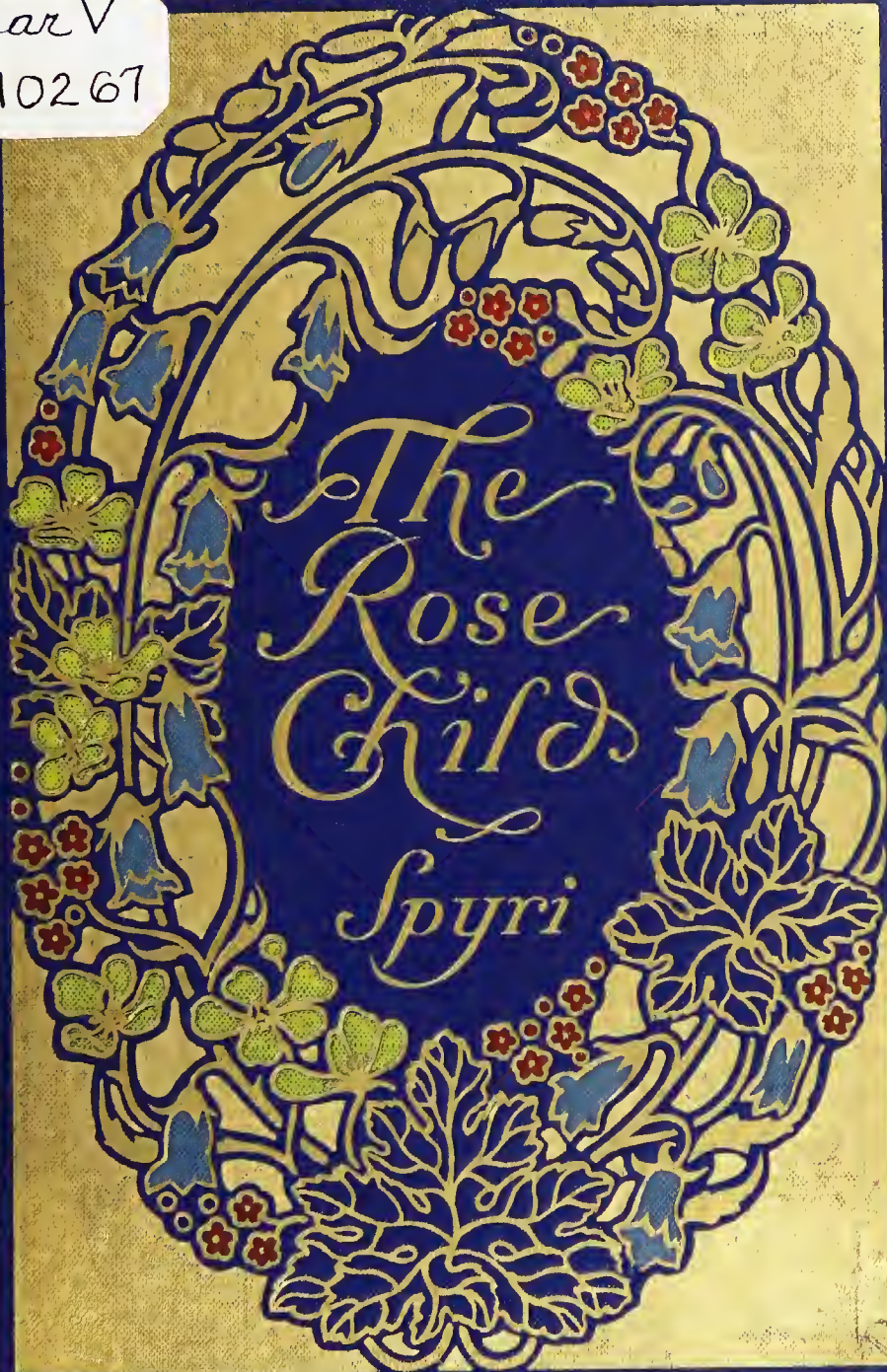
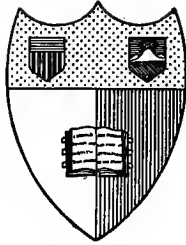


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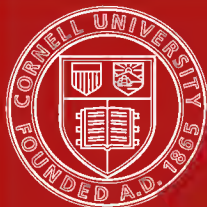


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# **THE ROSE CHILD**

## BOOKS BY JOHANNA SPYRI

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**THE TIME OF ROSES**



## CHAPTER FIRST

### THE TIME OF ROSES

**D**IETRICH, the sheriff of Wildbach, who had once owned considerable property, had for several years been falling into bad ways and by this means had lost his position and his salary. His only occupation was cutting a few tufts of grass from his uncultivated fields, and carrying it home to feed his poor little goat; for himself and his foster-child there were only a few potatoes and a little milk.

After dinner Dietrich would vanish and not appear again until toward night to milk the goat. Then he was seen no more at home; but everyone knew that he sat in the tavern until late at night, and that soon house and land and goat would be taken from him to pay his debts.

As long as his wife had lived things had gone better. They had had more land and a cow, and the wife had worked industriously early and late.

They had never had any children of their own, but an orphan niece of Dietrich's had been living with them for three years. He had lost his wife the year before, and since then things had gone so rapidly from bad to worse that everyone wondered at the child's fresh, blooming appearance. She was now eight years old and was everywhere called Rose-Resli, for she was never seen without a rose in her hand or in her mouth. Resli—her real name was Theresa—had such a love for roses, that she gazed with her merry blue eyes so longingly into every garden where roses grew, that the owners inside would call out kindly: "Would you like one?" And Rose-Resli, beaming with delight, would stretch her little hand through the fence and receive her prize gratefully.

So the child was always seen surrounded with roses as soon as they began to bloom, and every one knew the blooming Rose-Resli and were fond of her.

She did not see much of her uncle. In the morning she went to school and at noon he usually said:



“I shall not be home to-night, but you will find something to eat.”

But the cupboard was always empty. It was well that here and there a child at school gave Rose-Resli apples or pears, or even a slice of bread, and often when she had to go hungry, she could run freely to the gardens round about where the roses grew, and gather a few, and in this pleasure she would forget everything else.

To-day again the child had found no supper, but for all that she skipped happily across the meadows. It was a bright Summer evening. The butterflies were fluttering up and down in the blue air and high above the swallows flew round in a circle, twittering, summer-like, and all about in the meadows the crickets were chirping merrily, so that Rose-Resli became more and more gladsome and jumped higher and higher as if she would fly away with the butterflies. Thus in a short time she came to a garden, which lay at a distance, on a wooded hill, and always had the most beautiful roses. The garden was surrounded by a wooden fence, and Rose-Resli

quickly climbed up on the lower rail and looked longingly into the garden.

“Come right in,” called a voice from behind the trees; “I know very well what you are looking for; to-day you shall have some more roses.”

Rose-Resli didn't wait to be asked a second time. She stepped quickly inside, went straight to the fragrant rose-bed and looked in wonderment at the multitude of red and white, light and dark blossoms, glowing and giving forth their perfume together. Then the President's wife, the owner of the garden, came up to her. She had many times before given roses to Resli, and had just now called her to come in.

“You have come at just the right time to-day, Resli,” she said. “You shall have a big bunch, but many of the roses are ready to fall, you see, so you must be a little quiet and not jump so high, as you usually do, or all the petals will fall off the flowers before you reach home.”

Then the President's wife carefully cut a rose here and another there, and then two together,

light and dark red and white ones, until she made a big, large, wonderful bouquet. Rose-Resli's eyes grew bigger and bigger, for she had never held anything so wonderfully beautiful in her hand before. But here and there the fragrant petals were falling to the ground and the bare stems looked so sad among the other flowers, that Rose-Resli seemed quite alarmed.

"See! see!" said the lady warningly, "you will have to walk very slowly to your house, or you will not have three left with their petals on when you get there."

Rose-Resli thanked her politely and started on her way back. This led her past a miserable little hut where lived the "Sorrow-mother," a quiet woman with a sorrowful face. Rose-Resli had never heard her called anything else, and supposed that she had no other name.

"Sorrow-mother," called Resli, when she saw the old woman at the window, "see! see! Have you ever seen such roses?"

"No, Resli, not for a long time," replied the woman, and the child went on her way, quite

absorbed in the sweetness and beauty of her flowers.

As Resli was passing the last house on the road, the woman of the house, called the Peasant Woman of the Cross-way, because she lived where two roads crossed, came out and, with both of her strong arms on her hips, looked at the child.

“Well, well, you are really a Rose-Resli today,” she called to her; “come, show me your treasures close to.”

Rose-Resli turned quickly round, and joyfully held her bouquet out to her. But with her quick movement the petals dropped from three or four of the roses and fluttered to the ground. Resli looked at them sadly.

“Too bad,” said the woman, “but they would be just right for me. Child, give me your roses and you shall have a good piece of bread for them. You can’t carry them any farther. By the time you get home you will have nothing but stems in your hand. Come, give them to me.”

"All my roses, and not have any to keep?" asked Resli, quite taken aback.

"You can keep one of them; see, this one, the others will fall right away. Come lay them in here, they mustn't be lost," and the peasant woman held out her apron. Resli laid her roses in it, all except one which she placed in the front of her little dress, where she almost always wore a rose-bud. Then the peasant woman went into the house, and soon came back again with a big slice of bread in her hand, at sight of which, the child suddenly realized that she was very hungry.

"Listen, Resli, I will give you some good advice," said the peasant woman, as she gave the bread to the child; "take a little basket, go, every evening, where there are roses growing, and ask for the ones that are ready to fall. Then put them right into the basket, so that you will not lose the leaves; for I need them, and every evening, if you will bring me a nice little pile of petals, you shall have a good big piece of bread. Will you do it?"

“Yes, surely,” said Rose-Resli, and started on her way home, eating her bread, with great satisfaction.

When the child passed by the Sorrow-mother’s cottage again, she was coming along home, carrying on her back the bundle of fagots she had gathered.

“What has become of your beautiful roses?” she asked, when the child came up to her. Resli told her the whole story, and how she was going to bring rose-leaves every day to the cross-road woman.

The Sorrow-mother listened thoughtfully; then she said timidly:

“Resli, won’t you come to me to-morrow, before you take the roses to the peasant woman? I should like to ask you something then.”

“Yes, I will do that, so sleep well, Sorrow-mother!”

Whereupon Resli went on her way. When she reached her uncle’s distant cottage, she went into the silent, lonely room. She closed no door, made no light. Like a little bird she

sought her nest in the gloaming and soon was sleeping peacefully. She dreamed of her roses, until the bright sun wakened her again.





**A LITTLE HELPER AND  
GREAT HELP**



## CHAPTER SECOND

### A LITTLE HELPER AND GREAT HELP

**T**HE woman whom the people had given the name of Sorrow-mother was a very poor widow. She had seen better days, and was not accustomed to beg; she starved and suffered in silence, told her trouble only to the dear Lord, and sought in Him alone to find the consolation she needed. Her husband, who had been a tailor, died young and left her only one son. Like his father he was to be a tailor. This the boy's guardian had resolved upon, and he was the one to decide the matter. But Joseph did not like this; when he ought to be working at his trade, he ran away, and came home late at night or not at all. So he fell into bad company, and his guardian, who was also overseer of the parish, threatened, if he would not work and do well, to send him on the next transport to Australia.

Joseph was very much broken up by this and said that he could work, if they would let him do what he wanted, and if he could go away from home without being sent.

Then he disappeared and never came back. His mother mourned for him greatly, but she gave her child up to the dear Lord, and when the people in the village said scornfully:

“What good has it been for you to pray so much? You are living in poverty with your sorrow, and Joseph will die in poverty far away.” Then she would answer:

“If I have to remain a sorrowing mother to the end and have to die in poverty, I will not lose my faith that Joseph will return to the right way, for I have from the beginning and always, again and again, given him into the dear Lord’s keeping and have prayed for him so much, that it cannot be in vain.”

The next day, as soon as school was over, Rose-Resli started off. The child did not own a basket, but she could pile the roses in her apron. Skipping merrily along, she came to the

---

large garden, where the President's wife was wandering about among her flowers.

"Would you like some more roses, Resli?" she asked the child. "Come in, there are one or two more left to give you."

"Only the ones that are ready to fall," said Resli, holding out her little apron so that to-day she might not let a single leaf fall to the ground.

"Yes, if you like them so, you can have your whole apron full! Come over here."

And the President's wife led the child to a large bed full of roses which were wide open or had already dropped half their leaves. Here she cut off so many that Rose-Resli had her apron quite full.

"May I come again to-morrow?" asked Resli expectantly.

"Certainly you may," replied the lady; "you shall have all these that are wide open, if you take pleasure in them."

Rose-Resli thanked her and ran along much delighted. When she reached the tumble-down

cottage where the Sorrow-mother lived, the child remembered her promise to stop there. She stepped into the low, little room where the Sorrow-mother sat at the spinning-wheel. She greeted Resli with great friendliness. Then she went to her window, cut off two red roses from the little rose-bush growing there, and held them out to the child.

“See, Resli,” she said hesitatingly, “I want to ask you if you will take these two rosebuds also with you; perhaps the peasant woman will give you a little more bread for them, even if it is a very small piece. Will you do this, Resli?”

“Yes, yes,” replied the child quickly, “and then I will bring the bread right to you. I will be back again soon.”

The Cross-way woman was standing in front of her house, by the wall of her vegetable garden, and looking first into one and then into another of the baskets standing on the wall, and in which the beautiful, fragrant rose-leaves were spread out to dry in the sun. Every year the peasant woman made a sweet-smelling rose-water and for

this she used a great many rose-leaves, which were not very easy to get.

“That’s right,” she said with satisfaction as Rose-Resli came and opened her apron, “to-day you shall have a fine piece of bread.”

“I have two more,” said Resli, holding up high the Sorrow-mother’s rose-buds.

“Throw them on the others; they are very small indeed, but perhaps they will have a couple of leaves.”

“But I should very much like to have a separate piece of bread for them,” said Resli, still holding them fast in her hand.

“I know very well,” said the peasant woman, stepping into the house, “we were all like that once; now and then at school we swapped a piece of bread for a pear or a couple of prunes; it’s so, I know, Resli. There, take the big piece in exchange for the roses in your apron, and here is a little one for the other two. Are you satisfied with this?”

“Yes, yes, really,” Resli assured her, thanked her many times, and started to return. She laid

the small piece of bread in her apron for the Sorrow-mother, and immediately bit eagerly into the larger piece, for she had had very little to eat at noon, and at night there was nothing at all. So the whole piece of bread had come to an end before Resli reached the little old house. Now she was there and stepped inside and exclaimed: "Here, Sorrow-mother, here is your bread!"

The woman took the child's hand, and pressed it gratefully.

"You don't know how much good you are doing me, Resli," she said. "You see, out in the garden, I have potatoes, which are my only food. But often my stomach can't bear them any longer; bread is too dear for me, and then when I eat almost nothing, I grow so weak, I am no longer able to spin. So I am glad to have your bread, Resli, and thank you heartily for it."

Then Rose-Resli was sorry that she had brought only the small piece of bread to the Sorrow-mother, and had kept the large piece



for herself, and she kept thinking in her heart:

“Oh, if I had only eaten the little piece instead of the big one,” and she looked quite cast down. The Sorrow-mother thought she was still hungry, and wanted to give back the little piece of bread to her. But Resli said:

“No, no, I don’t want it. I have already had enough; to-morrow I will come again!”

And away she went.

On the following evening she came promptly back again. Once more the President’s wife had filled her apron with roses, and again the Sorrow-mother had broken off two rose-buds from the bush and given them to Resli. When she reached the Cross-way woman’s, and took the roses out of her apron, Resli said:

“Can I have one piece of bread to-day, but as big as the two together?”

“You see, I guessed right!” replied the peasant woman. “Now you have found out that it is a shame to swap good bread for apples and pears. That is right; only keep it, and to-day

it is quite fresh, so you shall have a fine piece; come with me."

The peasant woman went into her kitchen, and cut from the large loaf of bread the biggest piece Resli had ever held in her hand, in all her life. She ran quickly to the Sorrow-mother, and beaming with delight laid the whole piece in her hand; not a morsel had the child taken out of it to-day. Like a weight it had lain on her heart, that she had kept the large piece of bread and brought the small one to the Sorrow-mother. Her eyes shone with delight when the old woman looked in amazement at her piece of bread. She held it out to the child, saying:

"What is this, Resli? It is surely your bread; come take it, take it! If you will break off just a little piece of it, I will thank you!"

"No, no, I will not take a single crumb of it," said the child. "Good-night, and to-morrow I will come again!"

"I have no more roses, Resli, but I thank you; you don't know how much good you have done me!"

There were tears in the woman's eyes as she called after the child. Resli had noticed this, and for a moment she became quite thoughtful. Then something came to her mind, and Resli was glad in her heart once more, sang and jumped for joy and thought out what she would do the next day.

Soon the President's wife had no more roses, but Resli in her rambles had become acquainted with so many other gardens, that she had no trouble in finding other roses, and she was so quick and light-footed that no place was too far away for her. So every evening she brought her apron full of roses to the peasant woman, and received every time her piece of bread, which was larger rather than smaller, for the peasant woman was very much pleased with what Resli did.

A neighbor who also prepared rose-water, sometimes looked on with envy when she saw Resli shake out her full apron, and said it was no wonder if the Cross-way woman could make better rosewater than she; if she knew how to

procure such beautiful rose-leaves, she would succeed as well.

Resli never ate any more of the bread. The Sorrow-mother had to have it all, although she objected and wanted to share it with the child. From time to time Resli would ask:

“Sorrow-mother, is the bread doing you good?”

Then the poor woman would tell her again and again how much stronger she felt, since she had bread to eat every day; how much more she could spin and earn, so that she would not have to suffer with the cold in the Winter, as usual.

Finally she always said:

“If only I could repay you for what you are doing for me, Resli!”

But Resli’s face beamed with such delight that one could see that she already had received the best reward.

Thus it went on until the time of roses was over. One evening, when Resli had run far and wide, and had looked into all the gardens in vain,

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and at last brought only three half-withered roses to the peasant woman, she said:

“It is all over with the roses, but next year you must bring me your lovely rose-leaves again.”

These words made an impression on Resli, which the peasant woman had not expected. She supposed that such a child would receive something here and there from kind people, and not depend so much on her piece of bread. But Resli was thinking of the Sorrow-mother, and what would happen to her now if she had nothing to eat but her few potatoes. Big tears came into her eyes, as she saw that the roses were all gone.

“No, no, you must not cry, Resli,” said the peasant woman sympathetically. “Promise me that next Summer you will again bring me many beautiful roses, and you shall have your piece of bread every day all through the Winter. Will you do it?”

Then her tears were quickly dried, and Resli beamed with delight.

“Yes, indeed, I will; and you shall have all, all the roses, and forget-me-nots, too.”

“I don’t need them; but the roses—don’t forget them! There is your piece of bread, and now it is time for apples, and you must have some of those. There, Resli!” and the peasant-woman reached for a big red-cheeked apple, and offered it, together with the piece of bread, to the child.

In highest glee Resli ran off with her treasures, and the peasant woman gazed after her with gratification, for she was fond of Resli and delighted that she was so happy. Besides, she was pleased to have already assured the finest roses for herself the coming Summer. She had particularly noticed how her neighbor was always looking over at her rose-leaves, and she had been a little anxious lest she might entice Resli away for the following Summer, for she must have surely found out that the child brought her fine roses.

The Sorrow-mother, too, had a happy evening. When Resli, who always brought sunshine into the old woman’s lonely room, told her everything

she had arranged with the peasant woman, the Sorrow-mother folded her hands and silently thanked the dear Lord for having sent the child, like a good angel, to her, and that now she could look forward to the dreaded Winter with so much less anxiety and concern.





## **ROSE-RESLI'S TROUBLE**



## CHAPTER THIRD

### ROSE-RESLI'S TROUBLE

**S**OME days later it appeared as if a wonderful change had taken place; as if the Sorrow-mother and Rose-Resli had exchanged natures. The woman was sitting with a calm, happy face by her spinning wheel. Then Resli stepped in, looking as troubled as if something had happened which would take away her joyousness for all time.

“What is the matter, Resli; what is the matter?” asked the Sorrow-mother in alarm.

“I have a hole in my dress,” she cried out in a very fierce tone, “and at school the children all laughed at me; they ran behind me and kept singing louder and louder:

‘Rose-Resli, rose-stalk,  
Rose-Resli, hole in your frock!’

And at the recollection of the insult which



and she wiped away her tears, "but I thought every morning I should have another hole, and so they would run after me every day and sing behind me:

'Rose-Resli, rose-stalk'—

And so I thought I would never go to school again."

"Yes, indeed, Resli, you must go; that is a law, and a good one, or else you would never learn anything. And you see nobody must run away when trouble comes; we must hold still and bear it, because the dear Lord always has something to teach us in this way which we should not learn otherwise. For when we are in the midst of trouble and sorrow, we seek help and comfort from Him, and learn to know Him, and then trust comes into our hearts, because we perceive that we have a Father in heaven Who stands by us and hears when we call. Do you pray to Him, too, Resli?"

The child thought for a moment, then she said: "Yes, in school."

“What do you pray in school?”

Resli began, and without taking breath, for fear of losing the sound of the words and not be able to go on, she said as fast as she could:

“How the morning-hour rejoices  
Those that wake and praise the Lord:  
Thankful hearts and happy voices  
With His children well accord.”

“Now I don’t know any more.”

The sound of the words had escaped her, so she knew no more.

“It is a beautiful little verse, but you said it rather too fast, Resli; have you thought what it means?”

“No, I have not,” replied Resli.

“You see, it means that when you awake in the morning you should think of the dear Lord the first thing, and rejoice, and thank Him for having protected you all through the night. That is the way to pray in the morning. But do you know a little prayer for the evening?”

"No, I don't know any."

"Then you can only pray from your heart to the dear Lord, and ask Him to forgive you if you have done anything wrong during the day, and ask Him to help you so that you will not do it again. You see, Resli, when we can pray right to the dear Lord, we become quite happy again; if I did not do that always, I should have died from trouble long ago."

"Why?" asked Resli, wondering.

"You see, I have had cause enough. I am so very poor and have hardly enough to live on. Besides, I have a child out in the world, a son, and I know nothing about him; perhaps he is dying in poverty, or is already dead; and if I did not entrust him to the dear Lord every evening, as I did in the first hour of his life, and say, 'He is Thine, help him!' I could never go to sleep on account of my anxiety and grief; but when I have prayed so, comfort and trust come into my heart."

"I will help you to pray for him," said Resli.

"That delights me, child; that delights me;

and if you pray for Joseph, it will be good for you, too, that I know, and you will need it if you are able to pray aright."

"Why?" asked Resli again.

"See, my child," began the Sorrow-mother affectionately, but a little anxiously, "your uncle has done wrong, and they say that soon his house and land will be taken away from him. Then you will have to go to strangers, and that means much work and few kind words. You know nothing about that now, and so it will be well if you know the way to the dear Lord, so that you can tell Him all your troubles and find comfort in Him."

"Then I will come and live with you," said Resli, more pleased than troubled.

"Oh, you dear child, I couldn't take care of you at all—something quite different will happen; but we will tell the dear Lord about it, and He will provide for you. So, now, it is all mended," said the Sorrow-mother, who while she was talking had looked over the child's little frock carefully and mended it.



“If you need anything again, come to me and I will help you.”

Resli thanked her politely and ran away with a lightened heart. Now she would never be laughed at in school again, and this assurance delighted Resli so much that she quite forgot about the Sorrow-mother's telling her how, perhaps, she would have to go to strangers soon, and have to do hard work.

Resli did not forget her promise, for when she lay down to sleep she prayed quite loud and from her heart: “Dear Lord, do help Joseph!”

A long, hard Winter followed. The Sorrow-mother had to suffer much from the cold, but not from hunger, as in years before, and so she kept what little health she had.

Rose-Resli was her support and her bread-winner. In the late Autumn she had seen the Sorrow-mother with the greatest effort dragging home a little bundle of fagots. Since then she had gone every day into the forest and found so much wood that the Sorrow-mother was able to

make a fire every day in her little room, and cook her bread-soup on the little stove. Every evening after school, in spite of cold, storm and snow, Rose-Resli appeared at the Cross-way woman's, many a time quite blue from the cold and shivering in every limb; although she had been given another dress for the Winter, it was not very warm, and she had only a thin shawl over her neck and shoulders.

So when the peasant woman saw the child shivering and with her teeth chattering so from the cold, she thought she must be suffering from hunger to come running through storm and tempests for the sake of a piece of bread. This made her sorry, and she cut deep into the loaf, so that the piece was even larger than it had ever been in the Summer. But the child carried it all to the Sorrow-mother and firmly refused her entreaties to eat half of it herself. If Resli often went hungry to bed, she was glad that the Sorrow-mother was not in need, and prayed: "Dear Lord, help Joseph!" and went to sleep happy.

Under the Sorrow-mother's care her little frock remained in good condition all Winter long, and the school-children no longer laughed at her or ridiculed her.



**SORROW-MOTHER NO LONGER**



## CHAPTER FOURTH

### SORROW-MOTHER NO LONGER

**S**UMMER had come again, and in all the gardens the roses were blooming and giving forth their fragrance. They were in full bloom in all the beds, the young plants bore quite a burden of blossoms, and they nodded down from the flower-pots in all the windows. It was a great rose year. The Summer evening lay brightly over Wildbach and all the meadows and woods round about. The golden evening sunlight shone on Dietrich's little house, and its glittering windows could be seen from far away.

But in front of it two men were standing, with thoughtful faces. One was Uncle Dietrich. He knew that on the morrow house, fields, and goat would all be taken away from him, and in spite of that he would still be deep in debt.

He thrust both hands in his pockets and said, angrily:

"I will go away. I will know nothing more about it."

"But you must not forget that you will be found," said the other. "I will take the child home with me. She really can't work, for you have let her run wild, but I will soon teach her how to use the hoe. After school there are many hours. Then she shall help me."

"She is still young," said the Uncle.

"All the easier to teach," replied the other, and went on his way.

It was the road-mender of Wildbach and he had to dig out the weeds from the roads and clear them off. All the children were afraid of him and kept out of his way, for he was very cross and rough, and never spoke a friendly word.

To this man Rose-Resli was to go early the next morning. He had no children of his own, and it seemed to him quite right to take home such a child as this, to do all kinds of drudgery for him.

The child herself had no idea of what the men





*“ You have given me the most beautiful one of all.”*



had decided. Even now she was wandering cheerfully through the meadows, far beyond Wildbach on her way to the mill. Here there was a garden full of marvellous roses, and the miller's wife had promised Resli a large bunch of them.

Soon after, the child was seen, with her roses in her hand, going back happily by the same road in the golden evening light. She had not gone far when a young man, with quick footsteps, came up behind her. He was holding his straw hat in his hand and let the fresh, cooling air blow over his head.

"You have some beautiful roses," he exclaimed when he had caught up with Resli; "will you give me one to put in my hat?"

Resli nodded in assent and took one out.

"That is kind of you. You have given me the most beautiful one of all," said the stranger, as he placed it with satisfaction in his hat. "How far are you going?"

"I am going home to Wildbach," was the reply.

"Then we are going the same way," said the traveller and walked along with Resli.

"If you are from Wildbach, you must know the people there well, and can tell me something. Does good Frau Steinmann live there still, and is she well?"

"I don't know her," replied Resli. "Nobody there has that name."

"Oh, my God! my God!" groaned the stranger, and was silent. Resli looked at him wonderingly, for from time to time he wiped away a tear and no longer looked happy as before.

After they had walked along together for some time in silence, the stranger began again:

"Do you know the way to the Cross-way woman?"

Resli nodded very emphatically and said:

"I go there every day."

"Then tell me who lives in the old, tumble-down house there at the left on the road, where the crooked willow-tree stands?"

"The Sorrow-mother lives there. I know her well."

“What kind of a name is that? Hasn’t she any other?”

“I don’t know any other.”

“Is she called so because she has had a great deal of sorrow? Do you know?”

“Yes, she has sorrow, because she doesn’t know whether Joseph is living in misery or not.”

“Oh, my God! my God!” exclaimed the stranger again, and suddenly strode away so that he left Resli quite a distance behind. But he turned back again, took the child by the hand, and said very kindly:

“Come, let us walk along together and talk a little more.”

And he looked so kind and friendly that Resli felt quite trustful.

“Tell me,” he continued, “is the Sorrow-mother angry with Joseph?”

“Oh, no! Every night she prays for him, or else she could not go to sleep; and I help her, too.”

“Is that so? And what do you pray for him?”

“I pray: ‘Dear Lord, do help Joseph!’”

"Perhaps the dear Lord has heard you now, and has helped him."

"Do you believe it?" asked Resli, looking with the greatest interest at the stranger, whose face suddenly lighted up with joy. He said nothing more.

Now they came to the crooked willow-tree, a few steps from the little old house.

"Well, good-bye," said Resli, as she held out her hand to the stranger, evidently somewhat disappointed at his silence. "I am going to see the Sorrow-mother."

"I will go with you," he said quickly. But before they opened the door, it was burst open from the inside and out rushed the Sorrow-mother, embraced the stranger, and exclaimed, again and again:

"Oh, Joseph! Joseph! Is it really you?"

And she wept aloud for joy, and Joseph had to weep with her. And now, when Resli realized that the stranger was Joseph, who had returned to the Sorrow-mother and looked so well and not so shabby as she had imagined him, she did not

know how to contain herself for joy. She hugged the weeping mother and cried exultingly:

“The dear Lord has helped him; the dear Lord has helped him!”

Then all three went into the little house, and the Sorrow-mother looked her son over from head to foot, and her heart overflowed with thankfulness and joy, for he did not look like one who had been sunk into the depths and gone to ruin in poverty, as she had so often, in her chamber at night, imagined him to be. She could not look at him enough, he looked so good to her.

“Come, Mother, come,” said the young man, with a happy face, “now let us sit down together and have something to eat, and be merry. Can the child bring us something?”

“Oh, yes, she has done that already,” affirmed the mother. “How much good she has brought me before, and now has brought even my son! Where did you find him, Resli?”

“I will tell you all about that, Mother, but let the child go and get some sausages, a bottle of

wine, and a big loaf of bread," requested Joseph, laying a large piece of money on the table.

"A whole loaf?" asked Resli, with the greatest astonishment; for she could hardly believe that the Sorrow-mother was to have a whole loaf all at once. But she flew away in such delight over it that she was back again with all the provisions in an incredibly short space of time.

Then all three sat down at the little table and had a feast, such as was never seen in the room before. But the mother could hardly eat for joy, and kept asking, full of astonishment: "Is this really true, Joseph?" And he quite gayly assured her each time that it was, and gave Resli one slice of bread after another, and sausages, too; and if she said:

"No, no, I really can't eat any more; it is for the Sorrow-mother," then he would reply:

"Just eat and don't worry; Mother shall never again suffer want. She shall have enough bread every day."

"And now," said Joseph, when he had been quite refreshed after his long journey, "now I



will tell you, Mother, how things have gone with me. You know, I was to be sent to Australia. But the disgrace of being sent away I would not have, and I couldn't stay here any longer, so I ran away. I went over to England and there I stayed, because I had no money to go any farther. I had hard times there, had to work hard, to earn my living, and thought I should go to destruction. I really believe your prayers saved me, Mother, for every time when things were at their worst, and I was tempted to do wrong, I suddenly heard you as you used to pray, in your room beside me, that the dear Lord might bring all misery upon you, if only He would at last lead me in the right way. Then I saw you before me and couldn't do anything wrong, to bring you to the grave, and I began to work again.

“I had work in the machine-shops and little by little I improved. In nine years one can learn something, if one wants to, and I wanted to, and now I am a skilled mechanic and shall always find work.

“And now, Mother, you shall have something else. No one shall dare call you ‘Sorrow-mother’ again. See, Mother, I have brought you my savings. Now tell me how you have fared.”

Whereupon Joseph laid his beautiful hard-earned dollars before his mother on the table, and the joy in his heart shone out of his eyes, when he saw his mother’s increasing astonishment.

“Oh, that you should earn all that through hard, honest work, Joseph! I don’t know how to thank the dear Lord; it is almost too much!” And the good mother had to fold her hands and give praise and thanks again and again. But her son said:

“Tell me now, how it has been with you, Mother.”

“There is not much to tell, Joseph,” she said; “I have had hard times and much trouble, and they did not call me the Sorrow-mother without good cause. The dear Lord has always helped me through. But in these last years I have been so very poor and lost my strength, so I thought I should not live through another Winter.

“Then like an angel from Heaven came the child Rose-Resli, and she gave me back my strength. The whole Winter through and until now she has supported me, and I know she has often brought me her bread and gone hungry herself. And now I have only one cause for complaint, Joseph. Resli lives with her uncle Dietrich, and to-morrow he loses his house and home; the child has to go to strangers, and who knows how it will be with her.”

“What? The child who has taken care of you, Mother?” interrupted Joseph, indignantly. “We have enough for the child too, no one needs to give us anything for her. I will go to Dietrich. Rose-Resli shall not leave us again!”

And he shot out of the door and hurried away.

Then Resli jumped from her stool, fell on the old woman’s neck, and cried out in her delight, again and again:

“Sorrow-mother! Sorrow-mother! Now I can live with you! Now I shall not have to go away again!”

And the mother held the child fast and said:

“Oh, Resli, how much we have to be thankful for! If we thank the dear Lord as long as we live it will not be enough. Never forget that in all your life! Now the last trouble is taken away from my heart, and you must not call me Sorrow-mother any more, for I am not so any longer, but I will be a mother to you.”

When the uncle Dietrich learned from Joseph what he desired, he was glad, for secretly he was fond of Resli. He was unwilling to give her to the cross road-mender, but he didn't know at the time of any other way, for he had to leave early the next morning. So he said to Joseph:

“Take the child right away. Don't send her back to sleep, but take her little bed at once.” He thought the matter would be safer in this way, for if the road-mender came early in the morning he could not take Resli with him.

Joseph was much pleased and pressed another piece of money into Dietrich's hand, for he had heard that the uncle had never been unkind to Resli.

So he took the little bed and its scanty con-

tents on his shoulder and came home quite happy with it.

It was placed in the little chamber next the mother's bed, and Resli was unspeakably happy because now she could remain day and night with her.

Joseph found his sleeping-place just as he had left it nine years before. His mother had thought every day during this time:

“Perhaps he will come back, and then he must still find a home.”

And Joseph was so happy to have found his home again, that he would not have left it for any money. He found the work that he wanted, for he was a skilled, expert workman.

Every morning, when he went to work, Resli placed a rose in his hat. This pleased Joseph very much, and made him feel happy at his work. He always had a rose, even when there were no more to be seen anywhere about, for Resli knew every place where a last rose could be blooming, and she obtained the rose from the one to whom it belonged.

As soon as the story became known, how Resli had supported the Sorrow-mother for a whole year long almost alone, everybody loved her even much more than before, and wherever she went she received roses from the gardens, whether they were the first or the last.

So the three happy people lived together in the smallest house in Wildbach, and Rose-Resli will be her name all her life long.















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# JOHANNA SPYRI

## AND HER STORIES



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