to graze every day. He was grazing them near the cliffs the day Fair pushed Trembling into the sea, and he saw all that happened, and he saw how the whale swallowed

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Trembling, but he said nothing about it to any one, for he was afraid.

The next day he was watching the cows not far from the same place, and suddenly he saw the whale roll up out of the depths of the sea. It came close to the shore and it spewed Trembling out on the sand; then it disappeared down under the sea again.

The little cowherd was terribly frightened, but Trembling called to him not to be afraid.

“When you go back to the castle,” said she, “do you seek out the king’s son, and give him a message for me. Tell him what has happened to me, and tell him the whale has done me no harm as yet, but he has me under an enchantment so that I cannot leave this strip of sand. Three times he will come here and spew me out on the land, and toward evening he will come and swallow me again. This is the first time. Twice more will he come, and unless the king’s son can rescue me in that time, I will be lost to him forever. Tell him to come here to-morrow and to bring with him a gun and a silver bullet. After the whale has spit me out he must wait till the beast comes again to get me. When the



The little cowherd was terribly frightened. *Page 174.*

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whale comes, it will roll over on its side to take me. Then he will see a small reddish spot under its breast fin. He must shoot it through that red spot with a silver bullet, and unless he does that he will never get me back again.”

When Trembling had said this the whale came back and swallowed her again, and swam away with her.

The little cowherd started back toward the castle, and on the way he met Fair. He had such a queer look on his face that Fair stopped him and began to question him as to what was the matter.

The boy did not want to tell her, but she threatened and wheedled, and wheedled and threatened until she got the whole story out of him.

“That is well,” said Fair, “and I am sure you are a good boy and will do as Trembling bade you, and now come with me and I will give you a drink to refresh you.”

Fair took the boy back to the castle and filled a golden goblet and gave it to the boy to drink, and what she had filled it with was the drink of forgetfulness.

FAIR, BROWN, AND TREMBLING

The cowherd drank, and at once he forgot all about Trembling and the message she had given him, and so the king's son never heard about it.

The next day the cowherd was down by the sea again, and up came the whale out of the depths of the sea, and spewed Trembling out upon the sand as before, and disappeared as he had come.

The moment Trembling saw the lad she called to him. "Did you give the king's son my message?" she asked.

"No, I did not," answered the boy.

"Alack and woe is me! And why did you not do as I bade you?"

Then the lad told her how he had met Fair, and how Fair had drawn the whole story out of him, and then had given him the drink of forgetfulness, so that he had had no memory left of Trembling or her message.

"To-day Fair will meet you and try to do the same," said Trembling; "but you must manage to spill the drink and get my message to the king's son, for if you do not, then I am lost forever."

That evening when the lad went home, Fair

AN IRISH TALE

met him, and asked him whether he had seen Trembling again, and had talked with her.

“Yes, I saw her,” he answered, “and she bade me carry the same message to the king’s son that she gave me before.”

When Fair heard this she took the cowherd into the castle, and mixed a drink of forgetfulness as before, and served it to him in a golden goblet. But this time, instead of drinking what she gave him, the cowherd managed to spill it on the floor without Fair’s seeing what he did. Then he gave her back the goblet, and as it was empty, Fair thought he had drunk of it, and had forgotten all about his message.

But the lad had not forgotten, and that evening he managed to get a word with the king’s son, and he told him all about what had happened, and what he had seen, and the message that Trembling had sent to him.

Then the king’s son wondered with a great wonder, and rejoiced with fear. He had a silver bullet made, and the next day he went down to the cliffs with the cowherd, and the cowherd showed him where it was that the whale spewed Trembling out on the sand.

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The king's son hid back of some rocks there and watched and waited, and it was not so very long before the whale came rolling and wallowing through the waters, and the little waves ran up on the sand, and when he came near enough to the land he spewed Trembling out upon it and sank down under the waters again.

Then the king's son came out from behind the rocks, and he and Trembling ran to each other and embraced and wept with joy. They sat down and talked until it was time for the whale to come again, and then the king's son hid back of the rocks, and Trembling went and stood by the edge of the sea.

She only waited there a little while, and then came the whale to get her. He opened his mouth and rolled over on his side, and at once the prince saw the red spot under his breast fin. He waited not a moment but raised his gun and shot, and the silver bullet entered the red spot and pierced through to the great beast's heart, and the whale's life flowed out through the wound and he was dead.

But the king's son and Trembling returned to the castle, and when Fair saw them coming

AN IRISH TALE

she almost fainted, fearing what they might do to her.

They did nothing at first, but the prince wrote a long letter to Fair's father, telling him all that had happened, and asking what should be done with Fair.

The father wrote back that since she had been so wicked she should be sealed up in a cask and thrown into the sea from the cliffs to live or perish as heaven willed.

As he said, so it was done. Fair was put into a cask and thrown into the sea from the very place where she had pushed Trembling over, and what became of her no one ever knew.

But the king's son and Trembling lived together in great love and happiness forever after.

As for the little cowherd, he was brought to live in the palace and was treated with great honor, and when he grew up he married the princess who had been a baby when Trembling was thrown to the whale, and they loved each other so dearly that even the king's son and Trembling were no happier than they.

THE DEMON OF THE MOUNTAIN

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE

THERE was once a poor peasant lad who was sober and honest and industrious, and yet he never could succeed in the world; he was barely able to make enough to keep body and soul together.

One night he had a dream, and in his dream a venerable looking old man with a long gray beard, and wearing a golden crown upon his head, appeared to him.

“My son,” said the old man, “go to the top of the mountain that lies beyond the rocky plain to the eastward. There fortune awaits thee; only be brave and daring. Go, and delay not.”

In the morning, when the youth awoke, he remembered his dream and wondered over it for a time, but it was soon forgotten.

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE !

The next night the old man appeared to him again while he was sleeping and regarded him with a severe expression. "Why hast thou not already set out for the mountain?" he asked. "Fortune will not await thee forever."

When the youth awoke, he wondered that he should have dreamed of the same old man a second time, but still he regarded the dream as meaning nothing, and before the end of the day he had forgotten it.

But the third night the same old man appeared to him for still a third time. "How is this?" he cried! "By this time thou shouldst have been well on thy way to the mountain. Up! Up! delay not, or disaster will follow!"

When the youth awoke he determined to set out at once for the mountain. He packed up enough food for the journey and started out without further delay.

All day he traveled across the rocky plain, and by night time he had arrived at the foot of the mountain. Here he rested, and the next day he set out to climb to the top.

Up and up he went, and so at last came to the mouth of a cave that was at the summit.

A DEMON OF THE MOUNTAIN

A light shone out from the cave, and when the lad looked into it he saw a beautiful maiden sitting there, fair beyond all words. Her hair was of pure gold and shone like sunlight, and it was so long it fell down all about her and trailed on the floor, and out of her hair she was weaving a mantle.

When the beauty saw the lad she cried out loud for wonder.

“Who art thou, rash youth?” she called to him, “who hath dared to venture into the cave of the Mountain Demon?”

“I am a poor peasant who lives down below here on the other side of the plain,” he answered. “And I did not know this was a Demon’s Cave.”

“But how camest thou hither?”

“An old man told me to come. He appeared to me three times in a dream, with a crown of gold on his head, and he told me to journey to the top of the mountain and I would find fortune awaiting me.”

“He spoke truth,” answered the maiden. “That old man was my father; he was a King and I am a Princess. He who rescues me may

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE

have me for a bride if he will, and my Kingdom for a dowry.”

The Princess then told the lad that years before the Demon of this mountain had seen her beside a spring where she was bathing with her maidens. He had fallen in love with her, and for her sake he had made war on her father and slain him, but her he had brought here to his cave, and had set her to weaving a mantle out of her hair. When the mantle was finished she would be obliged to marry him, and already it was almost done.

“But how may you be rescued?” asked the lad.

“That is a difficult and dangerous task,” replied the beauty, “but it may be done. If you have the courage to stay here for three nights,” said the Princess, “and for those three nights will allow the Demon to torment you as he will, and yet are brave enough to utter never a sound, then his power over me will be broken, and I will be free from him.”

When the youth heard that the only way he could save the Princess was by allowing the Demon to torment him for three nights, his ardor was somewhat cooled. “And if I were to rescue

A DEMON OF THE MOUNTAIN

you, would you be willing to take me for a husband?" he asked.

"Yes, that I would," answered the Princess, "for if you can endure those torments for my sake, then I will know you love me truly, and that you are indeed a brave soul and a daring one."

The youth thought for a while. "Very well," he said, "at least I will try it."

Then he sat down, and he and the Princess talked together, and she was so wise and gentle and witty in her talk that with every hour that passed he loved her better and better.

Toward evening there was a great noise outside and a glare of red light, and the Mountain Demon rushed into the cave, and a terrible creature he was to look at, I can tell you. He was as black as soot, and his eyes shone in his head like coals of fire. He had horns and a tail, and instead of nails he had long claws on his fingers, and with every breath he sent out fire and cinders.

When the lad saw the Demon he began to shake and tremble, and he wished he were well out of that adventure and home again, even

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE

if he had to miss having a Princess for a wife. However it was too late to wish that now.

The Demon wasted no words upon the lad, but he picked him up and threw him down on the floor, and then he danced about on him up and down. After he had finished dancing on him, he hauled him about and pulled his ears and his hair, and did everything he could to make him cry out, and almost he succeeded; but still the youth remembered what the Princess had said and managed to keep his lips closed, and when the first ray of daylight shone into the cave, the Demon was obliged to depart, for so it is with the evil ones.

Then the Princess came, and lifted the youth up and comforted him, and she took down a flask from the wall where it hung, and rubbed him over with the ointment that was in it, and then his bruises disappeared — for he had been black and blue all over from the way the Demon had danced on him.

“That is one night passed, and you have stood it bravely,” said the Princess.

“Yes, that is all very well,” answered the Youth, “but I doubt whether I can stand two

A DEMON OF THE MOUNTAIN

more nights of it. Perhaps it would have been better if I had kept away altogether ; or at least that I go away now before I suffer any more torments that may be even worse.”

“Do not say that,” cried the Princess, and she began to weep.

When the lad saw her tears, his heart melted with pity for her, and he promised that he would not desert her, whatever happened, but would do his best to rescue her.

Then the Princess was cheered and brought out all sorts of good things that the Demon had stored away, and she and the lad ate and drank together and became quite merry.

After a while it became dark, however, and the lad's heart sank down again.

At the same hour as the night before, the Demon came rushing back into the cave again, and when he saw the lad was still there, he howled aloud for very rage. Again he caught up the lad and dashed him down on the floor of the cave, and this time he took a hammer and pounded him with it until it seemed to the lad that every bone in his body was beaten to a jelly.

He had to clench his teeth together to keep

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE

from crying out. All night the Demon tormented him until he was more dead than alive, but when morning came, the evil one was obliged to give over as before, and he disappeared out of the cave, howling horribly.

The Princess came and rubbed the lad all over with the ointment as before and then he became quite strong and well and sound again.

But now the lad was all for starting out for home. He had had enough of the Demon and his doings. The Princess had to beg and implore and entreat him before he would consent to remain for still the third night.

“What good will it do me, or you either,” he said, “if the Demon makes an end of me? And that I fear he will do, if he finds me here a third time.”

“Oh, my dear lad, surely you love me enough to suffer still one other little time,” wept the Princess. “I do not believe the Demon has really the power to kill you; and think, if you allow him to torment you only one more night and still keep silence, then you will have me for a wife, and a kingdom to reign over, and we will live together happily forever.”

A DEMON OF THE MOUNTAIN

“Very well,” said the lad at last, “I will try to stand it still this third time, though I misdoubt me I am a fool for my pains.”

So when the Demon came home that night, there was the lad still sitting in the cave with the Princess. The Demon was so enraged he swelled up to twice his size and turned blacker than ever. He caught the lad from off the stool where he was sitting and threw him on the floor and then he picked up a pair of pincers and pinched him all over. All night the Demon kept at him. He rolled him about over the floor, and knocked him against the stools and tables, and it seemed sometimes as though the lad would be obliged to cry for mercy. But he bit his lips till they bled, and not a sound came from between them.

At last it was morning, and when the sun shone into the cave, the Demon gave a howl and burst with a noise like a thunder-clap, and there was nothing left of him but a little heap of black dust on the floor.

But the lad lay there without sound or motion, as though he were dead. Then for the third time the Princess rubbed him with the ointment,

A TRANSYLVANIAN GIPSY TALE

and he opened his eyes and rose up and was quite well again.

The Princess bade him go to the back of the cave where there was a spring of water and bathe himself in it. This he did, and as soon as he had bathed he became the handsomest young man that ever was seen, and instead of poor and ragged clothes he was dressed in silks and velvets, and he had a jeweled ring upon his finger, and a golden crown on his head.

“And now,” said the Princess, “we will return to my own country, and you shall be King and I will be Queen, and we will live happily together from this time on.”

As she said so it was, and she and the peasant lad returned to her kingdom and were married, and they loved each other so dearly that there never was a cross word between them.

I went to the wedding along with all the others that were bidden, and ate and drank so much that I could hardly walk home again.

THE LAMIA

A HINDOO TALE

MANY long years ago there lived a young King named Ali Mardan, who was wise and good and just in all his rulings, and beloved throughout all his kingdom.

One day Ali Mardan went out into the jungle to hunt, and many attendants and courtiers rode with him. They went on deeper and deeper into the jungle, and then suddenly they came to an open place, and there, seated under a tree, was a young damsel, thin and pale, and she was weeping bitterly. Even through her tears, however, she was so strangely beautiful that the King's heart leaped within him at sight of her.

Ali Mardan bade his attendants stop where they were, and then he went up near to the damsel and questioned her as to who she was

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and whence she had come, and why she was weeping so bitterly.

The damsel answered him in a voice broken by sobs and sighs. She told him she had been an attendant in the court of the Queen of China. She said her father was a great lord, very rich and magnificent. A few days before, she had been walking alone in the gardens of the palace and there she had been suddenly seized by a band of robbers who had carried her off; they had stripped her of all her jewels and then left her here alone in the forest to perish from hunger or to be devoured by wild beasts.

Ali Mardan was filled with pity for the unfortunate damsel. He begged her to return with him to his palace, promising she should be treated with the greatest courtesy and respect.

The damsel willingly agreed to this proposal, and the King gave her into the charge of his attendants, bidding them carry her back through the jungle with all care possible.

As soon as they arrived at the palace, the King had the finest of the apartments prepared for the stranger. He presented her with magnificent robes, and the most valuable jewels in his

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treasure house, that she might adorn her beauty with them.

The King, indeed, had fallen violently in love with her. He could not rest until she promised to marry him, and then as soon as possible the wedding was arranged, and they were married with the greatest magnificence.

But from the time the stranger became his wife, a curious change came over Ali Mardan. It was not that he no longer loved the stranger. Indeed it seemed as though he were bewitched. He thought of nothing but her. Her lightest whims were gratified. He scarcely ever left her side, and all his affairs of state and duties were neglected. Even his looks changed. He became thin and pale, and his eyes were like dead stones in his head.

The stranger Queen, on the contrary, grew livelier and more beautiful with every day that passed. Her cheeks became round and rosy, her eyes sparkled like jewels, and often she laughed aloud to herself as if at some merry thought.

One of the things the Queen demanded of the King was that he should build her a pleasure

A HINDOO TALE

garden that should be for themselves alone. No one else was to be allowed to enter it except the gardener specially appointed to care for it. She told Ali Mardan exactly how she wished it, and as soon as possible he saw to it that her desires were carried out.

When the garden was finished it was seven miles long and seven miles wide, even as the Queen had desired. It had a marble wall around it, and golden gates. There were flowers and fruit trees, all of the rarest kind, and winding paths and marble seats and fountains and painted temples.

After it was finished the King and Queen spent a great deal of time there, and no one was allowed to enter the garden except themselves and the gardener who had charge of it.

Now in another land, far, far away, there lived at this time a very holy jogi, — a priest. He had one servant who was very true and faithful to him. Every year the jogi sent his servant to fetch him a jug of water from the holy lake Gangabal, which lies, surrounded by snows, at the top of the mountain Haramukh. Always he gave the servant a small box of magic oint-

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ment to carry with him. This box of ointment protected him from any evil or harm that might otherwise have befallen him, and also gave him the power to travel so quickly that he was able to go to the mountain and return again in three days, while without the magic ointment it would have taken him years to make the journey.

Now it so happened soon after the King had built the pleasure garden for his beloved, the jogi's servant came by that way, returning to his master with the water. He wondered when he saw the miles of marble wall and the gates of gold. He could see above the walls the boughs of trees covered with strange fruits, and the flash of water as the fountains spouted high. He became very curious to examine the garden, and after some trouble he managed to climb the wall and drop down on the other side. When he looked around he was amazed and excited over the beauty of everything. He set out to examine the garden, wandering on farther and farther along the paths, away from the place where he had entered. At length he became weary, and sat down under a tree to rest, and before he knew it he sank into a deep sleep.

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Now it so happened the King came into the garden alone that day, and chancing by where the servant lay he was amazed to see a stranger there, lying under a tree asleep. He came closer in order to see who it was who had dared enter the forbidden garden, and after regarding the servant attentively for a few minutes he noticed that he held some small bright object tightly clasped in his left hand.

Ali Mardan stooped, and gently loosening the servant's fingers, took from his hand the object, which proved to be a small gold box of ointment, curiously chased.

At almost the same moment the servant awoke, and at once, missing the box, he looked about him and saw the King standing near by and holding the box in his hand.

The man was terrified. He sprang to his feet and began to beg and entreat the King to return it to him.

"The box is not mine, indeed," said he. "It belongs to my master who is a holy and very powerful jogi." He then explained to the King the uses of the box. "Even now my master is waiting for me to return with the water from the

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sacred lake," he cried, "for he is so holy that he cannot wash except in that water."

"Is your master indeed such a saint?" asked the King, looking at him keenly. "I would like very much to see such a wonderful jogi. I will keep the box, and if he desires to have it, he will have to come to me to get it."

The servant fell on his knees and with tears entreated the King to return the box to him, but the King still refused. "Your master must come for it," he replied. "Only so can he regain possession of the box."

Finding the King determined in the matter the servant was obliged to go on his way without the box, but the distance to his own land was so great that it took him two and a half years to get there, traveling in the ordinary manner.

He found his master awaiting him impatiently, and the jogi at once demanded of him what had delayed him so long.

The servant told him the whole story, and when the jogi found the King had kept the box and had refused to give it back to the servant, he was very angry. He at once girded his garments about him and set out for the kingdom

A HINDOO TALE

of Ali Mardan, for he needed the box and was determined to have it back.

For two years and six months he journeyed on, and then he found himself at the place where he would be.

He at once demanded to be brought before the King. This was done, for the palace attendants could easily see he was a very holy man, and they would not have dared to refuse anything he asked.

No sooner did Ali Mardan discover who the jogi was than he made him welcome and at once returned to him the box of ointment. He also treated him with the greatest respect and heaped upon him every honor that was possible.

The jogi was pleased with this and all his anger against Ali Mardan died out. Presently, regarding the King carefully, he said, "Tell me, O King, have you always been so strangely pale? And have your eyes always had that stony look?"

The King hung his head, and at first he would not answer, but presently he said, "It has not always been so, but I cannot tell what ails me, nor can any of the physicians discover what is

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the matter with me. It is some very secret ailment, but always I grow thinner and paler, and unless some relief comes to me, I think I shall soon die.”

The jogi thought for a while and then he said, “Tell me: Have you any strange women in the house?”

“Only one,” answered the King, “and she is the Queen.” And he began and told the jogi the whole story of how he had found the damsel in the forest, beautiful and forlorn, and of how he had brought her home and married her and set her high above all others.

When he had made an end of his story the holy man spoke up bravely and fearlessly.

“This woman you tell me of does not come from the court of China. She is not the daughter of a high official. Indeed, she is not a woman at all. From all you have told me, I can easily see that she is a lamia — a snake creature with evil powers of magic. She is probably very old — two hundred years at least — and she has taken on this woman-form in order to bewitch you and draw the life out of you for her own evil purposes.”

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When the King heard these words, he cried aloud with horror and amazement. He could not believe what the jogi told him. "What can you be thinking of," he cried. "She is so beautiful and I love her so dearly that I cannot believe such a thing. You must be a very wicked man to believe it possible."

"Very well," answered the jogi calmly. "I am ready to prove what I say." He then told the King what to do in order to test the truth of his story. "If things do not turn out exactly as I say," said he, "then hold me guilty and mete out to me whatever punishment you see fit. But if all I tell you comes true, then let the woman be punished, and you will free yourself from a very wicked power."

To this bargain the King agreed, and that evening, according to the directions of the jogi, he sent word to the Queen that he would sup with her that night. He also caused a dish of rice to be prepared, part of it sweetened, and part of it very salt. It was all put in the same dish together, the salt at one end and the sweet at the other.

Then he went to the Queen's apartments and

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they sat down together at the table; the rice was placed between them that they might both eat from the same dish, but the sweet rice was on the King's side, and the salt rice on the side of the Queen.

When the Queen tasted it, she thought it very salt, but looking over at the King she saw he was eating it with the greatest enjoyment, and as though it were exactly as he liked it. She therefore ate also, without saying anything.

After they had eaten there was music and dancing, and then all the attendants were dismissed, and the King and Queen lay down as though to sleep. Ali Mardan only pretended to fall asleep, however. He was really awake, but he kept his eyes closed and lay quite still so as to deceive the Queen.

Now the Queen had eaten so much salt that before long she became very thirsty, but there was no water in the apartment, for the King had given orders that all the water should be privately removed. She twisted and sighed and turned, and at last her thirst grew so great that she could no longer bear it. She sat up and looked at Ali Mardan, but he kept his eyes shut



The Queen was a lamia, even as the jogi had guessed.
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and pretended to be asleep. For some time she sat there watching him, and all the while he lay there breathing deeply and evenly and did not so much as stir an eyelid.

After a time the Queen became satisfied that he was really asleep. She then arose and softly stole from the room.

As soon as she had gone, the King also arose and followed her. The Queen went out through a great painted door and down a long flight of steps that led to the garden, intending to satisfy her thirst at one or other of the fountains.

Now if a lamia goes out at night and the stars shine upon her, she cannot keep her human form, but is obliged to resume her natural shape of a snake, and as indeed the Queen was a lamia, even as the jogi had guessed, no sooner did she come out under the sky than she turned into an enormous serpent, and so glided away into the night.

The King still followed her, carefully keeping out of her sight, and saw her stop at one fountain after another, tasting at each one, but at none did she stay for more than a few moments.

On she went until at last she came to her

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favorite pool, where she and the King had often sat. Here she stayed, and leaning down over the edge, she drank and drank again. Long and deep were her drinkings. Then for a while she lay beside the fountain, satisfied and torpid, and while she so lay the King stole back to the palace and lay down again in bed, and closed his eyes.

Presently he heard the Queen returning quietly. She came back into the room in her human form, for she was able to resume it when she came in from under the starlight.

She stooped over Ali Mardan and listened to his breathing, and as he was still quiet and did not open his eyes, she believed he had not awakened or missed her. She then lay down again beside him and was soon asleep.

The next day the King called the jogi to him and told him what he had seen. "You were perfectly right," said he, "and I now know the Queen is indeed a lamia. I have now such a horror of her I do not see how I could ever have thought she was beautiful. But I am sure she is very powerful, and I fear if she discovers I know her to be a snake she will destroy me."

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“You must not let her know this,” answered the jogi. “Be very loving and merry with her as usual. Tell her you have a fancy that you and she shall sup together in the garden to-morrow night, and that you shall cook the food yourselves. To this she will agree. Meanwhile, do you have an enormous iron oven made, so constructed that it can be heated thrice hot. Have this oven chained down to the ground by seven iron chains. After this is finished, I will instruct you as to what further you are to do.”

The King followed out the jogi's directions in every particular. He had the oven made and chained to the ground in the pleasure garden by seven iron chains. Also he told the Queen that he and she would sup alone the next day in the pleasure garden, and that no hands but theirs should cook their meal. To this the Queen agreed as to a merry jest.

Accordingly, the next evening, the King and Queen went to the garden together, and he was very loving with her, as the jogi had instructed him to be.

Everything had been arranged for them in

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the garden. A golden table had been set out in a pavilion with a golden bowl of meal on it, and spices and sweets and everything that was necessary for making a cake such as the King liked. The Queen made the cake very skillfully, and the King said he would bake it. But after he had opened the oven door he was very awkward about placing the cake inside, and he called to the Queen to come and help him.

The Queen did not like to approach so close to the hot oven, but at last she did so. She took the cake and stepped to the oven door, and then the King gave her such a push that she stumbled and fell inside.

At once the King shut the iron door with a clang, and bolted it with the seven bolts that had been provided. The jogi, who had been hiding behind a bush close by, ran out and helped him.

No sooner did the Queen find herself locked into the oven than she changed back into an enormous serpent, and threshed and beat about, and bounded from side to side. So powerful were the blows of her tail that the iron sides of the oven were bent, but still she could not break

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through them. Her boundings would have carried the cage out of the garden if it had not been fastened down with the seven iron chains.

After a while, however, all grew silent within the oven. Then the jogi and the King unfastened the seven bolts and opened the door. When they looked inside, nothing was to be seen of the lamia but a little heap of dust upon the oven floor. The King stood looking at it, pale and shaken. But the jogi took his stick and brushed aside the dust, and drew out from the midst of it a small grayish ball that appeared to be of polished stone. This he gave to the King. "Take it," he said. "It is all that is left of the serpent, and by all rights it is yours."

"But what is it?" asked the King.

"It is a magic stone, and has the power of turning whatever you touch with it to gold."

But Ali Mardan drew back. "I do not wish to have it," said he. "It is too valuable. Never would my life be safe if I had such a thing as that in my possession."

"You are wise," replied the jogi. "My advice to you would be to say nothing about it to

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any one, but to take it and drop it into the depths of the sea where it can never be found.”

As the jogi advised, so the King did. He took the magic stone to the sea and dropped it down into the water where no one could ever find it again, and then he returned to his palace and lived in peace. In time he married the daughter of a neighboring King, and lived with her in great love and happiness, and the Queen bore him many children, both princes and princesses, and never a lamia among them.

THE THREE DOVES

A CZECH TALE

THERE was once a poor widow who had one only son named Jack, and he was a stout, likely lad.

One day Jack said to his mother, "Give me your blessing and let me go out into the world to seek my fortune."

The mother did not say no. "Go, my son, and my blessing go with you; only do not stay too long, for I am well on in years and I wish to see you again before I die."

The son promised he would not stay more than a year at most, and then off he set.

He journeyed on, a short way and a long way, and then he came to a sorcerer's house. There he knocked at the door and asked to take service.

The sorcerer was willing and ready to take him in. "You will have good wages," said he,

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“but you will have to stay with me for a year, no more, no less; that must be in the bargain.”

That suited Jack exactly, so the sorcerer showed him what he was to do and Jack set to work at once, without any more talk about it.

For a year he served his master, and the sorcerer was well pleased with him. All went well about the house, and if there were things Jack did not understand and that were not his business he asked no questions about them.

Every day the sorcerer went out and sat beside a fountain that was in front of the house. Every day three beautiful snow-white doves came there to bathe, and each dove had three golden feathers on its breast. They bathed, and then the sorcerer talked to them for a while, and after that they flew away. Jack asked no questions about them, nor whence they came nor whither they went.

At the end of the year his master said to him, “You have served me well and faithfully, and I am much pleased with you, but now the year has come to an end and you must go. Here is the key of my treasure chamber. Go and take as much treasure from it as you are able to

A CZECH TALE

carry, gold or jewels or precious stones. Take this sack and fill it with what you like best; I will never miss it, however much it is."

Jack took the key and the sack and went to the treasure chamber. He was amazed at what he saw there, gold and diamonds and emeralds and rubies and sapphires and amethysts and every kind of precious stones. He filled the sack with as much as he could carry, and then returned to his master.

"That is well," said the sorcerer. "You have now enough riches to build yourself a castle that an emperor might envy. I also intend you to have a wife who is suitable to live in such a castle. Have you seen the three snow-white doves that come every day to bathe in the fountain?"

"Yes," replied Jack, "I have seen them."

"Now I will tell you that those three doves are three enchanted Princesses. You must catch one of them and carry it home with you. After the castle is built pluck out the three golden feathers from its breast and the dove will become a Princess, the most beautiful in all the world. You can then marry her; but you must hide the

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feathers away and never let her find them, for if she does she will certainly become a dove again, and you may lose her forever.”

Jack promised to heed in every way what the sorcerer said to him. He laid down the sack of treasure and went out and hid beside the fountain. Before long there was a sound of wings, and the three doves flew down to the fountain and began to bathe, and while they were bathing he managed to creep up close and seize one of them. The other two flew away, crying mournfully, but Jack tied a handkerchief over the wings of the one he had caught, and carried it back to the house with him.

“That is well,” said the sorcerer; “and now be off, for no one must abide here with me for over a year.”

Jack thanked his master for all he had done for him and set off for home, and his feet were so light that the distance seemed as nothing to him.

When he reached home his mother was so glad to see him that she could not forbear from weeping aloud for joy. Jack made haste to show her the bag of treasure he had brought

A CZECH TALE

home with him, and the snow-white dove that was an enchanted Princess, and his mother could hardly believe it possible that such good luck had come to them.

Jack had a golden cage made for the dove, and there he kept it while his castle was being builded.

“And how will you turn the dove back into a Princess when you are ready for her?” asked the widow.

“Oh, I have only to pluck out the three golden feathers from her breast, for that is what the sorcerer told me.”

“And then will she always remain as a Princess?”

“She will unless she finds the golden feathers again. But I will attend to that; I will hide them so carefully that she will never have a chance of finding them.”

“And where will you find such a place, my son?”

“Oh, I intend to hide them in the feather bed upon which we sleep, for there she would never think of looking.”

“No,” said the widow, “that is not a good

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plan, for some time, by chance, the feather bed might come unfastened, and she might find them, but hide them in *my* feather bed, and then they will certainly be safe.”

To this, after some talking, the lad agreed.

Now all went on fast and merrily; workmen were hired and the castle built. When all was done Jack took the dove from its cage and plucked the golden feathers from its breast, — one — two — three. No sooner was this done than the dove vanished from his hands, and the most beautiful Princess in all the world stood there before him. She was so very beautiful that Jack was fairly dazzled by her.

“Now I am yours, and you are mine,” said the Princess, “for so it was to be, and so it has happened. Only beware lest I find my golden feathers, for if I do I will become a dove again, and you will lose me perhaps forever.”

“That shall never happen,” said Jack; and then he took the Princess by the hand and kissed her, and after that they were married as soon as the wedding feast could be prepared.

And now the widow was a happy woman. She had everything in the world her heart could

A CZECH TALE

wish for, and she was so proud of the wife her son had that sometimes she could hardly contain herself for joy.

Now after Jack and the Princess had been married for some time it so happened that Jack was obliged to go away on a long journey, and he left his wife to the care of his mother.

Soon after he had set out the widow came to the Princess's apartments to visit her. She sat down and began to talk to her daughter-in-law and for some time everything went very pleasantly. Presently the widow turned the talk upon the Princess's beauty and began to compliment and praise her.

"I do not suppose," said she, "that in the whole world there is any one to compare with you in beauty. I am very sure you far outshine every one."

"Ah," sighed the Princess, "you think me beautiful now, but if I only had one of my golden feathers you would see how much more beautiful I would become. I would be ten times more beautiful."

"I can hardly believe that," said the widow, wondering.

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“Nevertheless it is true, though you will never believe it unless you can find me one of the feathers.”

The widow thought one feather could do no harm. She went away and soon returned with it.

The Princess took the feather and stuck it in the bosom of her dress, and at once her beauty shone out so much brighter that it was as the moon when a cloud passes from before it.

The widow was wonderstruck. “I would never have believed it possible,” cried she. “I did not think you could possibly become more beautiful than you were.”

“Ah,” sighed the Princess, “that is only the beginning. If I had but another of my feathers, I would become even more beautiful still.”

The widow brought another feather, and the Princess put it in her dress, and now her beauty shone so bright that the whole room was filled with the light of it.

“This is nothing to what I would be if I had the third feather,” said the Princess.

The widow was so dazzled that she forgot all her son had told her. She ran and fetched the

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third feather. The Princess stuck it in the bosom of her dress, and at once she became a dove again.

“Now I must leave you,” she cried. “Tell my husband that if he would find me, he must seek me beyond seven seas and over seven mountains at the uttermost parts of the earth, and it will be a wonder if he ever finds me.”

So saying, she spread her wings, and flew away and out of sight.

The widow was almost beside herself with grief and terror. When her son came home she hardly knew how to tell him what had happened. Still the telling had to be done, so somehow or other she managed to begin and go on until the end.

Her son cried aloud with grief, when he heard what had happened. “I must return to the sorcerer,” he cried, “and ask his advice. It may be that he can tell me how to find her.”

So off he set and on he went, and neither stopped nor tarried until he was back again at the sorcerer’s house. There he told him the whole tale, and the sorcerer listened and shook his head.

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“This is a bad business,” said he, “and I know no more than you what has become of the Princess. But I have a brother, and he is King over all the birds in the world. You must go to him, and it may be that he can help you ; he is older and wiser than I am.”

The sorcerer then gave Jack a ball and bade him roll it before him and follow wherever it went, and it would bring him to where the King of the Birds was.

Jack thanked the sorcerer and took the ball and rolled it before him, and after he had rolled it three times it brought him to where the sorcerer’s brother lived, and an ugly one he was to look at, and so old his hair was white and his nose and chin met.

Jack told him his story and how the sorcerer had sent him thither for advice.

“I can tell you nothing of the Princess,” said the sorcerer’s brother, “but I will call all the birds together, both large and small. It may be that some one or other of them has seen the Princess.”

He took a whistle and blew upon it loud and shrill. At once there was a great sound of wings,

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and the birds began to gather together from all the four quarters of the earth. The sky was black with them. When they had settled around him, the sorcerer's brother began to question them about the Princess, but not one of them had seen anything of her.

"It is of no use," said the King of the Birds at last. "They know nothing of the Princess. You will have to go to the King of the Demons. He is our eldest brother and wiser than either the sorcerer or I. It may be he can help you."

The Bird King then gave Jack a ball and bade him roll it before him and follow where it went, and it would bring him to the King of the Demons.

Jack took the ball and thanked him, and set off again, and after he had rolled the ball three times it brought him where the King of the Demons was, and he was so hideous that Jack had never seen the like of him. His paunch was like a barrel, his nose was a yard long, and his eyebrows hung down over his eyes like a thatch.

Jack told him what had brought him thither, and after he had made an end of the story the

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King of the Demons said, "I myself know nothing of the Princess, but I will call my demons together. They fly far and wide, throughout all the world and farther. It may be that one of them has seen the Princess."

So the King Demon took a whistle and blew upon it so loud and shrill that the lad was almost deafened by it. At once, with a sound as of a mighty wind, all the demons in the world began to gather about them, and an ugly lot they were to look at.

After they were all there, the King questioned them about the Princess, but none of them had seen or heard tell of her.

And now the lad did not know what to do next. If the demons could not tell him of the Princess, then no one could.

But suddenly there was a great sound of wings, and the blackest and ugliest and largest of all the demons came hurrying up. He had been so far away when the King Demon had blown his whistle that it had taken him all that time to get back.

At once the King Demon began to question him about the Princess. Had he seen her or

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heard tell of her? And did he know where she was?

“Yes,” answered the demon, “I know where the Princess is. She is in a castle far, far away, beyond seven seas and over seven mountains at the uttermost parts of the earth, and that is where I was when you called me.”

“Then I have a task for you,” said the King. “You must take this lad upon your shoulders and fly with him thither.”

When the demon heard this he began to grumble and complain, but as the King Demon said so he was obliged to do. Before he and the lad set out, however, the King drew Jack aside and whispered in his ear:

“Now listen well to what I tell you! This demon is a very tricky and dangerous fellow. When he has brought you to within seven miles of the Princess’s Castle he will ask you to look and tell him whether you can yet see it. If you answer yes he will shake you off his shoulders and you will fall into the sea beneath, and you will be drowned. So whether you see it or not you must shut your eyes and answer no. When you are within three miles of the

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castle he will ask you the same question, and again you must answer no. If you do not, he will shake you from his shoulders and you will fall upon the rocks below and be crushed. When you have arrived above the roofs of the castle he will ask you the same thing for the third time, and for the third time you must answer no. If you do not, he will drop you upon the highest roof, from whence you can never get down, and there you may stay forever. So be careful and answer as I bid you."

This the lad promised to do, and then the demon took the lad on his shoulders and flew away with him.

On and on they flew, and fast as the wind blows the lad and the demon flew still faster. After a while they had gone so far that they were within seven miles of the castle. Then the demon called to Jack, "Look ahead of us and tell me whether you can see the castle. It should be within sight by now."

Then Jack shut his eyes and answered, "No, I see nothing."

The demon muttered and grumbled to himself, but on, on he flew, swifter than the wind.

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Presently they were within three miles of the castle, and the demon called, "Now look ahead and tell me if you see the castle."

Again Jack shut his eyes tight. "I see nothing of any castle," said he.

"Then you must be blind!" cried the demon angrily, and on he flew with the lad.

Last of all they came over the roofs of the castle. "Now tell me if you see the castle," he cried, "for it is directly below us."

For the third time Jack shut his eyes tight. "I tell you I see nothing of any castle," he answered.

The demon was in a rage. "You must be a fool as well as blind," cried he, and he flew through a window into the castle and threw Jack off his shoulders, and away he went like a flash of lightning.

Jack picked himself up and looked about him, and there were the three Princesses sitting together — his own dear wife and her two sisters. They sat at three golden spinning-wheels, and when his wife saw who had entered she gave a cry of joy and ran to Jack and threw her arms about his neck and kissed him, and Jack kissed

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her, and everything was love and happiness between them.

“Now you shall live here forever, and there will be no more partings,” cried the Princess.

That suited Jack well enough for him not to grumble over it, for the castle seemed a grand fine place to live in ; still he would rather have been at home, for there he was used to things.

For some time the lad lived there contentedly enough with the three Princesses, and there was only one thing that bothered him. Every afternoon the Princesses were changed into three doves, and flew away to bathe in the Red Sea, and they were gone for three hours, and that time hung heavy on the lad's hands.

At first he was satisfied to go about over the castle and look at things while they were away. His wife gave him all her keys and he was free to go about as he chose. Only into one room he must not go, for that was forbidden. Jack wondered and wondered what there was in that room that he must not see.

For a long time he kept away from it, but after a while he grew so curious that he thought he would just open the door and take one look in-



He lifted one of the goblets and held it up. *Page 223.*

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side. He would not touch anything, he would only look, and surely that could do no harm to any one. So one day when the Princesses were away, he unlocked the door and stepped inside and looked about him. There he saw such a terrible sight he almost fainted, for a great three-headed dragon was hung upon the wall. Each of its three heads hung upon a hook so that it could not loose them, and its tail lay across the floor, and beside the tail were three golden goblets of water.

Jack was in haste to get out of the room and away from the sight, but the dragon cried to him so piteously that he could not but linger.

“Dear lad, do not fear me,” cried the dragon. “I am dying with thirst. Give me, I pray of you, one of those goblets of water to drink from, and the first time your life is in danger I will save it.”

For the sake of pity Jack could not refuse. He lifted one of the golden goblets and held it up for one of the dragon's heads to drink from. No sooner had he done this than that head slipped from the nail and was free.

“That was an act of mercy,” said the dragon,

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“but it was not enough. Give me the second goblet of water, and the second time your life is in danger, I will save it.”

The lad had a pitying heart. He gave the dragon drink from the second goblet of water, and the second head was free.

Now the dragon thrashed about with its tail, and roared so terribly that the lad's heart quaked within him for fear. “You have now no choice,” cried the dragon. “Give me the third goblet of water, or I will destroy you.”

The lad was obliged to do as the dragon demanded. He gave it the third goblet of water, and at once it was free and flew away with a terrible noise. As it flew out of the palace, it met the three doves returning, and it caught the one that was the lad's wife and carried her off in its claws.

As soon as the other two doves became Princesses again, they began to weep and lament. Bitterly they reproached the lad for what he had done. “We were happy here together,” they cried, “and now you have brought this misfortune upon us. Oh, our poor sister! Who will save her from the power of the dragon?”

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“I will,” answered the lad, “or I will perish in the trying.”

Now in the Castle stable stood a fine coal-black steed. This steed was a brother to the Princesses, though the lad did not know that. Three brothers they had, and all had been changed into horses through evil enchantment. One was in the Castle stable, the second was a servant to the dragon, and the third was with an evil witch who lived over beyond the Red Sea.

The lad went down and saddled the horse and led it from the stable. “Now carry me well, good steed,” said he, “for we have a long journey before us.”

“What I can do, I will,” answered the steed, “but this is a very dangerous venture we are bent on. Before we set out take the flask that hangs from a nail in the hall and hide it in your bosom. It is filled with the Water of Life, and we may have need of it.”

The lad did as the steed bade him. He took the flask and hid it in his bosom, and then away they rode toward the Castle of the Dragon.

They rode along and rode along, and after a while they arrived at the castle, and there was

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the Princess looking out of a window, for the Dragon was away from home. As soon as she saw the lad she ran down to meet him, and he lifted her up in haste, and set her on the horse behind him and turned back the way he had come toward the Castle of the Princesses; and fast as the steed could carry them so fast they went.

But presently the steed bade the lad turn and look behind him. "Do you see any one coming," asked he.

"Yes," answered the lad, "I see the Dragon following fast on a fine black charger."

"That steed is my brother," said the horse, "and he goes faster than I can. Soon they will overtake us."

The Dragon rode up alongside of the lad and caught the Princess from him. "This once will I spare you," cried he to the lad, "because you gave me the water and so I promised, but do not venture near my Castle again or it will be the worse for you."

The lad rode home sad and discouraged, but the next day he set out again to rescue the Princess. He rode to the Dragon's Castle, and

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again the Dragon was away and the Princess was watching for him. She ran down to meet him, and he took her up and set her behind him, and away they went.

This time they had come within sight of the Golden Castle when the steed bade the lad turn and look behind him. "Do you see anything of the Dragon?" he asked.

"Yes, he is coming after us hard and fast; I can scarce see him for the cloud of dust about him."

"Then he will soon catch us," said the steed.

Sure enough, a little while later the Dragon rode up and snatched the Princess from the lad, and his eyes shot forth green fire. "This time, too, will I spare you," said he, "because of the second flask of water and the promise I gave you, but if you venture near my Castle again, I will surely rend you in pieces."

Then he rode away with the Princess, and the lad was left lamenting.

All the same it was not long before Jack rode out again to rescue the Princess. This time, when he reached the Dragon's Castle, the Dragon was sleeping, for the Princess had put

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a sleeping potion in his cup. She hastened down to meet the lad, and he took her up behind him and away they rode, fast as the steed could bear them.

This time they had almost reached the gate of the Golden Castle when the Dragon awakened. When he found the Princess gone, his eyes flashed fire and smoke breathed from his nostrils. He mounted his princely steed and set out in pursuit of them.

“Master,” said the steed, “we can never overtake them.”

“That we must do,” answered the Dragon, “or your life shall be forfeit.”

Just as the lad and the Princess reached the Golden Gateway the Dragon overtook them.

“Now I will spare you no longer,” cried the Dragon, “for this time there is no promise to withhold me.” He caught the lad with his claws and tore him into four pieces and left the bits lying there in the gateway while he rode away with the Princess.

That would have been the end of Jack if it had not been for the flask of the Water of Life in his bosom. The steed laid the pieces of his

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body all together in order. Then he sprinkled them with the Water of Life and they all became joined together perfectly as they had been before, but there was no breath of life in the body. The horse then poured a few drops of water into Jack's mouth, and at once he revived and rose up as strong and well as ever.

“Dear lad, we can do nothing further now,” said the steed. “If you are to save the Princess, you must have the help of my eldest brother, for he is the swiftest and strongest of any of us. He lives with an old witch over beyond the Red Sea. You must go there and take service with her. If you serve her well and faithfully, she will offer you one of her horses as a reward. You must choose the lean and sorry nag, for he is my brother, and it is he and he alone who can defeat the Dragon. But remember this: All the while that you are with the witch you must eat no food except when you are in the house with her and sitting at her table. She will give you other food for you to take out to the fields and eat there, but if so much as a crumb of it passes your lips, misfortune will surely come upon you.”

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“I will remember what you tell me,” answered Jack, and then he took a stout staff in his hand and set out in search of the witch.

He journeyed on and on, a short way and a long way, and then he came to a place where an enormous spider’s web, as big as a sheet, was spread across the road, and in this enormous spider’s web an enormous fly was caught. The fly struggled to free itself, and the web shook with its struggles, but the threads held and it could not break them. Then it buzzed pitifully.

The lad felt sorry for the fly. He took his staff and broke away the web and released it.

“Dear lad, you have saved my life,” said the fly, “and I am not ungrateful. Break off one of my legs. Do not be afraid, it will not hurt me. If you are ever in trouble rub the leg between your fingers and call upon me, and I will come and help you.”

Jack thanked the fly. He broke off one of its legs and put it carefully away so that he would not lose it, and then he journeyed on again.

After a while he came to the borders of a deep wood, and there a wolf was caught with his tail

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under a log. The log had rolled over on him, and he was unable to pull his tail from under it.

Jack felt sorry for him. He put his hands against the log and pushed it so that the wolf was able to pull his tail out.

“Dear lad,” said the animal, “I am not ungrateful. Pluck three hairs from my tail. If you are ever in danger, cast the hairs to the wind and call upon me and wherever I may be I will come and help you.”

Jack thanked the wolf and plucked three hairs from its tail. Then he journeyed on again.

It was not so very long after that that he came to the seashore, and there was a great crab lying on its back with the sun beating down on it, and it could not turn over so as to crawl back into the water.

Jack felt sorry for the crab, and by putting his staff under it he was able to turn it over.

“Dear lad, I am not ungrateful,” said the crab. “I know where you are going and why. In order to find the one you are seeking you will have to cross the sea, and this I will help you to do, for there is neither boat nor bridge to

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carry you over, and without my aid you could never reach the other side.”

The crab then called upon all the crabs in the sea to come and make a path for the lad to walk upon. This the crabs did. They rose to the surface of the sea by thousands and thousands, and linked their claws together and held tight, and Jack walked out over the sea on their backs as though they were a bridge and so came safely to the other side where he wished to be; not even the soles of his shoes were wet.

Then all the crabs sank down under the water again, except the one Jack had helped, and it was the King of them all. “Now, you must pull off one of my claws,” said the crab. “Keep it carefully, and if you are ever in trouble throw it into the sea and I will come and help you.”

Jack thanked the crab, and pulled off one of its claws and went on his way.

He did not have to go far before he came to the witch’s house. There he knocked at the door, and when the witch opened it he asked to be taken into service.

“That suits me well, for I have need of a good stout lad,” said the witch. Then she bade

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Jack enter and set out some food for him, and after he had eaten she showed him a bed where he could sleep.

The next morning the witch aroused him early and gave him his breakfast. "Now," said she, "you must drive my herd of horses out to pasture, for that will be your duty every day. Watch them carefully and see that none of them wanders away or is lost. If for three days you drive them all out in the morning and bring them all safely home at night, I will reward you according to your desire, but if you fail to bring home even the sorriest nag of them all, then I will tear you into shreds and pieces."

"That suits me well enough," answered Jack, "for it should not be such a hard task."

He went out to the stable to turn out the horses, and the witch followed him and gave him some food wrapped in a fine napkin to take with him. "For you may be hungry before night," said she.

Jack took the food and put it in his pocket, because the witch was watching him, but he remembered what the black steed had said, and he did not intend to touch a crumb of it.

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He drove the horses out to pasture and there all went well for a while. The horses fed there quietly enough, and Jack sat and watched them.

Then just at noon time he was seized with such a fierce hunger that he did not know what to do with himself. He got up and walked about, but his hunger was so great that at last he could bear it no longer. He took out the food the witch had given him and ate it all, even to the last crumb. As soon as he had done this he fell into a deep sleep.

Then all the horses that had been feeding so quietly raised their heads and galloped away, some one way and some another. They hid themselves in all sorts of places, in hedges and ditches and back of rocks. When, later on, Jack awoke, there was not a horse to be seen anywhere.

Jack was terribly frightened. He jumped up and began hunting about for them, this way and that, but not one of them could he find anywhere.

The lad was in despair. It seemed as though it would be his fate to be torn to pieces the very first night of his herding. Then suddenly he

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remembered the fly he had saved from the spider's web, and he took out its leg and rubbed it between his fingers and called on it to help him. At once, as out of clear air, the fly appeared, and with it were hundreds and thousands of other flies.

"I know your trouble," said the fly he had befriended, "and it is well you remembered and called upon me. Otherwise you would surely have perished. But now we will soon bring back the horses."

The flies then flew about over the fields, buzzing far and near, and wherever they found a horse they bit and stung it till it was almost mad with pain and for very life's sake was obliged to come galloping back to the place where Jack was waiting.

When they were all assembled again, even down to the sorriest nag of all, the flies disappeared as they had come, and Jack drove the herd home.

The witch was waiting for him, and when she saw he was bringing the horses with him she could hardly believe her eyes. She went out to meet him and counted the horses over and

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over again, but they were all there ; not one was missing.

The witch was in a fury. She gave Jack his supper and sent him to bed, and then she took down a heavy lash from the wall, and went out to where the horses were waiting and trembling.

“Why did you not hide yourselves as I commanded you?” cried the witch. “Why did you allow him to bring you home again?”

Then a lean and sorry nag, the poorest of them all, answered her. “Mistress, we did hide ourselves, and that so well that never in the world could he have found us, but a pest of flies came on us, and bit and stung us till for very life’s sake we were obliged to run back to him.”

“That is what you should never have done!” cried the witch. Then she lifted the lash and beat the horses till they could hardly stand, but she beat the lean and sorry nag the worst of all.

“That is to teach you to obey me,” said the witch. “To-morrow hide yourselves in the deep forest where the flies cannot find you, and if to-morrow he brings you home with him, I

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will beat you till you will wish you had never been foaled.”

After that the witch took a flask of ointment and rubbed the horses with it, and then their wounds were all healed, and they became as strong and sound as ever.

The next day the witch awoke Jack at break of day and gave him some breakfast and bade him drive out the horses to the pasture. She also gave him some food wrapped in a napkin to carry with him. “That is in case you should be hungry,” said she. Jack would have refused it, but he did not dare.

“And mind you bring every horse home with you,” said she, “even down to the leanest and sorriest of them. If you do not I will tear you into shreds and ravelings.”

Jack drove the horses out to the pasture, and he took the food the witch had given him and buried it under a rock that he might not be tempted to eat it.

Till noon time all went well. The horses grazed quietly, and Jack sat and watched them. Then all of a sudden he was seized with such a hunger that it was like a fierce gnawing within

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him. For a long time he withstood it, but at last he could bear it no longer.

He went to where he had hidden the food, and rolled the rock away, and snatched up the food and ate it all, even to the very last crumb. No sooner had he done this than his head grew as heavy as lead, and he sank down in a deep sleep. Then all the horses galloped away into the wood and hid themselves.

Toward evening Jack awoke and looked about him, and there was not so much as the ear of a horse to be seen anywhere. "Oh, but I am the fool!" cried Jack. "Why did I eat the food when I knew what would happen? Now I am as good as lost."

Then suddenly he remembered the three hairs the wolf had given him. He took them out and blew them to the winds, and called upon the wolf to help him. At once he saw the animal come galloping toward him across the fields, and with him was a great pack of wolves.

"It is well you remembered me," cried the wolf that Jack had befriended. "If you had not done so, you would assuredly have perished, but now we can soon bring the horses back to you."

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Then the wolves rushed away into the forest, and hunted out the horses, and snapped at their heel and tore at their tails until for very life's sake they were obliged to come out from the forest and gallop back to where Jack was waiting for them. When they were all there, down to the very last one, Jack thanked the wolves and started for home, driving the herd before him.

The witch was watching for him, and when she saw he was again bringing the horses safely back she ground her teeth with fury. She counted and recounted the horses, but they were every one of them there. Not one was missing.

The witch gave Jack his supper and sent him to bed, and then she took down the lash from the wall and went out to where the horses stood huddled together and trembling.

"What did I tell you?" cried she. "Why did you not hide as I commanded you? Now you shall have such a beating you will wish you were dead."

"Mistress," said the lean and sorry nag, "we did exactly as you told us. We went and hid in the dark forest, and he could never have found us, but a pack of wolves came ravening

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after us; they snapped and tore at us until for very life's sake we were obliged to return to him."

"You should have let yourselves be torn to pieces sooner," cried the witch, "and now you shall be punished as I promised you."

She raised the lash and beat the horses till they sank down under it, but the lean and sorry nag she beat the worst of all. Then, after a while, she took the flask of ointment and rubbed them with it, and they were healed and became strong and well again.

"To-morrow," said the witch, "the lad will again eat the food and fall asleep, and then you must run into the deep sea where neither the flies nor the wolves can find you, and hide there."

The next day the lad set out for the pasture again, driving the horses before him, but before he left the house the witch gave him some food wrapped in a napkin for him to carry with him. Jack dared not refuse to take it, but as soon as he came to the pasture, he took the food and scattered it about, and ground it into the earth with his heel, so that it was hard to tell which was food and which was dirt.

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“That puts an end to that,” said Jack, and then he sat down to watch the horses.

Till noon all went well. The herd grazed quietly, and Jack had no wish either to eat or sleep, and then at noon he was suddenly seized with such a hunger it seemed as though he would die of it. At last he could bear it no longer. He went to where he had ground the food into the earth and managed to pick up a few small pieces. These he ate, and then, as before, he fell into a deep sleep. Immediately the horses lifted their heads and away they went. This time it was neither in the fields nor in the wood they hid. They ran straight down into the sea, with the water splashing up around them, and hid in its depths.

When Jack awoke they were gone, and he did not know where to find them. For a while he was in despair, and then he remembered the crab that had promised to help him. He went down to the seashore and threw the claw into the water, and called to it, and at once it appeared from the deeps; it did not keep him waiting.

Jack told it the whole story. “And now,” said he, “the horses have gone again, and I do

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not know where to find them, and yet unless I can take them home with me, the witch will certainly tear me to pieces.”

“Have no fear of that,” said the crab. “We will not let that happen. I can tell you exactly where the horses have gone. They are hiding in the deepest part of the deep sea, but I and my crabs can soon drive them out on dry land again.”

The crab disappeared into the sea. There it gathered together a great multitude of crabs, and they crawled about here and there and everywhere, and wherever they found a horse they pinched it so bitterly with their sharp claws that the horses were obliged, for very life’s sake, to run out on dry land again.

Only the lean and sorry nag they could not find, for he had hidden under the great Queen Crab, and wherever the crab moved, there the nag moved also. The crab hunted everywhere for him and then at last it put its claws down under it, and there it felt him. Then it gave him such a pinch that he neighed aloud, and was obliged to run out from the sea and up on the shore with the others. Jack was glad enough to see him.

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He thanked the crabs and drove the horses back before him to the witch's house.

When the witch saw him coming with all the herd trotting along before him she was so filled with fury that she was ready to tear the flesh off their bones. She counted them over and over again, but they were all there. Not one was missing.

"Well," said she to Jack, "you have won your reward and to that I cannot say no. And now you have only to name it, and it is yours."

"Then," said Jack, "I will take the poor lean nag, for I feel sorry for him, and I mean to treat him kindly."

When the old witch heard that, she turned green in the face, but she spoke to the lad gently and in a wheedling tone.

"Not so! Not so! That would be a poor reward indeed. You have served me well, and I mean to give you the finest and handsomest steed in my herd, for that is your due."

But Jack would not listen to this. The poor nag was the one he wanted, and that was the one he would have and no other. At last the witch was obliged to give in to him.

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“If you will have it, you will,” said she, “but you shall never say you were not well paid. You shall have the poor nag, but you shall also have the handsomest steed of them all. You shall ride the handsome steed, for it is fat and strong, and the lean, poor nag shall run beside you.”

Well, Jack could not refuse. He took the handsome steed and mounted it, and the lean nag ran on beside him. But as soon as they were out of sight of the witch's house Jack jumped down from the handsome steed and mounted the poor nag, and let the fine one run on free.

“Master, you have done well and wisely,” said the nag. “Presently we will come to a stone gateway, and we will have to go through it. If you had ridden the handsome steed, it would have crushed your head against the gateway, as we passed through, but riding me not a hair of your head shall be hurt.”

Presently, as the horse had said, they came to the stone gateway and went through it, and this they did safely. Then Jack took a stick and drove the handsome horse back toward the witch's house, for he did not wish it to follow

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him, but he and the nag went on until they came to the edge of the Red Sea.

Then the crabs came up through the water by thousands and thousands and made a roadway with their backs, and Jack rode over them and so came to the other side.

Again Jack and his nag traveled onward a short way and a long way and so came at last to the Princess's castle. There the nag neighed loud and long, and at once the fine black steed came running out to meet them, and he and Jack's nag were glad enough to see each other, for they were own brothers, and it was many a long year since they had been together.

But not long did they tarry where they were. Almost at once they set out for the Dragon's house, and when they drew near it, there was the Princess at the window watching for them, for the Dragon was away from home.

When she saw Jack and the two steeds, she cried aloud for joy and ran down to meet them.

Jack lifted her up and set her on the black steed, and he rode the poor nag and back they went, fast, fast, — the way they had come.

Not long after the Princess had gone the

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Dragon returned home. When he could not find her anywhere in any of the rooms, he knew what had become of her, and he ran down to the stable and led out his steed and sprang upon its back.

“Master,” said the steed, “we can never overtake the Princess this time.”

[“That we must do,” cried the Dragon, “or your life shall answer for it.”

Then away they went, fast as the wind blows and faster.

Presently the nag that Jack was riding bade the lad turn and look behind him. “I hear a terrible noise,” said he, “and it must be the Dragon coming.”

Jack turned and looked behind him.

“Yes, it is the Dragon, and he rides so swiftly it will not be long before he is here.”

“Then light down,” cried the nag, “for the time has come for him to meet his punishment.”

So Jack alighted from his steed, and the Princess did likewise.

Up came the Dragon, raging, and would have seized the Princess, but the two horses flew at him and attacked him before he could touch

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her. Then the Dragon's own steed threw off the monster, and bit and tore at him. Against the three of them the Dragon could do but little, and before long they had torn him into a thousand pieces.

Then there was great rejoicing among them all, and Jack and the Princess mounted again and rode on until they came to the castle, and when the two sisters saw them coming they cried aloud and wept for joy.

But the nag from over the Red Sea turned to Jack and bade him take down the sword that hung on the castle wall and cut off his head and the head of his two brothers. This Jack was loath to do, but the nag said to him, "We have served you well, and now it is your turn to help us, and only by cutting off our heads can you restore us to our true shapes again."

Then Jack took down the sword and did as the nag demanded; he cut off the heads of the three steeds, and at once, in place of the horses, there stood three fine young Princes, as handsome as one could wish to look upon.

Then they all rejoiced again, and the Princes entered into their Castle and took possession of

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it, and they and their two sisters lived there happily together for many a long year, but Jack and his dear wife returned home the way they had come, and lived happy forever after, and the widow was so glad to see the two of them again that she almost died of happiness.

MIGHTY-ARM AND MIGHTY-MOUTH

AN EAST INDIAN STORY

IN two neighboring villages there once lived two men who were as great rascals as one could find in a seven-days journey. One was called Mighty-arm and that was because his strength was so great that no one could stand against him. The other was called Mighty-mouth, and he had the power of arguing so cleverly that he could make one believe black was white if he only talked long enough.

Whenever these two men met, they began to dispute and quarrel together as to which of them was the greater, but they never could come to an agreement.

“Listen,” said Mighty-mouth one day. “You and I are always quarreling, and yet we never get anywhere. Do you come and live with me for a while. No doubt there will be many times

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when we can make trial, you with your strength and I with my wit, and then we can see which comes out better, and so decide the matter without further argument.”

To this Mighty-arm readily agreed. He packed up his goods and chattels and came to live with Mighty-mouth.

Now not long after they began living together the feast of the Goddess Kiva came round, and the two rascals wished to offer up a sacrifice to her.

Said Mighty-arm to Mighty-mouth, “Is it right that two fellows as mighty as we should be obliged to pay money for a sacrifice?”

“No,” answered Mighty-mouth, “it is not right nor will we do so. Close by a shepherd has his sheepfold, and to-night we will go there and manage to steal a sheep from him. In this way we will have a sacrifice to offer up in a proper manner, and still it will cost us nothing.”

“That is well said,” agreed Mighty-arm, “and it is a good plan. But after all you could not carry the plan out except for my strength, for I will have to carry the sheep home.”

“Well, we will see how matters turn out,” replied Mighty-mouth.

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So that very evening, as soon as it began to grow dark, the two rascals set out together. They crept up close to the sheepfold without being seen by the shepherd, and there they lay and waited for him to go home, for, as soon as he did, they intended to enter the fold and choose a sheep to carry away with them.

Already it was time for the shepherd to go home for his supper, but the boy who generally came to watch the sheep while he was away had not arrived. The shepherd became more and more impatient. He was afraid his supper would grow cold, and at last he determined to wait no longer. He took his staff and stuck it in the ground, and hung his blanket about it so that it looked like a figure standing there. Then he cried out in a loud voice, "Boy, I am going home for my supper. Do you stay here and watch, and if any goblins or hoblins should come here to steal the sheep, call to me and I will come quickly." The shepherd said, "goblins or hoblins", not because there is any such thing as a hoblin, but because he liked to rhyme words.

After he had spoken in this way, he hurried

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off home without even once looking behind him, so eager was he to get his supper.

“Brother,” said Mighty-arm, “did you hear what the shepherd said? He has left a boy there to watch the sheep. We will have no chance to steal one, after all. We might as well have saved ourselves the journey for all the good we will get out of it.”

But Mighty-mouth laughed in his stomach quietly. “Do you not see,” said he, “that the pretended boy is only the shepherd’s staff that he has left sticking in the ground with his blanket wrapped around it? He said what he did to deceive any robbers who might be lurking near. As soon as he is out of hearing, we will go in and make our choice among the sheep.”

Now it so happened a goblin had been hiding in a tree top near by, and he also had overheard what the shepherd had said. He had never heard of a hoblin before, and as he was very curious by nature, he determined to slip into the sheepfold and lie hidden there until a hoblin came along and then to have a good look at it. So he slipped unperceived into the sheep-

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fold, and there changed himself into a fine large sheep, and lay down among the others.

A little while afterward the two rascals also came into the fold. They began to feel about among the sheep to find which was the largest and fattest. When they came to the goblin, Mighty-mouth said, "Here! This is the one we will take. Lift it up quickly and let us be gone before the shepherd returns."

The goblin had no wish to be carried away by the hoblins (for such he supposed them to be), so he at once made himself very heavy — as heavy as ten sheep, thinking it would be impossible to lift such a weight. But Mighty-arm picked him up without difficulty, and setting him on his head, started out at once, followed by Mighty-mouth.

The goblin was frightened. "These hoblins are very strong indeed," thought he. "He lifted me without trouble, heavy though I made myself. I doubt whether I would have much chance if it came to a trial of strength between us. I had better make him put me down and then escape as best I can."

With this idea he began to use his magic to

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send pains down into Mighty-arm ; he sent pains into his head and into his neck and into his body and into his arms. The sweat ran down from the great man's forehead.

“Oh! Oh!” he groaned. “This sheep is giving me such pains that I doubt whether I can carry him farther. I do not believe it is a sheep at all, but a goblin who has taken this shape.”

Mighty-mouth was frightened when he heard this, but instead of showing his fear he cried, “If he is a goblin then I am a hoblin” (for he remembered what the shepherd had said). “Put him down, and we will tear him in two and see what is inside of him.”

When the goblin heard this, he was so terrified that he melted away from Mighty-arm's head like smoke, though this was a difficult and painful thing for him to do.

Mighty-arm began to shake and shiver. “That was of a truth a goblin,” cried he, “and now I misdoubt me that he will soon come back to punish us for our bold talk.”

“Not he!” cried Mighty-mouth. “We have given him such a fright he will be careful



“I do not believe it is a sheep at all, but a goblin who has taken this shape.” *Page 254.*

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enough to keep away from us. Have no fear of him.”

So conversing, the two rogues made their way home again, no better off than when they started out.

Meanwhile the goblin had taken on his own shape and had hastened back to rejoin his fellows. He was still so frightened by the threat of Mighty-mouth that his teeth chattered in his head.

“Over yonder,” cried he, “are two hoblins. They are so strong they could carry an ox and think nothing of it, and so fierce that they would tear you to pieces just to see what is inside.”

“A hoblin!” cried another. “I never heard of a hoblin.”

“Oh, they are very fierce and terrible, as I tell you. A goblin has no chance at all against them.”

The other goblins listened and wondered. They began to feel very much troubled. Then the boldest among them said, “If this is the case, we had better all go together at once and destroy them. Even if they are as terrible as you say,

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two of them could do little against so many of us.”

To this the other goblins agreed, and at once they set out in search of the powerful ones.

Now Mighty-mouth always slept inside his house with his wife and children, but Mighty-arm slept on the porch, because there was no room for him within.

When the goblins arrived at the house, Mighty-arm was asleep, but their stirs and whisperings soon awoke him. He rose on his elbow and listened, and it did not take him long to learn who they were and why they had come. At once he was filled with fear.

He rolled over on his side and crawled into the house, and aroused Mighty-mouth. “The goblins have come,” he whispered. “They are outside talking together. They have come here to punish us, and they are so many that we will have no chance at all against them.”

“Do not let that disturb you,” answered Mighty-mouth. “Do you go out and lie down where you were and pretend to be asleep, and I will manage this matter so that no harm shall come to either of us.”

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Mighty-arm did as he was bidden. He crept back to his sleeping place, and lay down and breathed quietly as though he were asleep, though in reality he was trembling with fear.

Meanwhile Mighty-mouth awoke his wife and told her of the goblins and how he intended to drive them away. He bade her get up and light a fire and begin to prepare a supper. "Then presently," said he, "I will arise and follow you." He would then say thus and so to her, and she was to answer this, that, and the other.

His wife agreed to do as he said, and at once arose and made a fire and set about cooking a supper. Soon after Mighty-mouth followed her. "How is this?" he cried in a loud voice. "Where are the goblins I brought home yesterday and told you to cook for me?"

His wife pretended to be frightened at his tone. "Oh, my dear husband, I beg you will not be angry," she shouted, "but when the children came home to-day they demanded sweet-meats, and as I had none to give them, they took the three goblins and had them eaten before I could stop them."

Mighty-mouth began to stamp and roar

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about. He declared if he could not have goblins for supper he would eat nothing. For a long time he raged and scolded, but the goblins did not wait to hear him out. A man whose children ate goblins instead of sweetmeats was too fierce for them to fight against. Away they went, pell-mell, each one with but one thought, and that was to get away before the hoblin could catch him. Nor did they stop nor stay but fled till they came to a deep forest so far away they hoped the hoblins would never find it and that they might be able to live in safety and undiscovered by the mighty ones.

Now after a while it so happened that Mighty-arm and Mighty-mouth set out on a journey, and their way lay through this very forest where the goblins had taken shelter. They walked along together briskly, but when night came on they were still in the forest, and in order to be safe from wild animals they climbed up into a tree, intending to rest there until daylight.

Now it so happened the goblins had their meeting place under this very selfsame tree into which the two rascals had climbed.

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Toward midnight the goblins began to gather. They came rushing through the woods, some from one direction and some from another, and they built a fire and gathered around it to talk.

Now when Mighty-arm looked down and saw below him his old enemies, the goblins, gathered together in vast numbers, he was so frightened he began to shake and shiver. He shook so hard he lost his hold on the branch where he was sitting, and down he came with a great sound of crashing and tearing, and fell right into the middle of the fire the goblins had built.

That would have been the end of him — the goblins were ready to fall upon him and tear him to pieces — but Mighty-mouth called out from the tree above, “Brother! Brother! do not hurt them. Leave them alone for a while. You have had ten goblins for your supper. Can’t you wait until to-morrow to catch them?”

When the goblins heard this, and recognized the voice of the hoblin whose children ate goblins for sweetmeats, they were so frightened they fled away through the forest and no one

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ever knew what became of them, but they never were seen again.

But Mighty-mouth and Mighty-arm went along safely together to their journey's end, and Mighty-arm was obliged to confess that words are often greater than deeds in this world, particularly if one is dealing with goblins.

THE BEAUTIFUL MELISSA

A LOUISIANA TALE

THERE was once a lady who was so very beautiful that in all the world there was no one to compare with her in beauty. She was so proud of her looks that she made a vow never to marry unless she could find some one as handsome as herself to wed with. Many rich noblemen came from far and near to court her, but she would have none of them.

“You are wasting your time,” said she. “Do you think any one of you is as handsome as I am? I do not; and until I find some one who is my match for beauty, I will never marry.”

Then the gentlemen went away ashamed and disappointed.

Last of all there came to the lady's house a stranger, very finely dressed and magnificent

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looking. He rode in a golden chariot drawn by six coal-black horses, and he scattered money about him like water, but he was not handsome; indeed he was almost ugly to look at, he was so coarse and swarthy. When he came before the lady she gave a shriek and hid her eyes so as not to see him.

“Go! go!” she cried. “I cannot bear to look at you. After all the handsome men I have turned away, do you think I would consider you? Go, I tell you. It makes me quite faint even to have you in the room with me.”

When the stranger heard this he became very angry. “You think yourself so beautiful that no one in the world is fit to marry you?” said he. “That is as it may be, but now I will tell you something. Within a year you shall have a daughter, and that daughter shall as far outshine you in beauty as the moon outshines the stars in splendor.”

Then he returned to his coach and drove away.

At first the lady was troubled over what the stranger had said to her, but then she considered that he had been angry, and that what

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he said probably meant nothing, and she became easy again, and she fell as usual to looking at herself in the mirror, and admiring her eyes and her color and the shape of her mouth and her eyebrows.

But though the lady did not know it, the stranger who had come to court her was a magician, and had the power to bring about many things and to foretell events. So, sure enough, within the year, just as he had promised, the lady had a daughter, and this child was so beautiful that she was the wonder of all who saw her. She was far more lovely than her mother.

The lady was filled with rage and despair over this. She could not bear to think any one in the world was more beautiful than she, and she began to plot and plan as to how she could rid herself of the child. Every day the girl lived she became more fair and lovely, until at last the lady felt she could not bear it even a day longer. She sent for the old nurse who had charge of Melissa (for so the girl was called) and bade her take her away and kill her.

The nurse was horrified when she heard this. "How could I do such a thing?" she cried.

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“I love the child dearly, and she is too beautiful to perish.”

This saying of the nurse only increased the lady's anger. “Beauty or no beauty,” she cried, “you must do as I bid you. If you do not, I will give her to some one else who will obey me.”

“Very well,” said the nurse; “what must be must be, but first let me talk to Melissa quietly. She is so good and gentle I know she would wish to do your bidding, and even to rid herself of her life if you desired it.”

“Talk to her all you like,” said the lady, “only this I tell you: I will never look at her again, nor even have her in the same world with me.”

The old nurse then went to Melissa and told her all that her mother had said. “I myself cannot bear to kill you,” said she; “but look! Here are three small red seeds, and they have very wonderful powers. The first of these seeds will make you invisible; the second will take away all sense of feeling, and the third will throw you into a deep sleep. Put the first seed into your mouth and you can pass out of

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the house unseen. Follow the road that leads to the forest, and you will come to a well that is full of water. When you arrive there put the second seed into your mouth; you will then lose all sense of feeling whether of pain or of anxiety or trouble. You can then throw yourself into the well without any trouble, and all will be over, and your mother's wishes will be obeyed."

Weeping, Melissa took the seeds and promised to do as the old nurse told her. She put the first seed in her mouth and at once became invisible, and was able to go out of the house without being seen by any one. She followed the road to the forest until she came to the well the nurse had told her of. Here she knelt down and prayed that her soul might be received into Heaven. She then took the second seed in her fingers, intending to swallow it, but her hand shook so that it slipped through her fingers and fell into the well. Now the magic of the seed was such that as soon as it touched the water, the water sank down into the earth and disappeared, and the well became perfectly dry.

Melissa now did not know what to do. It

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was impossible to drown herself in the well, for there was no water, and yet she did not dare to return to the house and meet the anger of her mother. She determined to go on into the forest, hoping that the wild beasts there would devour her. But that was not what happened. So beautiful was she and so gentle that the beasts all shrank away into the shadows when she came near them, and not one of them would harm her.

Melissa wandered on deeper and deeper into the wood, and just before evening she came to a dark and gloomy looking house. She knocked at the door, and it was opened to her by an old, old woman, — so old that her eyes were almost sunk out of sight, and her chin and her nose met. As soon as the woman saw Melissa she began to cry out and lament.

“What are you doing here, unhappy one? Do you know this house belongs to an ogre. Haste! Haste to escape while there is time! If he returns and finds you here, he will certainly tear you in pieces.”

“That is exactly what I wish,” said Melissa. “What you say does not frighten me, for I wish

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to be torn in pieces. My mother hates me, and I have no desire to live, and if the ogre will destroy me, I will be very thankful.”

The old woman would still have driven her away, but Melissa begged so piteously to be allowed to enter that at last the crone could refuse her no longer. She allowed her to come in and sit beside the stove in the kitchen, and her beauty shone so brightly that the whole room was lighted by it.

Not long after this, the ogre came home, and the moment he was in the house he began to sniff about. “What is this I smell?” he cried. “Some one is here who was not here when I left this morning!”

“You speak truth,” said the old woman. “A girl has come here since you left, and is even now sitting by the stove in the kitchen, but she is so fair and so gentle that after you have seen her I am sure you will not have the heart to devour her.”

“What does it matter how she looks if she will make good eating,” cried the ogre; and he rushed into the kitchen, intending to devour Melissa at once with no more words about it.

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But no sooner did he see her than the fierceness melted out of him because of her beauty, and he became quite gentle.

“Do not be afraid of me, fair one,” said he. “I will not harm you. I only want to look at you and admire your beauty.”

“No, no,” cried Melissa. “I wish to be devoured. It was because I hoped you would tear me to pieces that I waited for you.”

Her voice was so sweet that the ogre was more delighted with her than ever.

“How gentle your voice is!” he cried. “And how bright your eyes are. They are like stars for brightness. I would be content to look in them forever.”

When Melissa heard this she became desperate. It seemed as though there were no way by which she could put an end to herself. She thought perhaps, if she were asleep and her eyes closed, the ogre might forget her beauty and be tempted to devour her, so she took out the third seed and placed it between her lips. At once she sank down in a slumber so deep that it was almost like death.

The ogre was distracted. He shouted to

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the old woman to come quickly, and together they did all they could to arouse Melissa, but all in vain. She lay there without sound or movement, only her breast rose and fell softly with her breathing.

All night the ogre and the old woman watched beside Melissa, and in the morning, when the ogre set out upon his business, he bade the crone guard her carefully and see that no harm came to her while he was away. All through the day Melissa slept, and the next day, and for days after that, so that it seemed she never would awaken. And all this while the ogre did nothing to harm her, and the old woman guarded her as though she were their greatest treasure.

Now far away on the other side of the forest was the Kingdom of the Peacocks. The young King who ruled over this country was so handsome that it was said there was not his equal for looks in the whole wide world.

The story of his beauty was brought to the lady who was the mother of Melissa, and it seemed to her that here at last was some one who was worthy to be her husband. She sent

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messengers to invite him to come to visit her, and this the young King was not loath to do, for he also had heard of her beauty, and was curious to see her. So one day he set out to journey to the place where she lived, with only one faithful servant as an attendant. The way led them through the forest, and the forest was so deep and dark that they lost their way in it. After a time they chanced upon the ogre's house, and the young King bade his servant knock and inquire the way. This the man did, and when he returned he said to his master, "Your Highness, I have just seen a very wonderful sight. In there a maiden is lying asleep, and I am sure in all the world there is no one to equal her for beauty; the whole room shines with it. The old woman says she lies there sleeping night and day, and nothing can awaken her."

When the King heard this he became very curious, and bade his servant hold his horse while he himself went in to look at the maiden.

No sooner had the King entered the room where Melissa lay, and looked upon her beauty, than he fell deeply in love with her. He en-

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treated the old woman to give her to him, but she refused. She feared what the ogre might do if he returned and found the maiden gone. The King, however, would not be denied, and he was so urgent that at last the old woman consented to let him take Melissa with him.

At once the King took the sleeping beauty and mounted her on his horse in front of him. Then he and his servant returned in haste the way they had come to his own kingdom.

The King, as soon as he arrived in his palace, had a magnificent couch prepared for Melissa. It was covered with cloth of gold and hung about with flowers. Upon this Melissa was laid, and the longer the King looked at her the more beautiful she appeared to him.

All the best physicians were summoned by the King from far and near, to try to waken her from her sleep, but not one of them could rouse her.

Now there was in the palace an old woman who was very wise. She had been the King's nurse when he was a baby. One day she came to him and said, "Your Majesty, I feel sure there is some magic about this sleep. All the physicians in your country have tried to waken her

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and cannot, and they are not able to understand why she still slumbers. If you will allow me, I would like to look into this matter.”

To this the King agreed, though he had little hopes that the old nurse could do anything. The woman came in to where Melissa was and began to examine her very carefully. She examined her feet and her hands and even her nails, and looked to see whether there was a poisoned pin or any like thing about her, but she could see nothing. Last of all she parted Melissa's lips, and there she saw a tiny red seed caught between the girl's teeth. She called the King to look at it, and then, very carefully, she removed it.

At once Melissa gave a deep sigh and opened her eyes and looked about her. What was her amazement to find herself lying on a couch in a palace and with the handsomest young man she had ever imagined kneeling beside her.

The King told Melissa who he was, and how he had found her in the ogre's castle, and had brought her here without her awakening. He also told her how he had been watching over her night and day, and that he loved her so

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dearly that he desired nothing on earth so much as to have her for a wife.

Melissa was very willing to marry him, for he was so handsome and spoke to her so tenderly that her heart filled with love for him, and she was happy to think she would be his Queen and live with him forever.

So as soon as possible they were married with great pomp and rejoicing. People were invited from far and near and great crowds came to the wedding. Among all the others came Melissa's lady mother. She wished to see the bride the King had chosen, and she also wished the King to see how beautiful she herself was, and to regret her.

But when she came into the palace, and saw that the King's bride was no other than her daughter Melissa, and that she was far more beautiful than ever, she almost died with hatred and envy. She had to be carried out from the palace fainting, and she turned quite green with envy so that her beauty all departed.

But as for the King and Melissa, they lived in happiness forever after, and ruled their kingdom peacefully and with great wisdom.

THE CASTLE THAT STOOD ON GOLDEN PILLARS

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

PETER the peasant and Anna his wife were always quarreling. If one said yes, the other said no; if one said black, the other said white.

One day they had porridge for dinner, and after they had eaten they began to quarrel as to who should scrape the pot. One wanted it, and the other wanted it, and at last the woman snatched it away from her husband and ran out of the house with it. Her husband caught up the ladle and ran after her, and he meant to give her a good beating when he caught her; and so away they went, up hill and down dale, over rock and through briers, and at last were lost to sight in the distance.

Now the husband and wife left behind them two children, a boy and a girl. The boy was a

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cross-grained, ugly fellow, but the girl was as pretty and sweet as they make them.

After the parents had gone, the children lived along together for a while, and then the boy said, "Now we will divide what is left, for it is plain to see the old man and woman are not coming back, and I have a mind to take my share and start out in the world to seek my fortune."

Now that was all very well, but there was nothing to divide but a cow and the little house-dog named Prisse. The boy said, "I will take the cow for my share."

The girl would rather have had the cow, too, for it seemed the dog would be of little use to her, but the boy did not care what his sister desired in the matter. He put a halter about the cow's neck, and off he set, leading her behind him, and the girl never saw either of them again.

Very sorrowfully she called the little dog to follow her, and she too set off to try to find a place where she could take service.

Presently the little dog said to her, "Do not be so sad and sorrowful. You got the best of that bargain by keeping me instead of the cow, for I intend to make your fortune for you."

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“How can you make my fortune for me, dear Prisse?”

“Never mind, but I shall do it; and you shall not have so very long to wait, either.”

The girl felt more cheerful when she heard this and walked along briskly in the way she had chosen.

After a while they came to a forest, and over beyond lay a beautiful palace.

“Now listen,” said Prisse. “The time has come for me to do as I promised. Over in yon castle lives a fine young Prince, and he is the ruler over all this country. I intend that you shall become his Princess, but in order to accomplish this, you must do in every way exactly as I tell you.”

“Very well, I am willing,” answered the girl, “for I should very much like to become a Princess.”

“Then, first of all, unbind your hair and shake it down about you.”

This the girl did, and her hair was so long and thick and shining that it covered her all over like a golden mantle.

“Now strip off all your garments but your

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shift and hide yourself yonder in the hollow of that oak tree.”

This also the girl did, and after she was hidden the little dog scratched a hole in the ground and buried her clothes.

“Now do you stay hidden there until I return,” said Prisse, and then he ran away in the direction of the castle.

As soon as the little dog arrived at the castle gate, he began to beat upon it and call aloud for help. The attendants came running and asked him what was the matter.

“The Princess! Oh, my poor mistress, the Princess of Dogalene!” cried Prisse. “Take me at once to your master that I may tell him what has happened to her.” The little dog cried so loudly and so sharply and so continuously that the attendants were almost deafened and made haste to lead him to their young master, the Prince of the castle. As soon as Prisse was brought before the Prince, he threw himself flat on the ground and cried even still more loudly, “Help! Help, I pray you, for my mistress the beautiful Princess of Dogalene.”

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“What has happened to your mistress?” inquired the Prince.

“She was out walking in her palace gardens in the kingdom of Dogalene, when she was set upon by a band of robbers who carried her away to the forest over yonder. They robbed her of all her fine garments and jewels and left her there. Even now she is hiding in a hollow tree clad in nothing but her shift and her mantle of golden hair, and unless you send succor to her, and that right speedily, I fear she will perish.”

The Prince was filled with pity at the thought of such misfortunes coming upon a Princess. He bade his attendants bring garments and jewels, the finest in the castle, and at once set out with the little dog to carry them to the Princess.

Prisse led them to the edge of the forest and bade them wait there for a bit. He took the clothes and jewels they had brought and carried them to the hollow tree where the girl was hiding. He gave them to her and bade her put them on. This she did, and when she was so arrayed she was so beautiful that there never was anything like it. Prisse then led her back to where the

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Prince and his attendants were waiting, and no sooner did the Prince see her than he was overcome by her beauty and wished for nothing in the world so much as to have her for his wife.

The peasant girl was mounted on a fine horse and rode back to the palace side by side with the Prince, talking with him very pleasantly.

As they alighted at the castle door, the old Queen came out to meet them, and she too was amazed at the beauty of the girl and greatly admired her. But when she heard that her son wished to marry the stranger, she was not so well content. "How do we know who this girl is, or where she comes from?" thought she to herself. "The little dog says she is a Princess, but for all we know she may be nothing but a common peasant." So she begged her son to wait for a while before preparing for the wedding.

The Prince was loath to do this, but at last he consented, and the Queen determined that while they were waiting she would find out for certain whether the girl were a Princess. She took a bean and hid it under the mattress of the girl's bed. "For if she is indeed a Princess," thought she, "her body will be so soft

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and fine she will feel the bean even through the mattress.”

But Prisse was hidden in the room when the Queen came in with the bean; he saw her hide it under the mattress, and he at once guessed what she was about.

After the Queen had gone away, he ran and told the girl what he had seen, and he also told her what she must say and how she must act the following day.

That night the girl went to bed as usual, and the next morning, as soon as she arose, the Queen came in to greet her and asked her how she had slept.

At once the girl began to complain, for that is what the little dog had told her she must do. “I do not know what was the matter,” she said, “but the bed seemed to be full of stones, and I think I must be bruised black and blue. It was very different in my kingdom of Dogalene, for there my bed was so soft and smooth that there never was anything to disturb me.”

When the old Queen heard this, she thought the girl must indeed be a Princess. If she had been a peasant surely one bean would not have

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disturbed her. Still she was not entirely satisfied, and when she thought no one was looking, she stole into the girl's room and hid three straws under her pillow.

But Prisse was watching, and told the girl what had been done and what she must say the next day.

The following morning the Queen came again to the girl's room and asked her how she had slept.

"Poorly enough," answered the girl. "I do not know what was the matter, but it felt as though there were great logs under my head instead of a pillow. It was different enough in my kingdom of Dogalene, for there I slept softly and sweetly."

The Queen thought none but a Princess could have been so uncomfortable just because there were three straws under her pillow, but still she determined to make one more test. She bade the girl's attendants dress her in a magnificent robe with a long train that trailed for yards behind her. The robe was of golden tissue, and the train was of velvet embroidered with threads of gold and precious stones. After she was

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dressed, and while she was waiting for her attendants to come for her, Prisse came running into the room and looked at her with wonder. "Where are you going, my dear Princess?" he asked, — for so he always called her.

"Oh, I am going out to walk in the garden with the Queen and her ladies-in-waiting."

"Now mind what I say," said Prisse. "When you are walking in the garden, do not lift your train, but let it trail behind you. If the Queen asks you why you are so careless, tell her you have far finer clothes at home in your kingdom of Dogalene; for this is also a trick the Queen is playing on you."

The girl promised to do as Prisse told her. Soon after the Queen sent for her, and they went out into the garden together. With them went a crowd of ladies-in-waiting, and they and the Queen were all very magnificently dressed, but not one of them was as finely clad as the girl. The grass was wet with dew, and as they walked the ladies lifted their skirts to save them from being spoiled, and the Queen did also. Only the girl let her skirt hang and her train trail behind her and she never stirred a finger to lift it.

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

Then the old Queen said to her, "Why do you not lift your dress as we do?"

The girl answered indifferently, "What does it matter? I have far finer robes at home in my Castle in Dogalene. This one is hardly worth the trouble of saving."

When the old Queen heard this, she doubted no longer, but felt assured the girl must certainly be a Princess. So the Prince and the peasant were married without further delay, and after that they lived together very happily, for they loved each other dearly.

Now one day, not so very long after they were married, the Princess (for the girl was really a Princess now, because a Prince had married her) sat at a window looking out, and there she saw a strange sight. Over the top of a hill came her mother, panting and out of breath, but taking steps a yard long and still holding tight to the porridge pot. Down the hill she ran and across a field, and then over another hill and out of sight. And a moment after her old peasant husband came over the top of the hill in pursuit of her; in his hand he brandished the ladle, and he shouted and called to her to stop, and he was

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hoarse with shouting. Down the hill he ran and across the field and over the top of the next hill after her.

That was a funny sight. The Princess burst out laughing.

The Prince was in the room with her, and at once he asked, "What are you laughing at, my own dear Princess?"

The girl was frightened. She did not dare to tell him she had just seen her mother running across the fields with a porridge pot, and her father pursuing her with a ladle, so she made up a story to tell him.

"I cannot but laugh," said she, "when I think that here I am, living proudly in a castle that has only stone pillars to support it, and at home, in my own kingdom of Dogalene, my castle stands on pillars of solid gold."

When the Prince heard this he was provoked. "It seems to me," said he, "that you think everything in the kingdom of Dogalene is better than anything we have here. I would like to see a kingdom as wonderful as you think that is. To-morrow we will set out to visit it, and then I can myself judge of its wonders."

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

When the girl heard this she did not know what to do. She was terrified to death. As soon as the Prince left her she sent for Prisse, and told him what the Prince had said. "He is determined to go and see my kingdom," said she, "and I do not know what to do, for you well know I have no kingdom to show him."

"Do not let that trouble you," said the little dog. "Set out with the Prince to-morrow as he wishes; I will run on ahead and arrange matters so that all will turn out to your advantage. Indeed, the sooner you make this journey the better for all of us."

When the Princess heard this she felt easier, and the next day she was quite willing to set out with the Prince as he desired.

The journey was made in great state. The Prince and Princess rode in a golden chariot drawn by six white horses, and a great train of attendants followed them. But Prisse ran ahead to arrange matters as he had promised.

The little dog ran on for a long time, and after a while he came to a kingdom other than that of the Prince. There, on either side of the

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road, stretched great fields of grain, and the reapers were busy reaping it. The little dog stopped and spoke to them.

“Listen!” said Prisse to them. “Presently a grand coach will come by this way with a Prince and Princess riding in it. If the Prince should stop and ask you to whom these fields belong you must answer, ‘To the young Princess of Dogalene who rides there beside thee so proudly.’ If you say this, I will return shortly and give you a bag of gold money; but if you fail to say it, then when I come back I will tear you to pieces.”

Prisse bristled up and looked so fierce when he said this that the reapers were frightened and promised to do as he bade them. Then the little dog hurried on and presently was lost to sight around a turn in the road.

Not long after he had gone, along came the Prince and Princess, riding grandly in their golden coach. The Prince looked to the right and looked to the left, and he was amazed at the size and richness of the fields of grain. “My dear,” said he to the Princess, “never have I seen finer crops than these are. I wonder to

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

whom they belong!" He stopped the coach and called to the reapers asking who was the owner of the fields.

Then the reapers answered, as Prisse had instructed them, "To the young Princess of Dogalene, who rides there beside thee so proudly."

The Prince was very much surprised at this. "Why did you not tell me these fields were yours?" he asked of the girl beside him.

"Oh, I own so many fields I cannot remember them all," she answered indifferently.

Meanwhile Prisse was running along the road far, far ahead of them; at least a mile ahead so that they could not possibly see him. Presently he came to a place where shepherds were tending vast herds of sheep. The little dog stopped and spoke to the shepherds as he had to the reapers. "Before long," said he, "a fine coach will come by this way, with a Prince and Princess riding in it. If the Prince should stop and ask to whom the herds belong, you must answer, 'To the young Princess of Dogalene who rides there beside thee so proudly.' If you do this I will come again to-morrow and bring you

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a bag of gold to divide amongst you, but if you do not, I will return and tear you to pieces.”

The shepherds were frightened when they heard this threat, even as the reapers had been, and promised to do exactly as Prisse bade them. Then he left them and hastened on again. By the time the Prince and Princess arrived at the place Prisse was again miles ahead and out of sight.

The Prince was looking this side and that, admiring the country, and when he saw the sheep he said to his bride, “Look, my dear! Never have I seen finer animals than those are, nor larger flocks. I wonder who is the owner!” He stopped the coach and called to the shepherds to ask whose were the flocks they were tending.

Then the shepherds answered as they had been told, “To the young Princess of Dogalene, who rides there beside thee so proudly.”

The Prince was more surprised than ever. “Why did you not tell me they were yours?” he asked of the girl.

“Oh, I cannot remember all the flocks I own,” she answered carelessly.

Meanwhile Prisse, far ahead, had come to

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

where a number of herdsmen were guarding great herds of cattle. To them he said the same thing he had said to the reapers and the shepherds. If the Prince stopped and asked them who owned the herds, they were to say they belonged to the Princess. If they did so he would return and reward them, but if they did not he would tear them to pieces. So when, not long afterward, the coach came by that way, and the Prince stopped and asked who owned the herds, he was answered as before, "To the young Princess of Dogalene who rides there beside thee so proudly."

"My dear wife," said the Prince, "I begin to see what a great and powerful Princess you must be ; you own a great many flocks and herds and fields, and all of the finest. I am more than ever anxious to see your castle."

Soon after, night came on, and the young couple were weary, so they and their attendants stopped at an inn to rest until the next day.

Prisse, however, neither stopped nor lingered. All the night he ran on and on, and toward morning he came to a great magnificent palace. It was built all of marble and stood on pillars

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of solid gold, and a Troll lived there. The Troll was away from home, and the door was locked, but the little dog managed to find a hole through which he could creep into the hall. Here everything was very fine and beautifully furnished, with velvet hangings and furniture of gold. But in one corner lay a great heap of dry bones, and beside the bones an unsheathed sword.

As soon as Prisse was inside the palace he turned himself into a loaf of bread and stuck himself in the keyhole so that he filled it.

Not long afterward the Troll came home, and he was in a great hurry to get inside, for it was almost morning, and if the sun shines on the face of a Troll he bursts, and nothing can prevent it. The Troll took out his key and tried to put it in the keyhole, and he could not because the keyhole was filled with bread.

“Out of the way! Out of the way with you!” he cried.

“Yes, but wait a moment — for just one little moment,” cried the loaf, “until I tell you how I came here.

First they sowed the grain.
Then they reaped it.”

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

“Out of the way! Out of the way!” shouted the Troll.

“Yes, but listen just a moment:

First they sowed the grain;
Then they reaped it;
Then they ground it into flour;
Then they kneaded it into a loaf.”

“Out of the way! Out of the way, I tell you!” roared the Troll.

“Yes, but a moment! Listen but a moment longer:

First they sowed the grain;
Then they reaped it;
Then they ground it into flour;
Then they kneaded it into a loaf;
Then they pricked it;
Then they baked it;
So it came into being.

And now quickly! Turn and look behind you, for here comes a lovely Princess to put a gold crown on your head.”

(The Princess was the sun, for now it had arisen.)

When the loaf said a Princess was coming the Troll was startled and turned and looked behind him, and the sun shone on his face, and

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at once he burst with a frightful noise, and that was the end of him.

But the loaf turned back into the little dog Prisse again, and crawled out through the hole and took the key and unlocked the door, and then he sat down on the steps to wait for the Prince and Princess.

On toward noon here they came, rolling merrily along in their golden coach drawn by the six white horses.

The little dog ran down the steps to greet them. "Welcome! Welcome to the palace of the Princess of Dogalene," he cried to them. He then begged that the Prince would wait outside for a short time while the Princess came in alone to greet her people.

To this the Prince agreed.

Prisse led the Princess through the great door into the hall of the palace. Here he stopped and turned to her and said, "Dear Princess, have I not served you faithfully and well?"

"That you have," answered the Princess.

"Am I not deserving of a reward?"

"None more so."

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

“Promise me that you will grant the favor I am about to ask of you.”

“I promise.”

“Then take up the sword that lies in the corner yonder,” said Prisse, “and cut off my head and my tail.”

The Princess was horror-stricken when she heard this. “What are you saying!” she cried. “Do I not owe you everything? Have you not been a true and faithful friend to me? How then can I make you such an evil return as that?”

“Very well!” answered the dog. “If you do not do as I say, I shall know you have an ungrateful heart and are untrue to your spoken promise as well.”

He then began to beg and entreat the Princess to do as he asked her, and so piteous was he that at last she could refuse no longer. Trembling, she took up the sword and struck with it, and the sword was so sharp that with that one blow it cut off both the dog’s head and his tail.

But no sooner was this accomplished than the dog’s shape vanished, and in its place appeared a handsome young Prince in magnifi-

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cent robes, and with a golden crown upon his head. At the same time the dry bones that lay in the corner rose up and became a great crowd of lords and ladies and attendants.

The Prince smiled upon the girl and took her by the hand. "Dear Princess," said he, "you have broken the enchantment that was laid upon me by the wicked ogre. Long ago he slew my father and took from me this castle and kingdom that should have been mine. He also turned me into a little dog and my people into dry bones. Then he swore that never should the enchantment be broken until a good and gentle Princess should come to my castle and through love of me should cut off my head and my tail. This you have done. The enchantment has been broken, and from now on you shall be to me as my own sister, and the half of my kingdom and all that I have shall be yours."

The girl's husband was then sent for, and when he entered the castle and saw the magnificence of all around him, he no longer wondered that his dear bride had boasted of her kingdom and her palace.

ADAPTED FROM A DANISH STORY

A magnificent feast was prepared and all was mirth and rejoicing, and from then on they all lived in mutual love and happiness, and the Prince who had been enchanted was as a dear brother to the girl and her husband.

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A CZECH STORY

MARUSA'S mother had died when she was quite small, and soon after her father had married again. The stepmother he brought into the house was a cruel and hard-hearted woman. She had nothing but harsh words and sometimes blows for Marusa. She hated the child because she was so good and gentle and pretty, while her own daughter was as coarse and as ugly as a toad. All the hardest tasks in the house were laid on Marusa, but the step-sister, Holena, did nothing but take her ease and keep her hands soft and white. But in spite of her drudgery, Marusa grew fairer and lovelier every day, and every day Holena grew uglier. Gladly would the stepmother have rid herself of Marusa if she had only known how.

After a while Marusa's father died, and then she was even worse off than ever.

A CZECH STORY

One day Holena sat warming herself by the fire, and because she had nothing to do but to make herself comfortable, she was very dull and down-hearted.

“What ails you, my pet?” asked her mother.

“Why do you look so sad and sorrowful?”

“Oh, I have been thinking of springtime, and wishing I had some violets,” answered Holena. “Out in the forest they grow so thickly sometimes, I was thinking that perhaps in some spot that was warm and sheltered they might be blooming already.”

“That may well be,” said the mother, “and I wish you had some, my dear one.”

“If Marusa wished, I am sure she could find some. She has often been out in the forest and knows where to seek them. If she were only more good natured I am sure she would try to get some for me, for I am almost sick with longing.”

The stepmother turned to Marusa. “Do you not hear what your sister is saying? Have you no heart of pity? Go and see whether you cannot find her some violets.”

“Violets!” cried Marusa. “Where could I

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find violets in winter, with the ground covered with snow, and everything frozen !”

“Do you dare to argue with me ?” cried the stepmother. “Go as I bid you. If you hunt about long enough you are sure to find some, and do not dare to return without them, or you shall have a sound beating !”

She threw open the door and raised her hand as though to strike the child.

Marusa caught up a ragged shawl and wrapped it about her and ran out into the snow.

The stepmother shut the door behind her. “She will not find them,” she muttered, “and if she never returns it will be all the better.”

Marusa wandered on into the forest, weeping. She knew it was impossible that violets should be blooming in the dead of winter, and yet she dared not return home without them. There seemed nothing left for her but to perish in the snow. The forest grew deeper and deeper, and the air grew colder. Suddenly she saw before her a red glow as though from a fire. She hastened forward, thinking some charcoal burners might have lighted it, and that perhaps they would allow her to warm herself beside it.

A CZECH STORY

Suddenly she came to an opening in the wood. All about it the trees grew in a circle. In the center a great fire blazed up toward the gray sky overhead, and around the fire were seated the twelve months of the year. They sat on twelve seats of carved stone. January's seat was the highest, and in his hand he held a silver scepter. On his right hand and on his left sat December and February, and all three of these months were very old and of a venerable appearance.

March, April, and May were much younger. May and April were beautiful, but March had a wild and blustering look. The three summer months were somewhat older than the spring ones, and September, October, and November were past middle life.

Marusa approached the circle timidly. "Kind sirs, will you allow me to warm myself at your fire?" she asked; "I am almost frozen."

"Approach, child," answered January. "You may well be frozen with such a sharp wind blowing."

Marusa drew close to the blaze and held out her reddened hands to warm them.

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“What are you doing in the forest in this sort of weather, and with only a ragged shawl to wrap about you?” asked January.

“My stepmother sent me out to look for violets, and Holena will not let me wear the warm cloak my mother left me.”

“Violets!” cried January. “Surely, child, you cannot expect to find violets in midwinter.”

Marusa’s eyes filled with tears. “No, but I am afraid to go home without them, for my stepmother said she would give me a good beating if I did so. Unless I can find in the forest some kind person to give me shelter, I fear I shall perish.”

“Brothers, this is a sad case,” said January, turning to the others. “Do you not think we would do well to help her?”

The other months all nodded gravely. “We would do well to help her,” they answered.

January arose and put his scepter in the hands of March. “March, this is your business,” he told him. “You are the one to serve her in this matter.”

March also arose and waved the scepter about him. At once the snow began to melt.

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A warm wind breathed through the forest. The branches, no longer frozen, became clothed with a mist of green, and the ground was covered with a carpet of purple flowers. They were violets. All the air was filled with the perfume of them.

“Quick! Quick!” cried January to Marusa. “They will not last long. Gather them before they are gone.”

Marusa stooped and quickly gathered a great bunch of the flowers. Already the air was growing colder. A sharp wind withered the flowers and sent the snow whirling over them. The branches again became frozen and all the greenness vanished. But Marusa had her violets. She thanked the months eagerly, and hiding the flowers under her shawl, she hastened home again through the frozen forest.

When she entered the door the stepmother was cooking the dinner and Holena still sat idly by the fire. They both looked around at her angrily.

“Back again?” cried the stepmother. “Did I not tell you not to dare to return without the violets?”

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“But I have them,” cried Marusa happily.

She threw off her shawl and held out the flowers to Holena. The whole house was filled with the perfume of them.

Holena snatched them from her. “Where did you find them?” she asked.

“In the forest. The ground was blue with them.”

“Why did you not bring me more? I suppose you were too lazy to pick them.”

“Here! Get back to your work,” said the stepmother. “Already you have wasted the whole morning.”

Marusa set to work while Holena sat by the fire playing with the violets, smelling them and dividing them into bunches. Not one of them was given to Marusa.

By the next day the violets were withered. Holena sat, glum and cross, warming herself by the fire.

“What ails you, my pet? Why are you so sad and down-hearted?”

“I have been thinking about strawberries,” said Holena. “I long so to have a taste of them that I am sick with longing. If Marusa could

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find violets while it is still midwinter I am sure she could find strawberries also, but she is so lazy she will not even take the trouble to look for them.”

“Do you hear what your sister is saying?” cried the stepmother to Marusa. “Does it matter nothing to you how she is feeling? Why do you not go out and try to find some strawberries for her?”

“Strawberries!” cried Marusa with dismay. “Oh, dear sister, how could you think of such a thing? How do you imagine strawberries could ripen in the snow?”

“Go,” cried the stepmother. “As Holena says, if you could find violets in January, there is no reason why you cannot find strawberries also. Go and do not dare to return without them. If you do I will give you a beating you will remember.”

She placed a basket on Marusa’s arm and drove her out from the house, barring the door behind her. “She will not find them,” she said to her daughter; “and this time we are well rid of her.”

“All the same, I would have liked her to bring me some berries,” answered Holena.

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Marusa wandered on deeper and deeper in the forest. Her heart was filled with despair, for she was sure it was quite impossible that she should find any strawberries.

Suddenly she saw, shining between the trunks of the trees, the red glow of the fire she had seen the day before. She hastened forward and soon found herself again in the circle of the months.

“Good sirs,” said Marusa, “will you again allow me to warm myself beside your fire?”

The months nodded kindly. “Warm yourself, my child,” answered January. “But why are you here again? Are you seeking more violets?”

“Oh, no,” answered Marusa. “It is strawberries I am seeking now. My stepsister longs so for the taste of them that she is almost ill with longing.”

“Strawberries!” cried January. “How can you expect to find strawberries when the ground is covered with snow?”

“I do not expect it,” answered the child, “but I am afraid to return home without them; I do not know what to do.”

January arose and placed his scepter in the

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hands of June. "Brother, this is a matter for you," said he. "I am sure you can help this poor child if you are willing."

"I will do what I can," replied June. He arose and waved the scepter.

Once more the snow was gone. It was summer now. The air was full of the perfume of flowers, the songs of birds, and the hum of insects. A warm wind stirred through the green leaves overhead. The ground was covered with strawberry vines loaded with rich and delicious-looking berries. "Quick, child!" cried June. "Summer will soon be gone. Winter will return. There is no time to waste."

Quickly Marusa filled her basket with berries. Scarcely had she laid the last handful in the basket when a cold wind swept through the forest, driving a cloud of white flakes before it. The leaves were gone from the trees; insects and birds alike were silent, and the snow covered over the already frozen vines.

Marusa hid the basket under her shawl, thanked the months joyfully, and hurried home with the berries.

She knocked at the door which was still

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barred against her, and the stepmother opened it.

“Why have you returned?” she cried. “Did I not tell you not to dare to return without the berries?”

“But I have them! Look!” cried Marusa. She pushed past her stepmother into the house, took the basket out from under her shawl, and showed her the fruit.

Holena snatched the basket from her. “Here! Give it to me,” she cried. “I knew you could find them if you wished. But what a few you have brought us! Greedy one! You have eaten some of them yourself.”

It was in vain Marusa assured them that not a single berry had she tasted. The stepmother struck her and drove her away to her work. She and her daughter sat down and divided the berries between them; not one was left.

The next day Holena appeared more glum and downcast than ever. “Heart’s dearest, what ails you?” asked the stepmother. “Are you ill that you seem so sad and sorrowful?”

“Yes, I am ill,” answered Holena. “I long

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so for a ripe pear that it seems as though I would die if I could not get one.”

“Do not let that trouble you,” answered the mother. “I will send Marusa out into the forest. If she could find violets and ripe strawberries she can just as well get some pears for us.”

“What are you saying!” cried poor Marusa with terror. “Who ever heard of gathering ripe pears in midwinter. It was only by a miracle that I was able to find the violets and strawberries. But pears!—No, No; that is impossible.”

“I know you do not want to go out and look for them,” cried the stepmother. “You are too lazy! You would rather see your sister perish before your eyes. But go! Go, I tell you! And do not dare to return without them. If you do, I will pound you to a jelly, and you will well deserve it.”

She pushed Marusa from the house and barred the door behind her. The poor girl ran away into the forest, and the tears that fell from her eyes froze on her cheeks, it was so cold.

Before long she found herself back in the

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opening in the forest where the months sat in a circle around their fire.

As soon as January saw her he called to her. "Come closer to the fire, dear child, and warm yourself. What are you seeking this time? Were not your mother and sister satisfied with the berries you took them?"

"They were satisfied for a time, but now it is pears they desire," said Marusa. "My stepmother has said that if I return without them she will beat me to a jelly."

January frowned. "Your stepmother and her daughter are very wicked women," said he, "and they shall soon reap the reward of their wickedness. Meanwhile you shall have the pears to carry home to them." He arose and placed his scepter in the hands of September. "Brother, will you help this child in her need?" he asked.

"Gladly," answered September.

He took the scepter and arose and waved it about him. And now it was autumn. Overhead the leaves were red and gold. The birds were silent. Only the voices of crickets sounded among the underbrush. The wind had a sharp-

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ness that told of coming winter. On the edge of the open stood a pear tree loaded with great golden, luscious pears.

“Make haste!” cried September. “Shake the tree, Marusa.” Marusa shook it. A single pear fell. “Shake it again.” Again she shook it and again a pear fell.

“That is enough,” cried January. “Take them and hurry home, child. A storm is coming. Make haste lest you be lost in the forest.”

Indeed already an icy wind had shriveled the pears, and had blown the leaves from the branches and left them stripped and bare.

Marusa thanked the months and hurried homeward. When she reached the house her stepmother and her stepsister were standing at the window watching for her. The mother threw the door open when she saw the child coming.

“Did you get the pears?” she called to her.

“Yes, I have them,” answered Marusa. She came into the house and closed the door behind her. From under her shawl she took the pears and held them out to Holena. The stepsister snatched them from her, and sank her teeth in

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the larger and finer one. Never had she tasted anything so delicious. The stepmother took the other and ate it.

“Where are the rest?” Holena demanded of Marusa.

“Those were all I was allowed to gather.”

“Do you think I believe that? You ate the others on the way home. I know that perfectly well, and you deserve to be beaten for it.”

“Indeed, indeed, I did not eat any. I shook the tree once, and one pear fell. I shook it a second time, and a second one dropped, and after that I was not allowed to shake it any more.”

“You may be sure I would have shaken it until the pears fell like hailstones,” cried Holena, “but you are such a fool.”

“Be off to your kitchen,” said the stepmother harshly, and she gave Marusa a push that sent her stumbling.

“Mother, give me my fur coat and my warm hood,” said Holena. “I am going to look for the pear tree.”

“Oh, no, my dear one. Look! a snowstorm is coming. You will be lost in the forest and frozen.”

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Holena would not listen to her. "I must and will have some more pears. If we sent Marusa to get them she would eat them herself on her way home." She tied on her hood and fastened her coat about her. Then she ran out into the snow. Her mother watched her from the window. There was no pathway through the forest — not even a foot-mark.

Holena wandered on and on, and in spite of her fur coat she grew colder and colder. After a long time she saw the light of a fire shining through the trees in front of her. She hastened toward it, and came to the open place in the forest where the months sat around the fire.

Holena stared at them without taking the trouble to speak; she did not even say good-day to them, but walked over to the fire and began to warm herself.

The months frowned and looked at each other and shook their heads disapprovingly. Then January spoke:

"What are you seeking here in the forest? Who are you, and whence come you?" he asked.

"That is none of your business," answered

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Holena rudely. "I am who I am ; I seek what I want, and as to where I come from that is also my own business, but you must all be fools to be sitting here around the fire instead of in your own houses."

She stood close to the blaze until she was warmed through. Then without so much as a "Thank you" or "Good day to you" she left the fire and wandered on again into the forest in search of the pear tree.

January frowned. He rose and waved his scepter in the air. At once the sky darkened. The wind blew colder, and the air was full of swirling snowflakes. The flakes fell so fast they blinded Holena. She could no longer see where she was going. She tripped over hidden rocks and ran into tree trunks. She cursed Marusa, as though it were her fault. She even cursed Heaven. Her footsteps grew slower and feebler. She tripped more often and at last fell and lay where she was while the snowflakes covered her over.

Her mother at home watched for her anxiously. Then as the sky darkened and the snow fell faster she put on her own fur coat, wrapped her

A CZECH STORY

head in a shawl, and started out in search of her daughter.

Marusa, left alone in the house, cooked the dinner and set the table. Then she went to the window and looked to see if any one were coming. There was no one. She waited a long time, and then she ate her own dinner. All afternoon she watched for them. She cooked the supper, but no one came to eat it. The next day passed, and the day after that and many days afterward, but the stepmother and Holena never again returned from the forest.

At first Marusa grieved for them and wept at the thought of how they must have been lost and frozen in the forest. "If they had only found those good kind months, they certainly would have helped them," she said to herself. But in time she ceased grieving. Now she could live in peace with no one to scold or ill-treat her. The house and all that was in it, the plow-land, and a cow, were all hers. There was no one else to claim them.

The older she grew, the sweeter and lovelier she became. After a while a young man came to court her. He was young and handsome

THE TWELVE MONTHS

and rich and good-tempered, and Marusa soon learned to love him dearly. Then they were married, and Marusa took her cow and went to live at his farm which was much larger and finer than her own little plot. In time children came to bless their home. Sometimes the children wandered deep into the forest in their play, but never did any of them, or Marusa either, see the kindly months who had helped her in her time of trouble. But Marusa never ceased to remember them and to feel grateful for their kindness.

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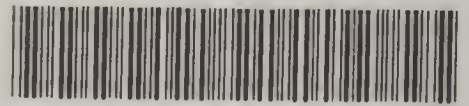
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