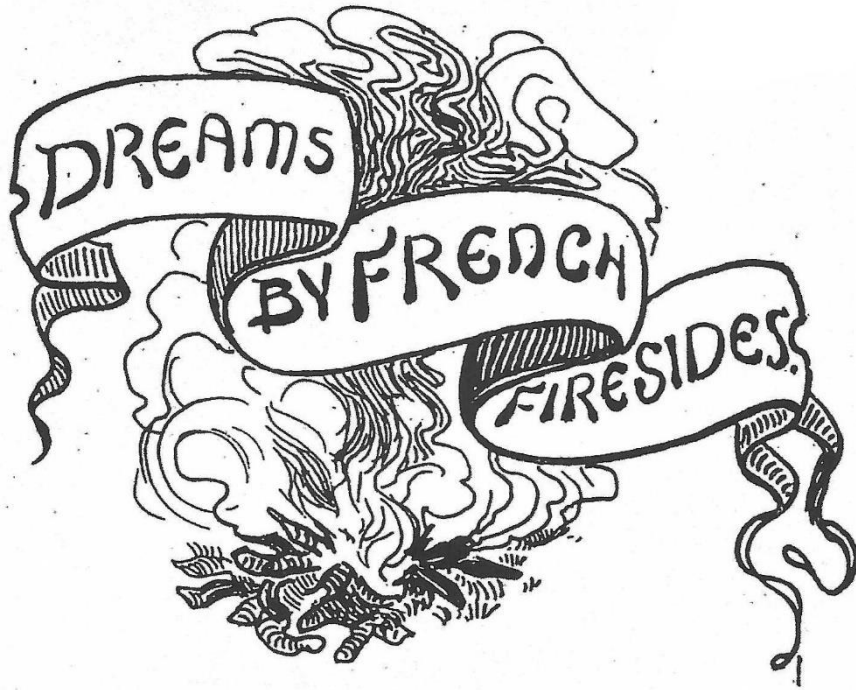


DREAMS BY
FRENCH FIRESIDES



RICHARD VON VOLKMANN-LEANDER

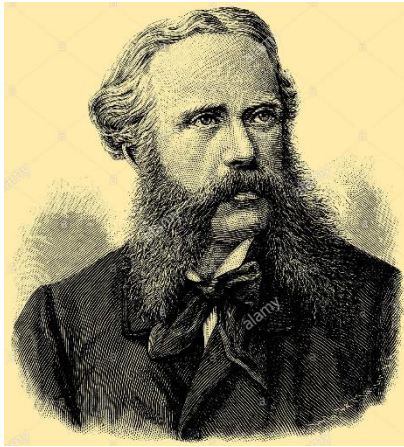


Translation by Waltraut Wiens
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
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¹ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

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1830-1889

BIOGRAPHY

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Richard von Volkmann-Leander, The Poet

His wide popular recognition came through an unpretentious entrance into the field of imaginative literature by the production of his fairy tales, *Dreams at French Firesides*. The history of the work is sufficiently given in his preface below. When it was disclosed that the unknown "Leander" of the *Dreams* was the famous physician, Volkmann's name became as familiar in the home as it already was in narrower professional circles, and the *Dreams* at once took its place in the great treasury of child literature in which

Germany so happily excels. The book, like Volkmann's professional works, passed through edition after edition in Germany, and has followed the same course in the English-speaking countries, where it has established itself as a valuable element in German instruction.

The stories are marked by simplicity of thought and style, sympathy with the child mind, and a warm human touch. Some of them are representative of a typically familiar, but never disrespectful, German treatment of themes toward which the English and American mind maintains a more reserved attitude. But always the point of view is naïf and the conception concrete and picturesque, like the workings of the youthful mind.

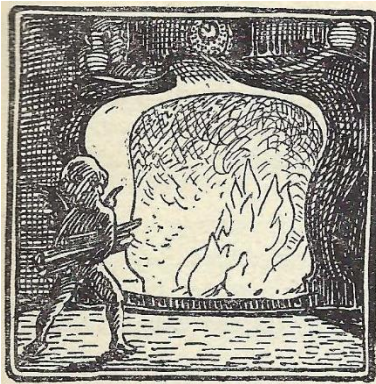
While its matter places the work in the ranks of pure literature, its style is full of colloquial and homely turns, upon which an adequate appreciation of the story largely depends. Volkmann wrote the stories for his own children but they are best received by a mature reader who understands the deeper problems the stories contain.

Richard von Volkmann, The Medical Doctor

He was born in Leipzig August 17, 1830, and died in Jena November 28, 1889. He is counted among the outstanding surgeons of the 19th century. Early on he devoted himself to the study of medicine and in 1867 became professor of surgery in the University of Halle. There he had a brilliant career as teacher, investigator, and practicing surgeon, and soon was ranked among the leading medical authorities of Germany. His published medical treatises were highly respected in Germany. In his university work and as surgeon-general during the Franco-Prussian War he did much to advance the knowledge of antiseptic surgery and to improve the way operations were performed in military hospitals and on the battlefield.

R. Arrowsworth
American Book Co.
New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, 1915
http://www.cingolani.com/vonVolkmann_bio.html

Preface



Terrible thunderstorms pound and shatter as they discharge their furious energy. But often they are followed by bleak days of dreary rain. So it was for us. The massive battles of those first weeks of the Franco-German War² were followed by monotony as we settled in to the siege of Paris.

We were like the wanderer who, during the worst of the storm, avoids thinking about the journey still ahead, because he is intent on finding shelter under a hospitable roof. But when that storm has passed, he steps over to the window again and again, looking out into the gray, rain shrouded landscape, restless, anxious to get on with the journey again. We also waited, impatient for that hour when we could return to our home hearth in bright sunlight.

But week after week, and month after month, that white flag³ did not appear on the ramparts of the forts!⁴

There we sat, when the day's work was done and evening descended upon the City by the Seine.⁵ Lonely, we were, at the firesides of the abandoned French villas and castles. And when the fire crackled and the sparks flew, strange and exotic dreams came over us. Like ghosts, they crept out from behind the dark curtains, throwing shadows on the brightly

² The Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71.

³ The signal of capitulation (by the French).

⁴ Allusion to the belt of fortifications with which Paris is surrounded, and which had to be taken by the German army.

⁵ City by the Seine (River) = Paris.

colored wallpaper and pressing in on the dreamer. And when that dreamer examined them in amazement, he found they were old acquaintances, some long-forgotten memories - probably from childhood. Because no one would believe what a German soldier dreams about, sitting in front of a French fireplace. Spécialité de rêveries allemandes. Allez donc! ⁶-

It was not different for your author. Now and then, when the snowflakes were blowing about outside, he took up his pen and tried to recreate those dreams on paper. And the field post office faithfully carried his musings home to the little folks for whom these stories were meant. When he finally returned to the German fatherland, to his own hearth, surrounded by his children, he was amazed to see how that loose collection of musings had become had become an actual book.

And so, may this book go into the world to commemorate a great and glorious Era, to which it can claim only one modest connection - that it grew out of that which we fought for and believed in - our love of the German people and way of life.

God bless our wonderful Fatherland!

Leipzig, on Easter 1871.

Richard v. Volkmann-Leander.

⁶ Specialty of German musings. There you go!



A LONG TIME AGO there lived a very skillful young organ builder. He crafted many organs, each one more wondrous than the previous. In time, he built an organ so miraculous that it would start to play by itself whenever a bride and groom, with whom the Lord God was particularly pleased, entered the church to be married.

When he had completed this organ, the master builder decided it was time to look for a bride for himself. He chose a beautiful and pious young woman and his wedding ceremony was arranged. With family and friends following them in a long procession, the bride and groom stepped over the threshold and into the church. The organ builder's heart was full of pride and ambition. As he entered into God's house, he wasn't thinking of the Lord, or even of his bride. Instead, he dwelt upon his skill as a master. No one could match his talent, he thought, and

⁷ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

everyone would be so amazed and admiring of him when the organ began to play all by itself.

But when he entered the church with his beautiful bride, the organ remained silent.

The organ builder's prideful heart was deeply wounded, and he vengefully decided that the fault must lie with his bride. She must not be faithful to him, he thought. He did not say a word to her all day, but that night he secretly gathered his belongings and left her.

He wandered for hundreds of miles, until he finally came to a strange land where no one knew him. He settled there and lived a quiet and lonely life for ten years.

8



In time, he was overcome with a nameless fear, but also a deep longing for the bride that he had so callously abandoned. He remembered how humble and lovely she had been and how viciously he had treated her.

He worked hard to quell his longing, but to no avail. Finally he decided he would go home and beg his wife's forgiveness. For many days and nights he travelled; the soles of his feet were sore and

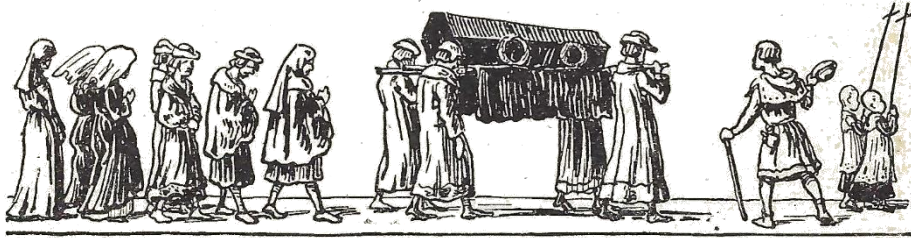
bleeding and still he walked. The closer he came to his home, the stronger his yearning grew. But the fear in him grew as well; would she be as loving and kind to him now, as she had been when she was a young bride?

At last in the distance, he saw the towers of his hometown glittering in the sun. He started to run then, faster and ever faster. The people who saw him shook their heads and said: "He's either crazy or he stole something."

As he entered the gates of the city, he ran headlong into large funeral procession. A multitude of people were walking behind the coffin and weeping. "Friends, who are you burying? For whom do you weep so piteously?" he asked.

⁸ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

“It is the beautiful wife of the master organ builder who so callously abandoned her,” they said. “She has been good and loving to so many of us, and we want to bury her in the cathedral.”



9

When he heard this, the organ builder said not one word. He silently walked beside the coffin with his head bowed. He helped to carry the casket. No one recognized him; but they heard him crying and assumed that he must be one of the many poor folks for whom the deceased woman had cared during her lifetime, so they did not disturb him.

The procession finally arrived at the church and -- wonder of wonders -- as the pallbearers stepped over the threshold, the organ began to play by itself; the music was as lovely as any that the people had ever heard. They gently placed the coffin before the altar. The organ builder leaned against a nearby pillar and listened as the music swelled to a mighty crescendo that shook the very foundations of the old cathedral.

His eyes closed; he was very tired from his long journey. But there was joy in his heart, because he knew that God had forgiven him. As the last note from the organ faded away, the master builder sank down upon the stone floor and he died. When the people raised his body from the ground, they recognized him. And so they opened his bride's coffin and laid the master builder inside it, next to his wife. As they closed the casket a second time, the organ began to play again, very softly. Soon the notes gently faded away. Since that time, the organ has never played by itself.¹⁰



⁹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

¹⁰ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.



11

THERE WAS ONCE A HOUSE, by a gate, on a meadow. A man and a woman lived there and they had one child, a tiny girl. They called her Goldkin. She was a lively, lovable little thing, and quick as a weasel. Early one morning, her mother went into the kitchen to get some milk. The little one got out of bed and walked to the door in her nightdress. It was a wonderful summer morning, and as she stood in the doorway, she thought: "It might rain tomorrow, so I better go exploring today." With only that one thought in her mind, she set off, running behind house and across the meadow, to the bushes in the distance. When she got there, the hazelnut bush frantically waved its branches and called out to her:

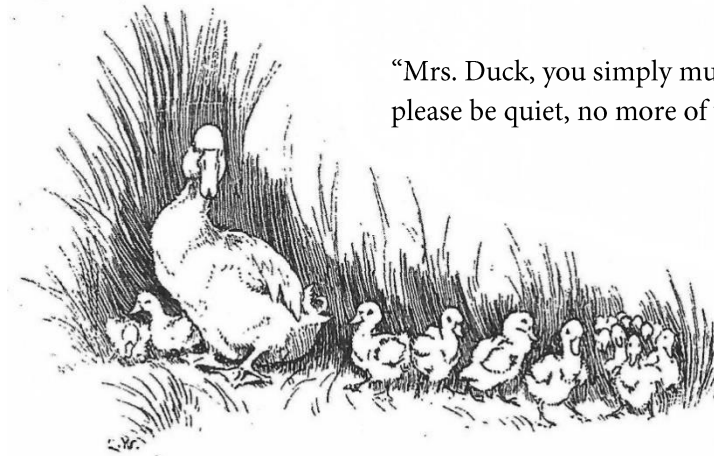
"What? No pants, my naked little child,
What are you doing out here in the Wild?
You have no shirt and only one sock,
where are your shoes -- you need to take stock!
Look, look, those ten little toes
you will see, they'll soon be froze.
Now be a good little Mouse,
Off you go, back to your house!!"

¹¹ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

But the little girl didn't listen and ran off through the bushes until she came to a pond. On the bank she met a Momma Duck and her brood of ducklings. They were golden yellow just like egg yoke. Momma Duck quacked loudly and furiously as she half flew, half ran at little Goldkin, snapping her beak open and shut, as if she meant to eat the little girl.

But little Goldkin wasn't afraid and she boldly confronted the duck:

12



“Mrs. Duck, you simply must stop all this nattering -- please be quiet, no more of your chattering!”

„Oh,“ said Momma Duck, „it's you, Golden Daughter! I didn't recognize you, but I know you would never hurt my little ones. Please don't be offended. How is your Mr. Papa and Mrs. Mama? How nice that you decided to come and visit with us. What an honor this is. You must have gotten up very early. So – you probably want to explore our pond. It is a beautiful place, don't you think?

When she finished quacking and nattering, Little Goldkin asked, “Tell me, Mrs. Duck, where did you get all those little canary birds?”

“Canaries??” repeated the duck, “I beg your pardon, but these are my little babies.”

“But they sing such lovely songs, and they don't have any feathers, only fuzzy hair. What do your little canaries get to eat?”

“They drink clear water and eat fine sand.”

¹² Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

“They can’t grow up if that’s all they get.”

“Oh yes, they can,” said Mrs. Duck; “the Lord God blesses them and, besides, the little ones find tender roots in the sand and little worms and snails in the water.”

Goldkin looked around and asked, “Don’t you have a bridge to get to the other side of the pond?”

“No,” said Mrs. Duck, “we don’t have a bridge. But if you want to get across, I will be happy to take you there.”

Mrs. Duck went into the water and broke off a big waterlily leaf. Goldkin sat on the leaf and the duck took the stem in her beak and swam to the other side, pulling the lily leaf along. All the little ducklings swam happily beside them.

“Thank you, Mrs. Duck,” said Little Goldkin, when they got to the far bank of the pond.

“No problem at all,” said the duck. “if you need me again, I’ll be happy to be of service. Give my regards to your parents. Goodbye.”

On the other side of the pond, there was another big green meadow and Goldkin wandered along for a while. Then she saw a stork. She walked over to him and said, “Good morning, Mr. Stork. What are you eating – it looks very green and it croaks.”



"Wiggle salad," replied the stork, "This is wiggle salad, little golden daughter."

"Can I have some too? I'm hungry!"

"Wiggle salad is not for you," said the stork.

Instead, he went to the brook, dove in deep with his long beak and brought forth a golden cup of milk and some bread to go with it. Then he lifted his

¹³ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

right wing and placed a little beaker of honey in front of the girl. Goldkin didn't have to be told twice; she sat right down and ate and drank. When she was full, she said:

"Thank you very much,
And good health to you, and a very long life!"

And off Goldkin went. In a little while, a small blue butterfly came flying along. "Little Blue One," said the girl, "do you want to play tag for a bit?" "That would be nice," said the butterfly, "but you mustn't grab my wings, so I don't lose my shimmery colours."

14

And so they ran and flew, and chased and played, as the case may be, all over the meadow, until evening. When dusk fell, Goldkin sat down and thought, I need to rest a bit and then I'll head home. Sitting there in grass, she noticed that the flowers 'round about were tired and seemed to be falling asleep. The daisy's head was nodding. She pulled herself upright once, looked around with glassy eyes in a golden face, then nodded off sleepily once more. There was a white Aster standing next to the daisy (it was its mother), who said:



'Little Daisy at close of day,
Hardly her head on her stalk will stay!'¹⁵

"Go to bed, my child." And, just like that, the little daisy nestled down and fell asleep. Its little white cap fell forward a bit and the white tips fell over its golden face. And then the Aster fell asleep too.

When Goldkin saw that everything around her was settled in for the night, she couldn't keep her eyes open either, and soon she was fast asleep, right there in the green meadow.

¹⁴ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

¹⁵ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

In the meantime, at home, Goldkin's mother had discovered that the girl was gone and she was frantic with worry, crying and running about and searching all over the house. She ran through all the rooms and searched all the nooks and crannies, looking under the beds and under the staircase. Then she went out onto the meadow, walked through the bushes and down to the pond. "But little Goldkin can't have gotten across to the other side of the pond," Mother said. "There's no bridge." (She didn't know about Mrs. Duck.)



16

And so she went back and searched the house all over again—every nook and every corner, under the beds and under the stairs. But she could not find her daughter. And again, she went outside, and searched the fields and bushes and the pond. All day long she looked. And she cried and cried. And Goldkin's father ran through all the streets of the town, asking everyone he met if they had seen his daughter. But nobody had.

And then, when darkness had settled in completely, one of heaven's twelve angels flew by the meadow. These angels are very special; every evening they fly around the whole world to see if any little child has gotten lost, so that they can bring it back to its mother. When the angel saw Goldkin lying asleep in the field, he gently lifted her up, without waking her. Then he flew over the town to see if there were any lights still on in the houses. When he saw a light in a living room, he said to himself, "that must be the house where this little girl belongs."

Without giving himself away, the angel peaked in the window where he saw a mother and a father sitting at a small table, crying. Under the table, they were holding hands.

Very quietly, the angel opened the door and laid the sleeping little girl under the staircase. Then he flew away.

The parents were still sitting at the table. Then the woman got up, lit another light and once more began searching the house.

¹⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

"Woman," said the man sadly, "you have already looked in vain in every nook and cranny and under the stairs. Let's to bed. Our Goldkin has probably fallen into the pond and drowned."

But the woman just kept searching. She shone her light under the stairs, and that's when she discovered her child lying there sleeping. She screamed with joy then, and the man hurried down the stairs. He saw his wife standing there, beaming with joy, their child in her arms. Goldkin slept soundly, never waking; she was so tired from her day in the meadow by the pond.

"Where was she? Where was she?" he shouted.

"She was lying under the stairs, fast asleep," replied the woman, "I don't understand it, I've looked under the stairs so often today."

Then the man shook his head and said: "This might have ended very badly, Mother, so we will just have to thank God that we have our little Goldkin back again!"

17



¹⁷ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

The Invisible Kingdom.

18



A YOUNG FARMER

called Jörg lived with his old father in a small house, which was a quarter of an hour away from the rest of the village, halfway up the mountain. Along with the house, there was so much good, arable land that neither of them had any worries. The forest began right behind the house, with oaks and beeches so old that the grandchildren of those who had planted them had been dead for more than a hundred years. There was also an old broken millstone - who knows how it got there. Whoever sat on the millstone had a wonderful view of the valley, and of the river that flowed through it, and the mountains that rose beyond the river. Here Jörg sat many evenings, when he had finished his work in

¹⁸ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

the fields, with his head on his hands and his elbows on his knees, dreaming, often for hours. Because he cared little about the people in the village, and was usually quiet and withdrawn, like people who think about all kinds of things are, people mockingly called him Dreamjörg. However, this left the young farmer completely indifferent.

The older he got, the quieter he became; and when his old father finally died, and he had buried him under a big old oak tree, Jörg became completely silent. When he sat on the old broken millstone, which he did much more often now than before, and looked down into the glorious valley, and saw how the evening mist rolled in at one end and slowly climbed up the mountains, how it then grew darker and darker, until the moon and the stars appeared in all their glory in the heavens: then his heart swelled with the wonder of it all. Because then the waves in the river began to sing, very softly at first, but soon very clearly for those who were listening. They sang about the mountains from where they had come, about the sea where they wanted to go, and about the mermaids who lived deep down at the bottom of the river. Then the forest began to rustle, very different from an ordinary forest, and talked of the most wonderful things. Especially the old oak tree that stood at his father's grave, which knew a lot more than all the other trees. And the stars high in the sky felt the greatest desire to fall down, down into the green forest and into the blue stream, and they shimmered and trembled like someone who can't hold on even one more minute. But the angels -- one stands behind every star -- held on to them tightly and said: "Stars, stars, don't be foolish! You are much too old for that, many thousands of years old, and even more! Stay in your place and behave with dignity! "-

19

It was a wonderful valley! - But only Dreamjörg saw and heard all this. The people who lived in the village had no idea; because they were quite ordinary. Every now and then they knocked down one of the old giant trees, sawed and chopped it up, and when they had



¹⁹ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

piled up a fine stack of firewood they'd say: "Now we can make coffee for a while." And in the river they did their laundry; that was very convenient for them. Of the stars, however, when they really sparkled, they said nothing more than: "It will be very cold tonight; if only our potatoes don't freeze to death." If poor Dreamjörg tried to show them a different way to think about the world, they just laughed at him. They were just ordinary people.

One day, when he was sitting on the old millstone again, he thought to himself about how alone he was in this big world. And then he fell asleep. He dreamed that a golden swing hung from the sky on two silver ropes. Each rope was tied to a star; but on the swing sat a charming princess. She was swinging so high that she flew down from heaven to earth and from earth back up to heaven again. Every time the swing came to the ground, the princess clapped her hands with joy and tossed him a rose. But suddenly the ropes broke and the swing with the princess on it flew far into the sky, on and on and on and on, until he could no longer see her.

Then he woke up and when he looked around, there was a large bouquet of roses on the millstone beside him. The next day he fell asleep again and dreamed the same thing. When he woke up the roses were there again.

It went on like that all week. Then Dreamjörg said to himself that there must be something true about the dream because he kept dreaming it. He locked his house and went to look for the princess.

After walking for many days, he saw from a distance a land where the clouds hung low down to the earth. He walked briskly towards it, and soon came to a large forest.

20



Suddenly he heard a fearful moaning and whimpering, and when he had approached the place from where it came, he saw a venerable old man with a silver-gray beard lying on the ground. Two disgustingly ugly, stark naked men held him down and were trying to strangle him. Dreamjörg looked around to see if he could find some weapon with which to fight off

²⁰ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

the two men, but he found nothing, and in fear of his life, he tore off a large tree branch. But no sooner had he grasped it than it turned into a mighty halberd²¹ in his hands. He rushed at the two monsters and ran them through, so that with a terrible howl they let go of the old man and ran away.

Then he helped the venerable old man up, consoled him and asked why the two naked fellows wanted to strangle him.

The old man said that he was the King of Dreams and that he had accidentally strayed into the realm of his greatest enemy, the King of Reality. As soon as the King of Reality noticed this, he had sent two of his henchmen to ambush him so that they could kill him.

"Did you do something wrong to the King of Reality?" asked Dreamjörg.

"Good Lord, no!" he was assured. "But the King of Reality easily becomes abusive towards others. That is in his character - and he especially hates me!"

"But the fellows he sent to strangle you were completely naked!"

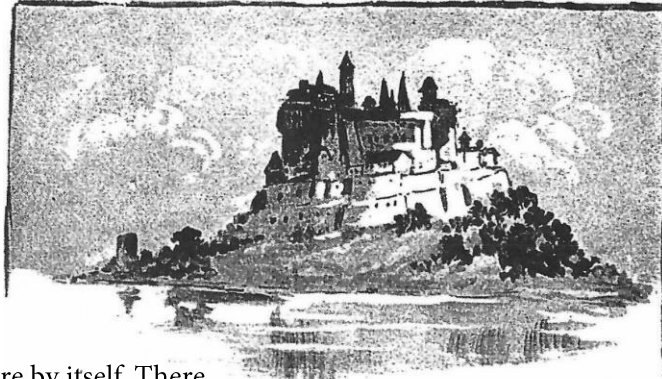
"Yes," said the King, "stark naked. That is fashionable in the Land of Reality. All the people there go naked, even the King, and they are not a bit ashamed. They are a hideous people! - But because you have saved my life, and I want to show my gratitude, I will give you a tour of my country. It is the most beautiful in the world, and Dreams are my subjects!"

Then the King of Dreams went on ahead, and Jörg followed him. When they came to the place where the clouds hung low down to the ground, the king pointed to a trap door which was so well hidden in the bush that you could never find it if you didn't know it was there. He pulled open the trapdoor and led his companion five hundred paces down into a brightly lit grotto, which stretched for miles in wonderful splendor. It was incredibly beautiful! There were castles on islands in the middle of great lakes, and the islands swam around like ships. If you wanted to go into a castle, you only had to stand on the bank and shout:

²¹ Halberd, also spelled halbert or halbard, weapon consisting of an ax blade balanced by a pick with an elongated pike head at the end of the staff. It was usually about 1.5 to 1.8 metres (5 to 6 feet) long. The halberd was an important weapon in middle Europe from the 14th through the 16th century.

'Island castle, float to me,
All your marvels let me see !'²²

23



Then the island floated to the shore by itself. There were also castles on the clouds; they flew slowly through the air. But if you called:

'Cloudland castle, come below,
Through your doors I fain would go!'²⁴

Then the clouds slowly lowered themselves. There were also gardens with flowers that smelled by day and shone by night; dazzling birds that told fairy tales and a lot of other wonderful things. Dreamjörg could barely contain his amazement and wonder.

"Now I want to show you my subjects, the Dreams," said the king. "I have three kinds. Good dreams for the good people, bad dreams for the bad ones, and also dream goblins. With these last, I sometimes have fun, because a king has to have fun sometimes.



First the King led Dreamjörg into one of the castles, which had such a tricky architecture that it looked downright funny: "This is where the dream goblins live," said the King, "a small, cocky, pranky folk. They don't do real harm, but they like to tease."

²⁵

"Come over here, little one," he called to one of the goblins, "and be serious for a

²² Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

²³ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

²⁴ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

²⁵ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

moment." The King said to Dreamjörg: "Do you know what the rogue does when I allow him to go up to earth once in a while? He runs into the closest house, looks for someone sleeping peacefully, pulls him out of bed, carries him up to the church tower and throws him off. Then he scurries down the tower stairs so that he gets to the bottom fast enough to catch his poor victim, carries him home again and tosses him into bed. The poor soul wakes with a terrible start, rubs the sleep out of his eyes, looks around in amazement and says: 'Oh dear God, it seemed as if I was falling from the church tower. It's a good thing that I was only dreaming.'"

"That's him???" exclaimed Dreamjörg. "He's been to see me before! But if he comes back again and I catch him, it will fare badly for him." No sooner had he said this than another dream goblin jumped out from under the table. He looked like a little dog, because he was wearing a very shaggy tunic, and he stuck out his tongue too.

"This one's not much better either," said the dream king. "He barks like a dog, but has the strength of a giant. When people get scared in dreams, he holds them by the hands and legs so that they cannot leave."

"I know him too," said Dreamjörg. "When you want to leave, it feels as if you were as rigid and stiff as a piece of wood. If you want to lift your arm, it won't work, and if you want to move your legs, they don't work either. Sometimes it isn't a dog, but a bear, or a robber, or something equally bad!"

"I will never allow them to visit you again," the king assured him. "Now come to the bad dreams, but do not be afraid, they will not harm you; they are only for the bad people." With that, they entered an enormous room, which was surrounded by a high wall and locked by a huge iron door. It was teeming with the most horrible figures and the most terrible monsters. Some looked like people, half like animals, some completely like animals. Frightened, Dreamjörg shrank back to the iron door. But the king spoke to him soothingly and said: "Don't you want to take a closer look at what bad people have to dream?" And he beckoned to a dream that stood close by; it was a hideous giant who had a mill wheel under each arm.

"Tell me what you're going to do tonight!" the king ordered him.

Then the monster pulled his head down to his shoulders and stretched his mouth to his ears, shook himself like someone who is really happy and said with a grin: "I'm going to the rich man who let his father starve. One day when the old man came and sat on the stone steps in front of his son's house and begged for some bread, the son came out and said to the servants: 'Chase that Jumping Jack away from my house at once!' So I will go to him tonight and pull him between these two mill wheels until all his bones are nicely broken and splintered. When he is really malleable and wiggly, I'll take him by the collar, shake him and say: 'See how beautiful you are now, you Jumping Jack!' Then he'll wake up, his teeth chattering and he'll shout: 'Wife, bring me another comforter, I'm freezing!' And when he falls asleep, I'll do it all over again!"

26

When Dreamjörg heard this, he forced his way out the iron door, dragging the king with him, and shouted: "I won't stay a moment longer with the bad dreams. That's horrible!"

Then the king led him into a splendid garden, where the paths were made of silver, the beds of gold, and the flowers of precious gemstones. This is where the good dreams went for walks. The first thing he saw was a Dream like a pale young woman with Noah's ark under one arm and a construction kit under the other.

"Who is that?" asked Dreamjörg.

"In the evening she always visits a little sick boy whose mother has died. During the day he is quite alone and nobody cares about him; but towards evening she goes to him, plays with him and stays all night. He falls asleep very early, that's why that dream leaves here early. The other dreams go much later. - Come along now; if you want to see everything, we have to hurry!"

Then they went deeper into the garden, among the good dreams. There were men, women, old people and children, all with lovely and good faces, dressed in beautiful clothes. Many of them carried all sorts of wonderful things, anything a heart could wish for. - Suddenly Dreamjörg stopped and screamed so loudly that all dreams turned around and looked at him.



²⁶ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

"What is wrong with you?" asked the king.

"That's my princess; she visited me so very often and gave me roses!" exclaimed Dreamjörg, quite delighted.

"Of course, of course!" replied the King. "That's her. Don't you think I've always sent you nice dreams? That's almost the nicest one that I have."

Then Dreamjörg ran to the princess, who was sitting on her little golden swing and rocking herself. As soon as she saw him coming, she jumped down and straight into his arms. He took her by the hand and led her to a golden bench. They both sat down and told each other how nice it was to see each other again. And when they were done, they started all over again. The King of Dreams, however, paced up and down the great path that went through the garden, his hands behind his back, and every now and then he would take out his watch and see what time it was. But Dreamjörg and the princess kept talking and talking. At last, the King went to them and said: "Children, that's enough now! You, Dreamjörg, are a long way from home, and I cannot keep you here overnight because I have no beds. Dreams don't sleep, but always have to go to the people on earth at night; and you, little princess, you have to get ready. Dress up all in pink today, and afterwards come to me so that I can tell you who you will appear to tonight and what you will say to him. "

When the Traumjörge heard this, he suddenly felt more courage than ever before in his life. He got up and said in a firm voice: "Lord King, I will never, ever leave my princess again. Either you have to keep me down here, or you have to give her to me on earth. I can't live without her, I love her too much! " As he said this, a tear the size of a hazelnut came to each eye.

"But Jörg, Jörg," replied the king, "it's the most beautiful dream I have! But so be it! You did save my life, after all. Take your princess and climb up to the earth with her. As soon as you arrive, take the silver veil from her head and throw it down again through the trap door. Then your princess will become flesh-and-blood, just like any other human child; for now she is only a dream! "

Traumjörge thanked him warmly and said: "Dear King, because you are so extremely generous, I would like to venture one more request. You see, I have a princess now, but I still lack a kingdom; and it is quite impossible that a princess can be without a kingdom. Can you get me one, even if it's a tiny one? "

The king replied: "Visible kingdoms, Dreamjörg, I do not have to give. But invisible ones; those I have and you shall get one -- one of the greatest and most wonderful ones that I still have."

Dreamjörg wanted to know how invisible kingdoms functioned, but the King assured him that he would soon understand all, and experience a true miracle, because that is how it is with beautiful and glorious invisible kingdoms.

27



"You see," said the king, "very unpleasant things can happen in ordinary, visible kingdoms. For example: if you are king

in an ordinary kingdom, and early one morning the minister comes to your bed and says: 'Your Majesty, I need a thousand dollars for the empire.' But then, when you open the state treasury,

you don't find a penny in it! What will you do then? Or, it could happen that you go to war and you lose. The other king, who has defeated you, marries your princess and he locks you in the tower. Such things cannot happen in an invisible kingdom!"

"But if we can't see it," said Dreamjörg, somewhat embarrassed, "of what use can our invisible kingdom be?"

"You strange man," said the king, touching his forefinger to Jörg's forehead, "you and your princess can see it! You see the castles and gardens, the meadows and forests that belong to the kingdom! You live in it, go for walks in it, and can do whatever you like with it; only other people can't see it."

Dreamjörg was delighted, because he was a little afraid that the people in the village would look at him strangely if he came home with a princess and became a king. Very touched,

²⁷ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

he said goodbye to the King of Dreams, climbed the five hundred steps with the princess, took the silver veil from her head and threw it down. Then he tried to close the trap door, but it was very heavy.

But he couldn't hold it and it dropped. There was a tremendous bang, almost as if many cannons were being fired all at once, and for a moment he lost consciousness. When he came to his senses, he was sitting on the old millstone in front of his house. The princess sat next to him, and she was flesh and blood like any ordinary human child. She held his hand, stroked it and said: "You dear, good, foolish man, for such a long time, you did not dare to tell me how much you loved me? Were you afraid of me?" -

The moon rose and lit up the river, the waves crashed upon the bank, and the forest rustled; but still they still sat and talked. Suddenly a small, black cloud seemed to float in front of the moon, and then something fell at their feet. It was a large folded cloth. Then the full moon shone brightly again. They picked up the cloth and spread it apart. It was very fine and folded hundreds of times, so that it took a lot of time to unravel. When they had it completely unfolded, it looked like a large map. There was a river in the middle, and on either side were towns, forests, and lakes. Then they realized that it was a kingdom and that the good Dream King had let it fall down from heaven for them. And when they looked at their little house, it had turned into a wonderful castle, with glass stairs, walls made of marble, wallpaper made of velvet and pointed towers with blue slate roofs. So they took each other by the hand and went into their castle. When they entered, their subjects were already gathered and they bowed deeply. Timpani and trumpets rang out, and pageboys walked ahead of them, scattering flowers. He was a king and she was a queen. -

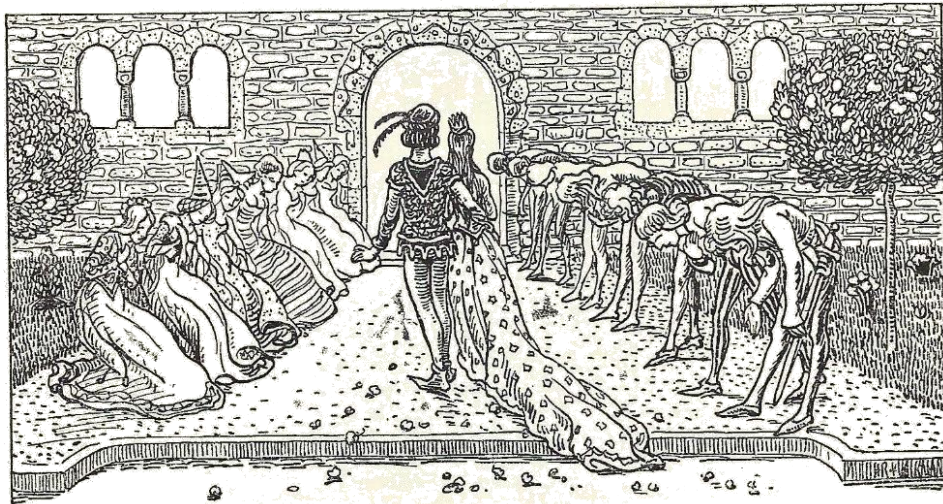
The next morning, however, word ran like wildfire through the village. Dreamjörg had come back and he'd brought a woman with him. "That'll be a good thing, too," people said. "I saw her this morning," one of the peasants interrupted, "as I went into the forest. She stood with him at the door. She's nothing special, a very ordinary person, small and thin. She was dressed quite poorly. And why wouldn't that be the case?! He has nothing, so she probably won't have anything either!"

So they gossiped, those stupid people; because they couldn't see that Jörg's bride was a princess. And in their simplicity they did not notice that the little house had turned into a big, beautiful castle -- because it was an invisible kingdom that had fallen from heaven just for Dreamjörg and his bride. For this reason, he did not care at all about the stupid people, but lived in his kingdom with his dearly beloved princess, and they were happy. In time,

they had six children, each one more beautiful than the other, and all were princes and princesses.

But nobody in the village knew any of this, because they were ordinary people and far too simple-minded to understand.

28





²⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

HOW THE DEVIL FELL INTO HOLY WATER



EVERYONE KNOWS THAT the devil is often unlucky. Yes, he is *so often* unlucky that when we meet a person who has a toothache, or whose boots are so badly worn he can hardly walk the cobblestone streets, or a man whose sweetheart sends him a letter on his birthday rejecting him – well, we call all those people “poor devils.”

One day the devil was sniffing around in the Cologne Cathedral³¹, hoping to catch a fat monk or an old prayer sister, when he stumbled and - splash! - he fell into the middle of

³⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

³¹ Kölner Dom.

the basin filled with holy water. You should have seen the faces he made, how he spluttered and snorted and how he scrambled to get out of that basin! When he finally got out, he shook himself like a wet poodle and slunk away as quick as he could! To add insult to injury, it was just around Christmas time and there was frost on the ground, so he was soon shaking with cold standing outside that church. But he'd gotten himself out of there so fast, because he was afraid that the good and pious folks within would notice his little mishap and would laugh at him.

"What do I do now?" he asked, as looked himself up and down. "I can't go home to hell; I dare not take that elevator. My grandmother will have my butt in a sling. ... I know, I'll go to Arabia, it's hot there too, and I can dry my clothes. Besides, they're slaughtering a lot of prisoners today - did I bring my opera glasses with me? "

So off he went to Arabia, to watch the slaughter, clapping vigorously and calling out -- "Bravo" -- when he was particularly pleased. And then, when his coat was completely dry he walked happily home to hell.



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³² Illustration by Louis William Wain.

But he had scarcely entered the room when he saw his grandmother. She took one look at him and her face turned violet-blue and sulfur-yellow and she shrieked:

"Look at you, you scoundrel!! You stink!! Have you been hanging around the churches again?" - Then the devil stuttered and sputtered and finally told her what had happened to him.³³



"Take off your coat," his grandmother ordered, "and get yourself to bed." And the devil scurried off, as commanded. He pulled the blue and red checkered feather bed over his ears so far that the black tips of his feet peeked out on the other end; he was very ashamed.

Grandmother grasped the coat gingerly, at the very edge of the collar, holding it as far away from herself as possible, like a cook grasping a dead mouse by the tail. (She held her nose with the other hand.) "Brrr!" she said,

and shook herself with revulsion. "This coat is disgusting!" Then she carried it outside to the gutter, where Hell's thick slime and sewer ran off into a molten sea. She put that coat into the sewer, soaked it for a while, then washed it thoroughly in the gutter. She then hung it over a chair by the fire.

When that fine piece of apparel was completely dry, and the devil finally stuck a leg out of the bed, ready to get up and put it back on, his Grandmother took the coat again and smelled it:

"Pooh!" she said and sneezed, "that church smell is so hard to get rid of." She fetched a brazier³⁴, sprinkled a few handfuls of chopped dog hair and shavings of horse hooves on the coals. When the smell began to waft, strong and rank, through the room, she held the coat over the brazier.

"Now," she said to the devil, "your coat is clean and you can be seen in decent company again! But I forbid anything like this to happen ever again! Do you understand me?"

³³ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

³⁴ A pan for holding burning coals.



**CATHEDRAL AT
COLOGNE**





A VERY RICH and distinguished knight lived in splendour and comfort. He was proud and very hard on the poor. Because of this, God let his body rust on one side, as punishment. His left arm rusted, as did his left leg; in fact, his whole body seized up, right up the middle. Only his face remained free.

35

The knight put a glove on his left hand, and had it sewn tightly around his wrist. He never took it off, day or night, so that no one would see how rusty his hand was. But he thought about his situation, dove deep into his consciousness, and tried to start a new way of life. He rejected his old friends and his drinking buddies, and took a beautiful and pious wife.

³⁵ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Indeed, she had heard some bad things about her knight, but because his face had remained attractive, when she was alone and thought about it, she only half believed the rumours, and when she was with him, she enjoyed his company, and so she didn't believe the rumours at all. That's why she accepted his proposal and took him as her husband. But after the wedding, on that first night, she discovered why he never removed the glove from his left hand, and she was terribly shocked. But she did not him know; only said to her husband the next morning that she wanted to go to pray in a small chapel that stood deep in the forest.

Next to the chapel there was a hermitage where an old hermit lived. He had previously lived in Jerusalem for a very long time and was so holy that people from far and wide made pilgrimages to meet with him. She intended to ask him for advice.

When she told the hermit everything, he went into the chapel and prayed to the Virgin Mary for a long time. When he came out again, he said: "You can still redeem your husband, but it will be difficult. If you start on this pilgrimage, but do not finish the task, then you, yourself will rust. Your husband has done a lot of injustice in his life; he has been very proud and hard on the poor. You must go begging for him, barefoot and in rags



like the poorest beggar woman. You must do this for as long as it takes to beg and collect a hundred gold guilders³⁶. Then your husband will be redeemed. Once you have done this, you must take his hand, go to church with him, and put the hundred gold guilders in the church basin for the poor. If you do this, God will forgive your husband all his sins, the rust will come off, and his human body will be restored."³⁷

³⁶ Guilder is the English translation of the Dutch and German *gulden*, originally shortened from Middle High German *guldin pfenninc* "gold penny". This was the term that became current in the southern and western parts of the Holy Roman Empire for the Fiorino d'oro (introduced 1252). Hence, the name has often been interchangeable with *florin* (currency sign *f* or *fl.*).

³⁷ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

"I want to do that," the knight's wife said, "no matter how difficult it is for me and no matter how long it takes. I want to redeem my husband, because only his body is rusted, not his heart, this I definitely believe!"

Then she went away, deep into the forest. In a short time, she met an old woman who was looking for firewood. She was ragged and wore a dirty skirt over which was a cloak that had so many stains that it was impossible to know what the original colour had been; the rain and sunshine had bleached the cloak almost colourless.³⁸

"If you want to give me your skirt and your cloak, old mother," the knight's wife said, "I'll give you all the money I have in my pocket, and my silk clothes too, because I would like to be poor."

The old woman looked at her in amazement and said: "I'm happy to do as you ask, little daughter, if you're serious. I have seen a lot in this world, and discovered that many people want to get rich, but that someone might want to be poor, that's a first for me. You, with your silky hands and your cute little face, might be surprised at the taste of poverty!"

But the knight's wife had already begun to undress and she looked so serious and was so sad that the old woman realized she was not joking. So she handed over the skirt and cloak, helped the knight's wife put them on, and then asked:

"What do you want to do now, my defenseless one?"

"I will go begging, old mother!" answered the knight's wife.

"Begging? Well, don't worry, there's no shame in it. At the door of heaven many will have to do that – those who have not learned to do it on earth. - But I still want to teach you the begging song:

³⁹

To beg and to whine
Through shower and shine,
Through hunger and thirst
We beggars are nursed.

³⁸ :“der (Rock) war aus ebenso vielen flecken zusammengesetzt wie weiland das Heilige Römische Reich“: The coat had as many desperate patches (of land) as the Holy Roman Empire.

³⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



Have pity, ye wealthy,
And grant me a dole,
Bread in the wallet,
Or soup in the bowl.

With wallets of leather,
And clothes patched together,
Hailstorms may beat on us,
! Winds may dishevel,
But when we are lucky
Then ho for a revel!⁴⁰

"It's a pretty song, isn't it?" said the old woman. With that, she threw on her silk clothes, jumped into the bush, and was gone.

The knight's wife, however, wandered through the forest and after a while she met a farmer who had gone out to look for a maid because it was harvest time and he needed workers. Then the knight's wife stopped, held out her hand and said: "Do you have something, anything, to give me, oh, just a bite!" But she didn't say the other verses because she didn't like them. The farmer looked at the woman, and since he found that she was neat and healthy in spite of her rags, he asked her if she would not like to be a maid working for him.



41

⁴⁰ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

⁴¹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

"I'll give you a cake for Easter, a goose for St. Martin's Day⁴², and a penny and a new dress for Christmas. Are you satisfied with that?"

"No," replied the knight's wife, "I have to go begging. God wants it that way."

This made the farmer angry, so he scolded and said scornfully: "God wants it that way? Hey? You probably had lunch with him? What? Lentils with sausages, right? Or maybe you're his aunt, and you know exactly what he wants? You are lazy. Good for the knout⁴³, not good enough for the hangman!" Then he went on his way, leaving her standing and giving her nothing. That's when the knight's wife realized that begging was very, very hard.

But she went on and after a time she came to a place where the road divided. Two stones stood at the fork. On one of the stones a beggar sat with his crutch. Now, the knight's wife was tired, and she thought she would sit down on the other stone for a short while, to rest. No sooner had she done this than the beggar struck her with his crutch and shouted:



"Get away, you Lazy Lizzy! You'll turn off my customers with your rags and your sugar-sweet face. I've got dibs on this corner. Get lost, unless you want my crutch to work like the bow of a fiddle on your back???"

⁴² Saint Martin's Day, also known as the Funeral of Saint Martin, Martinstag or Martinmas, as well as Old Halloween and Old Halloween Eve,^{[1][2]} is the Funeral day of Saint Martin of Tours (else Martin le Miséricordieux) and is celebrated on 11 November each year. The feast was widely seen as the preferred time for the butchering of "Martinmas beef" from prime, fattened cattle, geese, other livestock and the ending of the toil of autumn wheat seeding (sowing).^[3] Hiring fairs were more abundant than usual, where farm laborers could choose, or others had, to seek new posts. See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Martin%27s_Day

⁴³ Whip.

⁴⁴ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

The knight's wife sighed, got up, and walked on until her feet were torn to bloody ribbons. At last she came to a big, strange city. Here she stayed, sat down on the church pathway and begged; and at night she slept on the church steps. So she lived day in, day out. On some days, she received a penny, others days only a half penny. Some folks gave her nothing, or even scolded her, as the farmer had done. It was a very hard row to hoe to get to a hundred gold guilders. When she had begged for three quarters of the year, she had only saved one guilder. And just then, she gave birth to a beautiful baby boy whom she called "Redeemed" because she still hoped that she would save her husband in the end.

She tore a strip off the bottom of her cloak, a good cubit wide, so that the coat only reached her knees, wrapped the child in it, took it on her lap and continued to beg. And when the child did not want to sleep, she rocked it and sang:

Hush thee, baby, on my arm,
Sleep, my little homeless child;
Though thy father's halls are warm,
Here the wind is loud and wild.

He is clad in silk and gold,
Drinks red wine and eats white bread;
Could he see us starved and cold,
Grief would surely strike him dead.

Cold and hunger bring us rest,
We are happier far than he:
Hush thee, baby, on my breast,
Jesu, save my lord for me!⁴⁵

Often people stopped to see the poor young beggar woman with her beautiful child and gave her more than they had before. So she had faith and no longer cried, because she knew that she would certainly redeem her husband if only she persevered.

Meanwhile, when his young wife did not return, the knight in his castle was deeply saddened, because he said to himself: *She has seen the truth and has left you.*

First, he went into the forest to see the hermit to hear whether she had been in the chapel and prayed there. But the hermit was very curt and abrupt, saying only:

⁴⁵ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.



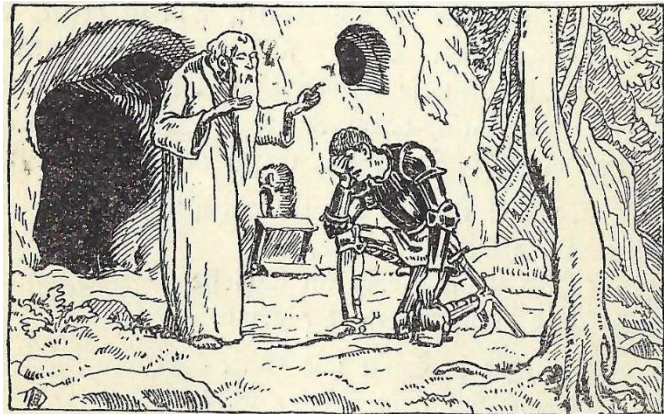
"Didn't you live in luxury? Weren't you proud and hard on the poor? Didn't the good Lord let you rust nearly to death as a punishment? Your wife did rightly when she left you. We don't put good and rotten apples in the same box, because then they will all rot! "

The knight sat down on the ground, took off his helmet and wept bitterly.

When the hermit saw this, he became friendlier and said: "Since I see that your heart has not yet rusted, I want to advise you: Do good, have faith in God and visit his churches, and you will find your wife again."

46

Then the knight left his castle and rode all over the world. Wherever he found poor people he provided for them, and whenever he saw a church he went in and prayed. But he couldn't find his wife. Almost a year had passed before he came to the town where his wife was sitting on the church path, begging. He made his way to the church to pray. The woman recognized him from afar, for he was tall and stately and wore a golden helmet with a vulture's claw on the pommel, and it shone from afar. She was dismayed because she had only saved two gold guilders, so she could not yet redeem him.



47

⁴⁶ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

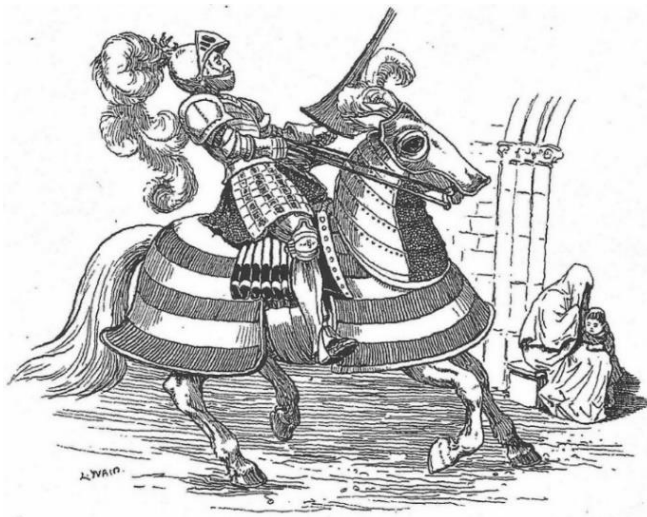
⁴⁷ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

She pulled her cloak low over her head so that he shouldn't recognize her, and crouched down so that he wouldn't see her snow-white feet, for her cloak only went down to her knees since she had torn off the strip for the child. But when the knight walked past her, he heard her sobbing softly, and when he saw her ragged and patched cloak and the beautiful child on her lap, also only wrapped in rags, it hurt him deep in his soul. He came up to her and asked her what he could do to help. But the woman didn't answer, and no matter how she tried to control herself, she couldn't help but sob softly. Then the knight took out his purse, in which there was much more than a hundred gold guilders. He placed it on her lap and said: "I'll give you everything I have left, even if it means that I have to beg to get back home."

Then the cloak fell off the woman's head without her wanting it, and the knight saw that it was his own wedded wife to whom he had given the money. Despite her rags, he took her in his arms and kissed her, and when he heard that the child was his son, he hugged and kissed the child as well. Then the woman took her husband, the knight, by the hand, led him into the church and put the money on the church basin. She said, "I wanted to redeem you, but you have redeemed yourself."

And so it was; for when the knight stepped out of the church the curse was lifted and the rust that covered his entire left side was gone. He lifted his wife and the child onto his horse. He, himself, walked beside them as they travelled back to his castle. They lived happily together for many years. The knight never stopped doing good deeds and his people loved him for his kindness.

As for the beggar rags that his wife had worn, the knight hung them in a beautiful shrine, and every morning when he got up he went to the shrine, gazed upon those rags and said: "This is my morning devotion; the Lord God understands my meditation. He knows that I will attend church with pleasure and anticipation evermore."



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⁴⁸ Illustration by Louis William Wain.





50

THE KING OF MACROONIA, who had been in his prime for some time, had just gotten up and was sitting unclothed in the chair by the bed. His minister stood before him and held out his stockings, one of which had a large hole in the heel. But although the minister had turned the stocking with great care so that the king would not notice the hole, and although the king usually paid more attention to stylish boots than to stockings, this time the hole did not escaped the royal eye. Horrified, the king took the stocking out of the minister's hand, and stuck his finger through the hole right up to his knuckle. He said with a sigh:

"What good does it do to be a king if I don't have a queen to help with these matters! What do you think, should I take a wife?"

"Your Majesty," replied the minister, "that is a sublime idea; an idea that might even have risen to my humble mind, if I had not felt that your Majesty would deign to utter it himself today!"

⁵⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

"Nice!" replied the king, "but do you think that it will be so easy for me to find a woman suitable for a king?"

"Pah!" said the minister. "They come a dime a dozen!"

"Don't forget that I have very high expectations. I will only accept a princess if she is smart and beautiful! And then there is one more criteria to which I attach particular importance: you know how much I like to eat gingerbread cookies. In my entire Kingdom there is not a single person who knows how to bake them, at least, how to bake them properly, not too hard and not too soft, but just a bit crispy: my princess-wife must be able to bake gingerbread cookies!"

When the minister heard this, he was shocked. But he quickly pulled himself together and replied: "A king like Your Majesty will no doubt find a princess who knows how to bake gingerbread cookies."

"Well, let us begin the royal search together then!" replied the king; and on that same day, in the company of the minister, he began to tour the various kingdoms in his neighbourhood where he knew there were princesses available to be given in marriage. But in the end, there were only three princesses who were beautiful and clever enough to please the king. None of them could bake gingerbread cookies.

"Of course I can't bake gingerbread cookies," said the first princess when the king asked her about it, "how about nice little almond cakes. Would you be satisfied with those?"

"No!" replied the king, "they have to be gingerbread cookies!"

The second princess, when he put the same question to her, clicked her tongue and said angrily: "Give me a break from your foolishness! There are no princesses who can bake gingerbread cookies."

The most catastrophic interview involved the third princess, although she was the prettiest and the cleverest. She did not even let the King get a word in edgewise. Before he could say a thing, she asked whether he knew how to play the Jew's harp? And when he said no, she gave him a gentle letdown. She said she was sincerely sorry, but she loved to hear the music of the Jew's harp so much that she had resolved not to marry any man who could not play it.

So the king drove back home with his minister, and when he got out of the carriage he said, sounding very depressed: "So that was all for nothing!"

But a king must have a queen, and a so long time later, he summoned the minister and told him that he had given up on finding a woman who could bake gingerbread cookies and had decided to marry one of the three princesses that they had visited. "It's the one who knows how to bake the little almond cakes," he added. "Go and ask if she wants to be my wife."

The next day the minister came back and said that that princess was no longer available. She had married the king of the land where the capers grow.

"Well then go to the second princess!" But the minister came home again, without a princess in tow. The old king had said he was very sorry, but unfortunately his daughter had died and so he could not give her away in marriage.

The king thought about his situation for a long time, but because he absolutely wanted a queen, he ordered the minister to visit the third princess again. Perhaps she had changed her mind in the meantime. The minister had to obey, although he took very little pleasure in his mission, especially when his wife told him that the trip would certainly be a useless waste of time. But the king anxiously waited for his return, especially because he remembered the issue of the Jew's harp, and the memory really annoyed him.

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The third princess, however, received the minister very cordially and said to him that it was true, she had only wanted a man who knew how to play the Jew's harp. But dreams are illusions, especially the dreams of one's youth! She saw that her wish could not be fulfilled, and since the king had otherwise pleased her very much, she wanted to take him as husband.



⁵¹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Then the minister drove back as fast as the horses could gallop. The king embraced him and gave him a metal of honor and a shoulder insignia. Colorful flags were hung in the cities, garlands were hung on all the houses and flowers strewn in the streets. The wedding was such a lavish affair that the people spoke of nothing else for a fortnight.

The king and the young queen lived in happiness and joy for a whole year. The king had forgotten all about the gingerbread cookies and the queen about the Jew's harp.

One day, however, the king got out of bed on the wrong side. Everything went badly. It rained all day. The royal orb⁵² fell and the little cross on top of it broke off. The court artist arrived with the new map of the kingdom, and when the king looked at it, he saw that the country was painted red instead of blue as he had ordered. And -- the last straw -- the queen had a headache.

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And so, for the first time, the couple quarreled. The next morning they didn't even know why, or if they did, they didn't want to remember. In short, the king was grumpy and the queen was snippy. She insisted on getting the last word. After they had argued back and forth for a long time, the queen finally shrugged her shoulders and said disdainfully:

"I thought you were finally going to shut up and stop criticizing everything before your eyes! You can't even play the Jew's harp."

No sooner had these words escaped her when the king interrupted and replied poisonously: "And you can't even bake gingerbread cookies!"

The queen was taken aback and, for a change, she did not answer back. She became very quiet. Both of them parted without exchanging

⁵² Orb: About the size of a fist, a golden ball symbolizing the globe with a cross on it as part of the imperial insignia.

⁵³ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

another word, each to his own room. The queen sat down in the corner of her sofa and cried and thought to herself: What a foolish woman I am! What was I thinking? I really couldn't have been much dumber!

The king, for his part, paced up and down his room, rubbing his hands and saying: "It's really lucky for me that my wife can't bake gingerbread cookies! Otherwise I would have had nothing to say when she accused me of not being able to play the Jew's harp!"

After repeating this at least three or four times, he grew ever happier. He began to whistle his favorite tune, then looked at the large picture of the queen that was hanging in his room, climbed up on a chair and used his handkerchief to wipe a spider thread that was hanging down over the queen's nose, and finally said: "She must have been quite angry, the good little woman! I'll go and see what she's doing!"

With that, he went out the door into the long hallway along which all the rooms lay. But because everything had gone wrong that day, the valet had forgotten to light the lamps, although it was already eight o'clock in the evening and pitch black.

So the king put his hands out in front of him, so as not to bump into anything. He padded his hands carefully along the wall when he suddenly felt something soft. "Who's there?" he asked.

"It's me," replied the queen.

"What are you looking for, my darling?"

"I wanted to ask your forgiveness," said the queen, "because I have offended you so badly."

"You don't need to do that at all!" said the king, and hugged her. "I am more guilty than you and I have long since forgotten everything. But, you know, we have to make a law in our kingdom. Two phrases are forbidden under the penalty of death, 'Jew's harp' and -"

"And 'gingerbread cookies'," said the queen, laughing, while she secretly wiped a few tears from her eyes. And that's the end of that story.

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⁵⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.





Young Man Playing a Jew's Harp, 1621, Dirck van Baburen



Jew's Harp



55

A YOUNG FARMER, who just could not seem to become successful, sat on his plow and rested for a moment to wipe the sweat from his face. An old witch came creeping by and called to him: "Why are you struggling so hard when its not getting you anywhere? Walk straight for two days until you come to a large fir tree, standing in a clearing in the forest. It towers over all the other trees. If you cut it down, your success is guaranteed."

The farmer did not have to be told twice; he took his axe and set out. After two days he found the fir. He immediately started to fell it, and as it toppled over and hit the ground with great force, a nest with two eggs fell from its highest branches. The eggs rolled out and onto the ground and cracked. As they broke, a young eagle came out of one egg and a little gold ring fell from the other. The eagle quickly grew in size, ever bigger until it was about half the height of a man. It shook its wings as if to try them out, then rose a bit above the earth. He called back to the young farmer:

⁵⁵ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

"You have liberated me! Take the ring that was in the other egg as a gift! It is a wishing ring. If you turn it around on your finger and state a wish, it will soon come true. But that ring can only grant one wish. When that is done, the ring will have lost all further power and will be just like any ordinary ring. So think carefully what you wish for, so that you don't regret it later."

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Then the eagle rose high in the air, hovered for a long time in great circles above the head of the farmer, and then shot like an arrow towards tomorrow.

The farmer took the ring, put it on his finger, and started walking home. That evening he reached a town. A goldsmith stood in the doorway of his shop where he had many valuable rings for sale. Then the farmer showed him his ring and asked what it was worth. "Not so much as a penny!" replied the goldsmith. Then the farmer laughed out loud and told him that it was a wishing ring and worth more than all the rings, combined, that the goldsmith had in his shop. Now, the goldsmith was a devious, wicked fellow. He invited the farmer to stay with him for the night and said: "To accommodate a man such as you with such a treasure brings good luck; stay with me!" He entertained him most generously, with wine and smooth words. But while the young farmer slept that night, the goldsmith pulled the ring from his finger and replaced it with an identical, ordinary ring instead.



The next morning the goldsmith could hardly wait for the farmer to leave. He woke him early in the morning and said: "You still have a long way to go. It is better if you leave here early."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

⁵⁷ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

As soon as the farmer was gone, the goldsmith hurried into his room, closed the shutters so that no one could see anything, then bolted the door behind him. He stood in the middle of the room, turned the ring and shouted: "I want to have a hundred thousand Thaler⁵⁸ immediately."

No sooner had he said this than it began to rain thalers, hard, shiny thalers, buckets of them came pouring down. The thalers struck the goldsmith on the head, shoulders and arms. He began to scream pitifully and wanted to run to the door, but before he could reach it and unlock it, he fell to the ground, bleeding all over. But the rain of money did not stop, and soon the floor collapsed under the weight, and the goldsmith and the money fell into the deep cellar. It kept raining until all of the one hundred thousand coins had come down. And then the goldsmith lay dead in the cellar, buried under all his money. The neighbors, alerted by the noise, rushed over and when they found the goldsmith dead, they said: "It is a great misfortune when one receives one's blessings so generously." They buried the goldsmith in the churchyard and his money was distributed among his heirs.



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Meanwhile the farmer went home happily and showed his wife the ring. "Now we cannot fail, dear woman," he said. "Our happiness is assured. We just need to consider carefully what we want to wish for."

⁵⁸ A Thaler, or Taler, is one of the large silver coins minted in the states and territories of the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg monarchy during the Early Modern period. A thaler size silver coin has a diameter of about 40 mm (1½") and a weight of about 25 to 30 grams, or roughly 1 ounce.

⁵⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



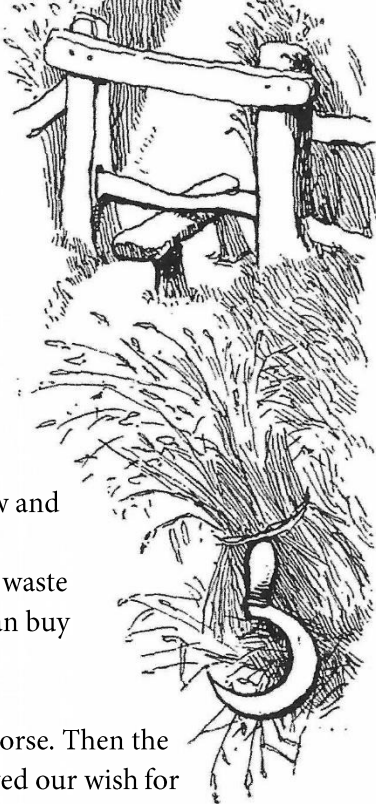
The woman immediately had good advice. "What do you think," she said, "if we wished for more land? We have so little. There's that gusset that runs between our two fields and separates them; we could wish for that."

"It might be worth the effort," replied the man, "to work hard for a year and, with a little luck, maybe we could just buy it." So the man and woman worked hard for a year. And luckily the harvest was very plentiful, so that they could buy the gusset and they still had a bit of money left over. "Do you see!" said the man, "we have the gusset and we still have a free wish."

The woman said it would be good if they wished for a cow and a horse. "Wife," replied her husband again, the remaining money jingling in his trouser pocket, "why do we want to waste our wish on such rubbish. If we work another year, we can buy the cow and the horse in the normal way."

And so it was; a year later, they had earned the cow and horse. Then the man rubbed his hands together happily and said: "We saved our wish for another year and still got everything we wanted. How lucky we are!" But the woman urged her husband to finally use the wish.

"I don't even know you anymore," she replied angrily. "In the past you always moaned and complained and wished for all sorts of things, and now that you can have whatever you want, you slave and slog away, and you're satisfied with every little thing. You're



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⁶⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

letting the best years pass us by. You could be a big, wealthy farmer, with all your chests full of money – but you can't make up your mind what wish to choose."

"Stop your eternal whining and complaining," replied the farmer. "We're both still young, and life is long. There is only one wish in that ring, and it can easily be wasted. Who knows what the future will bring; we may yet need the ring for something unexpected. Do we want for anything? Haven't we come up in the world since we have had the ring? Aren't people amazed at our success? So be reasonable. Meanwhile, you can always daydream about the things we might wish for in the future."



That was the end of the matter for a time. And it really seemed as if the ring had brought blessings to the household. From year to year, the chests filled up and the storerooms were well stocked.

After many years, the poor farmer became a wealthy landowner. He worked hard with his farmhands throughout the days and the seasons, as if he wanted to earn the whole world, but in the evenings after supper, he was contented and sat at ease and on his porch; his neighbors wishing him good health as they passed by.

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So the years passed. Now and then, when they were alone and no one could overhear, the woman still reminded her husband of the ring and made all sorts of suggestions for possible wishes. But since he always replied that there was still plenty of time, and that the best ideas always came to mind last, she mentioned the ring less and less, and in time, rarely talked about it at all. The farmer himself turned the ring around on his finger twenty times a day, but he was careful not to express a wish.

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Thirty, then forty years passed, and the farmer and his wife were now old and snow-white, but the wish remained unspoken. Then God showed them his favor and let them both die together, in peace, one blessed night.



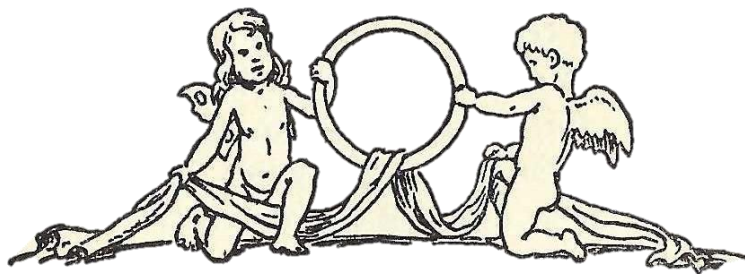
⁶¹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

⁶² Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Children and grandchildren stood around their two coffins and wept, and when one of them tried to take the ring from his father's finger and keep it as a remembrance, the eldest son said:

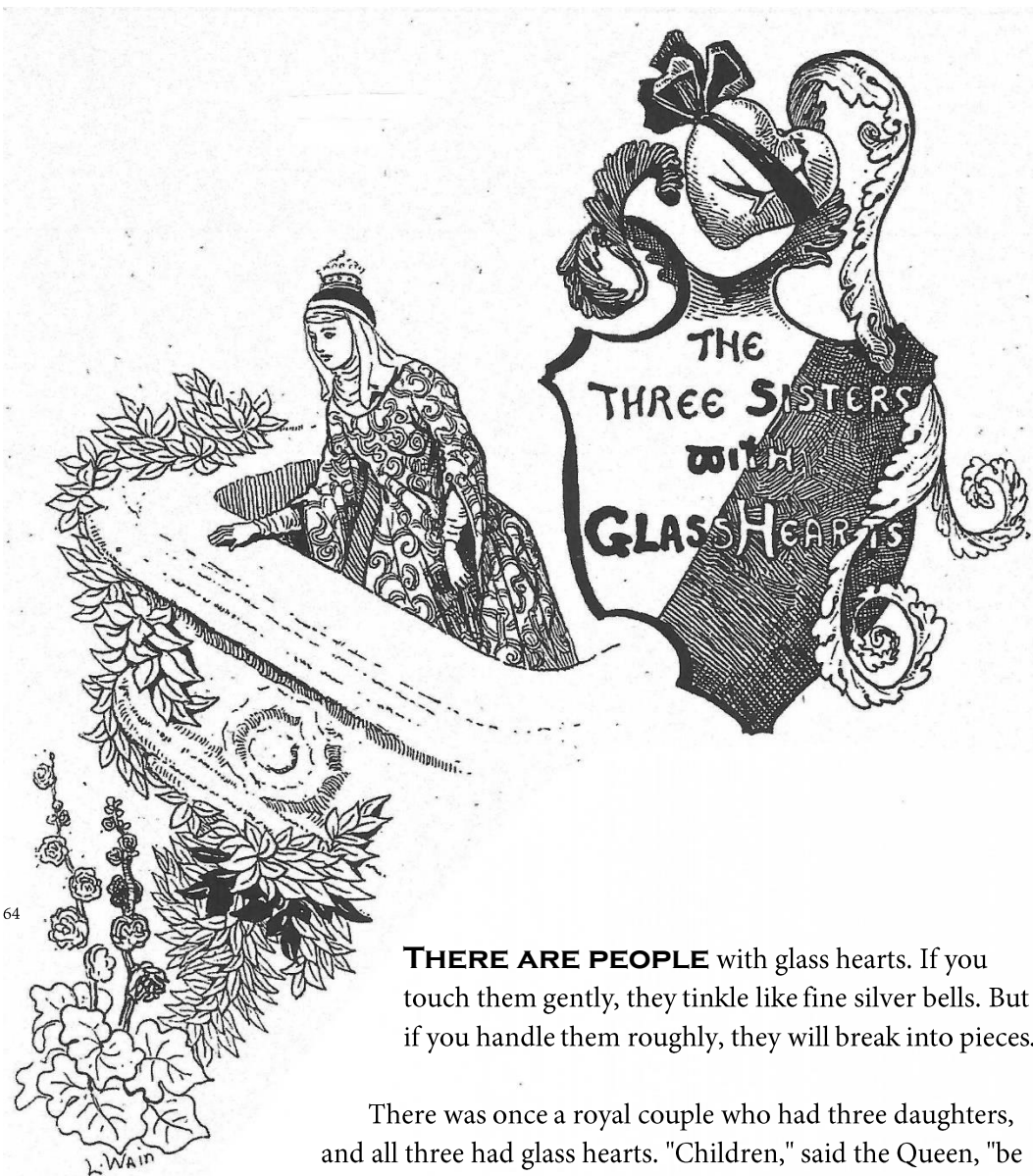
"Let Father take his ring with him to the grave. All his life, he had a secret bond with it; it was a dear keepsake. And our Mother looked at the ring so often; maybe she gave it to our father in her younger days."

So the old farmer was buried with the ring, which was supposed to be a wishing ring but wasn't one at all. And yet it brought such luck into the household; more than any person could wish for. Right and wrong are nebulous matters; and bad things in good hands are still worth much more than good things in bad ones.



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⁶³ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



64

THERE ARE PEOPLE with glass hearts. If you touch them gently, they tinkle like fine silver bells. But if you handle them roughly, they will break into pieces.

There was once a royal couple who had three daughters, and all three had glass hearts. "Children," said the Queen, "be careful with your hearts, they are fragile wares!" And so they were.

One day, however, the eldest sister leaned out of the window over the parapet and looked down into the garden as the bees and butterflies flew around in the flowerbeds. At the same time, the stone pressed against her heart: Crash! It felt like something shattered, and she collapsed and died.

⁶⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Some time later, the second daughter drank a cup of coffee that was too hot. There was another sound like a glass cracking, only slightly finer, and then she too collapsed. Her mother picked her and carefully examined her. To her delight, she soon realized that her daughter was not dead, and that her heart had only cracked. But it did not break.

"What should we do with our daughter now?" puzzled the king and queen. "She has a crack in her heart, and even if it is slight, it could easily break apart completely. We have to be very careful with her."

But the princess said: "Just leave me be! Sometimes, when something cracks but doesn't break, it becomes very strong and lasts a long time!"

In the meantime the king's youngest daughter had grown up and was so beautiful, good, and kind that princes flocked from all over and tried to woo her. But the old king had become wise through misfortune, and he said: "I only have one whole daughter, and she also has a glass heart. If I wed her to anyone, it will have to be a king who is also a glazier⁶⁵ and knows how to handle fragile glass hearts." But there wasn't anyone among the many royal suitors who was also a glazier and could work with such delicate glassware, and so they all had to leave.

There was a young man in the king's castle who was almost finished his training as a nobleman. He had to carry the train of the youngest daughter three more times, and then he would graduate as a nobleman. When he had done so, the king congratulated him and said to him: "You have completed your training and are now a nobleman. I thank you. You can go."

⁶⁵ A glazier is a tradesman responsible for cutting, installing, and removing glass (and materials used as substitutes for glass, such as some plastics). They also refer to blueprints to figure out the size, shape, and location of the glass in the building.



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When he had carried the train of the princess that very first time, the young nobleman saw that she had a very royal gait. When he carried it for her the second time, the princess said: "Let go of the train for a moment, give me your hand and lead me up the stairs, but gracefully, as befits a noble boy who leads a king's daughter." As he did so, he saw that she also had a very royal hand. But she also noticed something; but what it was, I will only tell you later. Finally, when he was carrying her train for the third time, the king's daughter turned around and said to him: "How wonderful you are to carry my train! No one has ever carried it so charmingly." Then the noble boy noticed that she was also very well spoken. But now he was done with his training and was a nobleman. The king had thanked him, congratulated him, and said he should leave.

When he left, the king's daughter was standing at the garden door and she said to him: "You carried my train so charmingly, like no other. If only you were a glazier and a king!"

To which he replied that he would do his best to become both. If she would only wait for him, he would certainly come back for her.

So he went to a master glazier and asked him if he could use an apprentice. "Yes," the master replied, "but you have to study with me for four years. In the first year, you learn to get the rolls from the bakery and to wash, comb and dress the children. In the second, you learn to smear the cracks with putty, in the third, to cut and install the glass, and in the fourth, you become a master."

⁶⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

Then young nobleman asked the master glazier if it would be possible to start at the end, because that would be faster. But the master advised him that a proper glazier always has to start from the beginning, otherwise nothing good would come of it.

The young nobleman was satisfied with that. So in the first year, he fetched the rolls from the bakery, washed and combed the children and dressed them. In the second, he smeared the cracks with putty, in the third, he learned to cut and install glass, and in the fourth, he became a master. Then he put on his nobleman's clothes again, said goodbye to his master and thought about how he could go about becoming a king.

While he was walking along the street, completely lost in thought, and staring down at the cobble stones, a man came up to him and asked if he had lost something, otherwise why was he staring at the ground? The young nobleman replied that although he had not lost anything, he was indeed looking for something, namely a kingdom; and he asked the man if he knew what one had to do to become king.

"If you were a glazier," said the man, "I would have advice to give you."

"But I am a glazier!" he replied, "I just finished my training!"

Then the man told him the story of the three sisters with the glass hearts, and how the old king wanted to marry his youngest daughter to a glass maker. "At first," he said, "there was still a condition that the glazier who married the princess had to be a king, but since no one can be found who is both a glazier and a king at the same time, the old king has had to give in, as the cleverest must always do, when faced with an untenable situation. Instead the old king has made two new conditions. Of course, the bridegroom still has to be a glazier; that's non-negotiable!"

"What are the two new conditions?" asked the young nobleman.

"The prospective bridegroom must please the princess and have velvet hands. If a glazier comes along that the princess likes and if he also has velvet hands, then the king will give him his daughter and later, when he's dead, he'll become the new king. The new rules have already brought many glaziers to the castle, but none of them have pleased the princess. Besides, none of them had velvet hands, but always rough hands, as is to be expected from an ordinary glazier."

When the young nobleman heard this, he went into the castle, found the king, reminded him that he'd trained to be a nobleman under the old king's tutelage, and told him that he had become a glazier for the sake of gaining his daughter's hand in marriage. The young nobleman told the old king that he had now returned to marry his youngest child and become king after his death.

Then the king called the princess to the throne room and asked her whether she liked the young nobleman, and when she said yes (she recognized him at once), the king told the nobleman to take off his gloves and prove that he had velvet hands. But the princess said that it was not necessary; she knew very well that he really did have velvet hands. She had noticed this when he led her up the stairs years ago.

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So both conditions were fulfilled. Since the princess had a glazier for a husband, and one with velvet hands as well, he could take great care of her heart, and it lasted until her blissful end.

The second sister, however, whose heart already had a crack, became an aunt to the children borne of the youngest princess. And, indeed, she was the very best aunt in the world. This assurance was given not only by the children, the young nobleman, and the princess, but also by all the subjects of the land. The second sister taught the little princesses to read, pray and make doll clothes. She inspected the princes' grades. Those who had good grades were highly praised and presented with a gift. But if someone earned bad grades, she boxed his ears and asked: "Say, young prince, what were you thinking? What do you want to be when you grow up? Out with it! Well, speak up."

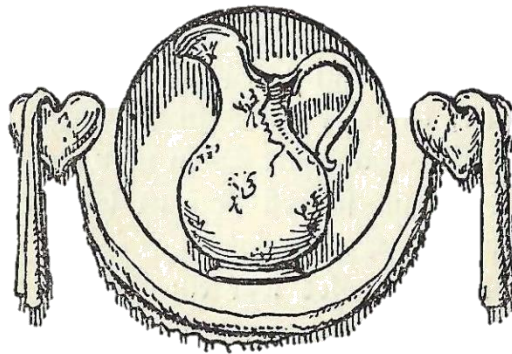
⁶⁷ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

And when he sniffled and said: "K-K-K-King!" she laughed and asked: "King! King Midas? King Midas, highborn with two long donkey ears!" Then the one who had received the bad grades was tremendously ashamed.

And this second princess also grew old, even though her heart was cracked. Whenever someone wondered about this, she would say: "When someone gets a crack in their youth, but it doesn't break them, then they often last a very long time afterwards."

And that's true too. Because my mother has one of those old creamers, white and covered with small, brightly colored flower bouquets. It has been cracked for as long as I can remember and its still in one piece. In the time since my mother has had that cracked creamer, so many new creamers have been bought and broken, that you can't even count them all.

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⁶⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



69

TODAY I WANT TO TELL YOU about two little children. They liked to play in a graveyard high up on a green mountainside. The little village to which the cemetery belonged was considerably further down the mountainside, but still high enough that the clouds often obscured it. Running along the valley floor was a river and, should you be walking along it and looking up, you often couldn't see the village for the clouds.

Now, the graveyard was situated higher on the mountainside than the village, so that its many black crosses jutted up and into the blue sky. It was difficult for the people to carry their deceased from the village to the churchyard, for the path was steep and rocky until you came to the green alpine meadow where the cemetery was. But they liked to do it because, for the villagers, it was difficult to live in the shadow of the mountain where it was gloomy and they often felt fearful, as we all do when we're in a deep cellar. They didn't think their dead liked it either, and so the villagers buried them high up on the mountain

⁶⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

so that they could see far out into the country, as well as down into the valley where the boats sailed on the river.

There was an abandoned grave in a corner on the edge of the churchyard. Only grass grew on it, although in the grass, quite hidden, there were a few wild white and blue flowers that no one had planted. In that grave lay an old man who had left behind neither wife nor child nor anyone else to care for him. He had come from a foreign country, nobody knew from where. He'd climbed to the top of the mountain every morning and sat there for hours. But soon he died and was buried. He certainly had a name; but no one knew what it was, not even the gravedigger. In the church book, for the entry about the old man, there were only three crosses and behind them it said "an old bachelor, a stranger, he died on so and so, in the year of Our Lord so and so".

There isn't much more to say about that, except that the gravedigger's two little children, of whom I was just about to talk, were particularly fond of the old, abandoned grave in the corner of the churchyard, because that was the only grave that they were allowed to play on, and trample as much as they liked. They were not allowed on any of the other graves, which were all very well kept. The grass was thick as velvet and mowed regularly. All kinds of flowers bloomed on the graves and the gravedigger watered them every day, with great care. The water was from a well in the village below, which he had to carry all the way up to the cemetery in heavy buckets. Many of the of the graves also had wreaths and colored ribbons.



⁷⁰ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

One particular morning, the little boy was very pleased with himself. "Trinchen," said the little boy, as he knelt on the abandoned grave, looking at the hole which he had dug with his little hands, "Trinchen, our house is ready. I have lined it with brightly colored stones and sprinkled it with flower petals. I am the father and you are the mother. - Good morning, mother, what are our children doing? "

"Hans", replied the little one, "you are way ahead of me. I don't have any children yet, but I'll have some in a moment." Then she ran around between the graves and bushes and came back with both hands filled with snails:

"Listen, father, I have seven children here, seven beautiful snail children!"

"Then we want to put them to bed right away, because it's getting late."

They plucked green leaves, put them in the hole, gently placed the colorful snails in their shells on top, and then covered each one with another green leaf.

"Now be very quiet, little Hänschen," said the girl, "I have to sing my children to sleep and I have to do it all by myself. Fathers never sing lullabies. Fathers have to go to work."

And so Hänschen was off, skipping down the path and around the graves, while Trinchen sang in a very fine voice:

"In your soft beds, now go to asleep,
My seven little children.
Safe in His care, the Lord will you keep.
Sleep peacefully, come what may,
Don't let your legs slip out of your beds,
Under your covers you must stay! "

But the one leaf began to move, and one of the snails stuck its head, with its two fine little horns, out from underneath. Then the little girl tapped the little snail's head with her finger and said: "Now, Gustl, you are always the naughtiest! This morning you didn't want to be combed. You settle yourself down, back to bed you go!" And she sang again:

Sleep peacefully, come what may,
Don't let your legs slip out of your beds,
Under your covers you must stay!"

And when you've gone to the Land of Dreams,
A shining angel you will meet.
She'll give you a gentle caress, oh so sweet.
My pretty children, all white and red,
She'll bring greetings from the Lord, mark what Mama has said.
She'll ask, if she may, were you good little children today?

But my children are so pious and good,
They'll get to heaven, as I pray they would!
Thank you for our milk and our bread.
And the lovely home where we are fed.
Now everyone's cuddled in their bed,
And Mama's prayers have all be said."

When she had finished singing, the seven snails really had all fallen asleep; at least, they were all very still. And since Hänschen had not yet returned, the little girl ran around the churchyard again, looking for more snails. She gathered a large number in her apron and returned with them to the grave. By that time, Hänschen was sitting there, waiting for her.

"Father," she called out to him, "I have a hundred more children!"

"Listen, woman," replied the little boy, "a hundred children are a lot. We only have one of your doll's plates and only two of your doll's forks. How will the children eat? No mother has one hundred children. There aren't even one hundred names. So how will we baptize our children? You have to take them back where you found them!"

"No, Hänschen," said the little girl, "my one hundred children are very pretty. I need them all."

Meanwhile the gravedigger's young wife came and brought the children their lunch; two large sandwiches. She kissed her little ones, sat them down on the grave, and gave them their food. She said: "Take care not to get your new overalls dirty."

So there they sat, silent as sparrows, and ate their sandwiches. –

But old man in his lonely grave had heard everything; because the dead always hear everything that is said by their gravesites. He thought of the time when he was a little boy. He, too, had known a little girl then. And they had played together, built playhouses and

pretended to be husband and wife. And then he thought of a time much later, when he had seen the little girl again, when she was all grown up.

But he had gone his own way, and never kept the friendship alive. But his travels and the years that followed must not have brought him much joy. And the more he thought about it, and the more the children chattered on top of his grave, the sadder the old man became. He started to cry and cry and cry.

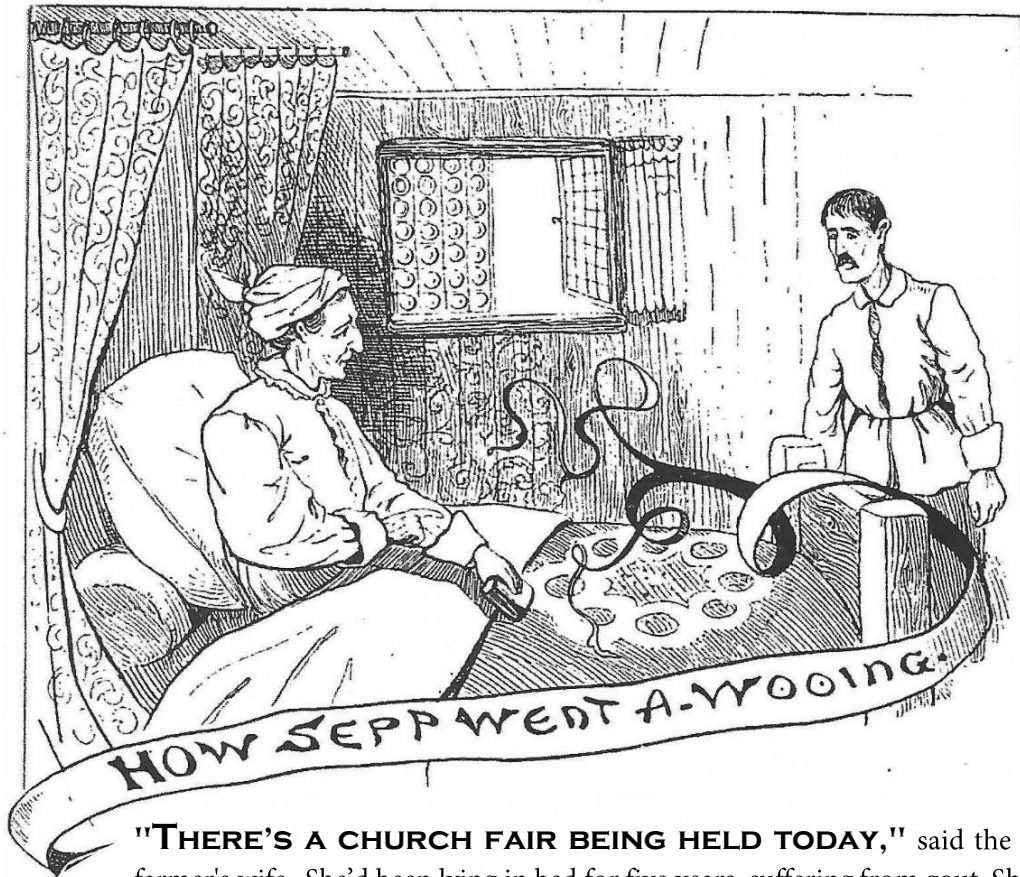
When the gravedigger's wife put the children on his grave, they ended up sitting on his chest. He tried to stretch out his arms because he felt that he needed to hold the children to his heart. But of course he could not do that; there were six feet of earth separating him from the children, and that much earth is very, very heavy. Then he wept even more; and he was still crying when the gravedigger's wife came to fetch the children home and put them to bed.

But when the gravedigger came to the churchyard the next morning, he saw that a spring had risen from the old abandoned grave. It was all those tears that the old man had cried. That stream, glittering in the sunshine, trickled out of the hole that Hänschen and Trinchen had dug for their snail children. The gravedigger was delighted, for now he no longer had to carry the heavy pails of up the steep path from the village. He lined the stream with large stones, and from then on watered all the graves with the water from that spring. He found that the flowers grew and bloomed more beautifully than ever before. The only grave that he didn't water was the old man's, because it was an abandoned grave that nobody ever asked about. Nevertheless, the wild mountain flowers grew more luxuriously than in any other place on earth, and the two children often sat by the grave, built paper boats and floated them down the stream.^{71 72}



⁷¹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

⁷² The poetry in this story was translated by Jessie Raleigh.



73

"**THERE'S A CHURCH FAIR BEING HELD TODAY,**" said the old farmer's wife. She'd been lying in bed for five years, suffering from gout. She struggled to sit up, tying and re-tying a kerchief around her head with trembling hands. She taken that kerchief off and put it back on so many times, and there was a large bow in the middle of her forehead, like four windmill blades; "Today is the parish fair, Sepp, and tonight you will go to the dance alone again, like you did last year and the year before, and like you always do. Didn't you promise me that you would take a wife this year? But it looks like it won't happen as long as I live – and not after that either. Your father must be turning in his grave! Do you want to become a staid old bachelor? You know what the girls are saying about you, don't you:

Old bachelor slippers-and-hood,
Go to the forest and look for wood,
Dry wood from the green trees,
Lest in winter you should freeze,—
Summer swiftly passes.

⁷³ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Ask the beggar boys to-night
If the wood will burn aright,
Or fall straight to ashes !”⁷⁴

Her son answered meekly that he liked all the girls in the village equally and that he didn't know which one to choose. "So go to the village," said the mother, "and pay close attention to what the girls who you think will suit you are doing, and then come back and tell me."

And off Sepp went. –



75

"Well," called his mother when he returned, "how was it? Where have you been?"

"First, to see Ursel; she was just coming from church. She was wearing a nice dress and new earrings."

Then the mother sighed and said: "If she goes to church often, she will soon learn to forget God. The miller doesn't hear the mill rattling either. She is not for you, my boy. Where did you go then?"

"To Kate", mother."

"What was she doing?"

"Standing in the kitchen amongst all the pots and plates."

"What did the pots look like?"

"Black."

⁷⁴ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

⁷⁵ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

"And her fingers?"

"White."

"Slick and sweet," said the mother:

"Broth and mutton,
A dainty glutton:
Who bakes sweet cakes and sets ale to brew,
Forgets the cattle and children too!"⁷⁶

"Let her go, Sepp! "

"Then I went to Barbara. She was sitting in the garden and making three wreaths; one of violets, one of roses, one of carnations. She asked me which one she should wear to the church fair today."

His mother was silent for a while and then said:

„Husband of silver,
And fair fool of gold,
Brings marriage of copper,
And sorrows untold.
Go on, my son!"⁷⁷

"The fourth girl I went to see was Gretel. She was standing on the street that runs in front of her front door, giving sandwiches to the poor people."

His mother shook her head and said: "If she does something in daylight that all people should see, then she will probably do something very different at another time when nobody is looking. If the master comes out to the field at noon while the people are eating, only the lazy servants jump up to mow; the hardworking ones stay seated. Better to stay single, Sepp, than to take her! - What did you do then?"

"Lastly I went to see Anne."

"What did she do?"

"Nothing at all, mother!"

⁷⁶ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

⁷⁷ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

"She must have done something?" asked the old farmer's wife again. "Nothing is very little to be doing, Sepp!"

"As God is my witness," answered the son, "she wasn't doing anything; you can count on that!"

"Then marry Anne, my boy! The best wives are those who do nothing that the boys can talk about!"

And so Sepp married Anne and their union was a very happy one. Later, Sepp often said to his mother:

"Mother, you were right in your advice:

Ursel and Kate,
Barbara and Gret,
To woo did all they can,
But they're worth altogether
Not half of my Anne!⁷⁸

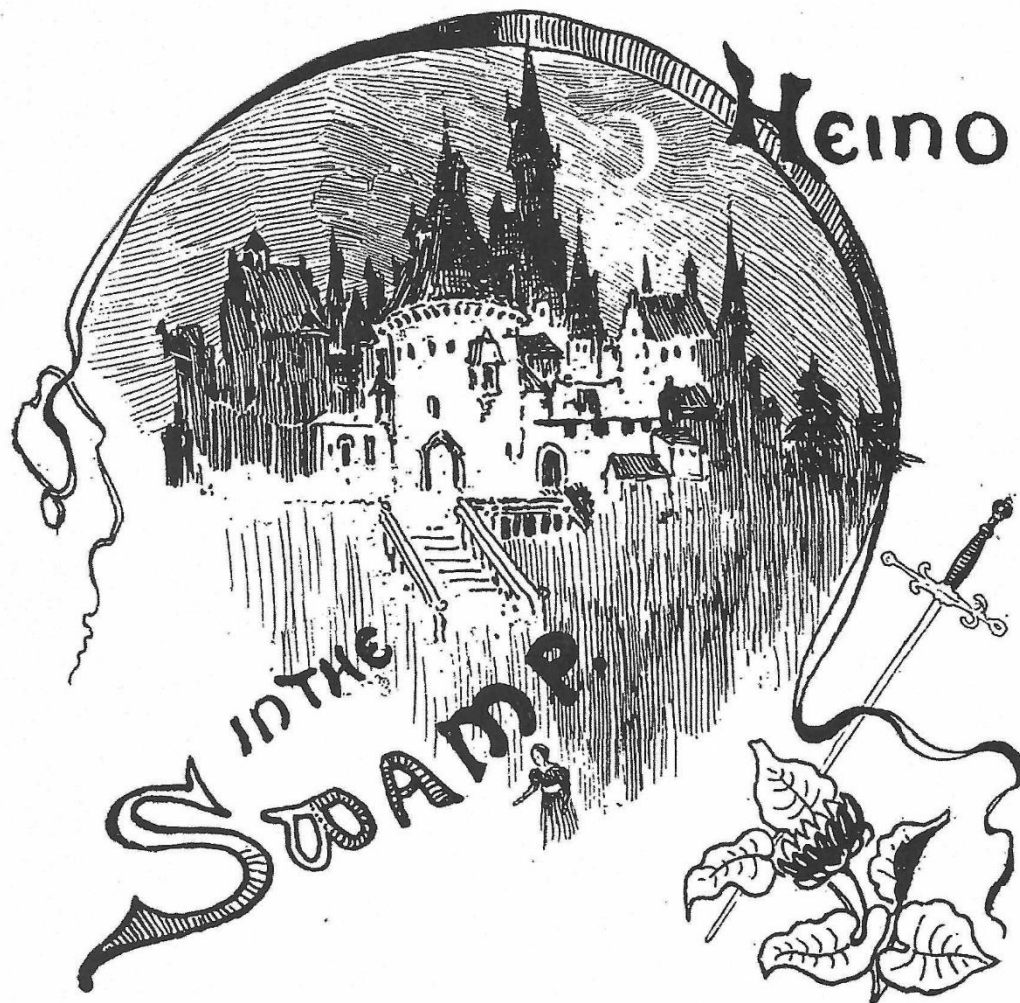
and **now**, I could tell you a lot about her – but I won't."



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⁷⁸ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

⁷⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



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"**OUR SON IS A GREAT HUNTER,**" said the old king. "He rides with his crossbow into the forest every day. But he never brings any game back, no matter how much he kills, because he gives everything he shoots to poor people.

So said the old king to the queen. But the deer in the forest knew it wasn't true. They weren't afraid of Heino at all, because they had known him for a long time and knew that he would not harm them. He always rode right through the forest to the other end. There, at the edge of the forest stood a little house, almost completely surrounded by trees and bushes.

⁸⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

The windows and doorway were overgrown with ivy and honeysuckle. In front of the door stood the beautiful Blue-Eyes, and when she saw the king's son approaching, her big eyes shone with joy like two stars that illuminated her whole face.

Heino never, ever brought any game home and he always wanted to ride alone. When his father insisted on hunting with him, Heino shot nothing. At last, the old king realized that something other than hunting must be going on. He ordered a servant to spy on Heino when he went on one of his outings, and when he came back, he told the old king what was really going on. Then the old king was very angry, for Heino was his only son, and he intended for him to marry the daughter of a mighty king in a neighboring kingdom. So he called two knights, showed them a lump of gold the size of a man's head, and promised to give it to them if they killed Blue-Eyes.

But Blue-Eyes had a snow-white dove that sat on the highest tree in the forest and watched the castle every day. When Heino got on his horse to ride out to see Blue-Eyes, she quickly flew ahead, beat her wings against the window and called out:

“The bushes are shaken,
For hither he strides;
Dear Blue-Eyes awaken!
Hark where he rides!”

Then Blue-Eyes went to stand at her door and wait for Heino to arrive.⁸¹



⁸¹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

When the white dove saw the two knights sneaking through the forest towards evening, she suspected that they were up to no good. She quickly flew to the castle and tapped on Heino's window until he came and opened it for her. She told him everything she had seen. Heino jumped on his horse and rode through the forest at great speed. When he got to the little house, the knights had already tied Blue-Eyes up and were debating about how to kill her. In a flash, Heino drew his sword and cut off both of their heads. He carried them back to the castle and put them on the threshold of his father's bedroom.

The old king had not been able to sleep all night because he kept hearing a constant whimpering and moaning. When morning came, he got up and opened his bedroom door. There he found the two heads of his knights on the threshold, and between them lay a letter from Heino. He wrote that, henceforth, he disowned his father and his mother, and that he'd gone to Blue-Eye's cottage, where he would guard her with his life. Heino said he would cut off the head of anyone who came to harm her, just as he had the two knights', even if it were the king himself.

When the old king read this, he was very upset. He went to the queen and told her everything. She was incensed when he told her he'd wanted to have Blue-Eyes killed. "You have spoiled everything!" she said. "You men are all alike! You always want to kill everything! It's always all-or-nothing. Six of your shirts came out of the laundry today, all six are missing their shirt collars. Where did they go? They were knotted, and so you tore them off instead of untying them with patience. And Heino is just like you. Now I have to deal with a situation of your making!"

"All right, all ready," said the king, trying to stop her tirade, because he suspected that the queen was right, "Just be quiet and stop shouting; that won't make it any better."

That night, the queen tossed and turned in her bed all through the night, wondering what to do. As soon as it was light, she went out into the field and dug up a herb that was poisonous and had black berries. Then she went into the forest and planted it by the path.

When she returned to the castle, the king asked her what she had done. She said: "I have planted a herb in Heino's way. A red flower grows on it; whoever breaks it off will forget his true love."

The next morning, when Heino was walking through the forest, he saw the herb by the path. It had sprouted a beautiful red flower that sparkled in the sun and had a scent so

intoxicating that he almost lost his senses. But although the dew had fallen heavily overnight, both the herb and the flower were quite dry.

Then he said:

“What plant is this so strange and new,
Whose leaves are never wet with dew?”

And the flower answered:

“A plant that’s found by none
Save by a monarch’s son.”

Then he asked again:

“And shall I pluck thee, say?
Thou flower upon my way”

And the flower answered:

“Then should I bloom more brightly,
Thou haughty monarch’s son!”



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Then he could not contain himself, and he plucked the flower. In that instant, he forgot all about his Beloved and went back to his parents in their castle.

⁸² Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

When his mother saw him coming, and that he had the red bloom tucked into his lapel, she knew that her plan had worked. The old king went to meet his son, brought him a golden helmet and golden armour and said: "I am old and weak; go into the world and discover its wonders. When you return in two years, I will give you the kingdom."

Heino then selected thirty squires, and they travelled from one kingdom to the other and saw the glory of the world.

When Heino did not return to her, Blue-Eyes realized that he must have abandoned her. Every morning she sent out the white dove; it flew around the world until it found Heino. And every evening the white dove came back and reported to Blue-Eyes where Heino was and how he was faring:

"How fares by field and flood
My hero of royal blood?"

And the dove answered:

"His hand is strong, his heart is stout,
Gaily he rides the world about,"

"And does he never think of me,
And all my grief and pain?"

"Alas, he never thinks of thee,
By day or night, on land or sea,
In sunshine nor in rain!"

Two years passed, when the white dove came back one evening with a blood stain on its wing.

Blue-eyes asked:

"How fares by field and flood
My hero of royal blood?"

Then she saw the blood stain on the bird's wing and became very sad. "Is he dead?" she asked.

"Would God that he were,
'Twere better by far!"

cooed the dove.

“Deep in the Marsh-fire Swamp he lies,
Deep in the Swamp with blinded eyes,
— Bewitched he lingers
Where reeds grow green,—
May God have pity !—
In the white arms of the Marsh-fire Queen!”

Then Blue-Eyes asked the white dove to sit on her shoulder and show her the way, and they set out to look for Heino.

After walking for three days, she came to the will-o'-the-wisp⁸³ swamp where Heino was enchanted. She sat quietly by the path and waited until evening. When it got dark, the sky clouded over and the clouds chased each other. The wind began to howl and the rain pounded on the alder bushes. Before long, Blue-Eyes saw the first blue flames⁸⁴ rising up from the swamp. Then she tied up her skirts and stepped boldly into the reeds. She walked steadfastly toward the will-o'-the-wisps. It was an arduous journey; for she soon sank into the mud up to her ankles. The wind whipped her hair around her shoulders, so she had to stop to tie it into a big knot at the nape of the neck. The rain coursed down her cheeks. The swamp got deeper and deeper, and the blue flames, which appeared in increasing numbers and in many places, seemed to mock her. Often it seemed that they were standing still, or even coming towards her, so that she hoped to reach them soon, but then they would float back to the middle of the swamp or disappear completely, just to reappear in a more distant

⁸³ In folklore, a **will-o'-the-wisp**, will-o'-wisp or *ignis fatuus* (Latin for 'giddy flame', plural *ignes fatui*), is an atmospheric ghost light seen by travelers at night, especially over bogs, swamps or marshes. The phenomenon is known in English folk belief, English folklore and much of European folklore by a variety of names, including jack-o'-lantern, friar's lantern, hinkypunk and hobby lantern and is said to mislead travelers by resembling a flickering lamp or lantern. In literature, will-o'-the-wisp metaphorically refers to a **hope** or **goal that leads one on** but is impossible to reach or something one finds sinister and confounding.

While urban legends, folklore and superstition typically attribute will-o'-the-wisps to ghosts, fairies or elemental spirits, modern science explains them as natural phenomena such as bioluminescence or chemiluminescence, caused by the oxidation of phosphine (PH₃), diphosphane (P₂H₄) and methane (CH₄) produced by organic decay.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will-o%27-the-wisp>

⁸⁴ Will-o'-wisps.

place. She sank into the swamp almost up to her knees, and could only take a few steps before she had to rest.

Then, very suddenly, the storm stopped, the wind was silent, and a narrow crescent moon peeped out from between the clouds. In front of her, reflected in the dark pool of the swamp, rose the magical castle of the will-'o-wisp queen.

White marble steps led from the still water of the swamp into a large, open hall, which was supported by many pillars of blue and green crystal each capped with a gold capital. In this hall an innumerable number of brightly flickering will-o'-the-wisps danced around a large flame, which floated in their midst. Suddenly a number of will-o'-the-wisps broke away from the others and formed two circles that tumbled out of the hall, whirling. And while one of them stopped on the steps in front of the castle, the other approached quickly, and Blue-Eyes recognized twelve pale but beautiful virgins, who wore golden tiaras on their foreheads, on which small golden bowls rose in front, in which the blue flames burned. In a wild dance they floated up to Blue-Eyes and surrounded her. While magical music sounded from within the castle, they sang:

“In our ring,
In our ring,
Sister Blue-Eyes, O come as we sing!

Come and see,
Come and see,
For a lover is signing to thee!

See, he shines!
See, he signs!
He loves thee, he calls thee, he signs!
Forget all on earth that was dear,
Sweet Blue-Eyes, be one of us here!”

But Blue-Eyes looked at the spirits calmly with her big clear eyes, and said bravely: "You have no power over me! God in heaven alone knows whether I will come out of this swamp alive again; but even if I have to die, you will never have me under your power!"

Then the virgins fled in all directions deep into the swamp. The second circle of will-o'-the-wisps, which had been dancing to and fro in front of the steps of the castle, now floated

toward Blue-Eyes. These were twelve beautiful but deadly pale boys, also with blue flames over their foreheads. They formed a circle around Blue-Eyes and slowly danced around her, alternately raising their white arms high above their heads and pointing backwards towards the castle. One of them in particular kept approaching Blue-Eyes as if he wanted to embrace her, and when she looked at him more closely, she saw that it was Heino.

Her heart quivered, as if it had been pierced with an ice-cold sword, and she cried out: "Heino, God help you in your great need!"

No sooner had she called out for God's mercy, than a violent gust of wind blew over the swamp and the lights of the wisps went out. The quiet surface of the pool rippled, and black waves broke over the white marble steps of the castle. Then the castle sank silently, and in its place stood four stakes of rotten wood, the remains of an old pagan fisherman's hut. In front of Blue-Eyes, in the deep swamp up to his belt, stood Heino, in human form as before, but pale and sad. His hair was tangled on his forehead, and his helmet and armor were rusty.

"Is it you, Blue-Eyes?" he asked wistfully.

"Yes, Heino, it's me."

"Leave me," he said, "for I am lost!"

But she gave him her hand and encouraged him; and he tried to take a few steps forward. Then he stopped and said:

"Ah, Blue-Eyes, I am down!
Ah, Blue-Eyes, I shall drown!"

But she just held his hand tighter and replied:

"Nay, Heino, thou art not down;
Nay, Heino, thou shalt not drown.
Only hold fast to me,
And soon shalt thou be free!"

So she helped him forward step by step, and again and again he stopped and said:

"Ah, Blue-Eyes, I am down!
Ah, Blue-Eyes, I shall drown!"

And again and again she comforted him and said:

“Nay, Heino, thou art not down;
Nay, Heino, thou shalt not drown.
Only hold fast to me,
And soon shalt thou be free!”

With indescribable effort they finally came to a place where they could see the end of the swamp and the path on the bank. Heino stopped there and cried: "I can't go on, Blue-Eyes! You must go back alone and take my regards to my mother. You can make it out because you haven't sunk as deeply as I, but the swamp is almost to my heart." As he said this, he turned to look back to the place where the castle had disappeared.

"Don't look around!" cried Blue-Eyes anxiously. But it was too late, for a single blue flame floated towards both of them from the middle of the swamp. It approached quickly and then the Queen of Will-o'-Wisps stood before them. She wore a wreath of white water lilies on her head, and her diadem was a golden serpent, which moved softly through her hair and wound around her forehead. With her glowing eyes she looked at Heino, as if she could to see his heart. Then she put her hand on his shoulder and said, softly pleading: "Come back, Heino!" And he stood and looked at her undecidedly and swayed unsteadily.

Blue Eyes tore the sword from his side and swung it at the Wisp Queen. But the Wisp Queen only smiled and said: "Foolish child, what can you do to me? I am not flesh and blood." She took Heino and pulled him to her with great force, so close that her black curls fell over his face. Blue Eyes called out in terrible anguish: "Even if you are not of this world, you horrible woman, I will rescue this man of flesh and blood from the fate you would bestow upon him!" The Wisp Queen made another attempt to pull Heino away with her, grasping him by his right hand. Then Blue-Eyes drew that sword high and cried: "Heino, it will not pain you!" and with all her might she swung that sword down and cut off his hand, by his wrist, with one blow.

Then the flame on the queen's head flickered and went out, and she faded away into the fog.

The white dove, which had hitherto been sitting on Blue-Eye's shoulder, flew over and settled herself on Heino's shoulder.

"At last, you are free, Heino!" cried Blue-Eyes when she saw this. "Come, it is not far to the path; gather the last of your strength. See, you are no longer sunk so deep."

And on they went. But still Heino often stopped and said:

"Blue-Eyes, my arm aches sore!"

And she replied:

"Heino, my heart aches more!"

Nevertheless, she almost had to carry him the last bit, and when he took that step out of the swamp and on to the path, he sank down dead tired and fell fast asleep. Blue-Eyes took her veil and bandaged his arm with it so that he would stop bleeding.

When she saw that he was sleeping peacefully, she pulled the ring he had given her from her finger, put it in his hand and set off for home.

As soon as she arrived, she went to see the old king. Looking at him joyfully with her big blue eyes, she said: "I have liberated your son; he will return to you soon. And now, God protect you; you will never see me again."

But the old king pulled her to his heart and said: "Little Blue-Eyes, my brave daughter, you have as much of a right to wear a crown as any king's child! If you want to forgive my son and take a one-armed man as your husband, I shall make you queen of the kingdom."

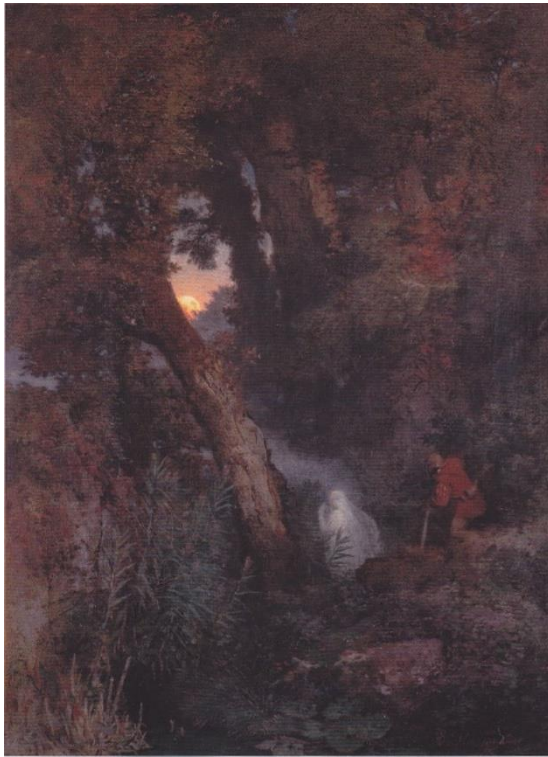
When old king finished speaking, the door opened and Heino stepped into the room. He took Blue-Eyes into his arms. There was great joy in the whole country, and everyone wanted to see the beautiful pious girl who had saved the king's son.

But when they stood in front of the altar and were ready to exchange rings, Heino forgot that he was missing his right hand and he held the stump out to the priest. Then a miracle happened; when the priest touched the stump, a new hand grew out of it, like a white flower from a brown branch. But for the rest of Heino's life, a fine red stripe, narrow like a thread, ran around that wrist.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ All the lines of poetry in this story were translated into English by Jessie Raleigh.



⁸⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



Das Irrlicht, by Arnold Böcklin, 1882 (The Will 'o Wisp)



Will-o'-the-wisp and snake, by Hermann Hendrich, 1823

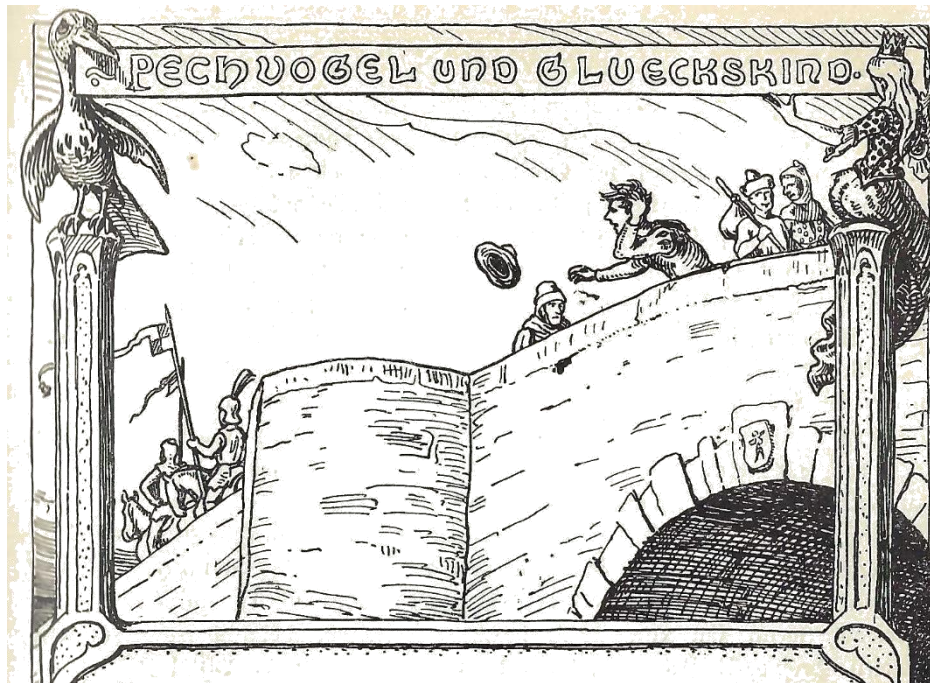


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IN A SMALL TOWN, not far from where I live, there once lived a young man whose every action led to misfortune. His father's name was Luckless, and that was his name as well. Both of his parents had died early, and the tall, skinny aunt who took him in, beat him every time she came home from mass. Unfortunately, she went to mass every day, so he received a daily beating. But he, himself, was also very unlucky. When he carried a glass, he usually dropped it, and when he picked up the shards, he always cut his fingers.

It was like that in all things. It is true that the long, skinny aunt finally died. He planted as many bushes and trees around her grave as there was room, as if he wanted to grow as many branches as the aunt had used to lash his back. His bad luck just continued to increase with each passing year. A great resignation came over him, and he decided to go and travel the world. *It can't get any worse out there, he thought; and maybe it will get better.* So he put all his money in his wallet and off he went.

⁸⁷ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



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When he got to the city gate, by the stone bridge that ran over the moat, he stopped and leaned over the railing. He looked down into the waves that foamed around the pillars, and his heart grew sad. It was almost as if it were a misfortune to leave the city in which he had lived for so long. Perhaps he would have stood there for a very long time if the wind hadn't suddenly blown his hat off his head and tossed it into the river. Then he awoke from his daydream, but the hat had already floated under the bridge and was dancing on the waves on the other side in the middle of the river. Every time a wave lifted that hat, it seemed to call back scornfully: *"Adieu, unlucky fellow! I am traveling; you can stay at home if that's what you want to do."* So Luckless one set off without a hat.

Merry journeymen often passed by, singing and laughing. They invited him to join them on their journey. But he just shook his head sadly and said: "I'm not good company for you, and I wouldn't bring you much joy! My name is Luckless!" As soon as they heard that, the jolly fellows became serious and embarrassed, and went on their way as quickly as they could. In the evenings at the inn he'd sit, tired, in a lonely corner of the bar, with his head in his hand, a pewter jug of wine in front of him. Occasionally, the innkeeper's wife would quietly come up to him and tap him on the shoulder. Startled out of his reveries, he'd turn to her and she'd ask why he seemed so sad. But when he told his story and said his name,

⁸⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

she's shake her head, go back to her spinning wheel and leave him to his misery, lonely and alone.

After wandering aimlessly for several weeks, one day Luckless came across a wonderful big garden, surrounded by a high, gilded fence. Through the railing you could see ancient trees and low shrubbery, alternating with large manicured lawns. A stream meandered in between, with a number of small bridges over it. Tame stags and roe deer walked about on the yellow sand paths. They came to the fence, stuck their heads through the bars and ate the bread out of Luckless' hand. In the middle of the garden, however, one could see a stately castle, its towers protruding high above the trees. The silver roofs flashed in the sun, and colorful flags and banners waved from the towers. He walked along the fence until he came upon a large, open gateway, from which a shady avenue led straight to the castle. In the garden itself everything was quiet; no one could be seen nor heard. There was a sign on the gate. *Aha!* thought Luckless, *as usual!* *When you pass a pretty garden, where the gates are invitingly open, there is always a sign next to it saying that entry is forbidden.* To his surprise, however, he saw that he was wrong this time, because the sign said nothing more than: "No one is allowed to cry here!" - "Well, well," he said, "*what a foolish inscription,*" Still, he took out his handkerchief and rubbed his eyes a little, just in case there might be a stray tear lingering in a corner. Then he went into the garden. The great wide path that ran straight to the castle made him uncomfortable. He preferred to take a side path through the middle of the tall jasmine and rose hedges. He pursued it for a while, until he came to a small forest, from which another path wound this way and that and finally led up to a hill. When he turned a corner, the top of the hill came into sight, and on that hill, in the grass, sat a beautiful girl.

She had a golden crown in her lap, that she kept breathing on. Then she took her silk apron, rubbed the crown with it, until she saw that it was very shiny. She clapped her hands for joy, pushed her long hair behind her ears and put the crown back on her head.

At the sight of the girl, Luckless felt a strange trepidation come over him. His heart started to pound loudly, as though it was about to burst. He slipped behind a bush and crouched down. But it was a barberry, and a twig fell straight across his face. And as the wind gently moved the bush back and forth, a thorn kept tickling the tip of his nose so that he had to sneeze loudly. Startled, the girl with the crown turned around and saw Luckless crouching behind the bush.

"Why are you hiding?" she called. "Do you want to harm me or are you afraid of me?"

Then, Luckless stepped out from behind the bush, trembling like an aspen leaf.

"You won't hurt me!" she said with a laugh. "Come here, sit with me for a while. My playmates all ran away and left me here. You can tell me a nice story, but it has to make me laugh! Do you hear? - But you look so sad! Is there something wrong? You know, if you didn't scowl so, you'd be a very attractive person."

"If you like," replied Luckless, "I could probably sit with you for a moment. But who are you? I have never seen anyone as beautiful as you in my entire life!"

"I am the Princess Fortunate, and this is my father's garden."

"What are you doing here all alone?"

"I'm feeding my roe deer and stags and cleaning my crown."

"And then?"

"Then I'll feed my goldfish!"

"What about when you're done with that?"

"Then my playmates will be back, and we'll laugh and sing and dance!"

"Oh, what a happy life you lead! And that happens every day?"

"Yes, every day! Now tell me who you are and what your name is."

"Oh, most beautiful princess, don't ask that of me! I am the most unhappy person under the sun and I have the ugliest name."

"Pooh!" she said, "an ugly name is an awful thing! In my father's country there is such a one called *Duckweed* and another called *Fat-Stain*; you aren't called that, are you?"

"No," he replied, "My name is not Duckweed, or even Fat-Stain. My name is even uglier. My name is Luckless."

"Luckless? That's hilarious! Can't you get another name? Listen, I'll think of a nice name for you, and then I'll ask my father to let you call yourself that. My father can do anything he wants, because he is the king. But only on condition that you put on a happy expression. Take your hand away from your face; you don't always have to pull at your nose like that! You have a very good nose and you're spoiling it. Brush the hair off your forehead! There you go! Now you look quite attractive. - Tell me, why are you so sad? Because I am always happy, and I make everyone I talk to happy. Only you don't seem to be responding!"

"Why am I so sad? Because I've been sad all my life and always have bad luck. And you're always happy? How do you manage that?"

"A fairy held me in her embrace at my holy baptism; my father had once done her a great service. She picked me up, kissed my forehead and said to me: *You shall always be happy and you will make others happy. And if a very sad person meets you, he shall forget his misfortune! You shall be called Fortunate!* - Has no fairy ever kissed you?"

"No!" he said, "Never!"

Then the princess became very quiet and thoughtful and looked at him so strangely with her big blue eyes, that an ice-cold shiver ran down his spine. Then she solemnly said:

"Does it always have to be a fairy? A princess is not nothing. Come here, kneel down before me; you are too tall for me."

Then she stepped in front of him, gave him a kiss on his forehead, and ran away laughing.

She was gone before Luckless could comprehend what had happened. He got up slowly. It was as if he were waking from a dream; and yet he felt that it could not have been a dream. A wonderful happiness stole into his heart. *"If only I had my hat,"* he said, *"then I would throw it up into the air. Maybe it would start trilling like a lark and fly away! That's really what I feel like doing. I truly think I'm happy. That is amazing."* – And so he picked a large bouquet of flowers in the garden and walked along the road singing.

As soon as he came to the next town, he bought a red velvet doublet with satin slits and a beret with a long white feather and, looking at himself in the mirror, said: "Luckless is my name?? Let us see if I can get another name. But it has to be the most wonderful name of all, otherwise I won't accept it." Then he got himself a horse, spurred it, so that it danced merrily, and continued on his journey.



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Princess Fortunate, however, after giving Luckless that kiss, had turned away and run off. She ran and ran. Then she slowed down more and more. At last she sat down on a bench not far from the castle and began to weep bitterly. When her playmates returned and found her, she was still crying. They tried to comfort her, but nothing worked. In their confusion, they ran to the king and shouted: "For God's sake, Lord King! This is a misfortune for the whole country! Princess Fortunate sits in the garden and weeps, and no one can help her." When the king heard this, he turned pale with terror and hurriedly jumped down the stairs and ran into the garden. He found the princess sitting and weeping on the bench. The crown was on her lap, and so many tears had fallen on it, that it flashed in the sunlight as if it was studded with a thousand diamonds. The king took his daughter in his arms and tried to comfort her. He asked her what was wrong, but she just kept on crying. Finally, he led her into the castle, where he ordered that anything that was beautiful and precious from all over the country should be presented to the princess. But she remained sad and, no matter how often he asked her to tell him what the grave heartache was that she had suffered, she did not answer. But the king kept asking, and finally she told him how she had been sitting in the garden when a young man who looked so very sad had approached her, and how she had kissed him to see if it might not make him a little happier.

⁸⁹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

Then the king smacked his forehead with his hands: "A stranger, a chucklehead, probably a very ordinary craftsman! With bad clothes and he doesn't even have a hat! It's inconceivable!"

"But I felt so very sorry for him!"

"A nice reason for a princess to kiss the first best rascal who comes her way! And Luckless is his name? Unheard of! But I will find this person, and when I have him, he will be beheaded. That is certainly the worst punishment that I can inflict upon him!"

Thereupon the king ordered his knights to roam the countryside in all directions and look for the poor unlucky fellow. "If you find a young person who looks as if the mice have eaten his bread, a person without a hat, that's him! You shall bring him to me immediately!" And the knights scattered like chaff blowing in the wind, and crisscrossed the whole country. Some of them met Unlucky, in his elegant clothes, sitting proudly on his horse but they did not recognize him. Most of the knights returned to the castle without having achieved anything, where the king scolded them angrily, and called them silly, clumsy people who were no good at all. The princess remained as sad as before and came to the dinner table with tearful eyes. The king would look at his beautiful, sad daughter, and let the soup and roast go cold.

This situation went on week after week. One day, however, there was a sudden cacophony in the courtyard. Everyone came running, and before the king even had time to go to the window to find out what was causing the ruckus, two knights were already leading Luckless into the king's room. They had tied his hands behind his back, but his face was beaming as if nothing better could have happened to him in his entire life. He bowed to the king and then straightened proudly, waiting to see what would happen next.

"We caught the sly fellow, Your Majesty!" said the older of the two knights. "He disguised himself in the meantime, because your description fits about as well as a fist in the eye! Certainly we would never have found him if the fool hadn't told us the whole story himself when we met him in the pub. And do you know what he did after we caught him and tied him up? He kept laughing and singing! And when we put him on his horse, and made him ride between ours, and galloped to the castle -- he scolded us and accused us of lollygagging and not riding fast enough! It's as if he can't wait to be beheaded. If this is the saddest person in all of Christendom, Majesty, then I'd like to see the happiest. He's likely to tear off his legs at breakfast and dunk them into his coffee, just for fun. Goodness knows, this fellow's already done everything else on the way here! "

When the king heard this, he stepped in front of Luckless, crossed his arms and said: "So you are the person who had the cheek to let the princess kiss you?"

"Yes, Your Majesty! And since then I have become the happiest person in the world!"

"Throw him in the tower, he will be beheaded tomorrow!"

The knights led Luckless out of the throne room and into the tower; but the king continued to pace up and down with long strides. "It's a bad deal," he said. "I have him and he'll be beheaded; but that alone won't make my child happy again."

He walked quietly to his daughter's room, looked through the keyhole, shook his head, paced up and down some more and finally he called for his Knight of the Secret Service. When that knight had arrived and been told everything, he thought about it a while and then said:

"I don't know if it will help, but you could try this: that Luckless was sad before, and is now happy, is certain. We also know that our beautiful princess used to be happy and now weeps continuously. Without a doubt: that kiss is to blame. Well, that Luckless fellow has to give the kiss back to the princess. Your Majesty, that is my most humble opinion! "

"That is quite impossible," replied the king angrily, "and completely contrary to the rules of my house!"

"Your Majesty only has to announce that the matter is an Act of State, then it will be fine and nobody can object to it."

The king thought about it some more, and then he said: "Well, we have to try it. Call all the counts and knights into the throne room and have the prisoner brought in!"

The king then put on his official state robes and sat on his throne. Beside him stood the princess, to whom he had not dared to say why he had called for her, and around him in a large circle stood the whole court; all distinguished gentlemen in gold-embroidered uniforms with stars and sashes. It was very quiet. Then the door opened and Luckless was brought in.

"You will be beheaded tomorrow," snapped the king, "but first you will immediately and in front of all these noble and illustrious gentlemen give back to my daughter, that kiss that she gave you so unthinkingly!"

"If that is your only wish, Your Majesty," replied Luckless, "then I shall do it gladly. If it is possible for a person to become even happier than I already am, then this act will do it."

"That's as it may be," interrupted the king harshly. "But this time you may have miscalculated!"

Then Luckless walked to the princess, hugged her and kissed her. She took his hand and looked at him very kindly, and they both stood there before the throne.

"Are you happy again, my dear daughter?" asked the king.

"A little happier, Father," she replied. "But it certainly won't last long."

"Yes, yes!" the King said sadly, "I can already see that. And he hasn't gotten any sadder, which should have happened if the original incident is to be reversed. He's still standing there smiling, and making that impudent happy face! What should we do now?"

Then the princess lowered her eyes and said softly: "I know what to do, Father, but I want to tell you privately, only in your ear."

The king went with the princess into an anteroom. When they came back, he took the hand of Luckless, put it in the princess's and said to all the gentlemen and counts assembled:

"There is nothing to be done, but God's will. This is my dear son who will be king when I die." -

Then Luckless became a prince and later he was crowned king of the kingdom. He lived in the golden castle and gave the princess so many kisses that she was even happier than she'd ever been.

Princess Fortunate, for her part, gave him the most beautiful names she could think of, in exchange for his ugly one; a different one every day. Only now and then, when she was in a mischievous mood, she would say to him: "Do you remember what your name was

before?" and she would laugh, because it seemed so ridiculous. Then he would cover her mouth and say: "Quiet! What would people think if they heard it? I'd lose all respect!"

90

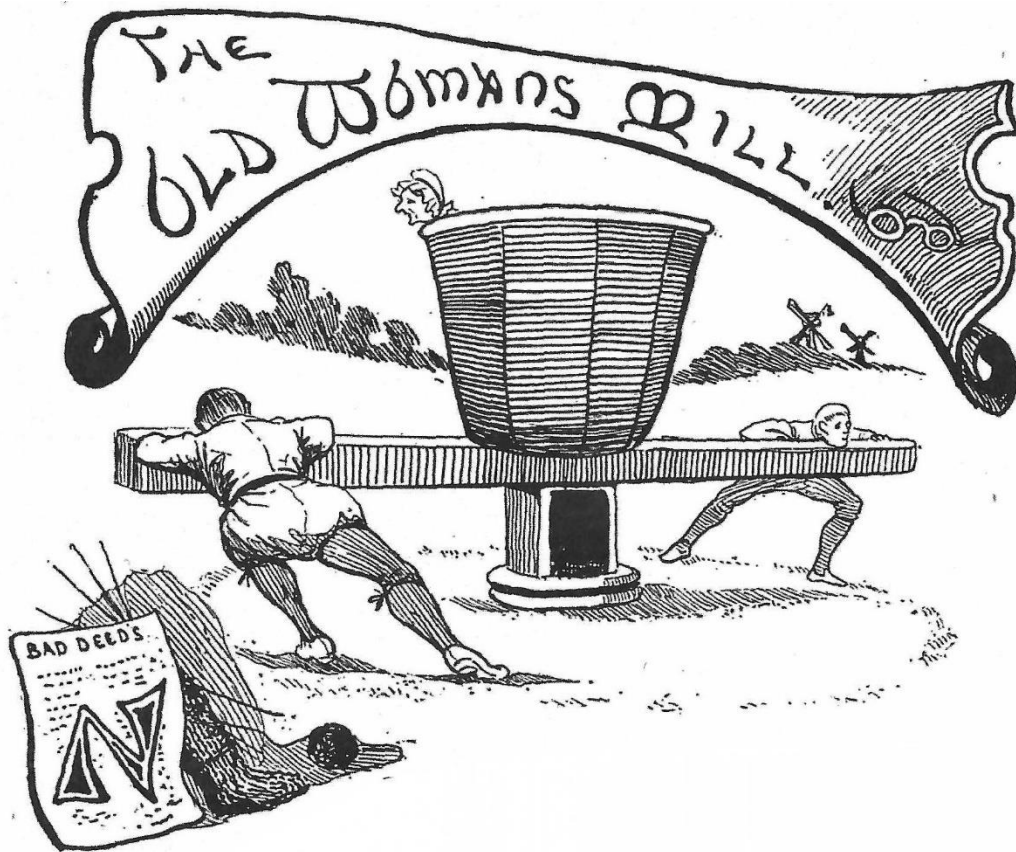


⁹⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



Träumereien, Titelbild

Zu „Pechvogel und Glückskind“

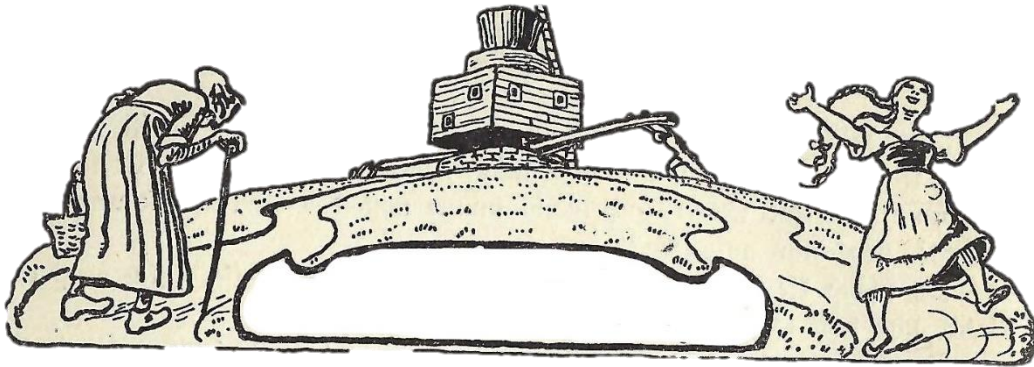


91

THE OLD WOMEN'S MILL IS LOCATED near Apolda in Thuringia. It looks roughly like a large coffee grinder, only the handle is not at the top, instead it is at the bottom. There are two large beams protruding from the bottom that are pushed 'round and 'round by two servants. The old women are put in at the top -- wrinkled and humpbacked, without hair or teeth -- and come out below, young and fresh, rosy-cheeked like Red Delicious Apples. One turn of the grinder and it's done; there's a loud CRUNCH and CRACK -- the sound goes through you like a knife to the core. But if you ask those who get ground up and have returned to their youth again, if it didn't hurt terribly, they'll answer: "Not at all! It's wonderful. It's like waking up early, after a good night's rest, when the sun peeks into your room, and the birds outside are singing, and the trees are rustling in the fresh morning breeze. Then you stretch in bed, before you roll out of it. Sometimes that makes a cracking noise too."

⁹¹ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.

An old woman lived a long ways from Apolda, but she'd heard about the mill. Since she had enjoyed her youth very much, she made up her mind to go there. One morning she started her journey. It was slow going and she had to stop often and rest, and she coughed a lot, but in the end she made it all the way to the mill.



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"I would like to be ground up and come out young again," she said to one of the farmhands, who was sitting on the bench in front of the mill with his hands in his trouser pockets and blowing ringlets from his pipe into the blue air. "Dear God," she said, but Apolda is a far distance to travel!"

"What is your name?" asked the servant, yawning.

"Old Mother Redclapper."

"Sit down on the bench for a minute, Mother Redclapper," said the servant. He went into the mill, consulted a very big book and came out with a long sheet of paper.

"Is that the bill, my boy?" asked the old woman.

"Heaven forbid!" replied the servant. "The grinding costs nothing. But you have to sign this contract first!"

"Sign?" repeated the old woman. "Am I promising my poor soul to the devil? No! I won't do it! I am a pious woman and I hope to get to heaven one day."

"It's not so bad!" laughed the servant. "The paper simply lists all the follies that you have committed in your entire life, in exact sequence, with time and date. Before you go through the grinder, you have to promise that when you are young again, you will repeat each and

⁹² Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

every one of those follies all over again, in the exact same sequence; as they are listed on this sheaf of paper!"

Then he looked at the page and said with a smile: "Of course, it's a long list, Mother Redclapper, in fact, it's quite an account! From the age of sixteen to twenty-six, a folly a day, and two on Sundays. After that it gets better. But in your forties, my goodness! You laid it on thick! Of course, after that, you're just average."

Then the old woman sighed and said: "Good gracious, Child, it's really not worth being ground up!"

"Of course not," replied the servant, "it's not worth it for most women! That's why we have a good time working here. Seven holidays a week; the mill's not in use very much, especially in the last few years. Long ago, business was a bit livelier."

"Isn't it possible to cross a few items off the list?" the old woman asked, and stroked the servant's cheeks. "Just three things, my boy. I don't mind doing the rest all over again, if I have to."

"No," replied the servant, "that is absolutely not possible. It's all or nothing - !"

"Well, then take your paper back," said the old woman after some reflection, "I've lost interest in your stupid old mill!" And with that, she made her way back home.

When she got home, the people in her village looked at her in amazement: "But Mother Redclapper, you don't look any younger than when you left here! Is there nothing to that old mill, after all?"

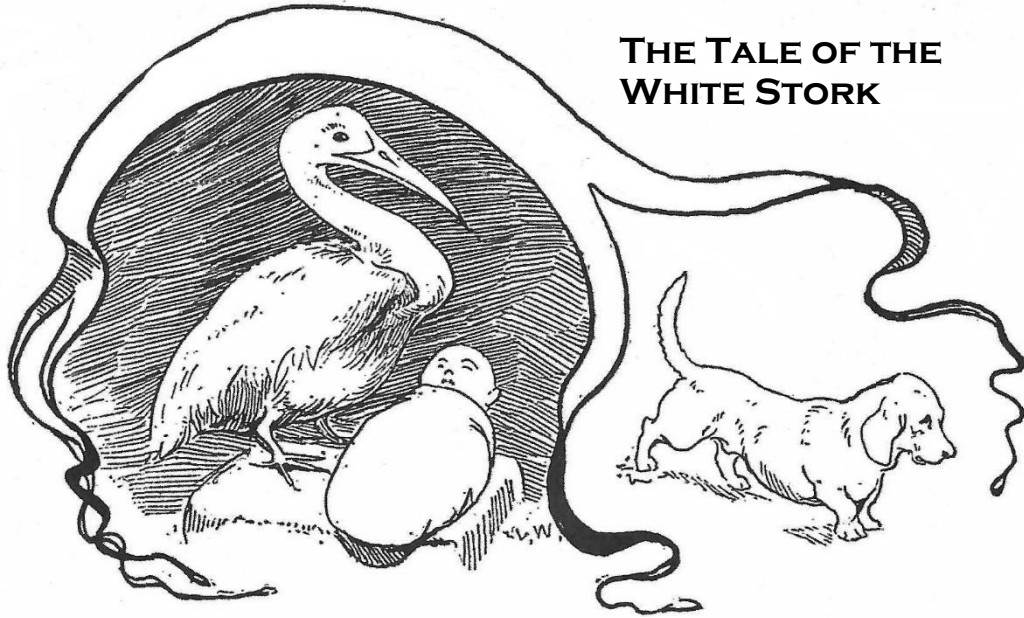
She coughed and replied: "Oh yes, there is something to it. But I didn't want to go back to my youth. After all, why should we hang on so dearly to this brief life that we have been given?"



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⁹³ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

THE TALE OF THE WHITE STORK



94

EVERYONE KNOWS WHY THE LEGS of the dachshund are so short, and that they're worn down from all the running that the dogs do. But how the stork got its long legs -- that is a completely different story.

Three days before the stork brings a new baby, it knocks with its red beak on the window of the house of the people who are about to receive it. The stork calls out:

“Make ready a cradle,
Some pap and pap-ladle,
A curtain for flies,
And sheets of small size,
A frock small and bright,
And a jacket of white,
As quickly as may be,
For I bring a new baby !?”⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

⁹⁵ Poetry by Jessie Raleigh.

Then people know that they have to prepare. But sometimes, when he is very busy, the stork forgets to give the three-day notice, and then there are problems because nothing is ready.

And in the case of a couple of poor couple who lived in a small hut in the village, the stork had forgotten. When he came to deliver the child, no one was home. The husband and wife had gone to work in the fields and the doors and windows were locked; there wasn't even a stoop in front of the house on which to lay the baby. The stork flew onto the roof of the hut and clattered loudly with his beak until the whole village came running. An old woman hurried out to the field to fetch the parents.

"Mr. Neighbor, Mrs. Neighbor! Mr. Neighbor, Mrs. Neighbor!" she exclaimed from afar, completely out of breath, "For God's sake! The stork is sitting on your house and wants to bring you a little child. Nobody is home to open the window. If you don't come soon, he'll drop it, and there will be a misfortune. Up at the miller's, the stork dropped a child about three years ago, and the poor worm is still a hunchback today."



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Then the man and the woman ran headlong home and took the child from the stork. When they looked at it and saw that it was a beautiful baby boy, the husband and wife were beside themselves with joy. But the stork was so annoyed by the long wait that he resolved never to bring them another child. When they finally came running from the fields, he glared at them and snapped his beak in anger. When he flew off, he said to himself: "It will be another long day today, before I can go home to my Mrs. Stork in the swamp. I have twelve more children to deliver, and it is already getting dark. Life can really be sour!"

⁹⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

But in their heartfelt joy, the husband and wife hadn't noticed that the stork was annoyed. And after all, it was his own fault that he had to wait so long, since he'd forgotten to tell them beforehand. As the child grew and became prettier by the day, the woman said one day:



"If only we could give the good stork who brought us our beautiful child something that he would enjoy! Can you think of anything? Because I really can't!"

"That will be difficult," replied the man; "he already has everything!"

The next morning, however, he came to his wife and said to her:

"What do you think if I ask the carpenter to make some really nice stilts for the stork? He always has to go out into the swamp to catch frogs, and then back to the big pond behind the village, where he gets the little babies that he delivers. He must get his feet wet very often! I also think that when he came to us,

his clattering sounded very hoarse. "

"That is a wonderful idea!" replied the woman. "But the carpenter has to paint the stilts a pretty red so that they match his beak!"

⁹⁷

"Oh?" said the man; "Do you really mean red? I was thinking of green."

⁹⁷ The white stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) is a large bird in the stork family, Ciconiidae. Its plumage is mainly white, with black on the bird's wings. Adults have long red legs and long pointed red beaks, and measure on average 100–115 cm (39–45 in) from beak tip to end of tail, with a 155–215 cm (61–85 in) wingspan. ...The adult white stork's main sound is noisy bill-clattering, which has been likened to distant machine gun fire. The bird makes these sounds by rapidly opening and closing its beak so that a knocking sound is made each time its beak closes. The clattering is amplified by its throat pouch, which acts as a resonator. Used in a variety of social interactions, bill-clattering generally grows louder the longer it lasts, and takes on distinctive rhythms depending on the situation. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_stork#cite_note-142.

"But, dearest!" the woman said, "what are you thinking? You men never know what matches and looks good together. They have to be red!"

Since the man was very sensible and always listened to his wife, he did order red stilts, and when they were finished he went to the swamp and brought them to the stork.

The stork was very pleased, and tried them on right away. Then he said:

"Actually I was really angry with you because you made me wait so long back then. But because you are such good people and have given me these beautiful red stilts, I will bring you a little girl as well. In four weeks from today, I'll be there. I will expect you to be home this time, and tell you that this is the only warning you'll get. I won't come by three days in advance, that's a trip that I can save myself! - Do you hear?"

"Oh, yes!" replied the man. "We'll definitely be at home. You shouldn't have any trouble this time."

When the four weeks were up, the stork came flying to the house and brought a little girl; it was even prettier than the little boy – and now the parents had one of each. Both children were healthy, as were their parents, so the home was a joyous one. –



⁹⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

Now, living in that same village, there was also a rich farmer who had only one boy. He wanted a girl too. And he was a nasty man. When he heard what the poor people had done, he thought to himself that he could certainly outdo them and thereby get what he wanted. He went straight to the carpenter and also ordered a pair of stilts. Only these were much nicer than the ones the poor people had made. The top and bottom were decorated with gold buttons and in the middle they were painted green, yellow and blue. Indeed, when they finished, they were unusually attractive.

Then the rich farmer put on his best coat, took the stilts under his arm and went out to the swamp, where he immediately found the stork.

"Your very obedient servant here, Your Grace!" he said to the stork, paying him an insincere compliment.

"Do you mean me?" asked the stork, who stood comfortably in the water on his beautiful red stilts.

"If I may be so free!" replied the farmer.

"Well, what do you want?"

"I would like to have a little girl, and so my wife took the liberty of sending Your Grace a little present. A pair of very modest stilts."

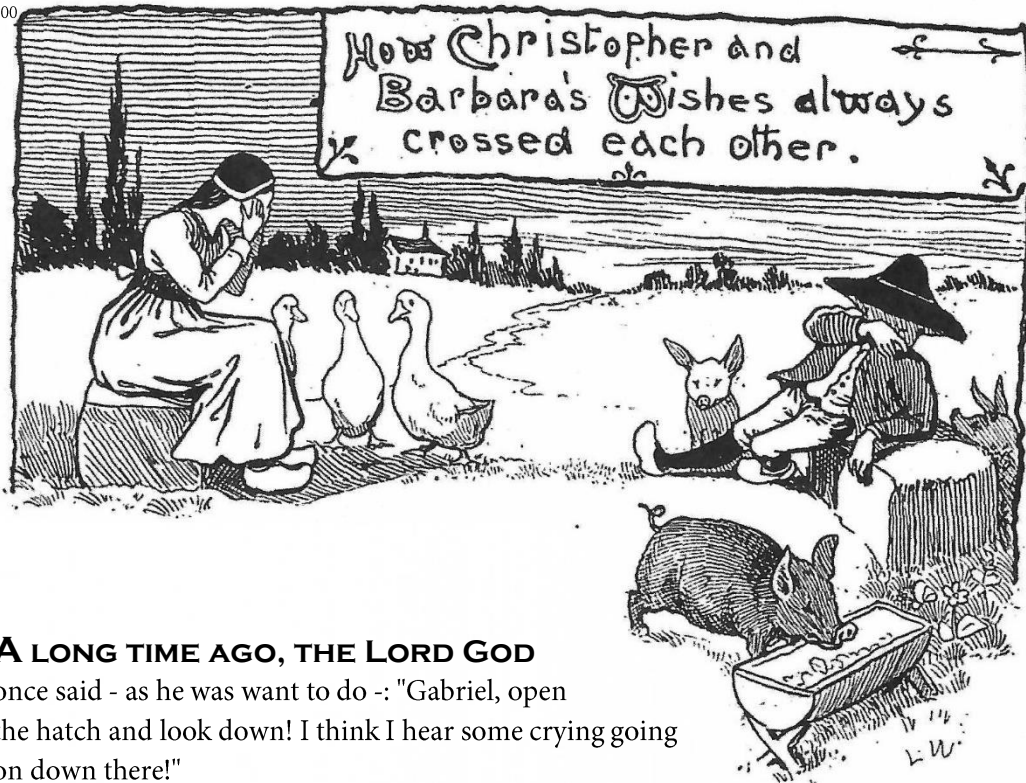
"Well, you just turn yourself around and get yourself home again!" replied the stork, turning away on one leg and refusing to look at the farmer again. "You can't have a little girl; and I don't need your stilts either! I already have two very nice red ones, and since I usually only use one at a time, they will probably last a long time. - Besides, your stilts are hideously ugly. Ugh! blue, green and yellow - just like a clown! I don't dare let Mrs. Stork see me with those."

And so the farmer had to leave with his beautiful stilts, and never did get a little baby girl.



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⁹⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.



A LONG TIME AGO, THE LORD GOD

once said - as he was want to do -: "Gabriel, open the hatch and look down! I think I hear some crying going on down there!"

Gabriel did as the Lord ordered, putting his hand in front of his eyes because the sun was shining and it was dazzling. He looked around and finally said: "There is a long green meadow down there. Barbara is sitting at the one end, tending the geese, and on the other, Christopher is tending the pigs, and they are both crying so hard that it makes one's heart ache."-

"Really?" said the Good Lord; "move over, Stretch*, so that I can see for myself."

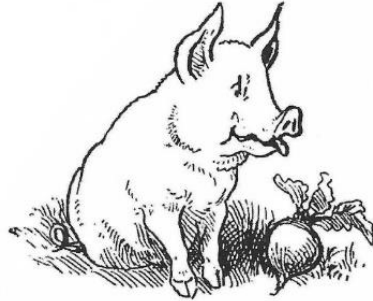
(* Everyone knows that the angel Gabriel is very tall.)

And when He looked down, He found that it was just as the angel Gabriel had said.

Now, the reason why Christopher and Barbara both wept so miserably was as follows: Christopher and Barbara were both very fond of each other. Since one tended the geese, and the other the pigs, they fit together well, and their station in life was compatible. They

¹⁰⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

resolved that they would get married, deciding that it was the right thing to do because they loved each other so much. But their master disagreed. So they had to be content with an engagement. But because good order is always important, and kissing is a very important matter for a bride and a groom, they agreed to give each other seven kisses in the morning and seven kisses in the evening – and that that was a good number. For a while, things went along pretty well, and the seven kisses were always exchanged, as agreed, both morning and evening. But on one particular morning – the morning of the day when this story took place, just as the seventh kiss was about to be delivered, Barbara's favorite goose and Christopher's favorite piglet had a disagreement over breakfast. They argued so vociferously that they almost came to blows. To settle the dispute, the couple had to break off their kisses at the wrong number. Later, when they both sat, lonely and far from each other at opposite ends of the meadow, it occurred to them that this really was a very bad situation, and they both began to cry. Which is when the Lord Himself caught them at it.



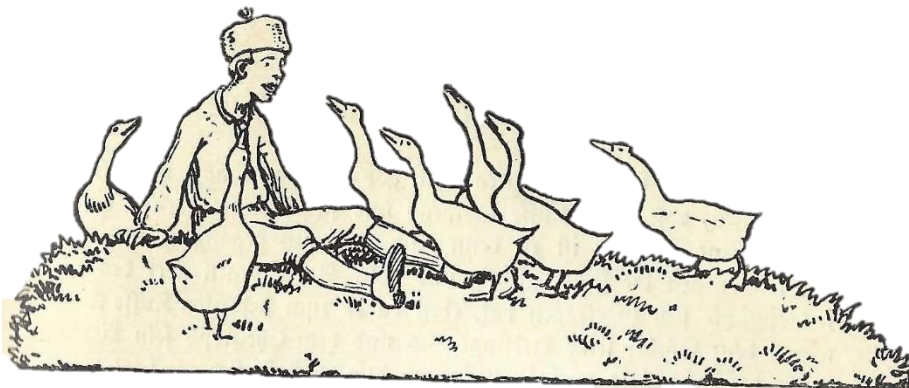
101

At first, the good Lord thought that their suffering would resolve itself on its own accord. But when the crying got more and more annoying and Christopher's favorite piglet and Barbara's favorite goose also became sad, and made very sour faces, He said: "I want to help them! Whatever they wish for today, those wishes will come true."

The two only had one thought; they wanted to see each other, but because the meadow was large and had a bush in the middle, they couldn't. So Christopher thought: *If only I were over with the geese!* and Barbara sighed: *Oh, if only I were with the pigs!*

Suddenly Christopher really was sitting with the geese and Barbara with the pigs; but yet again they were not together, and the wrong number of kisses still couldn't be made right.

¹⁰¹ Illustration by Louis W. Wain.



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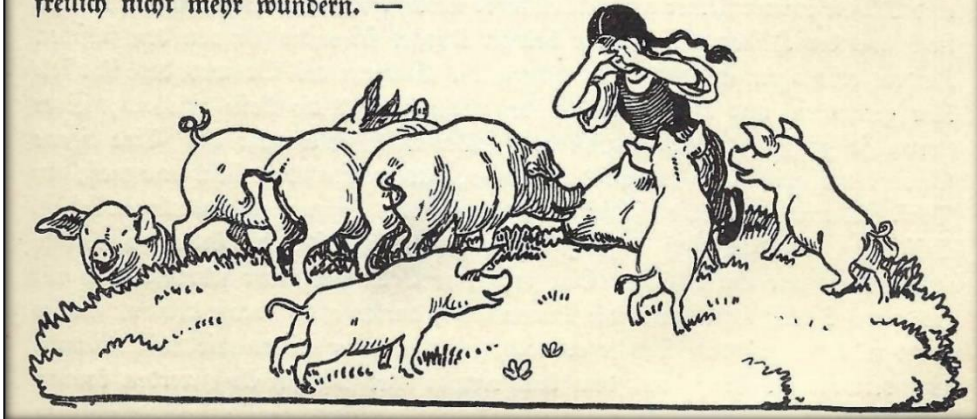
Then Christopher thought: *Barbara must have wanted to visit me.* And Barbara thought: *Christopher probably walked over to me on the other side of the meadow! - Oh, if only I were with my geese! - Oh, if only I were with my pigs!*

And again, Barbara was now sitting with the geese and Christopher with the pigs, and so it went all day long, with the two of them wishing for each other and passing each other by. And so the whole day passed and they never made up for that seventh morning kiss. Christopher wanted to catch up that same evening, when they both came home dead tired, but Barbara said it was no use, and that good order had gone out the window and the matter could never be made right. -

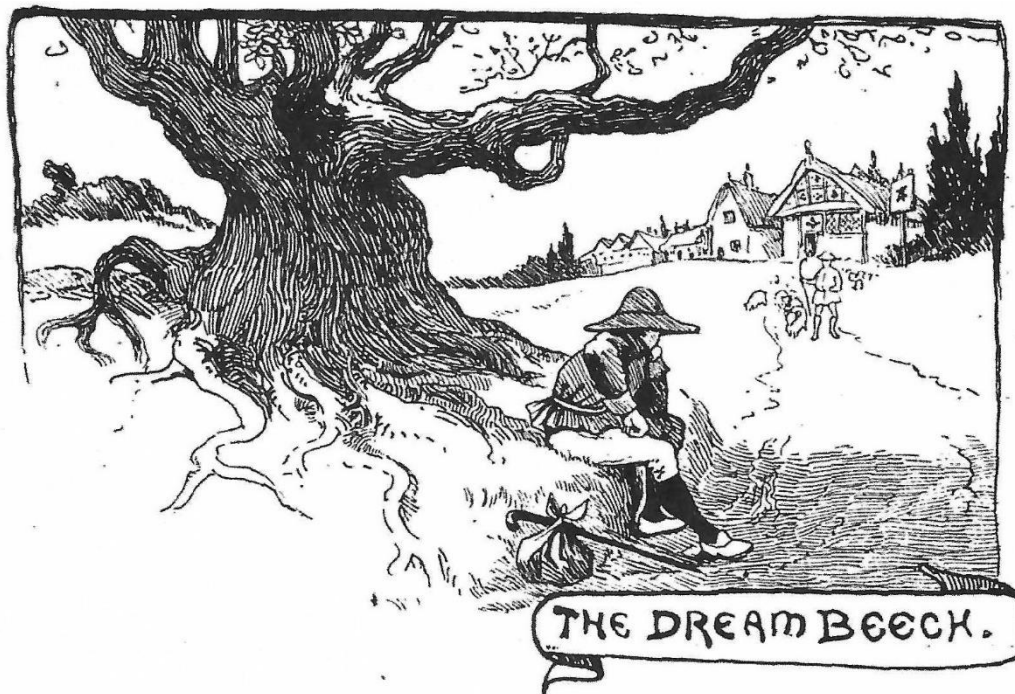
When the Good Lord saw that the two of them always wished right past each other, he said: "I meant well, but I made a mess of it. But I said, what I said! It can't be helped!" So he made up his mind, right there and then, never again to interfere with lovers and grant them their wishes without further ado, but always to inquire first as to what they actually wanted. Later, He is said to have commented to Gabriel in confidence, that it was a real shame that lovers' wishes were so seldom of the kind that He could actually grant. And when I turned to Him a long time later on a similar matter, He pretended not to hear me. Afterwards, when Gabriel told me this story; I wasn't surprised any more and understood the Lord's dilemma.

¹⁰² Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

Als aber der liebe Gott sah, daß sich die beiden immer so aneinander vorbeiwünschten, sprach er: „Da habe ich etwas Gutes angerichtet. Aber, was ich gesagt habe, habe ich gesagt! Dagegen kann nun weiter nichts helfen!“ So hat er sich denn vorgenommen, nie wieder Liebesleuten ihre Wünsche so ohne weiteres in Erfüllung gehen zu lassen, sondern sich immer erst zu erkundigen, was sie denn eigentlich haben wollten. Später aber soll er einmal im Vertrauen zum Gabriel gesagt haben: es wäre doch recht schade, daß ihre Wünsche so gar selten von der Art wären, daß er sie gewähren dürfe; und als ich mich vor langer, langer Zeit einmal in ähnlichen Angelegenheiten an ihn wandte, tat er gar nicht, als wenn er es hörte. Nachher erzählte mir der Gabriel diese Geschichte; da konnte ich mich freilich nicht mehr wundern. —



¹⁰³ Copy from Page 85 of Richard Volkmann's book, published in 1914.



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IT MUST BE AT LEAST A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, when lightning struck and split it apart from top to bottom. A plough has been ploughing up that same land for almost that long. But before that, a mighty old beech tree stood on that green grassy hill, just a few hundred paces from the first house at the edge of the village. Trees like that giant old beech don't grow anymore; animals and people, plants and trees having been getting smaller and more pitiful since then. The peasants say that the beech tree stems from ancient times and that a holy apostle was slain by pagans underneath it. The roots of the beech drank the blood of the apostle, and when it reached the trunk and branches, that beech tree grew to new heights and incredible strength. Who can say if that's true?

But there is another story intrinsically tied to the beech tree's history, that everyone in the village, old and young, knows about. It is just this: Whoever fell asleep under that beech tree and had a dream, that dream would inevitably come true. That is why, since time immemorial, it was called the Dream Beech, and nobody ever called it anything else. However, there was a special condition: whoever lay down under the Dream Beech with the intention of falling asleep, was not allowed to think about what he would be dreaming. If he did, he dreamed only nonsensical stuff that no reasonable person could make any

¹⁰⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

sense of. Now, that is a very difficult condition because most people are far too curious not to think about it, and so the vast majority of those who tried, failed. At the time when the following story took place, there was probably not a single person in the village, neither man nor woman, who had succeeded even once. But there was an eternal truth within that Dream Beach, that was certain.

On one hot summer day, when there was no breeze, a poor travelling journeyman came wandering down the road. He had been in foreign countries for many years, and had had a very hard time of it, and he was sore and sick. When he reached the village, he turned all his pockets inside out, one more time, but they were still empty. *What are you going to do?* he asked himself. *You are dead tired; no landlord will take you in for free, and thieving can be an arduous business.* Then he saw the magnificent beech tree on the green grassy knoll. It was only a few steps from where he stood on the path, so he went to lay down under the tree on the grass to rest a bit. But the tree rustled soothingly, and as it gently moved its branches, a few glittering rays of sunshine filtered through now and again. And when the branches parted on an errant breeze, a slice of blue sky could be seen. Then the journeyman closed his eyes and he slept.

After he had fallen asleep, the beech threw down a branch with three leaves on it. The branch fell on his chest. Then he dreamed that he was sitting at a table in a room, and the table was his, and the room belonged to him too, as did the house. And a young woman was in front of the table, leaning on it with both hands and looking at him in a loving way, and that was his wife. And there was a child on his knees, and he was feeding the baby his porridge, and because it was too hot, he was blowing on the spoon. And then the woman said: "What a good father you are, my dear!" and she laughed. And there was another child jumping around in the room, a chubby boy, and he had tied a string to a large carrot and was pulling it behind him and was calling to it as if it was a puppy dog. And he realized that both children were his. So he dreamed; and he must have liked the dream very much, because he laughed as he slept.

When he woke up it was almost evening, and a shepherd was standing in front of him with his herd of sheep. The journeyman jumped up, refreshed, stretched and stretched again and said: "Good heavens, who knew life could be that good! But it's nice that such things are possible." Then the shepherd came up to him and asked him where he was from and where he was going and whether he knew anything about the tree. After the shepherd had convinced himself that the journeyman was as innocent as a newborn child, he exclaimed: "You are a lucky fellow! It's obvious that you had a good dream; I have been watching you sleep and could tell by the expressions on your face! " Then he told the journeyman

something of the legend of the tree: "What you have dreamed will come true; that is as certain as that this is a sheep and that there is a goat. Just ask the people in the village; they'll tell you what I say is true! Now, tell me what you dreamed!"



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"Old man," replied the journeyman with a smile, "that's how you snore the innocent. I keep my best dreams to myself and you can't blame me for that. But not to worry, they won't come to anything!" And he wasn't just saying it, he was serious. As he walked to the village, he said to himself: "*What nonsense! I'd like to know how a tree gets that kind of knowledge and power.*"

When he got to the village, he saw a flagpole on the gable of the third house; the flag had a golden crown on it. The innkeeper of The Crown stood at the front door. He was in a very good mood at that moment because he had already eaten his dinner, was pleasantly stuffed, and that was the best hour of his day. Our journeyman politely took off his hat and, on a hunch, asked whether the innkeeper would be willing to give him a room at the same rate that God charges His guests. The innkeeper of The Crown looked the handsome fellow in his dusty, torn clothes up-and-down. Then he gave a friendly nod and said: "Just sit here in the arbor next to the door; the kitchen probably has a piece of bread and a jug of wine left over. In the meantime they can find a bed for you." Then he went in and sent his daughter to bring the journeyman the bread and wine. She sat with him and asked him for stories about the foreign countries that he had visited and the hard times he'd had. Then she told

¹⁰⁵ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

him what she knew about the village: how the wheat harvest was going, that the neighbor's wife had had twins, and the date of the next dance at The Crown.

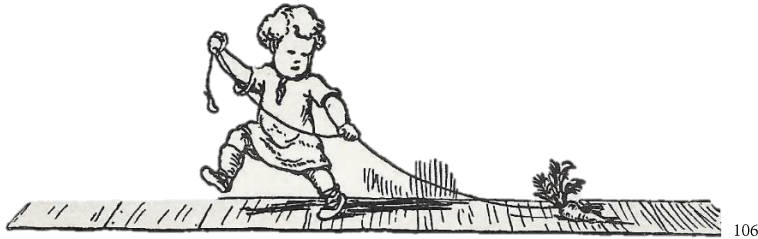
Suddenly she got up, leaned over to the journeyman across the table and said: "Why do you have a branch with three leaves sticking out of your coat lapel?" Then the craftsman looked and saw the branch which had fallen on him while he was sleeping. "It must be from the big beech tree right outside the village," he said, "I had a little nap underneath it."

The girl listened curiously and waited to see what he would say next. When he was silent, she began to tease out the truth of his words very carefully until she was sure that he really had slept under the Dream Beech. She worded her inquiries as carefully as a cat skirting a hot plate of porridge, until she had convinced herself that he knew nothing of the strange powers of the Dream Beech; because he might be a rogue and just pretend that he didn't know anything. When she was done, she fetched another pitcher of wine, and told him in a friendly manner that he should have another drink. She told him the things that she had dreamed about and how it was such a shame that none of it would ever come true.

Meanwhile the shepherd came back from the field and drove the sheep through the village. When he passed The Crown and saw the girl sitting in the arbor with the journeyman, he stopped for a moment and said: "Yes, yes, he should tell you about his wonderful dream; he doesn't want to tell me anything!" And he drove his sheep on.

Then the girl became even more curious, and when he still said nothing about his dream, she could no longer contain herself and asked him frankly what he dreamt while sleeping under the beech.

Then the journeyman, who was a rascally sort, and in a cheerful mood because of his lovely dream, made a sly face, winked, and said: "I had a wonderful dream, it must be true; but I don't dare say what it was." But she kept pressing and entreating him to tell her. Then he moved very close to her and said in all seriousness: "Just think, I dreamed that I would marry the daughter of the innkeeper of The Crown and later become innkeeper myself!"



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Then the girl turned very white and then red, and then walked away and into the house. After a time, she came back out and asked if that had really been his dream and if he was serious.

"Of course," he said, "the girl in my dream looked just like you!" Then the girl went into the house again and this time, she did not come back. She went into her room, her mind all atwitter. Her thoughts ran over her heart like water over the weir: always new and always different, and always the same, so that there was no end to it. *"He doesn't know anything about the tree,"* she thought. *"And he dreamed it nevertheless. Whether I like it or not, it will turn out that way. There is nothing that can be done about it."* Then she lay down in bed and dreamed of the journeyman all night. When she woke up the next morning, she knew his face by heart, so often she had seen it in her dreams - and he was a handsome lad, that was true.

The journeyman, on the other hand, had slept soundly and peacefully on his cot, the Dream Beech, his dream thereunder, what he had said to the landlord's daughter that evening - all long forgotten.

He was standing at the door of the inn, about to shake hands with the Innkeeper and say goodbye, when the girl stepped into the room. When she saw him standing there ready to go, a strange fear overwhelmed her, as if she were not permitted to let him go. "Father," she said, "the wine has still not been tapped, and the young lad has nothing to do; if he could stay here for a day, he could earn his keep from last night, and a bit of travel money on top of that." The innkeeper of The Crown thought it was a splendid idea, because he had already had his morning drink and his breakfast and was so stuffed, and that it was the best hour of his day.

But the tapping of the wine went very slowly, and the girl always had this other chore or that other task to do, which is why the journeyman had to be fetched up from the cellar.

¹⁰⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

When the barrel was finally empty and the bottles full, she said it would be good if he could help out in the field before he left; and when he was finished with that, there was work to do in the garden, and so much else that no one had thought of before. Week after week went by, and every night she dreamed of him. In the evenings, she sat with him in the arbor in front of the house, and when he told her how hard it had been for him in foreign lands with strangers who had not been good to him, she always got dust in her eyes, and had to use her apron to wipe them.

And after a year the journeyman was still in at the innkeeper's house; and everything was scoured, white sand strewn in all the rooms, and green fir branches over top, and the whole village was celebrating a holiday. Because the young journeyman was getting married to the daughter of the innkeeper of The Crown, and everyone was happy. And anyone who was not happy because they were envious, at least pretended they were.

Soon afterwards the innkeeper of The Crown had his best hour again, because he was full and satisfied all around, and he sat in his armchair and slept with his tobacco can on his knees. Finally, when they came to try to wake him up again, they could not; he was dead – dead as a doornail¹⁰⁷.

Now the young journeyman really was the innkeeper of The Crown, as he had jokingly said, and everything else happened just as he dreamed it under the Dream Beech. Very soon he also had two children, and he probably took one of them on his lap and fed it and blew on the porridge spoon, and the other boy was certainly running around the room with the carrot at the same time, although the person who told me this story did not expressly tell me that, and I forgot to ask him. But it must have been so, because whatever one dreams under the Dream Beech always comes true.

One day some time later, it might have been about four years since the wedding, the young innkeeper - because that is what he now was -- was sitting in the tavern. His wife came in, stood in front of him and said: "Imagine, yesterday at noon one of our mowers fell asleep

¹⁰⁷ **Dead as a doornail** is a phrase which means not alive, unequivocally deceased. The term goes back to the 1300s, the phrase *dead as a doornail* is found in poems of the time. The term *dead as a doornail* was used in the 1500s by William Shakespeare, and in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol in 1843. It is thought that the phrase *dead as a doornail* comes from the manner of securing *doornails* that were hammered into a door by clenching them. Clenching is the practice of bending over the protruding end of the nail and hammering it into the wood. When a nail has been clenched, it has been dead nailed, and is not easily resurrected to use again. An alternative wording of the phrase *dead as a doornail* is *deader than a doornail*.

under the Dream Beech, without thinking about much at all. Do you know what he dreamt? He dreamt that he would become very rich. And who was it? Old Kaspar, who is so stupid that we only tolerate him out of pity. What will he do with all that money?"

Then the man laughed and said: "How can you believe in the stupid story, when you are otherwise such a clever woman? Why not ask yourself how a tree, no matter how beautiful and old, can know the future?"

The woman looked at her husband with wide eyes, shook her head and said very seriously: "Husband, do not sin! One should not joke about such things."

"I'm not joking, woman!" replied the man.

Then his wife was silent again for a while, as if she did not really understand him, and then she said: "What is this?! I should think that you have every reason to be grateful to that sacred old tree. Didn't everything turn out the way you dreamed it?"

When she said this, the man made the kindest, most tolerant face he could and said: "God knows that I am thankful, God and you. Yes, it was a beautiful dream! It feels like it was just yesterday, and I still remember it exactly. In fact, everything has become a thousand times more wonderful than I dreamed it; and you are a thousand times more dear and prettier than the young woman who had appeared to me in my dream back then."

His wife just looked at him with wide eyes. He continued: "As for the tree and the dream, dearest heart, I think that anyone who likes to dance responds to a whistle; and when someone shouts into the forest, it echoes back it again. I lived through many awful, nasty years, so it is probably no wonder that when I dreamt, I dreamt of something wonderful for my future."

"But that you should dream that you would marry me!"

"But I never dreamed that! I only saw a young woman with two children, and she wasn't nearly as pretty as you and neither were the children."

"Ugh," replied the woman. "Do you want to deny me or the tree? Didn't you tell me on the first day when we met each other - it was already evening and we were outside in the arbor - didn't you tell me straight away that you had dreamed that you would marry me and become the innkeeper of The Crown?"

Then the man remembered for the first time, the jest he had allowed himself with his now-wife, and he said: "It can't help, my dear! I really didn't dream about you then; even when I said it, it was just a joke. You were so curious and I wanted to tease you!"

Then the woman started crying violently and left. After a while, he followed her. She stood by the well in the courtyard, still crying. He tried to comfort her, but in vain.

"You stole my love and betrayed my heart!" she said. "I'll never be happy again!"

He asked her whether she didn't love him, as dearly as no other person in the world, and whether they hadn't lived contentedly and happily together like no one else in the village. She had to admit everything, but she remained sad, despite all his reasoning and persuasion.

Then he thought: Let her cry! Overnight she'll be distracted with other matters; tomorrow she'll be as before. But he was wrong; the next morning his wife no longer wept, but she was serious and sad and she avoided her husband. Every attempt to comfort her failed. Most of the day she sat in a corner brooding, and when her husband walked in she was startled.

When this went on for several days without any change, he too began to feel a great sadness. He feared that he had lost his wife's love forever. He walked around the house quietly, trying to find a solution, but couldn't think of anything. So one afternoon he went out to the village and strolled through the fields to clear his mind. It was a hot July day; no clouds in the sky. The ripe wheat fields billowed like a lake of gold, and the birds sang; but his heart was full of sorrow. There he saw the old Dream Beech standing in the distance. Like the Queen of Trees, she towered high into the sky. It seemed to him as if she waved to him with her green branches and called to him like an old friend. He went and sat under her and thought of the past. Five years had come and gone since he, as a poor lost soul, had rested under her branches for the first time and had that wonderful dream. Oh, it had been so lovely! And that dream had lasted for five years. - And now? It was all over! All over?! Forever? -



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¹⁰⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

Then the beech began to rustle again, as it had done five years previously, and began to move its mighty branches. And as she moved them, like then, she let glittering rays of sunlight filter through, here and there, and sometimes a slice of blue sky could be seen through the branches. Then his heart grew quieter and he fell asleep; he was tired and hadn't slept much the previous nights because he'd been so worried. And then he dreamed the same dream again, just as he had five years ago. And this time, the woman at the table and the children playing had the dear familiar faces of his wife and his children. And the woman looked at him so kindly - oh, so lovingly.

He woke up, and when he realized that it had only been a dream, he was sadder than ever. He broke off a green branch from the beech, went home, and placed it in the hymn book. The next day, when his wife was about to go to church - it was Sunday - the branch fell out. Her husband was standing next to her and he blushed, bent down, picked it up and tried to put it in his pocket. But the woman saw it and asked where the branch came from?

"It's from the Dream Beech," he said, "It took pity on me. When I was outside yesterday, sitting under the tree, I fell asleep. It probably wanted to comfort me because I dreamed that everything was all right again and that you had forgiven and forgotten everything. But it is not true! There's nothing to the story of the Dream Beech. It is a mighty, wonderful tree, but it knows nothing of the future."

His wife stared at him. It seemed that a ray of sunshine fell over her face: "Husband, did you really dream that?"

"Yes!" he replied firmly, and she saw that he was telling the truth; his face quivered because he didn't want to cry.

"And it was really me; I was really your wife?"

When he said yes, too, she fell into his arms and kissed him repeatedly. "Praise God," she said, "now everything is all right again! I love you so much - so dearly, you can't even imagine it! But I was so afraid these past days, whether I should really love you, or whether God had actually chosen a different man for me. But you stole my heart from me, you bad man, and there was a bit of deception in it! - Yes, you stole it from me, but now I know that it doesn't matter and that it would have happened this way anyway." Then she was silent for a while and then continued:

"But you will never speak ill of the Dream Beech again, promise me?"

"No, never again; because I believe in the Dream Beach -- maybe differently than you do -- but no less ardently. Believe and rely on that! We will keep the branch in the front of the hymn book always, so that it doesn't get lost."



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¹⁰⁹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



C. St.

Träumereien

Zu „Die Traumbuche“



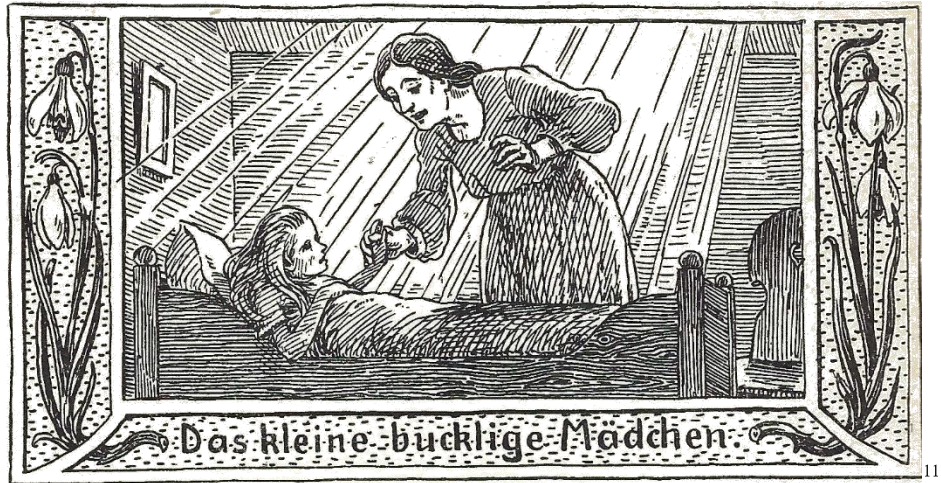
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ONCE UPON A TIME there was a woman who had only one daughter. She was very small and pale and probably a little different from other children. Because when the woman went out with her, people often stopped, stared at the child and whispered to each other. Whenever the little girl asked her mother why people looked at her so strangely, the mother always replied: "Because you are wearing such a beautiful new dress." The little one was satisfied with that. When they came back home, the mother would take her daughter in her arms, kiss her again and again and say: "You dear, sweet angel of my heart, what will become of you once I'm dead? Nobody knows what a dear angel you are; not even your father!"

The time came when the mother suddenly fell ill and on the ninth day, she died. The little girl's father threw himself desperately upon the deathbed and wanted to be buried with his wife. His friends, however, talked to him and comforted him; so he went on. After a year

¹¹⁰ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

he took a new wife. She was more beautiful, younger and richer than the first, but she did not have the goodness of character.



After her mother's death, the little girl did nothing but sit in her room on the windowsill from morning to night, every day. There was no one who wanted to take her out. The child became even more pale and, in that entire year, she did not grow at all.

When the new mother moved into the house, the little girl thought: "Now we will go for walks again, around the city, in the bright sunshine along the pretty paths where the beautiful shrubs and flowers grow, and where the many nicely dressed people are." For she lived in a small, narrow alleyway into which the sun only rarely shone; sitting on the windowsill, the little girl could only see a piece of blue sky about the size of a handkerchief. Her new mother went out every day, mornings and afternoons. Each time she put on a beautiful, brightly colored dress, much nicer than her own mother had ever owned. But she never took the little girl with her.

Then the child finally gathered her courage, and one day she begged her stepmother to take her along. But her stepmother categorically refused, saying: "You're not very clever, are you! What would people think if I let them see you with me? You're a humpback. Humpbacked children don't go for walks, they stay at home."

The little girl became very still, and as soon as the stepmother had left the house, she pulled a chair up to a mirror, climbed up and took a look at herself – and, really, she was hunched

¹¹¹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

over, with a hump on her back! Then she sat down on her windowsill again and looked down into the street and thought of her wonderful mother, who had taken her along everywhere she went. Then she thought about the hump on her back again:

"I wonder what's in there?" she said to herself, "there must be something in that hump."

The summer passed, and when winter came the little girl had grown so pale and so weak that she could no longer sit on the windowsill, but always had to lie in bed. And when it came time for the little snowdrops to stick their first green tips from the earth, her old mother came to her one night and told her how beautiful, how glorious it was in heaven.

The next morning the little girl was dead.

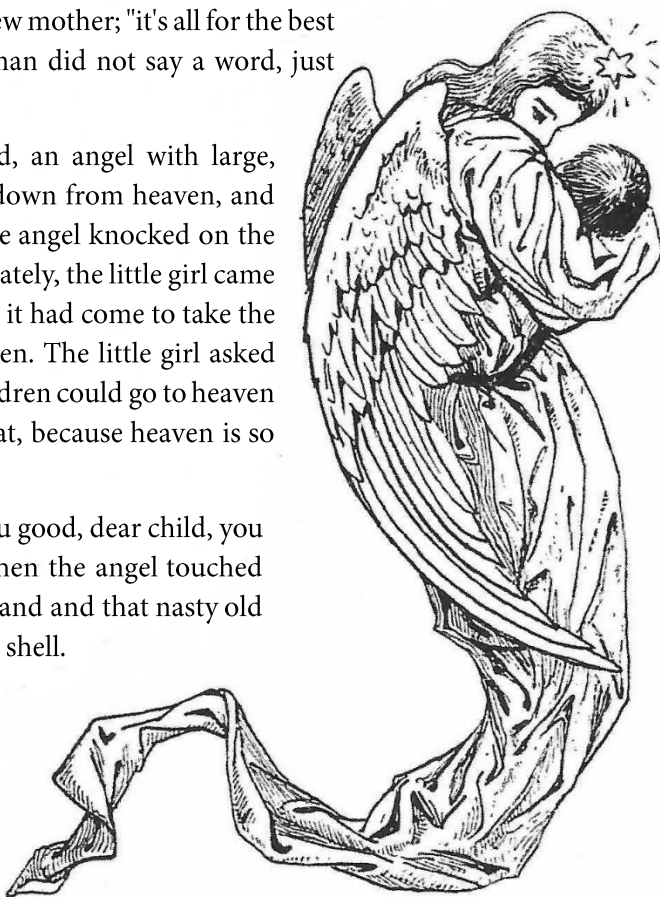
"Don't cry, husband!" said the new mother; "it's all for the best for that poor child!" And the man did not say a word, just nodded his head in silence.

When the little girl was buried, an angel with large, white swan wings came flying down from heaven, and sat down next to the grave. The angel knocked on the grave as if it was a door. Immediately, the little girl came out of the grave. The angel said it had come to take the little girl to her mother in heaven. The little girl asked shyly whether humpbacked children could go to heaven too? It was hard to imagine that, because heaven is so beautiful and elegant.

However, the angel replied: "You good, dear child, you are no longer humpbacked!" Then the angel touched the child's back with its white hand and that nasty old hump fell off like a large hollow shell.

And what was in that hump?

Two wonderful, white angel wings! The little girl stretched them out, and it was as if she had always known how to fly!



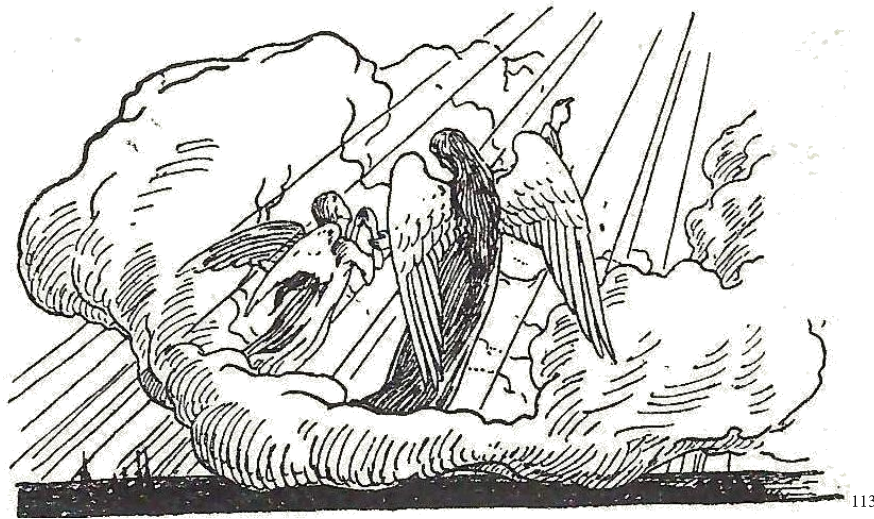
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¹¹² Illustration by Louis William Wain.

With the angel, she flew through the bright sunshine up into the blue sky.

And when she got to heaven, in the loveliest place of all, sat her mother, who spread her arms out towards her child.

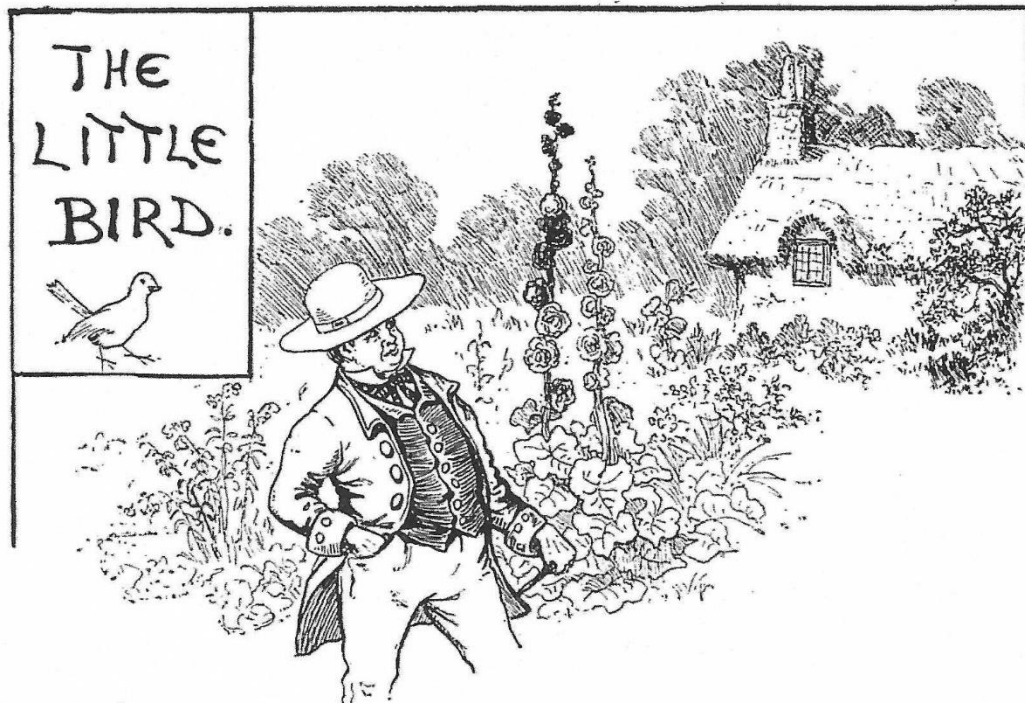
The little girl flew straight into her mother's lap.



Note from the author:

The motive for this fairy tale does not come from me. I've known it since I was a child, but I don't know where it came from.

¹¹³ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



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A MAN AND A WOMAN LIVED in a pretty little house, with a lovely garden behind it. There were beautiful old trees in the garden, and the woman grew the rarest plants and flowers in it. They lacked for nothing and were very happy. One day the man went for a walk in the garden, happily smelling the flowers, and thought to himself: "*What a happy person you are and what a good, pretty, skillful wife you have!*" As he thought about this, something moved at his feet.

The man, who was very nearsighted, bent down and saw that it was a small bird that had probably fallen out of its nest since it could not yet fly. He picked it up, looked at it, and carried it into the house to show his wife.

"Dear lady," he called to her, "I have caught a little bird; I think it is a nightingale¹¹⁵!"

¹¹⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

¹¹⁵ The **common nightingale** is a small passerine bird best known for its powerful and beautiful song. The common nightingale is slightly larger than the European robin, at 15–16.5 cm length. It is plain brown above except for the reddish tail. It is buff to white below. The sexes are similar. The song of the nightingale has been described as one of the most beautiful sounds in nature, inspiring songs, fairy tales, opera, books, and a great deal of poetry.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_nightingale

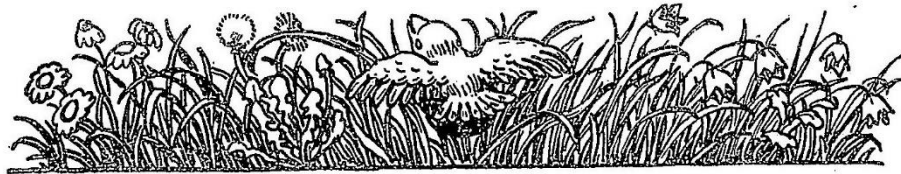
"Guess again!" answered the woman without even looking at the bird; "How is a young nightingale supposed to get into our garden? There are no older ones in it."

"You can count on it, it's a nightingale! By the way, I've heard one singing in our garden before. It will be wonderful when it grows up and starts to sing! I love to hear the nightingales!"

"It's not a nightingale!" repeated the woman, still not looking up; she was busy knitting a stocking and had just dropped a stitch.

"Yes, it is!" said the man, "I can see it very clearly now!" and held the bird close to his nose.

Then the woman looked up, saw the bird for the first time, laughed loudly and called out: "Husband, it's just a common sparrow!"



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"Wife," replied the man, now clearly irritated, "why would you think that I'd confuse a nightingale with the most common bird that there is! You know nothing about natural history, but as a boy, I had a butterfly and a beetle collection."

"But, husband, I beg you, does a nightingale have such a broad beak and thick head?"

"Yes, it does, and it is a nightingale!"

"I tell you, it is not. Listen to how it peeps!"

"Little nightingales peep too."

And so it went, until they were seriously quarrelling. Finally, the man stomped out of the room angrily and fetched a small cage.

¹¹⁶ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



"Don't you put that disgusting animal in any room in my house!" the woman shouted to him when he was still standing in the doorway. "I don't want it in here!"

"You're about to understand that I'm still master of the house!" shouted the man. He put the bird in the cage, gathered ant eggs and fed it – which made the little bird very happy.

At dinner the man and the woman sat at opposite corners of the table and refused to speak to each other.

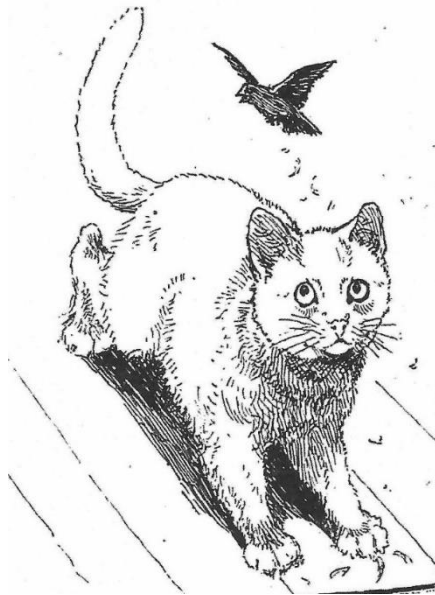
Early the next morning, the woman went to her husband's bed and said seriously: "Dear husband, yesterday you were unreasonable and very nasty to me. I just took another look at that bird. It is definitely a young sparrow. Allow me to let it go."

"Don't you dare touch that nightingale!" the man shouted angrily, ignoring his wife.

The next fourteen days passed in this vein. The happiness and peace that had once graced the home, seemed to have evaporated. The man growled, and when the woman wasn't snapping at him, she was crying. Only the little bird was happy; it grew bigger and bigger feeding on ant eggs, and its feathers grew noticeably longer, as if it would soon fly. The little bird hopped around in the cage, sat in the sand on the bottom, ducked his head and fluffed his feathers by shaking himself, and peeped and peeped – just like any young sparrow. And every time he peeped it stabbed the woman's heart like a dagger. -



One day the husband went out, leaving his wife crying alone in the house, thinking how happily she had once lived with her husband. From morning to evening they had enjoyed each other's company and he had loved her so much. Now everything, everything was different, ever since the cursed bird came into the house.



She jumped up suddenly, like someone who has made a decision, took the bird out of the cage, went to the window and let it hop out into the garden.

Soon afterwards the man came home.

"Dear husband," said the woman, not daring to look at him, "An accident has happened; the cat has eaten the little bird."

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"The cat?" repeated the man, numb with horror; "It ate the bird? You're lying! You let the nightingale get away on purpose! I would never have thought it of you. You are an awful woman. Our marriage is over!" He turned very pale and tears came to his

eyes.

When the woman saw this, she suddenly realized that she had done a very great wrong to let the bird go, and weeping, she hurried into the garden to see whether she might still be able to find it there and catch it. And there it was, right in the middle of the path! The little bird hopped and fluttered because it still couldn't fly properly.

Then the woman rushed to catch it, but the little bird scurried into a flower bed and from the bed into a bush and from there to another bush. The woman tripped and fell trying to catch it. She trampled on the beds and flowers without paying any attention to them, and chased about the garden after the bird for half an hour. At last she caught it, and purple in the face, her hair in wild disarray, she went back into the house. Her eyes sparkled with joy and her heart pounded.

"Dear Husband," she said, "I have caught the nightingale again. Don't be angry anymore; it was really nasty of me!"

¹¹⁷ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Then the man looked at his wife lovingly. He thought to himself that she had never been as beautiful as she was at that very moment. He took the little bird out of her hand, held it close to his nose again, and looked at it from all sides. Then he shook his head and said: "My dear, you were right! I'm only seeing it now; it's really is just a sparrow. How strange that I could be so mistaken."

"Beloved," replied his wife, "you're just saying that to make me feel better. Today that bird really does look like a nightingale to me."

"No, no!" the man interrupted her, looking at the bird one more time and laughing loudly, "It's a very common sparrow — yellow-billed." Then he gave his wife a hearty kiss and went on: "Carry him back into the garden and let the stupid sparrow that made us so miserable for a fortnight, fly away for good."

"No," replied the woman, "that would be cruel! He is not quite fully fledged yet, and the cat could really get him. We want to feed him for a few more days until his feathers have grown even more, and then - then we will let him fly! "-

The moral of the story is this: if someone has caught a sparrow and thinks it's a nightingale – don't tell him he is wrong, because he'll likely take it badly. In time, he will certainly notice it himself.



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¹¹⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



119

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE, when the angels played with the farmer's children in their sandboxes, the gates of heaven were wide open and the golden glitter of heaven fell to earth like rain. The people looked from the earth into the heavens; they saw the blessed ones walking between the stars, and the people sent their greetings to those on high, and the blessed ones sent their regards to those below. But the most wonderful thing of all was the music, which could be heard coming from heaven. The good Lord had written the sheet music himself, and a thousand angels performed the notes with violins, timpani and trumpets. When the music began to sound, all became very quiet on earth. Even the wind stopped rustling and the waters in the sea and rivers stood still and smooth as glass. The people acknowledged each other's joy and held each other's hands. Listening to the music, they felt so loved and uplifted; in a way that one simply cannot describe to a poor human heart in today's day and age.

That's how the people were then; but it didn't last long. One day the good Lord closed the gates of heaven as a punishment to those below, and said to the angels: "Stop your music;

¹¹⁹ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

for I am sad!" Then the angels were saddened too and each sat down with his sheet of music on a cloud and shredded the sheet with their golden scissors into nothing but little scraps of paper, which they tossed down to earth. Here the wind took the scraps, blew them like snowflakes over mountains and valleys and scattered them all over the earth. And the children of men each snatched a piece of paper, the one a large scrap and the other a smaller one, and carefully kept them and considered each scrap very valuable; for it was a tiny part of the heavenly music that had sounded so wonderful. But over time they began to quarrel and became disrespectful to each other, because everyone believed they had gotten the best scrap. In the end, everyone asserted that what he had was heavenly music proper, and that what the others had was pure illusion. Those who wanted to be really clever - and there were many of those - made a big flourish on the back and front of their scrap, and imagined they'd done something particularly special. One whistled "a" and the other sang "b"; one played in minor and the other in major; none could understand the other. In short, it was noise like in a Jewish school. - It is still like that today. -



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But when the end of time arrives, when the stars fall to the earth and the sun into the sea, then the people will crowd at the gates of heaven like children at a Christmas tree. And when the gates are opened - then the good Lord, with the help of his angels, will gather all the scraps of paper and restore His heavenly music book again. He'll gather the big scraps

¹²⁰ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

and the small ones, even the very tiny ones, on which there's only a single note. The angels will put the pieces back together, and then the gates will open with fanfare, and the heavenly music will ring out once again, just as beautifully as before. The human children will stand amazed and ashamed. They will listen and say to the other: "That was yours! This was mine! but now it all sounds quite different. How wonderful it is! and how beautiful! for at last all the parts are together again, and everything is in its rightful place!"

Oh, yes! That's how it will be. You can rely on it.



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¹²¹ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



122

This story is No. 20 of 22 in Richard von Volkmann-Leander's book. I have decided not to translate it.

Leander wrote thoughtful and meaningful stories for children. For the most part, it does not matter that he wrote them 150 years ago, as a man of his time. This tale, however, is no longer appropriate.

Leander writes about a little black boy growing up and learning how to live a good and decent life. The boy does, in fact, grow up to be a good man. It turns out that the harder he works, the more accomplished he becomes at his craft (he is a musician), the more the "blackness" of his skin wears off until he is a white man. And then the people love him.

¹²² Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Leander's point, of course, is that all little children should strive to work hard, attend to their careers, develop their talents and do the morally correct thing. Unfortunately, Leander seems to suggest that all "good" adults are white, and that "whiteness" is a reward for hard work and talent. This should be offensive to all people, everywhere.

In defense of Leander, he is a man of his time and was simply reflecting the status quo. It is true that the Golden Princess, who is not black, does not fare well in this story. Her skin is made of pure gold. She is a haughty princess who mocks those less fortunate than herself – like the little black boy. Eventually her skin of pure gold wears off and she becomes a dull tin woman, relegated to the junk room of a freak show.

The moral of Leander's story will always remain true and important: no matter the obstacles, we should put in our best efforts to be good people and never hurt or mock each other. But I believe there are other stories that better illustrate these truths.

Waltraut Wiens, December 2020



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¹²³ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



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IT WAS AT A TIME when the earth was at its most beautiful and when it was hardest for people to die, because the lilacs were already in bloom and the rose buds had thickened. Two wanderers were walking along the heavenly street, one poor and one rich. On earth they had lived close together on the same street, the rich man in a large, splendid house and the poor man in a little hut. But because death does not differentiate, it just so happened that they both died at the same hour.

Now they met again on the street going to heaven; they walked side by side in silence.

But the path became ever steeper, and the rich man was soon angry because he was fat and short of breath and had never walked so far in his life. The poor man soon gained a good head start and arrived at the Heaven's Gate first. But because he did not dare to knock, he sat down quietly in front of the gate and thought: *You want to wait for the rich man; maybe he'll knock.*

After a long time the rich man also arrived, and when he found the gate locked and no one there to open it immediately, he began to bang on the door loudly, hitting it with his fist.

¹²⁴ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

Then St. Peter rushed over, opened the gate, looked at the two of them and said to the rich man: "That was certainly you banging, impatient and unable to wait. I should think you wouldn't want to be so obvious. We haven't heard a lot of good things about you during your time on earth!"

Then the rich man lost his courage and St. Peter lost his interest in him. He turned and held out his hand to the poor man so that he could get up more easily. He said: "Both of you, just step into the hall; you'll soon discover what's what!"

They found themselves in a place that really wasn't heaven at all, just a large, wide hall with many locked doors and benches along the walls.

"Have a rest," said St. Peter, "and wait until I come back, but use your time wisely. While you wait, you should think about what you want in the afterlife. Each of you will get exactly what ever it is you wish for yourself. So consider carefully, because when I come back, I will expect an answer; don't forget anything; because afterwards it will be too late." -

With that he left. When he returned after a time, he asked them if they'd had enough time to think about how they'd like things arranged for eternity. The rich man immediately jumped up from the bench and said he wanted a large golden castle as beautiful as that of the emperor, and the best of every kind of food every day. Chocolate early in the morning and roast veal with applesauce and rice pudding with sausages every day at noon, followed by red groats. Those were his favorite dishes. And something different every day for dinner in the evening. He also wanted a very nice stuffed armchair and a green silk dressing gown. And Peter mustn't forget the daily paper either, so that he would know what was happening down on earth.

Peter looked at him pityingly, was silent for a long time and finally asked: "And you don't want anything else?" - "O yes!" the rich man said quickly, "Money, a lot of money, all the cellars full; so much that you can't even count it!"

"You shall have all of that," replied St. Peter, "come, follow me!" and he opened one of the many doors and led the rich man into a splendid golden castle, in which everything was just as he had wished. After showing him everything, he went away and put a large iron bolt in front of the gate of the castle. The rich man put on his green silk dressing gown, sat down in armchair, ate and drank and enjoyed himself, and when he was full he read the daily paper. And once every day he went down to the cellar and looked at his money. -

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And twenty and fifty years passed and fifty again, so that a hundred years had gone by - and that is only a very tiny span of eternity - when the rich man was so tired of his magnificent golden castle that he could hardly bear it any longer. "The roast veal and sausages are awful," he said, "I can't enjoy them even one more day!" Of course, he was just sick of them. "And I haven't read the daily paper for a long time," he continued, "I don't care what goes on down there on earth. I don't know a single person anymore. My acquaintances have all died long ago. The people who are alive now are doing such stupid things and talking so foolishly, that it makes me dizzy reading about it." Then he fell silent and yawned, because it was all very boring, and after a while he said again:

"I don't know what to do with my money either. What do I have it for? You can't buy anything here. How can a person be so stupid and want money in heaven!" Then he got up, opened the window and looked out.

But although it was light everywhere in the castle, it was pitch dark outside; black as night, so that you couldn't see the hand in front of your face, day in, day out, year in, year out, and as quiet as in the churchyard. Then he closed the window again and sat down in his armchair; and every day he got up once or twice and looked out again. But it was always the same. And there was always chocolate early in the morning and roast veal with applesauce and milk rice with sausages and then red groats, one day after the other; always, forever.

~~***~~

When a thousand years had passed, the great iron bolt on the gate rattled and St. Peter entered. "Well," he asked, "how do you like it?"

The rich man became bitterly angry: "How do I like it? I don't like it. I hate it! How can anyone be pleased with such a worthless castle! How did you ever imagine that anyone can endure it here for a thousand years! You don't hear anything, you can't see anything; nobody cares about you. All your advertising about a wonderful heaven and eternal happiness - it was all lies. It is a very pathetic institution!"

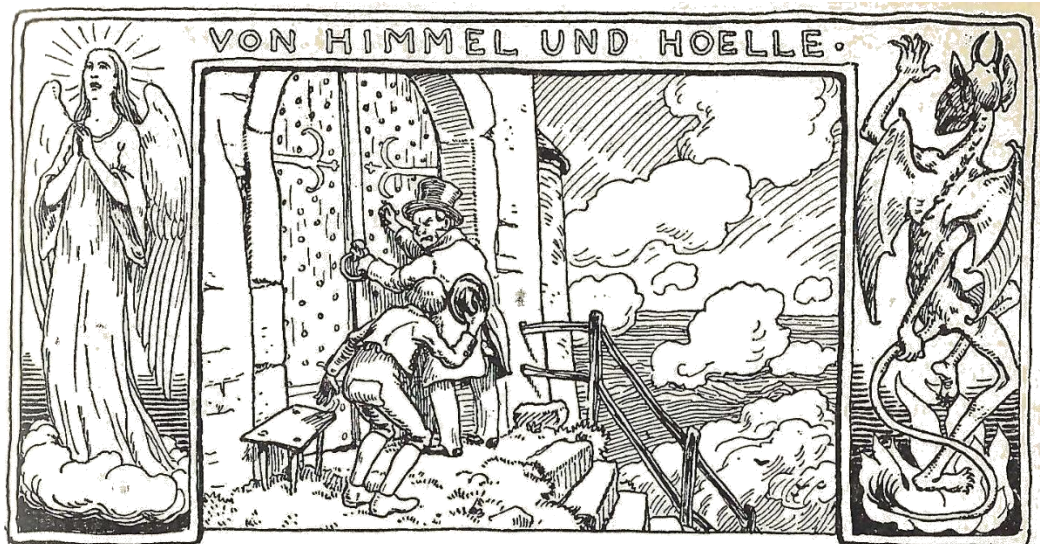
Then St. Peter looked at him in astonishment and said: "You apparently don't know where you are. You think you are in heaven? You are in hell. You, yourself wanted to go here. This castle belongs to hell."

"Hell?" repeated the rich man in alarm. "This is not hell, is it? Where is the devil and the fire and the cauldrons?"

"Did you think," said Peter, "that sinners are still being roasted like they used to be? That has not been the case for a long time. But you are down in hell, you can rely on it, deep down, so that one can actually feel sorry for you. In time, you will probably figure it out for yourself."

Then the rich man fell backwards, horrified, into his armchair, put his face into his hands and sobbed: "In hell, in hell! I poor, miserable person, what shall become of me!"

Then Peter opened the door and went out, and when he pushed the iron bolt to lock the door, he could still hear the rich man sobbing inside: "In hell, in hell! I poor, miserable person, what shall become of me!" -



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And another hundred years went by, and then a hundred again, and time stretched interminably for the rich man. It was unimaginably terrible. And when the second thousand years came to an end, St. Peter entered again.

¹²⁵ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

"Oh!" the rich man called out to him, "I have longed for you so much! I am very sad! Will it always be this way? For all eternity?" And after a while he asked: "Saint Peter, how long is eternity?"

Peter replied, "When ten thousand years have passed, it will begin."

When the rich man heard this, he dropped his head to his chest and began to weep bitterly. Peter stood behind his chair and secretly counted his tears, and when he saw that there were so many that God would certainly forgive him, he said: "Come on, I want to show you something really beautiful! I know of a knothole in the wall in the attic, through which you can see into heaven."

With that, Peter led the rich man up the attic stairs, through all sorts of junk, to a small room. As they entered it, a golden beam fell through the knothole, directly on St. Peter's forehead, so that it looked as if he were wearing a diadem of fire.

"That's from the real heaven!" said the rich man, trembling.

"Yes," replied Saint Peter, "now take a look!"

But the knothole was high up on the wall and the rich man wasn't very tall so he could barely reach it.

"You have to make yourself as tall as possible and stand up on your toes," said Peter. Then the rich man tried as hard as he could, until finally he could look through the knothole. And he really did see into heaven. The good Lord sat on his golden throne between the clouds and the stars in all his splendor and glory, and around him were all the angels and saints.

"Oh," he exclaimed, "that is beautiful and glorious; no one on earth can even imagine this! But say, who is the one who is sitting at the feet of God with his back to me?"

"That is the poor man who lived next to you on earth and with whom you came up the road to heaven when the two of you died. When I asked the two of you to think about what you wanted for eternity, he wanted only a footstool, so he could sit at the feet of God forever. And that's what he got, just like you got your castle."

When he said this, he quietly went away without the rich man noticing. Because the rich man was still standing very still, on tiptoes, and looking into heaven, as if he just couldn't get enough of the sight. It was very difficult for him, because the knothole was very high up and he had to keep standing on his toes; but he wanted so badly to do it, because what he saw was just so beautiful.

~~***~~

And after yet another thousand years, St. Peter came to visit for the last time. The rich man was still standing on his tiptoes in the attic by the wall and gazing steadily into heaven and was so absorbed in what he saw that he didn't even notice that Peter had entered.

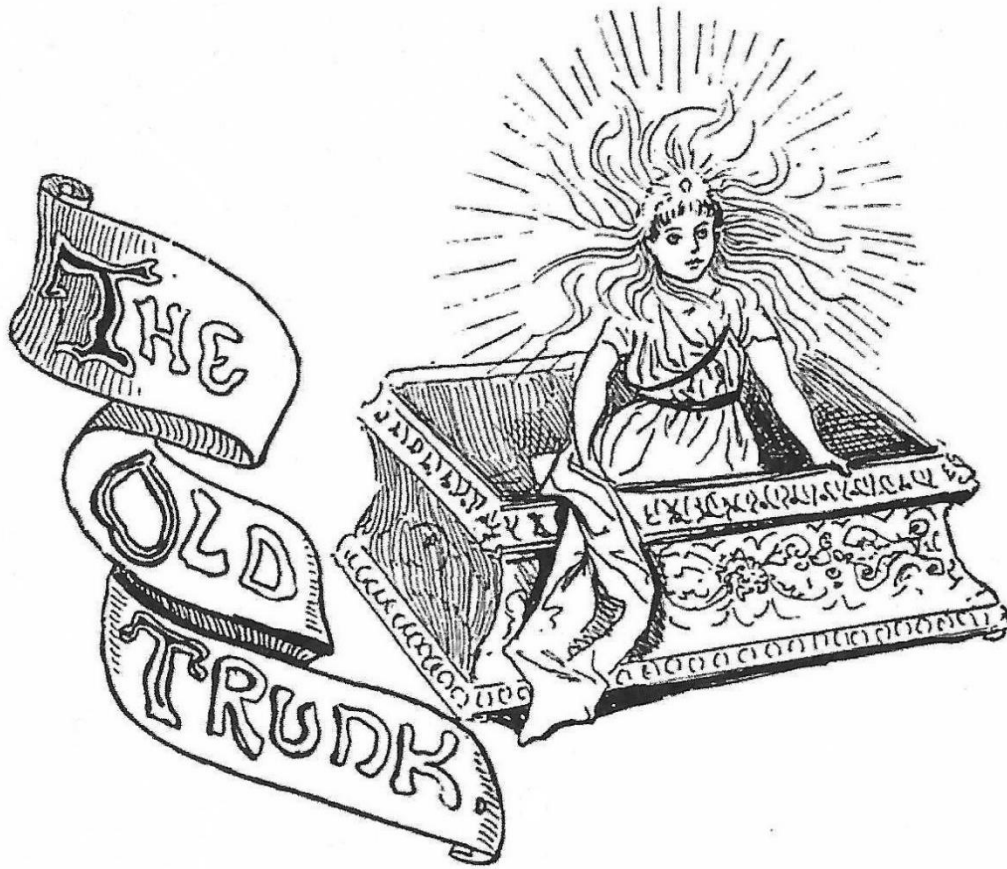
At last Peter put his hand on the rich man's shoulder, so that he turned around. And then St. Peter said to him:

"Come with me, you've stood here long enough! Your sins have been forgiven; I'm here to take you to heaven. – but consider this; wouldn't you have been so much more comfortable, if only you had wanted it that way?"



Träumereien

Zu „Von Himmel und Hölle“



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AN OLD MAN WHO TRAVELED frequently had a trunk. The trunk wasn't beautiful, in fact, it was ugly. It was covered with a ragged sealskin and had iron bands and steel corners. The moths had eaten away at the fur, and the iron fittings were badly rusted, and in the course of time they had gotten dented and scratched.

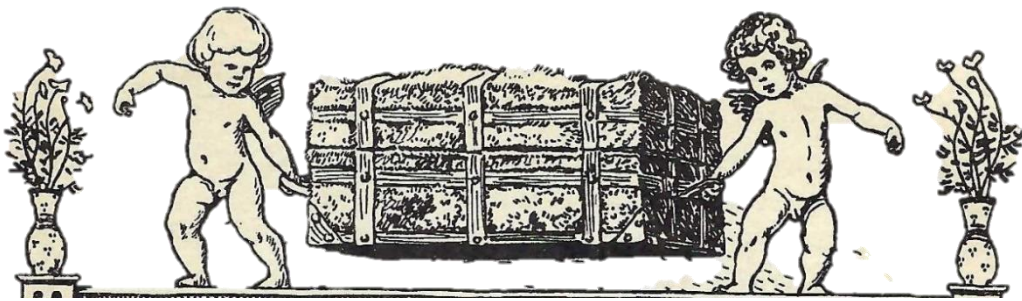
"That case can take really take it," said the porters when they lifted it out of the carriage. Bang! they threw it down with a crash. That wasn't exactly the way to ease the already bad mood of the old trunk. With its iron corners, it prodded and poked anyone who came its way. "You don't have to come so close to me," it grumbled when the other suitcases complained. "You just want to see how ragged I am."

¹²⁶ Illustration by Louis William Wain.

The gentleman who owned the trunk was an eccentric. When he was at home, the trunk always had to be in his room under a gilded mirror, although it was an odd scene: the old, ugly trunk in an otherwise very nice and cozy room. And when he traveled and stopped off somewhere, the first thing he always did, was to have the trunk brought in and placed next to his bed.

"There must be money in that trunk!" said the people, "because he never lets it out of his sight." But on this point they were completely on the wrong track. There was certainly something in it -- but money? No, least of all, money!

If the old gentleman was quite alone in the room, he would press a secret spring. Whoosh! The trunk's lid popped open. What was in it? A locked, magnificent case covered with red velvet and trimmed with golden braids and cords.



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As soon as someone else entered the room, snap! the lid slammed shut.

But the old man's maid was very clever. One day, she left her shoes in front of the door and crept in very quietly in her stockings to the trunk, which was standing open.

When she got close enough to peek inside, and saw the red and gold case glimmering within the old trunk, she forgot herself and shouted: "Goodness, the old trunk is very pretty inside!" Then the trunk noticed that someone was there. Snap! it closed its lid with such force that it almost pinched her fingers – fingers that were reaching for the velvety soft case inside.

"Oomph" she said, startled, "what a nasty old trunk that is. Best never to get near it!" When someone later asked her about the trunk that the gentleman was so secretive about, and

¹²⁷ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.

whether there was anything distinctive about it, she replied that there was nothing special about it, and even less in it. Everyone has their own peculiarities, she said, especially old, unmarried people. Her master has simply hung his heart on the old ragged trunk; nothing more.

But there was, indeed, something special in the old trunk. Sometimes the old gentleman carefully bolted all the doors, and then he pressed the secret spring so that the lid popped open. He'd listened again, to make sure that everything was quiet outside, and if he couldn't hear anyone, he'd lift the red velvet case out of the trunk and put it on the table in front of him. Then he'd press a second hidden spring on the case, and the red velvet lid popped open too.

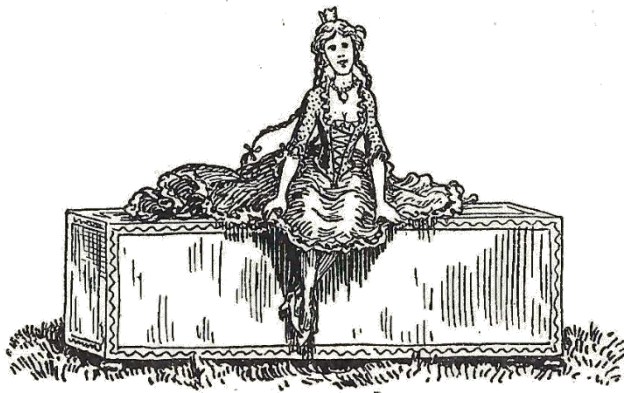
And what was in it?

Strange but true! A very cute little princess with two long pigtails and red high heeled shoes. She immediately jumped out of the case, sat on it and let her legs dangle. And this is what made her so charming - she'd begin to tell the most wonderful fairy tales.

And the old gentleman would sit in his armchair and listen attentively to her.

One day, when she had just finished telling a story, she said: "I've told you so many pretty fairy tales now; but I think you keep forgetting them. Can't you write them down?"

"Oh yes," replied the old gentleman, "I could write them down, at least to some extent, and certainly not nearly as prettily as you tell them. But nobody must know how I know these stories, and especially not about you in the old trunk. Because I have to have you all to myself. Otherwise all kinds of people will come streaming and want to look at you and touch you with their clumsy fingers. The velvet on the case would soon be destroyed, too."



"No, for God's sake!" replied the little fairytale princess. "But people would be surprised if they knew who's in the old trunk."

And then she laughed.

"Quiet!" said the old gentleman suddenly, "someone is knocking at the door. Jump back into the case." Then he quickly put it back into the trunk. Snap! The sealskin lid slammed shut, and when the maid - for it was she - came in and brought the tea, the old trunk was again sullen and ragged under the mirror. As she passed it, she secretly kicked it, without the old man noticing, and muttered: "Old nasty trunk, yesterday you almost snapped my fingers off."

¹²⁸ Illustration by Hans von Volkmann.



LOUIS WILLIAM WAIN, ILLUSTRATOR

Louis William Wain was born on 5 August 1860 in Clerkenwell in London. His father, William Matthew Wain, was a textile trader and embroiderer; his mother, Felicia Marie/Julie Felicie (Boiteux) was French. He was the first of six children and the only male child. ...

Wain was born with a cleft lip and the doctor gave his parents the orders that he should not be sent to school or taught until he was ten years old. ... [Eventually], Louis studied at the West London School of Art and eventually became a teacher there for a short period. At the age of 20, Wain was left to support his mother and his five sisters after his father's death.

Wain soon quit his teaching position to become a freelance artist, and in this role, he achieved substantial success. He specialized in drawing animals and country scenes, and worked for several journals. ...

At the age of 23, Wain married his sisters' governess, Emily Richardson, who was ten years his senior (which was considered quite scandalous at the time), and moved with her to Hampstead in north London. Emily soon began to suffer from breast cancer and died three years into their marriage. ...

Wain is known for his anthropomorphic cats. Wain was a prolific artist over the next thirty years, sometimes producing as many as several hundred drawings a year. ...

Wain's illustrations often parody human behaviour, satirizing fads and fashions of the day. He wrote, "I take a sketch-book to a restaurant, or other public places, and draw the people in their different positions as cats, getting as near to their human characteristics as possible. This gives me doubly nature, and these studies I think [to be] my best humorous work."

(See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Wain)

"In November 1936 Wain suffered a stroke. He died on 4 July 1939 at the age of 78." (<https://simon-hitchman.com/2020/04/21/lost-in-catland-the-life-of-louis-wain/>)





HANS VON VOLKMAN, ILLUSTRATOR

“Hans Richard von Volkmann, the son of the surgeon Richard von Volkmann, was born on May 19, 1860 in Halle (Rathausstrasse 6), Germany.

Even as a 14-year-old, von Volkmann was already roaming his native town and surrounding region with pencil and paint box in hand. More than 100 watercolors in the Halle city archive testify to this. The former city archivist Werner Piechocki published a selection of these paintings and drawings in 1992 in the volume "The old hall: From the sketchbooks of Hans von Volkmann". ... These are the early artistic steps of one of the most important German landscape painters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

After studying with Hugo Crola, Heinrich Lauenstein, Johann Peter Theodor Janssen and Eduard von Gebhardt from 1880 to 1888 in Düsseldorf and becoming a member of the Malkasten artists' association there, Hans von Volkmann then went on to work and study with Gustav Schönleber, who was only a few years his senior, in Karlsruhe. That city became his adopted home and place of work until his death. He quickly achieved success as a landscape painter and became the most prominent representative of the Karlsruhe Landscape School founded by Schönleber. Today his works can be seen in many German museums. ... In addition to extensive excursions to Hesse, Thuringia, Saxony, Swabia, Upper Bavaria and Mecklenburg as well as to the Riviera (1893), his path also led him repeatedly back to his hometown Halle. He died there on April 29, 1927.¹³⁰”



Gerolsteiner Dorfansicht, 1889

¹³⁰ https://www.wikiwand.com/de/Hans_von_Volkmann

JESSIE RALEIGH, TRANSLATOR: In 1890, Adam & Charles Black Publishers, published an English translation of *Träumereien an französischen Kaminen*. The translator is Jessie Raleigh. I have search hard for any information at all about Jessie Raleigh, but have not been able to find anything. I don't even know if Jessie was male or female.

A & C Black is a British book publishing company, owned since 2002 by Bloomsbury Publishing. The firm was founded in 1807 by Adam Black in Edinburgh, and moved to the Soho district of London in 1889. Because of this, I think Jessie Raleigh may have been British. I can't find anything else that J. Raleigh translated or authored.

I really liked her/his translations of Leander's poetry so I often used it. Whenever I did, I footnoted it. I did not otherwise use her translation because it was often dated. I wanted to do my own translating with the objective of making the message as transparent to a modern audience as possible. These "fairy tales" are unusual because they appeal to children, but have an ethical message that even adults can understand. This is different than the usual pabulum that we get with Disney Studios.

I also footnoted which illustrations were made by which artist, Hans von Volkmann or Louis Wain. There are three plates with no artistic reference; I found those on the internet and they did not provide any illustrator's name.

Wallace W. Wiens
Niagara on the Lake, Ontario
December 2020

**SCHOLAR SELECT BOOK; MESSAGE FROM THE
PUBLISHER**

Träumereien an französischen Kaminen

von Richard von Volkmann-Leander

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ONCE UPON
A TIME