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Queen Loving Heart

—BY—

JEAN ROSS.



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Queen Loving Heart

A Children's Play In One Act

BY JEAN ROSS

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Queen Loving Hearts

PROLUGUE

HOW THE FAIRIES CAME TO AMERICA

Long ago there were no fairies,
In this land we hold so dear;
Listen, children, hear the story,
How they came to journey here.

When by persecution driven,
Our forefathers crossed the sea,
Deeply mourned the little people,
Fairies of the hill and lea.

For beloved by gentle fairies,
Are all faithful hearts and true,
That they might not part forever,
They would share their exile, too.

All too far it was for flying,
For their little wings are frail;
They must hide in holds of vessels,
Stowed away 'tween cask and bale.

Happy were the ships that brought them,
Though they had no gold to pay,
For in coin of willing labor,
Twice and thrice they paid their way.

Hard they worked to pay their passage,
Pulling on the heavy sails,
And with fairy spell and magic,
Tempering the stormy gales.

From all countries thus they gathered,
 Brownies small from Scotland's strand,
 Irish fay, and English Robin,
 Elf and troll from Northman land.

Here they found them pleasant valleys,
 Leafy groves in which to dwell,
 Here among us still they linger,
 In each woodland glade and dell.

And if good you are, and patient,
 Thoughtful, earnest, kind and true,
 You may see the fairies dancing,
 As you pass the woodland through.

Or, at night, when you are sleeping,
 Flitting through the window wide,
 Will the fairies come a-bringing
 Golden dreams of eventide.

—o—

Scene I.—Woodland glade, with a Maypole ready for winding, in the center. Large hollow stump at one side. Throne-like seat covered with evergreen, in background

(Enter a group of fairies, brownies, elves, etc.)

An Elf—

Once again we meet together,
 With the Maytime now at hand,
 To consider every problem
 That confronts our fairy band.

And to choose one of our number,
 O'er our councils to preside,
 To appoint the tasks before us,
 For our welfare to provide.

Should a maiden thus be chosen,
 She shall be our Queen of May,
 Though her reign shall not be ended,
 With the closing of the day.

Through the months from June to August,
She shall reign our summer queen,
Likewise, through the autumn, winter,
She shall wear our crown of green.

She must be of all most worthy,
Gentle, loving, kind and dear—
Speak, my brothers; speak, my sisters—
Who shall reign this coming year?

Troll—

All the maids of Fairyland
Worthy are; they toil each day
With kindly thought and helping hand,
To smooth some other's stumbling way.
But some excel; I choose the one,
Famed for many a noble deed,
For many a worthy service done,
To those in want and need.
One who in all hath done her part—
Little Lady Loving Heart.

Elf—

Know ye any other maid,
Who, a better claim has won,
To this honor which is paid,
To our best and worthiest one?

(Pause—no answer.)

Elf—(continuing)

All who wish this maiden crowned,
As the ruler of our band,
Let them make their purpose known,
By the right uplifted hand.

(All raise their hands.)

Loving Heart our queen shall reign,
Throughout the coming year;
Perchance some tasks her steps detain,
For I see she is not here.

Brownie Bold I pray depart,
 Search you through the woodland green,
 Find and bring our Loving Heart,
 To be crowned our fairy queen.
(Exit Brownie Bold.)

Troll—

While we wait Brown Bold's return,
 With her, our chosen queen,
 Let us gather flower and fern,
 To deck her throne of green.
(All place flowers about throne.)
(Enter Brownie Bold and Loving Heart.)

Brownie Bold—

I found her by the forest spring,
 Binding up a swallow's wing,
 With healing herbs to banish pain,
 Teaching it to fly again.

Elf—

In our choice we have been wise,
 True, indeed, our brother's words;
 For, no friends the fairies prize,
 Higher than the little birds.

Troll—

Gentle Hand, who wert our queen,
 Through the happy season sped,
 With thy hand this wreath of green,
 Place upon the new queen's head.

(Gentle Hand leads Loving Heart to the throne and crowns her.)

Gentle Hand—

Oh, my sister, be your reign
 Kindly, gentle, free from stain,
 Adding joys from day to day,
 As the seasons roll away.

Elf—

(Omit if desired.)

If it please our august queen,
Let us dance this holiday,
Round our Maypole or the green,
Interweaving streamers gay.

*(Loving Heart nods, and all take part in the May-
pole dance. At the conclusion they group themselves in
a semicircle about the queen.)*

Loving Heart—

Let us talk of graver things,
Thus, alone, your queen may learn,
What to you some sorrow brings,
And gives you great concern.

Elf—

There's a time all fairies fear:
The winter time of every year.
We've no houses, snug and warm,
To protect us from the storm;
We must hide in straw stacks cold,
Or in cellars dank with mould.
Perhaps our chosen leader can
Help us to devise some plan
That will give the winter cheer,
Make the season seem less drear.

Loving Heart—

As beside the woodland spring,
I bound the swallow's broken wing,
He told me of a Southern clime,
Where 'tis always summer time;
Thither all the swallows fly,
Ere the winter days are nigh.
And my service he would pay,
Bear me on his back away,
Ere the summer reached its end,
And for each and every friend,
He'd provide a feathered steed,

So together we might speed,
Till we reached that sunny clime,
Where 'tis ever summer time.

Brownie Bold—

Much I'd love on feathered steed,
Southward through the air to speed,
But I must refuse this boon,
For the swallows fly too soon.
Scarce the sun has passed its prime,
When they seek that Southern clime;
And for brownies 'tis a crime,
Not to help at harvest time.

Loving Heart—

'True, indeed, Bold Brownie's word,
Let others of our band be heard.

Troll—

There's a story I once heard the gray squirrels tell,
As I list to their chatter one day,
Of the little red folk and a cave where they dwell,
To which they alone know the way.

And it's truly a wonderful cavern, indeed,
With its walls set with crystal so bright,
That of torch or of candle there's never a need,
Nor of windows to let in the light.

And, with hot springs and fountains to keep it all
warm,
And soft needles of pine on the floor,
There is comfort within, though without is the storm,
And the tempests of winter time roar.

To this refuge, ere cometh the first icy blast,
Flee the 'little red Indian men,
And here they remain till the winter is past,
And the springtime is with us again.

Loving Heart—

If we also only knew,
Of a cave like this so warm,
There to live the winter through,
Safe from tempest and from storm.

Elf—

Would that they would kindly share
This refuge from the storm and cold,
But of this I needs despair,
For their hearts no kindness hold,
Toward the fairies whom they fear,
And regard intruders here.
That shall be our task this year,
To dispel this groundless fear,
And to let these people find
That our hearts toward them are kind.
And I further ask of you,
That you search the woodland through,
For, perchance, there may be found
Other caves beneath the ground,
Like unto the secret den
Of the little Indian men.
Let us now go each his way
To the tasks of everyday.

(Exeunt all.)

INTERLUDE

SILVER LODGES

Often in the early morning,
When the world is wet with dew,
You may find bright webs of silver
Scattered all the meadows through.
Wrought of silken tissue finer
Than e'er human hands have spun,
Vanishing from sight as swiftly
Flees the dew before the sun.

These are shining silver lodges,
 'Neath whose flimsy shelter dwell
 The Puk-Wudjies—little people—
 So the Indian legends tell.

Though the redmen's tribes have vanished,
 The Puk-Wudjies have not fled,
 Still in orchard and in meadow,
 Are their tents of silver spread.



Scene II.—Same Location.

(From the hollow stump comes forth a group of children in Indian dress.)

Chief Grey Eagle—

Northward, like returning warrior,
 Comes the sun, resplendent chief,
 And the forest dons new garments,
 Budding flower and bursting leaf.

Ah, how welcome sound of waters,
 Token that the spring is nigh,
 But, more cheering to the spirit,
 Is the bluebird's song on high.

When we hear the bluebird singing,
 Then we open the cavern door,
 And with longing hearts climb upward
 To the glad free world once more.

Chief Big Bison—

Here we seek our silver lodges,
 Scatter far and drift apart,
 Let us hold a solemn council,
 Here, within the forest's heart.
(All seat themselves in a circle.)

Chief Grey Eagle—

Let us think upon our foemen,
The little paleface men,
Who encroach upon our forest,
Penetrate each secret glen.

Trespassing within this woodland,
On our sacred council ground,
Even now their tiny footsteps
On the greensward may be found.

Let us then, my braves, consider
Their misdeeds, and how we may,
As a fitting punishment,
Drive them far and far away.

Chief Big Bison—

Better far that from their number,
Capture one whom we will hold
For a ransom, and in payment,
Ask not jewel, gem, nor gold;
But a solemn solemn promise,
That they leave to us this glen,
And that nevermore forever,
Will they trespass here again.

Chief Grey Eagle—

Very wise, this plan, my brother,
As you say, so let it be.
Look! There comes a maiden hither;
Let us hide before she see.

(All conceal themselves in the bushes. Enter Loving Heart. The two chiefs spring out and seize her hands.)

Chief Grey Eagle—

Lucky are we; we have captured
Of the band the fairy queen,
Best beloved of all her people,
Lately crowned with wreath of green.

Red Deer—

Do not lose thy hold, Grey Eagle,
Lest she soar on pinions light,
And, by craft of fairy magic,
Fade and vanish from our sight.

Chief Grey Eagle—

How then may we hope to keep her,
Till her ransom shall be paid?
Man of Medicine, come hither,
Cast a spell upon this maid.

(The Medicine Man, old and lame, approaches. From his bag he takes some dried herbs, which he scatters over Loving Heart.)

Medicine Man—

Balsam, sage, and bitterweed,
Bergamot and caraway,
Plucked while wet with morning dews,
Dried beneath the noontide's ray.

With these herbs I charm away
Power to see the face of friend,
Power to soar on wings aloft,
Till I bring the spell to end.

Likewise shall she walk unseen,
By the others of her band,
Though she speak, they cannot hear,
However close at hand.

Loving Heart—(pitying the old Medicine Man.)

If such potent charms you know,
Let me ask why you refrain
From using such to heal disease,
And banish all your grievous pain.

Medicine Man—

Though by all I'm counted wise,
Yet to me no charm is known
That will drive old age away,
Bringing back the years long flown.

Loving Heart—

Neither do the fairies know
Such a spell, though they possess
Medicines that give relief,
To all in great distress.
(Takes vial from basket on her arm.)
And this little vial contains,
A healing ointment good,
Made from birch and wintergreen,
With bark of hemlock wood.

Medicine Man—

For this gift of ointment rare,
Distilled by fairy art,
Rewards be thine, O, maiden kind,
From the Great, Good Spirit's heart.

I pray thee, tarry here awhile,
Among us, unafraid.
I give thee over to the care
Of Kee Wee, our Rainbow Maid.
(*Exeunt Loving Heart and Kee Wee.*)

Chief Big Bison—

Success is ours; the fairy band
Will pay whatever we demand,
And to recover her again,
Will freely leave this woodland glen.

Medicine Man—

Ah, I fear our craft is vain,
And this maid will soon regain
Her liberty; for magic art
Has little hold on kindly heart.

Chief Grey Eagle—

Fear not for thy magic power;
Never for a single hour
Has it failed. But let's away;
Our council's over for today.
(*Exeunt.*)

Scene III.—Same locality. Autumn foliage in place of green. Enter the fairies.)

Elf—

Brothers, sisters, have you seen
Loving Heart, our little queen?
Lost she was the selfsame day,
That we crowned her Queen of May.

Troll—

We have searched the woodland here,
And all the country far and near,
And save for footprints on the ground,
Trace of her we have not found.

Brownie Bold—

In the season past our band
Sore has missed her guiding hand.
All in vain has been the quest
That we took at her behest.
We have found no cavern warm
To protect us from the storm.

Gentle Hand—

Much I tremble for her fate,
For I know the red men's hate.
And I fear the Indian men
Hold her captive in their den.

Elf—

Let us still our search pursue,
Search once more the woodland through.
(Exeunt.)

(Enter Kee Wee and Loving Heart.)

Kee Wee—

Why do you sigh and drop the tear,
What sorrow grieves you, playmate, dear? . . .

Loving Heart—

I grieve because I never see
The fairy friends so dear to me.

Kee Wee—

Let them be forgotten, pray,
Here with us I bid you stay;
Greater love there cannot be,
Than our hearts have given thee.
Here with us you'll never know
Frost and tempest, wind and snow,
But be snug within our cave,
Howsoever storms may rave.

Loving Heart—

Duty tells me I must share
All my kindreds' woe and care;
Never, never, must I ask
Kinder lot or lighter task.

Kee Wee—

Oh, my comrade, Loving Heart,
Rather than we two must part,
I would gather all your kin,
Urge and bid them enter in
Our hidden cave, within whose hall,
There's ample room for each and all.

Loving Heart—

Thanks for your words so kindly meant,
But your chiefs would ne'er consent.

Kee Wee—

See, our chiefs come hither soon,
I will ask of them this boon.

(Enter the Indian men, who seat themselves in a circle.)

Chief Grey Eagle—

Long the time, my braves, has been
Since we seized this fairy queen;

But we have not yet arranged
For her ransom; what has changed
Our purpose, that we thus delay,
Putting off from day to day.

Chief Big Bison—

This change is due to Loving Heart;
For from her we hate to part.

Kee Wee—

Let me ask a favor, pray;
Let her longer with us stay;
And that she may not sorrow long
For kindred lost, in friendship strong,
We'll give to each one of her band,
The offer of the peaceful hand,
That our tribes united be,
Nevermore to disagree.

Chief Grey Eagle—

Shall we then their crimes forgive,
Side by side, attempt to live.
In all concord, happy, free?
It may not be, it may not be.
They would make us each a slave,
Find and rob us of our cave,
Drive us out into the storm,
While they held the cavern warm.

Medicine Man—

Oh, mighty chieftain, your harsh word
Does there a grievous wrong, I fear.
Kindly are they, I have heard,
As this gentle maiden here.

Like her they have the power and skill
To soften wee, to banish pain;
If peace we make, our tribesmen will
In turn some added favors gain.

Aside from this, a debt we owe,
To Loving Heart, whose open hand
Has e'er been ready to bestow
Her choicest gifts upon our band.

Now let us show the gratitude
That overflows the red man's heart,
By ending thus the ancient feud,
That long has held our tribes apart.

Chief Grey Eagle—

Perhaps my brother's plan is best;
(To Loving Heart.)
Go forth, my child, your people greet;
Convey to them our kind request,
That they with us in council meet.

Loving Heart—

Alas! I know not how to find
My fairy friends and kindred all,
Before I seek, you must unbind
The spell that holds me in its thrall.

(The Medicine Man flings wide his arms, thus lifting the spell.)

Kee Wee—

I with Loving Heart will go,
Lest some plot her people fear.
I to them our hearts will show,
Aid her to conduct them here.

(Exit Loving Heart and Kee Wee. Soon they return with all the fairy company.)

Chief Grey Eagle—

All too long our tribes have carried
In their bosoms hate and dread,
Let the tomahawk be buried,
And our tribes know peace instead.

Elf—

Oh, great chief, your words of wisdom
 Fall indeed on grateful ears,
 With eager souls we have looked forward
 To this time for any years.

Let our queen declare her pleasure,
 And our future course decide,
 Judgment pass upon this measure,
 We will faithfully abide.

Loving Heart—

That we may avoid all friction,
 Wood and glade will we divide.
 Yours shall be the western section,
 We will keep the eastern side.

Lake and stream, and forest lonely,
 Sharing with unselfish heart,
 In our laws and customs only,
 Shall we hold ourselves apart.

*(The chiefs consult together for a few moments,
 then signify their agreement.)*

Chief Grey Eagle—

Just the decree. And as a fair
 Return for goodly gifts she gave;
 With you hereafter we will share
 The comforts of our secret cave.

And though in councils as of yore,
 Our chiefs their power retain,
 O'er every heart forevermore,
 Your Loving Heart shall reign.

*(Exeunt all through the hollow stump into the secret
 cave.)*

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