

2024/2025 Storytelling Selections

Resource: The Gutenberg Project (gutenberg.org)

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Notes:

1) Since these stories come from many sources with many authors and editors, it is the suggestion of the storytelling committee that, for the sake of simplicity, students should cite their story in one of the following ways:

[*Title of story*], as found in the Gutenberg Project.

[*Title of story*], a [*country/tribe of origin*] story as found in the Gutenberg Project.

2) All these stories are in the public domain, and minor edits have been made to certain texts at the discretion of the Storytelling Committee.

3) We recognize that many of these tales have been edited and translated from their original sources. Storytellers are encouraged to research the origins of these stories and take those origins into consideration when presenting them for a modern audience.

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2024/2025 Storytelling Theme: CONFLICT

Conflict is a central part of every story. A character can experience conflict when facing a villain, navigating their morals and beliefs, or when clashing with societal expectations. All of these types of interactions can result in characters learning and growing!

Storytellers, as you read these stories, consider where the characters face conflict - this could be character vs. character, character vs. nature, character vs. society, or even character vs. self. Consider how these conflicts, and the conflict that you may face in your own life, shape our world, an individual's character, and our relationships. While conflict can feel imposing, it is important to consider who we are when the world around us tests us.

Through conflict we build our own character, our ability to engage with the world around us, and hopefully make some aspect of our world, society, or ourselves better than before. As Albert Einstein once expressed, "in the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."

1. Little Red Cap

Book: *Grimms' Fairy Tales*

Author: Edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott

Origin: Germany

Once upon a time, there was a sweet little girl, who was loved by everyone who looked at her, and most of all by her Grandmother. There was nothing that she would not have given the child!

Once she gave her a little cap of red velvet, which suited her so well that she would not wear anything else. So she was always called Little Red-Cap.

One day, her Mother said to her, "Come, Little Red-Cap, here is a piece of cake and a bottle of fresh milk. Take them to your Grandmother. She is ill and weak, and they will do her good. Set out before it gets hot. Walk nicely and quietly. Do not run off the path, or you may fall and break the bottle; then your Grandmother will get nothing! When you go into her room, don't forget to say 'Good morning,' and don't stop to peep into every corner, before you do it."

"I'll take great care," said Little Red-Cap to her Mother, and gave her hand on it.

The Grandmother lived in the woods, half an hour's distance from the village, and just as Little Red-Cap entered the woods, a Wolf met her. Red-Cap did not know what a wicked creature he was, and was not at all afraid of him.

"Good-day, Little Red-Cap," he said.

"Thank you kindly, Wolf."

"Whither away so early, Little Red-Cap?"

"To my Grandmother's."

"What have you got in your apron?"

"Cake and milk. Yesterday was baking-day, so my poor sick Grandmother has to have something good, to make her stronger."

"Where does your Grandmother live, Little Red-Cap?"

"A good quarter of an hour farther on in the woods. Her house stands under the three large oak-trees; the nut-trees are just below. You surely must know it," replied Little Red-Cap.

The Wolf thought to himself, "What a tender young creature! What a nice plump mouthful—she will be better to eat than the old woman. I must act craftily, so as to catch both."

He walked for a short time by the side of Little Red-Cap, and then he said, "See, Little Red-Cap, how pretty the flowers are about here—why do you not look round? I believe, too, that you do not hear how sweetly the little birds are singing. You walk gravely along as if you were going to school, while everything else in the wood is merry."

Little Red-Cap raised her eyes, and when she saw the sunbeams dancing here and there through the trees, and pretty flowers growing everywhere, she thought, "Suppose I take Grandmother a fresh bouquet of flowers. That would please her too. It is so early in the day that I shall still get there in good time."

And so she ran from the path into the woods to look for flowers. And whenever she had picked one, she fancied that she saw a still prettier one farther on, and ran after it, and thus got deeper and deeper into the wood.

Meanwhile, the Wolf ran straight to the Grandmother's house and knocked at the door.

"Who is there?"

"Little Red-Cap," replied the Wolf. "She is bringing cake and milk. Open the door."

"Lift the latch," called out the Grandmother, "I am too weak, and cannot get up."

The Wolf lifted the latch, the door flew open, and without saying a word he went straight to the Grandmother's bed, and devoured her. Then he put on her clothes, dressed himself in her cap, laid himself in bed, and drew the curtains.

Little Red-Cap, however, had been running about picking flowers. When she had gathered so many that she could carry no more, she remembered her Grandmother, and set out on the way to her.

She was surprised to find the cottage-door standing open. And when she went into the room, she had such a strange feeling, that she said to herself, "Oh dear! how uneasy I feel to-day, and at other times I like being with Grandmother so much."

She called out, "Good morning," but received no answer. So she went to the bed and drew back the curtains. There lay her Grandmother with her cap pulled far over her face, and looking very strange.

"Oh! Grandmother," she said, "what big ears you have!"

"The better to hear you with, my Child," was the reply.

"But, Grandmother, what big eyes you have!" she said.

"The better to see you with, my dear."

"But, Grandmother, what large hands you have!"

"The better to hug you with."

"Oh! But Grandmother, what a terrible big mouth you have!"

"The better to eat you with!" And scarcely had the Wolf said this, then with one bound he was out of bed and swallowed up Red-Cap.

When the Wolf had satisfied his appetite, he lay down again in the bed, fell asleep and began to snore very loudly. The huntsman was just passing the house, and thought to himself, "How the old woman is snoring! I must just see if she wants anything."

So he went into the room, and when he came to the bed, he saw the Wolf lying in it. "Do I find thee here, thou old villain!" he said. "I have long sought thee!"

Then just as he was going to fire at him, it occurred to him that the Wolf might have devoured the grandmother, and that she might still be saved. So he did not fire, but took a pair of scissors, and began to cut open the stomach of the sleeping Wolf.

When he had made two snips, he saw the little Red-Cap shining, and then he made two more snips, and the little girl sprang out, crying, "Ah, how frightened I have been! How dark it was inside the Wolf!"

And after that the aged grandmother came out alive also, but scarcely able to breathe.

Red-Cap then quickly fetched great stones with which they filled the Wolf's body. And when he awoke, he wanted to run away, but the stones were so heavy that he tumbled down at once, and fell dead.

Then all three were delighted. The huntsman drew off the Wolf's skin and went home with it. The grandmother ate the cake and drank the milk which Red-Cap had brought, and grew strong again.

But Red-Cap thought to herself, "As long as I live, I will never leave the path to run into the woods, when my mother has forbidden me to do so."

2. The Mouse, The Bird, and The Sausage

Book: *Grimms' Fairy Tales*

Authors: Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm

Origin: Germany

Once upon a time, a mouse, a bird, and a sausage, entered into partnership and set up house together. For a long time all went well; they lived in great comfort, and prospered so far as to be able to add considerably to their stores. The bird's duty was to fly daily into the woods and bring in fuel; the mouse fetched the water, and the sausage saw to the cooking.

When people are too well off they always begin to long for something new. And so it came to pass, that the bird, while out one day, met a fellow bird, to whom he boastfully expatiated on the excellence of his household arrangements. But the other bird sneered at him for being a poor simpleton, who did all the hard work, while the other two stayed at home and had a good time of it. For, when the mouse had made the fire and fetched in the water, she could retire into her little room and rest until it was time to set the table. The sausage had only to watch the pot to see that the food was properly cooked, and when it was near dinner-time, he just threw himself into the broth, or rolled in and out among the vegetables three or four times, and there they were, buttered, and salted, and ready to be served. Then, when the bird came home and had laid aside his burden, they sat down to table, and when they had finished their meal, they could sleep their fill till the following morning: and that was really a very delightful life.

Influenced by those remarks, the bird next morning refused to bring in the wood, telling the others that he had been their servant long enough, and had been a fool into the bargain, and that it was now time to make a change, and to try some other way of arranging the work. Beg and pray as the mouse and the sausage might, it was of no use; the bird remained master of the situation, and the venture had to be made. They therefore drew lots, and it fell to the sausage to bring in the wood, to the mouse to cook, and to the bird to fetch the water.

And now what happened? The sausage started in search of wood, the bird made the fire, and the mouse put on the pot, and then these two waited till the sausage returned with the fuel for the following day. But the sausage remained so long away, that they became uneasy, and the bird flew out to meet him. He had not flown far, however, when he came across a dog who, having met the sausage, had regarded him as his legitimate booty, and so seized and swallowed him. The bird complained to the dog of this bare-faced robbery, but nothing he said was of any avail, for the dog answered that he found false credentials on the sausage, and that was the reason his life had been forfeited.

He picked up the wood, and flew sadly home, and told the mouse all he had seen and heard. They were both very unhappy, but agreed to make the best of things and to remain with one another.

So now the bird set the table, and the mouse looked after the food and, wishing to prepare it in the same way as the sausage, by rolling in and out among the vegetables to salt and butter them, she jumped into the pot; but she stopped short long before she reached the bottom, having already parted not only with her skin and hair, but also with life.

Presently the bird came in and wanted to serve up the dinner, but he could nowhere see the cook. In his alarm and flurry, he threw the wood here and there about the floor, called and searched, but no cook was to be found. Then some of the wood that had been carelessly thrown down, caught fire and began to blaze. The bird hastened to fetch some water, but his pail fell into the well, and he after it, and as he was unable to recover himself.

3. The Myth of Arachne

Book: *A Child's Story Garden*

Author: Compiled by Elizabeth Heber

Origin: Greek Mythology

A long time ago there lived a maiden whose name was Arachne. She could weave the most beautiful fabrics that people had ever seen. She chose the most exquisite colors. They were the colors that were found in the flowers, the green of the trees and grass, and the varied, dainty tints and shades from the blue sky and its gorgeous sunsets.

People had said that Arachne learned to weave from the birds, although some of them thought that Arachne had been taught to weave by the goddess Athena. When Arachne heard that the people thought that Athena had taught her to weave she became very angry. She declared that Athena had not taught her to weave; that no one had taught her. She said she would compete with the goddess Athena in weaving. The goddess Athena was a noble goddess. She was the Goddess of Wisdom, and of all the Arts and Crafts. When she heard what Arachne had declared she said: "It is very wrong that Arachne should be so proud and envious. I will go to see her."

The goddess Athena disguised herself in humble apparel and visited Arachne. She talked with her about her weaving, and still Arachne boasted of the wonderful weaving she could do; but the goddess told her that she was foolish to be so boastful.

This made Arachne angry, and she said: "I am not afraid at all, not of any one in the world." At this moment the goddess threw aside her plain garments and revealed herself the goddess Athena. This did not frighten Arachne. She looked calmly at Athena and told her that she would give up anything, even her life, to prove to the people that she could weave even better than the goddess.

They then set about to arrange their looms, to select their threads, and to begin work. At last they began. Whirr! Whirr! went the shuttles. Spin! Spin! they sang, faster and faster, in and out, over and under, flew the shuttles.

Arachne had chosen the most delicate, lovely threads that she could find, but while she wove these beautiful threads she was thinking of her revenge and other evil and wicked thoughts, while her skillful and swift fingers moved faster and faster.

At the same time Athena was sitting in the sunlight, busily and carefully weaving over and under, and in and out, her dainty, beautiful silken threads, which seemed to have come from the very sunbeams themselves. The colors were most harmonious and exquisite. Even the rainbow was surpassed. Athena was thinking of the fleecy clouds, which were to her as white ships that sailed through the blue sea of the sky. She thought of the brown earth, with its emerald decking of trees and meadows; of the buttercups and daisies of gold, and the roses and lilies which dotted Mother Earth's carpet. She thought of the butterflies that flitted about, and of the birds, in coats of red, blue, glossy black, and dazzling gold.

When Arachne looked at Athena's work she shuddered with shame, for, although her own work had been skillfully done, it was marred by the envy, malice and evil thoughts she had woven into it. While Athena's work was no more skillfully woven, it was by far the more beautiful. The azure sky, with fluffy white clouds; the meadows, dotted with flowers, and fields, with their shady green trees, filled with birds of gorgeous hues, all made a wonderful picture.

Poor Arachne knew her fate. She hastened away and took with her the threads that she had been using in weaving, and wrapped them about her neck. She thought she would end her life by hanging to a tree. This made the beautiful and kind Athena sad, and she said to Arachne: "You must live—live on forever," and she touched Arachne and changed her form. Arachne gradually grew smaller and smaller, until she was no larger than a honeybee. She had many legs and wore a brown, fuzzy coat. Instead of hanging by the threads she had used she now hung from a dainty silken spider web, for Arachne was still a weaver, but not a weaver as of old.

Today, perchance, if you should see a busy little spider, it might be one of Arachne's children, or perhaps Arachne herself. No one knows—neither you nor I.

4. The Little Pine Tree

Book: *A Primary Reader: Old-time Stories, Fairy Tales, and Myths Retold by Children*

Author: E. Louise Smythe

Origin: Unknown

A little pine tree was in the woods. It had no leaves. It had needles.

The little tree said, "I do not like needles. All the other trees in the woods have pretty leaves. I want leaves, too. But I will have better leaves. I want gold leaves."

Night came and the little tree went to sleep. A fairy came by and gave it gold leaves. When the little tree woke it had leaves of gold.

It said, "Oh, I am so pretty! No other tree has gold leaves."

Night came.

A man came by with a bag. He saw the gold leaves. He took them all and put them into his bag.

The poor little tree cried, "I do not want gold leaves again. I will have glass leaves."

So the little tree went to sleep. The fairy came by and put the glass leaves on it. The little tree woke and saw its glass leaves. How pretty they looked in the sunshine! No other tree was so bright. Then a wind came up. It blew and blew. The glass leaves all fell from the tree and were broken.

Again the little tree had no leaves. It was very sad, and said, "I will not have gold leaves and I will not have glass leaves. I want green leaves. I want to be like the other trees."

And the little tree went to sleep. When it woke, it was like other trees. It had green leaves. A goat came by. He saw the green leaves on the little tree. The goat was hungry and he ate all the leaves.

Then the little tree said, "I do not want any leaves. I will not have green leaves, nor glass leaves, nor gold leaves. I like my needles best."

And the little tree went to sleep. The fairy gave it what it wanted. When it woke, it had its needles again. Then the little pine tree was happy.

5. The Battle of the Crabs

Book: *Philippine FolkTales*

Author: Compiled and Annotated by Mabel Cook Cole

Origin: Philippine Islands

One day the land crabs had a meeting and one of them said:

“What shall we do with the waves? They sing so loudly all the time that we cannot possibly sleep.”

“Well,” answered one of the oldest of the crabs, “I think we should make war on them.”

The others agreed to this, and it was decided that the next day all the male crabs should get ready to fight the waves. They started for the sea, as agreed, when they met a shrimp.

“Where are you going, my friends?” asked the shrimp.

“We are going to fight the waves,” answered the crabs, “for they make so much noise at night that we cannot sleep.”

“I do not think you will succeed,” said the shrimp, “for the waves are very strong and your legs are so weak that even your bodies bend almost to the ground when you walk.” Wherewith he laughed loudly.

This made the crabs very angry, and they pinched the shrimp until he promised to help them win the battle.

Then they all went to the shore. But the crabs noticed that the eyes of the shrimp were set unlike their own, so they thought his must be wrong and they laughed at him and said:

“Friend shrimp, your face is turned the wrong way. What weapon do you have to fight the waves?”

“My weapon is a spear on my head,” replied the shrimp, and just then he saw a big wave coming and ran away. The crabs did not see it, however, for they were all looking toward the shore, and they were covered with water and drowned.

By and by the wives of the crabs became worried because their husbands did not return, and they went down to the shore to see if they could help in the battle. No sooner had they reached the water, however, than the waves rushed over them and killed them.

Some time after this thousands of little crabs appeared near the shore, and the shrimp often visited them and told them of the sad fate of their parents. Even today these little crabs can be seen on the shore, continually running back and forth. They seem to rush down to fight the waves, and then, as their courage fails, they run back to the land where their forefathers lived. They neither live on dry land, as their ancestors did, nor in the sea where the other crabs are, but on the beach where the waves wash over them at high tide and try to dash them to pieces.

6. The Story of a Dam

Book: *South-African Folk-Tales*

Author: James A. Honey, M.D.

Origin: South Africa

There was a great drought in the land; and Lion called together a number of animals so that they might devise a plan for retaining water when the rains fell.

The animals which attended Lion's summons were Baboon, Leopard, Hyena, Jackal, Hare, and Mountain Tortoise.

It was agreed that they should scratch a large hole in some suitable place to hold water; and the next day they all began to work, with the exception of Jackal, who continually hovered about in that locality, and was overheard to mutter that he was not going to scratch his nails off in making water holes.

When the dam was finished the rains fell, and it was soon filled with water, to the great delight of those who had worked so hard at it. The first one, however, to come and drink there, was Jackal, who not only drank, but filled his clay pot with water, and then proceeded to swim in the rest of the water, making it as muddy and dirty as he could.

This was brought to the knowledge of Lion, who was very angry and ordered Baboon to guard the water the next day, armed with a huge knobkerrie. Baboon was concealed in a bush close to the water; but Jackal soon became aware of his presence there, and guessed its cause. Knowing the fondness of baboons for honey, Jackal at once hit upon a plan, and marching to and fro, every now and then dipped his fingers into his clay pot, and licked them with an expression of intense relish, saying, in a low voice to himself, "I don't want any of their dirty water when I have a pot full of delicious honey." This was too much for poor Baboon, whose mouth began to water. He soon began to beg Jackal to give him a little honey, as he had been watching for several hours, and was very hungry and tired.

After taking no notice of Baboon at first, Jackal looked round, and said, in a patronizing manner, that he pitied such an unfortunate creature, and would give him some honey on certain conditions, that is, that Baboon should give up his knobkerrie and allow himself to be bound by Jackal. He foolishly agreed; and was soon tied in such a manner that he could not move hand or foot.

Jackal now proceeded to drink of the water, to fill his pot, and to swim in the sight of Baboon, from time to time telling him what a foolish fellow he had been to be so easily duped, and that he (Jackal) had no honey or anything else to give him, excepting a good blow on the head every now and then with his own knobkerrie.

The animals soon appeared and found poor Baboon in this sorry plight, looking the picture of misery. Lion was so exasperated that he caused Baboon to be severely punished, and to be denounced as a fool.

Tortoise hereupon stepped forward, and offered his services for the capture of Jackal. It was at first thought that he was merely joking; but when he explained in what manner he proposed to catch him, his plan was considered so feasible that his offer was accepted. He proposed that a thick coating of "bijenwerk" (a kind of sticky black substance found on beehives) should be spread all over him, and that he should then go and stand at the entrance of the dam, on the water level, so that Jackal might tread upon him and stick fast. This was accordingly done and Tortoise posted there.

The next day, when Jackal came, he approached the water very cautiously, and wondered to find no one there. He then ventured to the entrance of the water, and remarked how kind they had been in placing there a large stepping-stone for him. As soon, however, as he trod upon the supposed stone, he stuck fast, and saw that he had been tricked; for Tortoise now put his head out and began to move. Jackal's hind feet being still free he threatened to smash Tortoise with them if he did not let him go. Tortoise merely answered, "Do as you like." Jackal thereupon made a violent jump, and found, with horror, that his hind feet were now also fast. "Tortoise," said he, "I still have my mouth and teeth left, and will eat you alive if you do not let me go." "Do as you like," Tortoise again replied. Jackal, in his endeavors to free himself, at last made a desperate bite at Tortoise, and found himself fixed, both head and feet. Tortoise, feeling proud of his successful capture, now marched quietly up to the top of the bank with Jackal on his back, so that he could easily be seen by the animals as they came to the water.

They were indeed astonished to find how cleverly the crafty Jackal had been caught; and Tortoise was much praised, while the unhappy Baboon was again reminded of his misconduct when set to guard the water.

Jackal was at once condemned to death by Lion; and Hyena was to execute the sentence. Jackal pleaded hard for mercy, but finding this useless, he made a last request to Lion (always, as he said, so fair and just in his dealings) that he should not have to suffer a lingering death.

Lion inquired of him in what manner he wished to die; and he asked that his tail might be shaved and rubbed with a little fat, and that Hyena might then swing him round twice and dash his brains out upon a stone. This, being considered sufficiently fair by Lion, was ordered by him to be carried out in his presence.

When Jackal's tail had been shaved and greased, Hyena caught hold of him with great force, and before he had fairly lifted him from the ground, the cunning Jackal had slipped away from Hyena's grasp, and was running for his life, pursued by all the animals to this very day.

Lion was the foremost pursuer, and after a great chase Jackal got under an overhanging precipice, and, standing on his hind legs with his shoulders pressed against the rock, called loudly to Lion to help him, as the rock was falling, and would crush them both. Lion put his shoulders to the rock, and exerted himself to the utmost. After some little time Jackal proposed that he should creep slowly out, and fetch a large pole to prop up the rock, so that Lion could get out and save his life. Jackal did creep out, and left Lion there.

7. Puss In Boots

Book: *The Blue Fairy Book*

Authors: Edited by Andrew Lang, Story by Charles Prerault

Origin: France

There was a miller who left no more estate to the three sons he had than his mill, his donkey, and his cat. The partition was soon made. Neither scrivener nor attorney was sent for. They would soon have eaten up all the poor patrimony. The eldest had the mill, the second the donkey, and the youngest nothing but the cat. The poor young fellow was quite comfortless at having so poor a lot.

“My brothers,” said he, “may get their living handsomely enough by joining their stocks together; but for my part, when I have eaten up my cat, and made me a muff of his skin, I must die of hunger.”

The Cat, who heard all this, but made as if he did not, said to him with a grave and serious air:

“Do not thus afflict yourself, my good master. You have nothing else to do but to give me a bag and get a pair of boots made for me that I may scamper through the dirt and the brambles, and you shall see that you have not so bad a portion in me as you imagine.”

The Cat’s master did not build very much upon what he said. He had often seen him play a great many cunning tricks to catch rats and mice, as when he used to hang by the heels, or hide himself in the meal, and make as if he were dead; so that he did not altogether despair of his affording him some help in his miserable condition. When the Cat had what he asked for he booted himself very gallantly, and putting his bag about his neck, he held the strings of it in his two forepaws and went into a warren where there was great abundance of rabbits. He put bran and sow-thistle into his bag, and stretching out at length, as if he had been dead, he waited for some young rabbits, not yet acquainted with the deceits of the world, to come and rummage his bag for what he had put into it.

Scarce was he lain down but he had what he wanted. A rash and foolish young rabbit jumped into his bag, and Monsieur Puss, immediately drawing close the strings, took and killed him without pity. Proud of his prey, he went with it to the palace and asked to speak with his majesty. He was shown upstairs into the King’s apartment, and, making a low reverence, said to him:

“I have brought you, sir, a rabbit of the warren, which my noble lord the Marquis of Carabas” (for that was the title which puss was pleased to give his master) “has commanded me to present to your majesty from him.”

“Tell thy master,” said the king, “that I thank him and that he does me a great deal of pleasure.”

Another time he went and hid himself among some standing corn, holding still his bag open, and when a brace of partridges ran into it he drew the strings and so caught them both. He went and made a present of these to the king, as he had done before of the rabbit which he took in the warren. The king, in like manner, received the partridges with great pleasure, and ordered him some money for reward.

The Cat continued for two or three months thus to carry his Majesty, from time to time, game of his master's taking. One day in particular, when he knew for certain that he was to take the air along the river-side, with his daughter, the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to his master:

"If you will follow my advice your fortune is made. You have nothing else to do but go and wash yourself in the river, in that part I shall show you, and leave the rest to me."

The Marquis of Carabas did what the Cat advised him to, without knowing why or wherefore. While he was washing the King passed by, and the Cat began to cry out:

"Help! help! My Lord Marquis of Carabas is going to be drowned."

At this noise the King put his head out of the coach-window, and, finding it was the Cat who had so often brought him such good game, he commanded his guards to run immediately to the assistance of his Lordship the Marquis of Carabas. While they were drawing the poor Marquis out of the river, the Cat came up to the coach and told the King that, while his master was washing, there came by some rogues, who went off with his clothes, though he had cried out: "Thieves! thieves!" several times, as loud as he could.

This cunning Cat had hidden them under a great stone. The King immediately commanded the officers of his wardrobe to run and fetch one of his best suits for the Lord Marquis of Carabas.

The King caressed him after a very extraordinary manner, and as the fine clothes he had given him extremely set off his good mien (for he was well made and very handsome in his person), the King's daughter took a secret inclination to him, and the Marquis of Carabas had no sooner cast two or three respectful and somewhat tender glances but she fell in love with him to distraction. The King would need to have him come into the coach and take part of the airing. The Cat, quite overjoyed to see his project begin to succeed, marched on before, and, meeting with some countrymen, who were mowing a meadow, he said to them:

"Good people, you who are mowing, if you do not tell the King that the meadow you mow belongs to my Lord Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot."

The King did not fail asking of the mowers to whom the meadow they were mowing belonged.

"To my Lord Marquis of Carabas," answered they altogether, for the Cat's threats had made them terribly afraid.

"You see, sir," said the Marquis, "this is a meadow which never fails to yield a plentiful harvest every year."

The Master Cat, who went still on before, met with some reapers, and said to them:

"Good people, you who are reaping, if you do not tell the King that all this corn belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot."

The King, who passed by a moment after, would need to know to whom all that corn, which he then saw, did belong.

“To my Lord Marquis of Carabas,” replied the reapers, and the King was very well pleased with it, as well as the Marquis, whom he congratulated thereupon. The Master Cat, who always went before, said the same words to all he met, and the King was astonished at the vast estates of my Lord Marquis of Carabas.

Monsieur Puss came at last to a stately castle, the master of which was an ogre, the richest had ever been known; for all the lands which the King had then gone over belonged to this castle. The Cat, who had taken care to inform himself who this ogre was and what he could do, asked to speak with him, saying he could not pass so near his castle without having the honor of paying his respects to him.

The ogre received him as civilly as an ogre could do, and made him sit down.

“I have been assured,” said the Cat, “that you have the gift of being able to change yourself into all sorts of creatures you have a mind to; you can, for example, transform yourself into a lion, or elephant, and the like.”

“That is true,” answered the ogre very briskly; “and to convince you, you shall see me now become a lion.”

Puss was so sadly terrified at the sight of a lion so near him that he immediately jumped onto the tiled roof, not without abundance of trouble and danger, because of his boots, which were of no use at all to him in walking upon the tiles. A little while after, when Puss saw that the ogre had resumed his natural form, he came down, and owned he had been very much frightened.

“I have been, moreover, informed,” said the Cat, “but I know not how to believe it, that you have also the power to take on you the shape of the smallest animals; for example, to change yourself into a rat or a mouse; but I must own to you I take this to be impossible.”

“Impossible!” cried the ogre; “you shall see that presently.”

And at the same time he changed himself into a mouse, and began to run about the floor. Puss no sooner perceived this but he fell upon him and ate him up.

Meanwhile the King, who saw, as he passed, this fine castle of the ogre’s, had a mind to go into it. Puss, who heard the noise of his Majesty’s coach running over the draw-bridge, ran out, and said to the King:

“Your Majesty is welcome to this castle of my Lord Marquis of Carabas.”

“What! my Lord Marquis,” cried the King, “and does this castle also belong to you? There can be nothing finer than this court and all the stately buildings which surround it; let us go into it, if you please.”

The Marquis gave his hand to the Princess, and followed the King, who went first. They passed into a spacious hall, where they found a magnificent meal, which the ogre had prepared for his friends, who were that very day to visit him, but dared not to enter, knowing the King was there. His Majesty was perfectly charmed with the good qualities of my Lord Marquis of Carabas, as

was his daughter, who had fallen in love with him, and, seeing the vast estate he possessed, said to him:

“It will be owing to yourself only, my Lord Marquis, if you are not my son-in-law.”

The Marquis, making several low bows, accepted the honor which his Majesty conferred upon him, and forthwith, that very same day, married the Princess.

Puss became a great lord, and never ran after mice any more but only for his diversion.

8. The Boy Who Wanted More Cheese

Book: *Dutch Fairy Tales for Young Folks*

Author: William Elliot Griffis

Origin: The Netherlands

Klaas Van Bommel was a Dutch boy, twelve years old, who lived where cows were plentiful. He was over five feet high, weighed a hundred pounds, and had rosy cheeks. His appetite was always good and his mother declared his stomach had no bottom. His hair was of a color half-way between a carrot and a sweet potato. It was as thick as reeds in a swamp and was cut level, from under one ear to another.

Klaas stood in a pair of timber shoes that made an awful rattle when he ran fast to catch a rabbit, or scuffed slowly along to school over the brick road of his village. In summer Klaas was dressed in a rough, blue linen blouse. In winter he wore woolen breeches as wide as coffee bags. They were called bell trousers, and in shape were like a couple of cow-bells turned upwards. These were buttoned on to a thick warm jacket.

Klaas was a farmer's boy. He had rye bread and fresh milk for breakfast. At dinner time, beside cheese and bread, he was given a plate heaped with boiled potatoes. Into these he first plunged a fork and then dipped each round, white ball into a bowl of hot melted butter. Very quickly then did potato and butter disappear "down the red lane." At supper, he had bread and skim milk, left after the cream had been taken off, with a saucer, to make butter. Twice a week the children enjoyed a bowl of bonnyclabber or curds, with a little brown sugar sprinkled on the top. But at every meal there was cheese, usually in thin slices, which the boy thought not thick enough. When Klaas went to bed he usually fell asleep as soon as his shock of yellow hair touched the pillow. In summer time he slept till the birds began to sing, at dawn. In winter, when the bed felt warm and Jack Frost was lively, he often heard the cows talking, in their way, before he jumped out of his bag of straw, which served for a mattress. The Van Bommels were not rich, but everything was shining clean.

There was always plenty to eat at the Van Bommels' house. Stacks of rye bread, a yard long and thicker than a man's arm, stood on end in the corner of the cool, stone-lined basement. The loaves of dough were put in the oven once a week. Baking time was a great event at the Van Bommels' and no men-folks were allowed in the kitchen on that day, unless they were called in to help. As for the milk-pails and pans, filled or emptied, scrubbed or set in the sun every day to dry, and the cheeses, piled up in the pantry, they seemed sometimes enough to feed a small army.

But Klaas always wanted more cheese. In other ways, he was a good boy, obedient at home, always ready to work on the cow-farm, and diligent in school. But at the table he never had enough. Sometimes his father laughed and asked him if he had a well, or a cave, under his jacket.

Klaas had three younger sisters, Trintjé, Anneké and Saartjé; which is Dutch for Kate, Annie and Sallie. These, their fond mother, who loved them dearly, called her "orange blossoms"; but when at dinner, Klaas would keep on, dipping his potatoes into the hot butter, while others were all through, his mother would laugh and call him her Buttercup. But always Klaas wanted more cheese. When unusually greedy, she twitted him as a boy "worse than Butter-and-Eggs"; that is, as troublesome as the yellow and white plant, called toad-flax, is to the farmer--very pretty, but nothing but a weed.

One summer's evening, after a good scolding, which he deserved well, Klaas moped and, almost crying, went to bed in bad humor. He had teased each one of his sisters to give him her bit of cheese, and this, added to his own slice, made his stomach feel as heavy as lead.

Klaas's bed was up in the garret. When the house was first built, one of the red tiles of the roof had been taken out and another one, made of glass, was put in its place. In the morning, this gave the boy light to put on his clothes. At night, in fair weather, it supplied air to his room.

A gentle breeze was blowing from the pine woods on the sandy slope, not far away. So Klaas climbed up on the stool to sniff the sweet piny odors. He thought he saw lights dancing under the tree. One beam seemed to approach his roof hole, and coming nearer played round the chimney. Then it passed to and fro in front of him. It seemed to whisper in his ear, as it moved by. It looked very much as if a hundred fire-flies had united their cold light into one lamp. Then Klaas thought that the strange beams bore the shape of a lovely girl, but he only laughed at himself at the idea. Pretty soon, however, he thought the whisper became a voice. Again, he laughed so heartily, that he forgot his moping and the scolding his mother had given him. In fact, his eyes twinkled with delight, when the voice gave this invitation:

"There's plenty of cheese. Come with us."

To make sure of it, the sleepy boy now rubbed his eyes and cocked his ears. Again, the light-bearer spoke to him: "Come."

Could it be? He had heard old people tell of the ladies of the wood, who whispered and warned travelers. In fact, he himself had often seen the "fairies' ring" in the pine woods. To this, the flame-lady was inviting him.

Again and again the moving, cold light circled round the red tile roof, which the moon, then rising and peeping over the chimneys, seemed to turn into silver plates. As the disc rose higher in the sky, he could hardly see the moving light, that had looked like a lady; but the voice, no longer a whisper, as at first, was now even plainer:

"There's plenty of cheese. Come with us."

"I'll see what it is, anyhow," said Klaas, as he drew on his thick woolen stockings and prepared to go down-stairs and out, without waking a soul. At the door he stepped into his wooden shoes. Just then the cat purred and rubbed up against his shins. He jumped, for he was scared; but

looking down, for a moment, he saw the two balls of yellow fire in her head and knew what they were. Then he sped to the pine woods and towards the fairy ring.

What an odd sight! At first Klaas thought it was a circle of big fire-flies. Then he saw clearly that there were dozens of pretty creatures, hardly as large as dolls, but as lively as crickets. They were as full of light, as if lamps had wings. Hand in hand, they flitted and danced around the ring of grass, as if this was fun.

Hardly had Klaas got over his first surprise, then of a sudden he felt himself surrounded by the fairies. Some of the strongest among them had left the main party in the circle and come to him. He felt himself pulled by their dainty fingers. One of them, the loveliest of all, whispered in his ear:

"Come, you must dance with us."

Then a dozen of the pretty creatures murmured in chorus:

"Plenty of cheese here. Plenty of cheese here. Come, come!"

Upon this, the heels of Klaas seemed as light as a feather. In a moment, with both hands clasped in those of the fairies, he was dancing in high glee. It was as much fun as if he were at the festival, with a row of boys and girls, hand in hand, swinging along the streets, as Dutch maids and youth do, during kermis week.

Klaas had not time to look hard at the fairies, for he was too full of the fun. He danced and danced, all night and until the sky in the east began to turn, first gray and then rosy. Then he tumbled down, tired out, and fell asleep. His head lay on the inner curve of the fairy ring, with his feet in the centre.

Klaas felt very happy, for he had no sense of being tired, and he did not know he was asleep. He thought his fairy partners, who had danced with him, were now waiting on him to bring him cheeses. With a golden knife, they sliced them off and fed him out of their own hands. How good it tasted! He thought now he could, and would, eat all the cheese he had longed for all his life. There was no mother to scold him, or daddy to shake his finger at him. How delightful!

But by and by, he wanted to stop eating and rest a while. His jaws were tired. His stomach seemed to be loaded with cannon-balls. He gasped for breath.

But the fairies would not let him stop, for Dutch fairies never get tired. Flying out of the sky--from the north, south, east and west--they came, bringing cheeses. These they dropped down around him, until the piles of the round masses threatened first to enclose him as with a wall, and then to overtop him. There were the red balls from Edam, the pink and yellow spheres from Gouda, and the gray loaf-shaped ones from Leyden. Down through the vista of sand, in the pine woods, he looked, and oh, horrors! There were the tallest and strongest of the fairies rolling along the huge, round, flat cheeses from Friesland! Any one of these was as big as a cart wheel, and would feed a regiment. The fairies trundled the heavy discs along, as if they were

playing with hoops. They shouted hilariously, as, with a pine stick, they beat them forward like boys at play. Farm cheese, factory cheese, Alkmaar cheese, and, to crown all, cheese from Limburg--which Klaas never could bear, because of its strong odor. Soon the cakes and balls were heaped so high around him that the boy, as he looked up, felt like a frog in a well. He groaned when he thought the high cheese walls were tottering to fall on him. Then he screamed, but the fairies thought he was making music. They, not being human, do not know how a boy feels.

At last, with a thick slice in one hand and a big hunk in the other, he could eat no more cheese; though the fairies, led by their queen, standing on one side, or hovering over his head, still urged him to take more.

At this moment, while afraid that he would burst, Klaas saw the pile of cheeses, as big as a house, topple over. The heavy mass fell inwards upon him. With a scream of terror, he thought himself crushed as flat as a Friesland cheese.

But he wasn't! Waking up and rubbing his eyes, he saw the red sun rising on the sand-dunes. Birds were singing and the cocks were crowing all around him, in chorus, as if saluting him. Just then also the village clock chimed out the hour. He felt his clothes. They were wet with dew. He sat up to look around. There were no fairies, but in his mouth was a bunch of grass which he had been chewing lustily.

Klaas never would tell the story of his night with the fairies, nor has he yet settled the question whether they left him because the cheese-house of his dream had fallen, or because daylight had come.

9. The Little Old Woman and Her Pig

Book: *Mother's Nursery Tales*

Author: Katherine Pyle

Origin: England

One time a little old woman was sweeping her room, and she found in the corner a bright silver shilling. "There!" said the old woman, "Now I can buy that little pig I have been wanting for such a long time."

She finished her sweeping in a hurry and put on her bonnet and her shawl and started off to market to buy her pig, and she carried a tin pail with her so she could gather blackberries along the way.

The bushes were fairly loaded down with berries, so it did not take her long to fill her pail, and after that she got to market in no time.

At first she could not find just the pig she wanted. Some were too little and some were too big; some were too fat and some were too thin. But at last she found just exactly the right pig; it was round and pink and it had one black ear, and the curliest tail there was in the market. She paid just exactly a shilling for it, and then she tied a rope around its hind leg and started home with it, driving it before her, and carrying the pail of blackberries on her arm.

At first all went well. The little pig trotted quietly along, and the sun shone, and the birds sang, and the little white clouds floated across the sky. But presently they came to a stile, and the pig did not want to go over it. Now, there was no way to go round, and no way to get home except over this stile.

"Go on, piggy," said the old woman, shaking the rope. But piggy wouldn't go on. The old woman tried to drive him, and he wouldn't go, and then she tried to lead him, and then she coaxed him and talked to him, but he just wouldn't go over the stile.

At last the old woman quite lost patience with him. She saw a dog trotting along the road, and she called to him. "Here! Here, good dog; come and bite piggy, for I can't make pig go over the stile, and at this rate I won't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

The dog stopped and looked at her and looked at the pig, but he would not bite it.

Close by, a stick lay in the road, and the woman called to it (and she was quite cross by this time). "Stick, stick, shoo dog; dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and at this rate I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the stick wouldn't. It lay there quietly in the road just as though she hadn't spoken to it.

Over in the field a fire was burning, and the old woman called to it, "Fire, fire, burn stick; stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and at this rate I won't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the fire wouldn't.

Then the old woman called to a brook nearby, "Water, water, quench fire; fire won't burn stick, stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the brook wouldn't.

She saw an ox over in the field. "Ox, ox," she cried, "drink water; water won't quench fire, fire won't burn stick, stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the ox wouldn't.

There was a piece of rope twisted about the fence. "Rope, rope," she cried, "pull ox; ox won't drink water, water won't quench fire, fire won't burn stick, stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the rope wouldn't.

Then she called to a rat that lived in a hole under the stile, "Rat, rat, gnaw rope; rope won't pull ox, ox won't drink water, water won't quench fire, fire won't burn stick, stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

But the rat wouldn't.

A cat was sitting on a gate-post. "Cat, cat, catch rat," called the old woman. "Rat won't gnaw rope, rope won't pull ox, ox won't drink water, water won't quench fire, fire won't burn stick, stick won't shoo dog, dog won't bite pig, pig won't go over the stile, and I shan't get home till midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

"No," answered cat, "I am very comfortable sitting here. Why should I disturb myself just to please you? But if you will get the red cow to give you a saucerful of milk for me then I will catch the rat."

So the little old woman tied the pig to the stile, and then she climbed over the fence into the field where the red cow was standing.

"Please, good cow, give me a saucerful of milk for cat," she said, "so that cat will catch the rat that won't gnaw the rope that won't pull the ox that won't drink the water that won't quench the fire that won't burn the stick that won't shoo the dog that won't bite the pig that won't go over the stile so that I can get home before midnight with my pail of fine ripe blackberries."

Said the cow, "If you will go over yonder to where the haymakers are working and fetch me a wisp of hay to eat, then I will give you the milk."

So the little old woman went over to the haymakers and said, "Please, good kind haymakers, give me a wisp of hay to give to the cow so that she may give me some milk to give to the cat."

The haymakers were very hot and thirsty and they said, "Very well; if you will go down to the stream and fetch us a pailful of water we will give you the hay."

So the little old woman emptied out her blackberries on the ground very carefully and then she hurried down to the stream and brought back to the haymakers a pailful of fresh cool water.

The haymakers drank deep of it and then they gave the little old woman all the hay she wanted. She put the blackberries back in the pail and hurried back to the cow with the hay.

The cow gladly gave her a saucerful of milk in return for the hay.

The old woman took the milk to the cat, and while cat was drinking it the old woman untied the rope that fastened the pig to the stile.

Cat finished the milk and licked up the last drop of it, and then she bounded down beside the stile and began to catch the rat.

The rat squeaked with terror and began to gnaw the rope.

The rope began to pull the ox, the ox began to drink the water, the water began to quench the fire, the fire began to burn the stick, the stick began to shoo the dog, the dog began to bite the pig, and the pig squealed at the top of its lungs and scrambled over the stile and ran for home so fast that the little old woman could hardly keep up with it.

They got home in less than no time; it wasn't even midday, and the little old woman had her blackberries for dinner, and what was left over she gave to the pig.

10. Hudden and Dudden and Donald O'Neary

Book: *Celtic Fairy Tales*

Author: Selected and Edited by Joseph Jacobs

Origin: Celtic Folk Tale

There was once upon a time two farmers, and their names were Hudden and Dudden. They had poultry in their yards, sheep on the uplands, and scores of cattle in the meadow-land alongside the river. But for all that they weren't happy. For just between their two farms there lived a poor man by the name of Donald O'Neary. He had a hovel over his head and a strip of grass that was barely enough to keep his one cow, Daisy, from starving, and, though she did her best, it was but seldom that Donald got a drink of milk or a roll of butter from Daisy. You would think there was little here to make Hudden and Dudden jealous, but so it is, the more one has the more one wants, and Donald's neighbors lay awake at night scheming how they might get hold of his little strip of grass-land. Daisy, poor thing, they never thought of; she was just a bag of bones.

One day Hudden met Dudden, and they were soon grumbling as usual, and all to the tune of "If only we could get that vagabond Donald O'Neary out of the country."

"Let's kill Daisy," said Hudden at last; "if that doesn't make him clear out, nothing will."

No sooner said than agreed, and it wasn't dark before Hudden and Dudden crept up to the little shed where lay poor Daisy trying her best to chew the cud, though she hadn't had as much grass in the day as would cover your hand. And when Donald came to see if Daisy was all snug for the night, the poor beast had only time to lick his hand once before she died.

Well, Donald was a shrewd fellow, and downhearted though he was, began to think if he could get any good out of Daisy's death. He thought and he thought, and the next day you could have seen him trudging off early to the fair, Daisy's hide over his shoulder, every penny he had jingling in his pockets. Just before he got to the fair, he made several slits in the hide, put a penny in each slit, walked into the best inn of the town as bold as if it belonged to him, and, hanging the hide up to a nail in the wall, sat down.

"Something to drink, sir," says he to the landlord.

But the landlord didn't like his looks. "Is it fearing I won't pay you, you are?" says Donald; "why I have a hide here that gives me all the money I want." And with that he hit it with his stick and out hopped a penny. The landlord opened his eyes, as you may fancy.

"What'll you take for that hide?"

"It's not for sale, my good man."

"Will you take a gold piece?"

"It's not for sale, I tell you. Hasn't it kept me and mine for years?" and with that Donald hit the hide another whack and out jumped a second penny.

Well, the long and the short of it was that Donald let the hide go, and, that very evening, who but he should walk up to Hudden's door?

"Good-evening, Hudden. Will you lend me your best pair of scales?"

Hudden stared and Hudden scratched his head, but he lent the scales.

When Donald was safe at home, he pulled out his pocketful of bright gold and began to weigh each piece in the scales. But Hudden had put a lump of butter at the bottom, and so the last piece of gold stuck fast to the scales when he took them back to Hudden.

If Hudden had stared before, he stared ten times more now, and no sooner was Donald's back turned, than he was of as hard as he could pelt to Dudden's.

"Good-evening, Dudden. That vagabond, bad luck to him—"

"You mean Donald O'Neary?"

"And who else should I mean? He's back here weighing out sackfuls of gold."

"How do you know that?"

"Here are my scales that he borrowed, and here's a gold piece still sticking to them."

Off they went together, and they came to Donald's door. Donald had finished making the last pile of ten gold pieces. And he couldn't finish because a piece had stuck to the scales.

In they walked without an "If you please" or "By your leave."

"Well, I never!" that was all they could say.

"Good-evening, Hudden; good-evening, Dudden. Ah! you thought you had played me a fine trick, but you never did me a better turn in all your lives. When I found poor Daisy dead, I thought to myself, 'Well, her hide may fetch something;' and it did. Hides are worth their weight in gold in the market just now."

Hudden nudged Dudden, and Dudden winked at Hudden.

"Good-evening, Donald O'Neary."

"Good-evening, kind friends."

The next day there wasn't a cow or a calf that belonged to Hudden or Dudden but her hide was going to the fair in Hudden's biggest cart drawn by Dudden's strongest pair of horses.

When they came to the fair, each one took a hide over his arm, and there they were walking through the fair, bawling out at the top of their voices: "Hides to sell! Hides to sell!"

Out came the tanner:

"How much for your hides, my good men?"

"Their weight in gold."

"It's early in the day to come out of the tavern."

That was all the tanner said, and back he went to his yard.

"Hides to sell! Fine fresh hides to sell!"

Out came the cobbler.

"How much for your hides, my men?"

"Their weight in gold."

"Is it making game of me you are! Take that for your pains," and the cobbler dealt Hudden a blow that made him stagger.

Up the people came running from one end of the fair to the other.

"What's the matter? What's the matter?" cried they.

"Here are a couple of vagabonds selling hides at their weight in gold," said the cobbler.

"Hold 'em fast; hold 'em fast!" bawled the innkeeper, who was the last to come up, he was so fat. "I'll wager it's one of the rogues who tricked me out of thirty gold pieces yesterday for a wretched hide."

It was more kicks than halfpence that Hudden and Dudden got before they were well on their way home again, and they didn't run the slower because all the dogs of the town were at their heels.

Well, as you may fancy, if they loved Donald little before, they loved him less now.

"What's the matter, friends?" said he, as he saw them tearing along, their hats knocked in, and their coats torn off, and their faces black and blue. "Is it fighting you've been? or mayhap you met the police, ill luck to them?"

"We'll police you, you vagabond. It's mighty smart you thought yourself, deluding us with your lying tales."

"Who deluded you? Didn't you see the gold with your own two eyes?"

But it was no use talking. Pay for it he must, and should. There was a meal-sack handy, and into it Hudden and Dudden popped Donald O'Neary, tied him up tight, ran a pole through the knot, and off they started for the Brown Lake of the Bog, each with a pole-end on his shoulder, and Donald O'Neary between.

But the Brown Lake was far, the road was dusty, Hudden and Dudden were sore and weary, and parched with thirst. There was an inn by the roadside.

"Let's go in," said Hudden; "I'm dead beat. It's heavy he is for the little he had to eat."

If Hudden was willing, so was Dudden. As for Donald, you may be sure his leave wasn't asked, but he was lumped down at the inn door for all the world as if he had been a sack of potatoes.

"Sit still, you vagabond," said Dudden; "if we don't mind waiting, you needn't."

Donald held his peace, but after a while he heard the glasses clink, and Hudden singing away at the top of his voice.

"I won't have her, I tell you; I won't have her!" said Donald. But nobody heeded what he said.

"I won't have her, I tell you; I won't have her!" said Donald, and this time he said it louder; but nobody heeded what he said.

"I won't have her, I tell you; I won't have her!" said Donald; and this time he said it as loud as he could.

"And who won't you have, may I be so bold as to ask?" said a farmer, who had just come up with a drove of cattle, and was looking for something to drink.

"It's the king's daughter. They are bothering the life out of me to marry her."

"You're the lucky fellow. I'd give something to be in your shoes."

"Do you see that now! Wouldn't it be a fine thing for a farmer to be marrying a princess, all dressed in gold and jewels?"

"Jewels, do you say? Ah, now, couldn't you take me with you?"

"Well, you're an honest fellow, and as I don't care for the king's daughter, though she's as beautiful as the day, and is covered with jewels from top to toe, you shall have her. Just undo the cord, and let me out; they tied me up tight, as they knew I'd run away from her."

Out crawled Donald; in crept the farmer.

"Now lie still, and don't mind the shaking; it's only rumbling over the palace steps you'll be. And maybe they'll abuse you for a vagabond, who won't have the king's daughter; but you needn't mind that. Ah! it's a deal I'm giving up for you, sure as it is that I don't care for the princess."

"Take my cattle in exchange," said the farmer; and you may guess it wasn't long before Donald was at their tails driving them homewards.

Out came Hudden and Dudden, and the one took one end of the pole, and the other the other.

"I'm thinking he's heavier," said Hudden.

"Ah, never mind," said Dudden; "it's only a step now to Brown Lake."

"I'll have her now! I'll have her now!" bawled the farmer, from inside the sack.

"By my faith, and you shall though," said Hudden, and he laid his stick across the sack.

"I'll have her! I'll have her!" bawled the farmer, louder than ever.

"Well, here you are," said Dudden, for they were now come to the Brown Lake, and, unslinging the sack, they pitched it plump into the lake.

"You'll not be playing your tricks on us any longer," said Hudden.

"True for you," said Dudden. "Ah, Donald, my boy, it was an ill day when you borrowed my scales."

Off they went, with a light step and an easy heart, but when they were near home, who should they see but Donald O'Neary, and all around him the cows were grazing, and the calves were kicking up their heels and butting their heads together.

"Is it you, Donald?" said Dudden. "Faith, you've been quicker than we have."

"True for you, Dudden, and let me thank you kindly; the turn was good, if the will was ill. You'll have heard, like me, that the Brown Lake leads to the Land of Promise. I always put it down as lies, but it is just as true as my word. Look at the cattle."

Hudden stared, and Dudden gaped; but they couldn't get over the cattle; fine fat cattle they were too.

"It's only the worst I could bring up with me," said Donald O'Neary; "the others were so fat, there was no driving them. Faith, too, it's little wonder they didn't care to leave, with grass as far as you could see, and as sweet and juicy as fresh butter."

"Ah, now, Donald, we haven't always been friends," said Dudden, "but, as I was just saying, you were ever a decent lad, and you'll show us the way, won't you?"

"I don't see that I'm called upon to do that; there is a power more cattle down there. Why shouldn't I have them all to myself?"

"Faith, they may well say, the richer you get, the harder the heart. You always were a neighborly lad, Donald. You wouldn't wish to keep the luck all to yourself?"

"True for you, Hudden, though 'tis a bad example you set me. But I'll not be thinking of old times. There is plenty for all there, so come along with me."

Off they trudged, with a light heart and an eager step. When they came to Brown Lake, the sky was full of little white clouds, and, if the sky was full, the lake was as full.

"Ah! now, look, there they are," cried Donald, as he pointed to the clouds in the lake.

"Where? where?" cried Hudden, and "Don't be greedy!" cried Dudden, as he jumped his hardest to be up first with the fat cattle. But if he jumped first, Hudden wasn't long behind.

They never came back. Maybe they got too fat, like the cattle. As for Donald O'Neary, he had cattle and sheep all his days to his heart's content.

11. The Milky Way

Book: *Classic Myths*

Author: Retold by Mary Catherine Judd

Origin: Russia

Soon after the world was made, God created a beautiful maiden and gave her charge of all the birds beneath the heavens. Her name was Lindu. Her father's name was Uko. She knew all the birds of passage, and where they should go in autumn, and she sent each flock on its way.

Lindu cared for the birds tenderly, like a mother for her children, and gave them help whenever it was possible. She sent the stormy wind to blow dust into the eyes of the fierce hunters when they were seeking to slay her pets. It was not surprising that all the world loved her, and those who dwelt in the sky most of all.

The North Star wished to make her his wife. He drove up to Uko's palace with a dusky coach drawn by six black horses, and in the coach were ten fine presents. But Lindu did not love him.

"You always stay in one place, and cannot stir from it," said she. "Go back to your watch-tower."

Then came the Moon drawn in a silver coach by ten gray horses, and the Moon brought twenty presents. But Lindu did not love the Moon.

"You change your face too often and not your path, and that will never suit me," she said.

So the Moon drove away wearing his saddest face. Scarcely had the Moon gone before the Sun drove up. He rode in a golden coach drawn by twenty gold-red horses, and he brought thirty presents with him. But all his grandeur went for nothing with Lindu, for she said:

"I do not love you. You follow the same track day by day, just like the Moon. I love the changing seasons, the changing winds, anything that changes."

At that the gold-red horses leaped away and Lindu was alone with her birds.

At length the Northern Light came from his home in the midnight land in a diamond coach drawn by a thousand white horses. He was so grand that Lindu went to the door to meet him. His servants carried a whole coach-load of gold and silver, pearls and jewels into her house. She loved this bright suitor at once.

"You do not travel the same path all the time like the others. You set out when you wish and rest when it pleases you. Each time you wear a new robe, and each time you ride in a new coach with new horses. You shall be my bridegroom."

And Lindu's choice was made.

The news was sent throughout the world, and guests came from the four sides of the sky and of the earth to greet Lindu and the Northern Light. It was agreed that the wedding should be when the birds flew south. Back to his home in the midnight land went the Northern Light, knowing that Lindu loved him best.

The torrent which fell half a thousand feet over the mountain side sent Lindu her bridal veil. The Frost King sent her laces so fine that a breath of summer air would have destroyed them, and they were stored away in a block of ice for safe keeping. The birds brought her robes of butterfly wings softer than silk and more beautiful than velvet. Her sandals were from the wings of the honey bee, stronger than reindeer skin, and fleeter than a chamois' foot.

Spring passed away. Summer came and went. The birds flew south, and Lindu waited for the Northern Light's return. Snow sparkled on the earth, but no hoof-beat of his thousand white horses broke the stillness of the midnight air. Spring came, but never the Northern Light.

Then Lindu began to weep, and from her tears sprang the little brooks in the valleys of Earth. The birds flew about her head and rested on her shoulders. They tried to caress her in a hundred ways, but Lindu did not heed them. Then they flew away and wandered in strange places, building nests where no nests were ever seen before. Many an egg was lost and many a nestling stolen because Lindu was not near to help her birds.

At last Uko heard their sad songs and then saw his daughter's grief. Uko's heart was always merry and his hands so full of work that he had not noticed Lindu's trouble. He ordered the Four Winds to lift her gently and bring her to him in his sky palace.

She dressed herself in her bridal veil, her frosted laces, and robes of butterfly wings, and the four strong Winds lifted her from the ground. The song-birds of Earth gathered about her and sang their sweetest songs. With her white bridal veil streaming far out on the air and a happy smile on her lips, Lindu sailed across the sky to Uko's palace. There she lives now, happy as her father Uko. Her white veil spreads from one end of the heavens to the other, and whoever lifts his eyes to the Milky Way beholds the maiden in her bridal robes.

From there she directs her birds. From there she waves her white hand in greeting to the Northern Light as his thousand horses leap through the sky. She has forgotten his unkindness and her sorrow. The Northern Light still loves her, but is so changeful that he can never keep a promise. Uko has given Lindu her station in the heavens and her work. Forever beautiful and forever young, never changing, she forever smiles at the changeful Northern Light.

12. Kate Crackernuts

Book: *English Fairy Tales*

Author: Collected by Joseph Jacobs

Origin: England

Once upon a time there was a king and a queen, as in many lands have been. The king had a daughter, Anne, and the queen had one named Kate, but Anne was far bonnier than the queen's daughter, though they loved one another like real sisters. The queen was jealous of the king's daughter being bonnier than her own, and cast about to spoil her beauty. So she took counsel of the henwife, who told her to send the lassie to her next morning fasting.

So early the next morning early, the queen said to Anne, "Go, my dear, to the henwife in the glen, and ask her for some eggs." So Anne set out, but as she passed through the kitchen she saw a crust, and she took and munched it as she went along.

When she came to the henwife's she asked for eggs, as she had been told to do; the henwife said to her, "Lift the lid off that pot there and see." The lassie did so, but nothing happened. "Go home to your minnie and tell her to keep her larder door better locked," said the henwife. So she went home to the queen and told her what the henwife had said. The queen knew from this that the lassie had had something to eat, so watched the next morning and sent her away fasting; but the princess saw some country-folk picking peas by the roadside, and being very kind she spoke to them and took a handful of the peas, which she ate by the way.

When she came to the henwife's, she said, "Lift the lid off the pot and you'll see." So Anne lifted the lid but nothing happened. Then the henwife was rare angry and said to Anne, "Tell your minnie the pot won't boil if the fire's away." So Anne went home and told the queen.

The third day the queen goes along with the girl herself to the henwife. Now, this time, when Anne lifted the lid off the pot, off falls her own pretty head, and on jumps a sheep's head.

So the queen was now quite satisfied, and went back home.

Her own daughter, Kate, however, took a fine linen cloth and wrapped it round her sister's head and took her by the hand and they both went out to seek their fortune. They went on, and they went on, and they went on, till they came to a castle. Kate knocked at the door and asked for a night's lodging for herself and a sick sister. They went in and found it was a king's castle, who had two sons, and one of them was sickening away to death and no one could find out what ailed him. And the curious thing was that whoever watched him at night was never seen any more. So the king had offered a peck of silver to anyone who would stop up with him. Now Katie was a very brave girl, so she offered to sit up with him.

Till midnight all goes well. As twelve o'clock rings, however, the sick prince rises, dresses himself, and slips downstairs. Kate followed, but he didn't seem to notice her. The prince went to the stable, saddled his horse, called his hound, jumped into the saddle, and Kate leapt lightly up behind him. Away rode the prince and Kate through the greenwood, Kate, as they pass, plucking nuts from the trees and filling her apron with them. They rode on and on till they came

to a green hill. The prince here drew bridle and spoke, "Open, open, green hill, and let the young prince in with his horse and his hound," and Kate added, "and his lady him behind."

Immediately the green hill opened and they passed in. The prince entered a magnificent hall, brightly lighted up, and many beautiful fairies surrounded the prince and led him off to the dance. Meanwhile, Kate, without being noticed, hid herself behind the door. There she sees the prince dancing, and dancing, and dancing, till he could dance no longer and fell upon a couch. Then the fairies would fan him till he could rise again and go on dancing.

At last the rooster crew, and the prince made all haste to get on horseback; Kate jumped up behind, and home they rode. When the morning sun rose they came in and found Kate sitting down by the fire and cracking her nuts. Kate said the prince had a good night; but she would not sit up another night unless she was to get a peck of gold. The second night passed as the first had done. The prince got up at midnight and rode away to the green hill and the fairy ball, and Kate went with him, gathering nuts as they rode through the forest. This time she did not watch the prince, for she knew he would dance and dance, and dance. But she sees a fairy baby playing with a wand, and overhears one of the fairies say: "Three strokes of that wand would make Kate's sick sister as bonnie as ever she was." So Kate rolled nuts to the fairy baby, and rolled nuts till the baby toddled after the nuts and let fall the wand, and Kate took it up and put it in her apron. And at dawn they rode home as before, and the moment Kate got home to her room she rushed and touched Anne three times with the wand, and the nasty sheep's head fell off and she was her own pretty self again. The third night Kate consented to watch, only if she should marry the sick prince. All went on as on the first two nights. This time the fairy baby was playing with a birdie; Kate heard one of the fairies say: "Three bites of that birdie would make the sick prince as well as ever he was." Kate rolled all the nuts she had to the fairy baby till the birdie was dropped, and Kate put it in her apron.

At dawn they set off again, but instead of cracking her nuts as she used to do, this time Kate plucked the feathers off and cooked the birdie. Soon there arose a very savory smell. "Oh!" said the sick prince, "I wish I had a bite of that birdie," so Kate gave him a bite of the birdie, and he rose up on his elbow. By-and-by he cried out again: "Oh, if I had another bite of that birdie!" so Kate gave him another bite, and he sat up on his bed. Then he said again: "Oh! if I only had a third bite of that birdie!" So Kate gave him a third bite, and he rose quite well, dressed himself, and sat down by the fire, and when the folk came in next morning they found Kate and the young prince cracking nuts together. Meanwhile his brother had seen Annie and had fallen in love with her, as everybody did who saw her sweet pretty face. So the sick son married the well sister, and the well son married the sick sister, and they all lived happy and died happy.

13. Why the Tiger and the Stag Fear Each Other

Book: *Fairy Tales from Brazil: How and Why Tales from Brazilian Folk-Lore*

Author: Elsie Spicer Eells

Origin: Brazil

Once upon a time there was a large handsome stag with great branching horns. One day he said to himself, "I am tired of having no home of my own, and of just living anywhere. I shall build me a house." He searched on every hill, in every valley, by every stream, and under all the trees for a suitable place. At last he found one that was just right. It was not too high, nor too low, not too near a stream and not too far away from one, not under too thick trees and not away from the trees out under the hot sun. "I am going to build my house here," he said, and he began to clear a place for it at once. He worked all day and did not go away until night.

Now in that same country there lived a large handsome tiger, with sharp, sharp teeth and bright, cruel eyes. One day the tiger said to himself, "I am tired of having no home of my own,—of just living around anywhere! I shall build me a house." Accordingly the tiger searched for a place to build his house. He searched on every hill, in every valley, by every stream, and under all the trees. At last he found a place which was just right. It was not too high nor too low, not too near a stream and not too far away from one, not under too thick trees and yet not away from the trees out in the hot sun. The tiger said to himself, "I am going to build my house here. The place is all ready for me for there isn't very much underbrush here." He began at once and finished clearing the place. Then it became daylight and he went away.

At daylight the stag came back to do more work on his new house. "H'm," he said when he looked at the clearing. "Somebody is helping me. The place is cleared and ready for me to build the foundation."

He began to work at once and worked all day. At night when the foundation was laid, he went away.

At night the tiger came to work at his new house. "H'm," he said when he looked at it. "Somebody is helping me. The foundations of my house are all laid." He began to work at once and built the sides of the house. He worked all night and went away at daybreak, leaving the house with the sides completed. There was a big door and a funny little window in the side.

At daybreak the stag came back to work on his house. When he saw it he rubbed his eyes for he thought that he must be dreaming. The sides of the house were completed with a big door and a funny little window. "Somebody must surely be helping me," he said to himself as he began to work to put on the roof. He worked hard all day and when the sun went down, there was a roof of dried grass on the house. "I can sleep in my own house to-night," he said. He made his bed in the corner and soon was sound asleep.

At night the tiger came back to work on his new house. When he saw it he rubbed his eyes for he thought that he must be dreaming. There was a roof of dried grass on the house.

"Somebody must surely be helping me," he said to himself as he entered the door. The first thing he saw when he entered the door was the stag sound asleep in his bed in the corner. "Who are you and what are you doing in my house?" he said in his deepest voice.

The stag woke up with a start. "Who are you and what are you doing in my house?" said the stag in his deepest voice.

"It is not your house. It is mine. I built it myself," said the tiger.

"It is my house," said the stag. "I built it myself."

"I made the clearing for the house," said the tiger, "I built the sides and made the door and window."

"I started the clearing," said the stag. "I laid the foundations and put on the roof of dried grass."

The stag and the tiger quarreled all night about whose house it was. At daybreak they decided that they would live together there.

The next night the tiger said to the stag, "I'm going hunting. Get the water and have the wood ready for the fire. I shall be almost famished when I return."

The stag got the wood and water ready. After a while the tiger came back. He brought home for dinner a great handsome stag. The stag had no appetite at all and he didn't sleep a wink that night.

The next day the stag said that he was going hunting. He told the tiger to have the wood and water ready when he got back. The tiger got the wood and water ready. By and by the stag came back bringing with him the body of a great tiger.

"I am nearly famished," said the stag. "Let's have dinner right away." The tiger hadn't any appetite at all and he could not eat a mouthful.

That night neither the tiger nor the stag could sleep a wink. The tiger was afraid the stag would kill him if he shut his eyes for a minute, and the stag was afraid the tiger would kill him if he slept or even pretended to be asleep. Accordingly he kept wide awake too.

Toward morning the stag got very cramped from keeping in one position for so long. He moved his head slightly. In doing this his horns struck against the roof of the house. It made a terrible noise. The tiger thought that the stag was about to spring upon him and kill him. He made a leap for the door and ran out of it as fast as he could. He ran and ran until he was far, far away from the house with the roof of dried grass.

The stag thought that the tiger was about to spring upon him and kill him. He, too, made a leap for the door and ran and ran until he was far, far away from the house with the roof of dried grass. The tiger and the stag are still running away from each other until this very day.

The house with the roof of dried grass waited and waited there in the place which was neither too high nor too low, too near the river nor too far away, not under too thick trees nor out in the hot sun. It waited and waited until it got so tired it fell down in a heap.

14. Prince Darling

Book: *The Blue Fairy Book*

Authors: Edited by Andrew Lang, Story by Cabinet des Fees

Origin: France

Once upon a time there lived a king who was so just and kind that his subjects called him “the Good King.” It happened one day, when he was out hunting, that a little white rabbit, which his dogs were chasing, sprang into his arms for shelter. The King stroked it gently, and said to it:

“Well, bunny, as you have come to me for protection I will see that nobody hurts you.”

And he took it home to his palace and had it put in a pretty little house, with all sorts of nice things to eat.

That night, when he was alone in his room, a beautiful lady suddenly appeared before him; her long dress was as white as snow, and she had a crown of white roses upon her head. The good King was very much surprised to see her, for he knew his door had been tightly shut, and he could not think how she had got in. But she said to him:

“I am the Fairy Truth. I was passing through the wood when you were out hunting, and I wished to find out if you were really good, as everybody said you were, so I took the shape of a little rabbit and came to your arms for shelter, for I know that those who are merciful to animals will be still kinder to their fellow-men. If you had refused to help me I should have been certain that you were wicked. I thank you for the kindness you have shown me, which has made me your friend forever. You have only to ask me for anything you want and I promise that I will give it to you.”

“Madam,” said the good King, “since you are a fairy you no doubt know all my wishes. I have but one son whom I love very dearly, that is why he is called Prince Darling. If you are really good enough to wish to do me a favor, I beg that you will become his friend.”

“With all my heart,” answered the Fairy. “I can make your son the handsomest prince in the world, or the richest, or the most powerful; choose whichever you like for him.”

“I do not ask either of these things for my son,” replied the good King; “but if you will make him the best of princes, I shall indeed be grateful to you. What good would it do him to be rich, or handsome, or to possess all the kingdoms of the world if he were wicked? You know well he would still be unhappy. Only a good man can be really contented.”

“You are quite right,” answered the Fairy; “but it is not in my power to make Prince Darling a good man unless he will help me; he must himself try hard to become good, I can only promise to give him good advice, to scold him for his faults, and to punish him if he will not correct and punish himself.”

The good King was quite satisfied with this promise; and very soon afterward he died.

Prince Darling was very sorry, for he loved his father with all his heart, and he would willingly have given all his kingdoms and all his treasures of gold and silver if they could have kept the good King with him.

Two days afterward, when the Prince had gone to bed, the Fairy suddenly appeared to him and said:

“I promised your father that I would be your friend, and to keep my word I have come to bring you a present.” At the same time she put a little gold ring upon his finger.

“Take great care of this ring,” she said: “it is more precious than diamonds; every time you do a bad deed it will prick your finger, but if, in spite of its pricking, you go on in your own evil way, you will lose my friendship, and I shall become your enemy.”

So saying, the Fairy disappeared, leaving Prince Darling very much astonished.

When the Prince grew old enough to understand, he soon learned that there could be nothing worse than to be proud, obstinate, and conceited, and he had really tried to cure himself of these defects, but by that time all his faults had become habits; and a bad habit is very hard to get rid of. Not that he was naturally of a bad disposition; he was truly sorry when he had been naughty, and said:

“I am very unhappy to have to struggle against my anger and pride every day; if I had been punished for them when I was little they would not be such a trouble to me now.”

His ring pricked him very often, and sometimes he left off what he was doing at once; but at other times he would not attend to it. Strangely enough, it gave him only a slight prick for a trifling fault, but when he was really naughty it made his finger actually bleed. At last he got tired of being constantly reminded, and wanted to be able to do as he liked, so he threw his ring aside, and thought himself the happiest of men to have got rid of its teasing pricks. He gave himself up to doing every foolish thing that occurred to him, until he became quite wicked and nobody could like him any longer.

One day, when the Prince was walking about, he saw a young girl who was so very pretty that he made up his mind at once that he would marry her. Her name was Celia, and she was as good as she was beautiful.

Prince Darling fancied that Celia would think herself only too happy if he offered to make her a great queen, but she said fearlessly:

“Sire, I am only a shepherdess, and a poor girl, but, nevertheless, I will not marry you.”

“Do you dislike me?” asked the Prince, who was very much vexed at this answer.

“No, my Prince,” replied Celia; “I cannot help thinking you very handsome; but what good would riches be to me, and all the grand dresses and splendid carriages that you would give me, if the bad deeds which I should see you do every day made me hate and despise you?”

The Prince was very angry at this speech, and commanded his officers to make Celia a prisoner and carry her off to his palace. All day long the remembrance of what she had said annoyed him, but as he loved her he could not make up his mind to have her punished.

But when he reached the room in which Celia had been locked up, he was greatly surprised to find that she was not in it, though he had the key in his own pocket all the time. His anger was terrible, and he vowed vengeance against whoever had helped her to escape. After he went to his own room, but he had scarcely got into it when there was a clap of thunder which made the ground shake, and the Fairy Truth appeared suddenly before him.

“I promised your father,” said she sternly, “to give you good advice, and to punish you if you refused to follow it. You have despised my counsel, and have gone your own evil way until you are only outwardly a man; really you are a monster—the horror of everyone who knows you. It is time that I should fulfill my promise, and begin your punishment. I condemn you to resemble the animals whose ways you have imitated. You have made yourself like the lion by your anger, and like the wolf by your greediness. Like a snake, you have ungratefully turned upon one who was a second father to you; your churlishness has made you like a bull. Therefore, in your new form, take the appearance of all these animals.”

The Fairy had scarcely finished speaking when Prince Darling saw to his horror that her words were fulfilled. He had a lion’s head, a bull’s horns, a wolf’s feet, and a snake’s body. At the same instant he found himself in a great forest, beside a clear lake, in which he could see plainly the horrible creature he had become, and a voice said to him:

“Look carefully at the state to which your wickedness has brought you; believe me, your soul is a thousand times more hideous than your body.”

Prince Darling recognized the voice of the Fairy Truth and turned in a fury to catch her and eat her up if he possibly could; but he saw no one, and the same voice went on:

“I laugh at your powerlessness and anger, and I intend to punish your pride by letting you fall into the hands of your own subjects.”

The Prince began to think that the best thing he could do would be to get as far away from the lake as he could, then at least he would not be continually reminded of his terrible ugliness. So he ran toward the wood, but before he had gone many yards he fell into a deep pit which had been made to trap bears, and the hunters, who were hiding in a tree, leaped down, and secured him with several chains, and led him into the chief city of his own kingdom.

On the way, instead of recognizing that his own faults had brought this punishment upon him, he accused the Fairy of being the cause of all his misfortunes, and bit and tore at his chains furiously.

The hunters who had caught him took him to a great menagerie, where he was chained up among all the other wild beasts, and he determined to show his sorrow for his past bad behavior by being gentle and obedient to the man who had to take care of him. Unfortunately, this man was very rough and unkind, and though the poor monster was quite quiet, he often beat him without rhyme or reason when he happened to be in a bad temper. One day when this keeper

was asleep a tiger broke its chain, and flew at him to eat him up. Prince Darling, who saw what was going on, at first felt quite pleased to think that he should be delivered from his persecutor, but soon thought better of it and wished that he were free.

“I would return good for evil,” he said to himself, “and save the unhappy man’s life.” He had hardly wished this when his iron cage flew open, and he rushed to the side of the keeper, who was awake and was defending himself against the tiger. When he saw the monster had got out he gave himself up for lost, but his fear was soon changed into joy, for the kind monster threw itself upon the tiger and very soon killed it, and then came and crouched at the feet of the man it had saved.

Overcome with gratitude, the keeper stooped to caress the strange creature which had done him such a great service; but suddenly a voice said in his ear:

“You see, a good action always brings its reward,” and the Prince found himself changed into a beautiful white dove. He remembered that white was the favorite color of the Fairy Truth, and began to hope that he might at last win back her favor.

But just now his first care was for Celia, and rising into the air he flew round and round. No trace of Celia was to be seen, and the Prince, in despair, determined to search through the world till he found her. He flew on and on for several days, till he came to a great desert, where he saw a cavern, and, to his delight, there sat Celia, sharing the simple breakfast of an old hermit.

Overjoyed to have found her, Prince Darling perched upon her shoulder, trying to express by his caresses how glad he was to see her again, and Celia, surprised and delighted by the tameness of this pretty white dove, stroked it softly, and said, though she never thought of its understanding her:

“I accept the gift that you make me of yourself, and I will love you always.”

“Take care what you are saying, Celia,” said the old hermit; “are you prepared to keep that promise?”

“Indeed, I hope so, my sweet shepherdess,” cried the Prince, who was at that moment restored to his natural shape. “You promised to love me always; tell me that you really mean what you said, or I shall have to ask the Fairy to give me back the form of the dove which pleased you so much.”

“You need not be afraid that she will change her mind,” said the Fairy, throwing off the hermit’s robe in which she had been disguised and appearing before them.

“Celia has loved you ever since she first saw you, only she would not tell you while you were so obstinate and naughty. Now you have repented and mean to be good you deserve to be happy, and so she may love you as much as she likes.”

Celia and Prince Darling threw themselves at the Fairy’s feet, and the Prince was never tired of thanking her for her kindness. Celia was delighted to hear how sorry he was for all his past follies and misdeeds, and promised to love him as long as she lived.

“Rise, my children,” said the Fairy, “and I will transport you to the palace, and Prince Darling shall have back again the crown he forfeited by his bad behavior.”

Celia and Prince Darling reigned for many years, but he was so determined to govern worthily and to do his duty that his ring, which he took to wearing again, never once pricked him severely.

15. The Baba Yaga

Book: *Wonder Tales from Many Lands*

Author: Written and Illustrated by Katherine Pyle

Origin: Russia

There was once a man and wife who had no child, though they wished for one above all things.

One day, when the husband was away, the wife laid a big stick of wood in the cradle and began to rock it and sing to it. Presently she looked and saw that the stick had arms and legs. Filled with joy, she began to rock and sing to it again; she kept it up for a long time, and when she looked again, there, instead of the stick of wood, was a fine little boy in the cradle.

The woman took the child up and nursed him, and after that he was to her as her own son. She named him Peter, and made a little suit of clothes and a cloth cap for him to wear.

One day Peter put on his little coat and went out in a boat to fish on the river.

At noon his mother went down to the bank of the stream and called to him, "Peter, Peter, bring your boat to shore, for I have brought a little cake for you to eat."

Then Peter said to his boat:

"Little boat, little boat, float a little nearer.

Little boat, little boat, float a little nearer."

The boat floated up to the shore; Peter took the cake and went back to his fishing again.

Now it so happened that a Baba Yaga, a terrible witch, was hiding in the bushes near-by. She heard all that passed between the woman and the child. So after the woman had gone home, the Baba Yaga waited for a while, and then she went down to the edge of the river and hid herself there, and called out:

"Peter, Peter, bring your boat to the shore, for I have brought another little cake for you."

But when Peter heard her voice, which was very coarse and loud, he knew it must be a Baba Yaga calling him, so he said:

"Little boat, little boat, float a little farther.

Little boat, little boat, float a little farther."

Then the boat floated away still farther out of the Baba Yaga's reach.

The old witch soon guessed what was the matter, and she rushed off to a blacksmith, who lived beyond the forest.

"Blacksmith, blacksmith, forge me a little fine voice as quickly as you can," she cried, "or I will put you in my mortar and grind you to pieces with my pestle."

The blacksmith was frightened. He made her a little fine voice as quickly as he could, and the Baba Yaga took it and hastened back to the river.

There she hid herself close to the shore and called in her little new voice, "Peter, Peter, bring your boat to the shore, for I have brought another little cake for you to eat."

When Peter heard the Baba Yaga calling him in her fine, small voice, he thought it was his mother, so he said to his boat:

"Little boat, little boat, float a little nearer.

Little boat, little boat, float a little nearer."

Then the little boat came to the land. Peter looked all about, but saw no one. He wondered where his mother had gone, and stepped out of his boat to look for her.

Immediately the Baba Yaga seized him. Like a whirlwind she rushed away with him through the forest and never stopped till she reached her own house. There she shut him up in a cage behind the house to keep him until he grew fat.

After she had shut him up, she went back into the house, and her little cat was there. "Mistress," said the cat, "I have cooked the dinner for you, and I am very hungry. Will you not give me something to eat?"

"All that I leave, that you can have," answered the Baba Yaga. She sat down at the table and ate up everything but one small bone. That was all the cat had.

Meanwhile at home the mother waited and waited for Peter to come back from the river with his fish. Then at last she went down to look for him. There was his boat drawn up on the shore empty, and all round it were marks of the Baba Yaga's feet, and the trees and bushes were broken where she had rushed away through the forest. Then the mother knew that a witch had carried off the little boy.

She went back home, weeping and wailing.

Now the woman had a very faithful servant, and when this girl heard her mistress wailing, she asked her what the matter was.

The woman told her all that she had seen down at the river, and how she was sure a Baba Yaga had flown away with Peter.

"Mistress," said the girl, "there is no reason for you to despair. Just give me a little wheat cake to keep the life in me, and I will set out and find Peter, even though I have to travel to the end of the world."

Then the woman was comforted. She gave the servant a cake, and the girl set out in search of Peter.

She went on and on, and after a while she came to the Baba Yaga's house. The girl knocked at the door, and the Baba Yaga opened it.

“What do you want here?” she asked. “Are you seeking work or shunning work?”

“I am seeking work,” answered the girl. “Can you give me anything to do?”

The witch scowled at her terribly. “You may come in,” she said, “and set my house in order, but do not go peeping and prying about, or it will be the worse for you.”

The girl went in and began to set the house in order, while the Baba Yaga flew away into the forest, riding in a mortar, urging it along with a pestle, and sweeping away the traces with a broom.

After the witch had gone, the little cat said to the girl, “Give me, I beg of you, a little food, for I am starving with hunger.”

“Here is a little cake; it is all I have, but I will give it to you in Heaven’s name.”

The little cat took the cake and ate it all up, every crumb.

“Now listen,” said the cat. “I know why you are here, and that you are searching for the little boy named Peter. He is in a cage behind the house, but you can do nothing to help him now. Wait until after dinner, when the Baba Yaga goes to sleep. Then rub her eyes with sap so that she cannot get them open, and you may escape with the child through the forest.”

The girl thanked the little cat and promised to do all things as it bade her.

When the Baba Yaga came home, “Well, have you been peeping and prying?” she asked.

“That I have not,” answered the girl.

The Baba Yaga sat down, ate everything there was on the table, bones and all. Then she lay down and went to sleep. She snored terribly.

The girl took some sap and smeared the witch’s eyelids with it. Then she went out to where Peter was and let him out of the cage, and they ran away through the forest together.

The Baba Yaga slept for a long time. At last she yawned and woke, but she could not get her eyes open. They were stuck tight with sap. She was in a terrible rage; she stamped about and roared terribly. “I know who has done this,” she cried, “and as soon as I get my eyes open, I will go after her and tear her to pieces.” Then she called to the cat to come and scratch her eyes open with its sharp little claws.

“That I will not,” answered the cat. “As long as I have been with you, you have given me nothing but hard words and bones to gnaw, but she stroked my fur, and gave me a cake to eat. Scratch your own eyes open, for you shall have no help from me.” And then the little cat ran away into the forest.

But the faithful servant and Peter journeyed safely through the forest, and you may guess whether or not the mother was glad to have her little Peter safe home again.

As to the old Baba Yaga, she may be shouting and stamping and rubbing the sap from her eyes yet, for all I know.