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**BLUE
BEARD.**



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Newcastle-on-Tyne:
W. R. Walker, Royal Arcad

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BLUE BEARD.

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Embosomed in a spacious pleasant wood, in stately pride a lofty castle stood, its owner was a wealthy knight, he had a blue beard that made him a foul sight. His neighbour had two beautiful daughters who often rode to take the air. The eldest sis-



ter, Fatima, whose beauty was well known to fame, Blue Beard had seen, and wanted her for his wife, to live and pass the remainder of her life at his mansion. He sent his trusty squire to her mother to offer proposals; and to ask consent. The ladies then in deep debate both pro and con

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the case they fairly state. It is true, they said, the man is old and ugly, but then he has lots of gold; thus love for riches did blind their reason, and did make them send a kind message back.



The time was fixed and the bridal cake was made, and the bride was arrayed in costly robes, attended by a numerous host of friends, Fatima bended her knee at the altar; there blushing sweetly in the face of day she vowed to love and obey her husband. His wife, her sister, with their fe-

male friends, grim Blue Beard now most gallantly attends, his jewels bright, pictures, statues, and plate, one room alone was kept from the review, a room grown famous as the chamber blue.



To go a journey Blue Beard now intends and resigns his keys and palace to his wife, and strict injunctions gave ere he left home, that she might freely roam o'er all the castle, save the blue room—nor at her peril dare therein to peep. No sooner had he turned and gone, her roving fancy was upon

all search ; she thought all safe, so she opened the door—what a sad scene then did meet her view. The room was spread with mangled females—here lay a body—there was seen a head ; she turned disgusted from the sight—so great was her fright



that the key fell from her hand ; by spots of blood she found it crimsoned over. With trembling then she flew and shut the door To make it bright in vain she strove : the more she toiled, the deeper was the stain. To raise her spirits she in vain essayed—

the ugly key betrayed what she had done. Now she went for her sister Ann, to see if between them both they could invent some scheme, by which she might assuage and turn aside her husband's rage. He soon returned, the keys were brought to him,



the fatal one his eye now caught. How is this ? he cried with a stern look. Your duty madam you have yet to learn. How dare you defy my strict orders ? For this base wretch, depend you die. His sword was lifted up to strike her, when she fell

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on her knees and begged her life to be saved. Her sister strove the blow to avert, and hoped he would some mercy show. Reluctantly the tyrant gave consent—she to her chamber went with her sister.



Traitress now hasten to prepare, he said, for by our holy prophet thus I swear, you shall not now much longer live; I will not sheathe my sword till I have got your head with heaven go make your peace, in half an hour from this your life shall cease. One short half-hour was all Fatima's store

She did deplore her rashness, but it was too late; her brothers she expected soon but if they did not arrive in time what could she do. To save her sister, Ann heart broken, went with good intent upon the battlements, to see if her brothers were



in sight, or hail some traveller passing by Ann, dearest Ann, Fatama said, can not you see aught to lend me aid? No human being seems to pass this way. All I can see said Ann, is sun and grass. For the last time to her sister she cried, is aught to

fight? Yes, was the reply, my brothers
now I see—you are saved at last. Then
God be praised for his mercies Her hus-
band now roared out be ready, the time is
now expired. He raised his arm to give



the fatal blow, when on the tyrant both her
brothers flew—they did pursue, and made
him feel the full effect of their well tem-
pered steel. The spot he marked out for
Fatima's death received the wounded mon-
ster's latest breath,



