

## 2018/2019 Storytelling Selections

Resource: *The Gutenberg Project* ([gutenberg.org](http://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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# 1. CHICKEN LICKEN

Book: Childhood's Favorites and Fairy Stories: The Young Folks Treasury, Volume 1

Author: Various

Origin: Danish

Link: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/19993/19993-h/19993-h.htm#page45a>

As Chicken-licken was going one day to the wood, whack! an acorn fell from a tree on to his head.

"Gracious goodness me!" said Chicken-licken, "the sky must have fallen; I must go and tell the King."

So Chicken-licken turned back, and met Hen-len.

"Well, Hen-len, where are you going?" said he.

"I'm going to the wood," said she.

"Oh, Hen-len, don't go!" said he, "for as I was going the sky fell on to my head, and I'm going to tell the King."

So Hen-len turned back with Chicken-licken, and met Cock-lock.

"I'm going to the wood," said he.

Then Hen-len said: "Oh Cock-lock, don't go, for I was going, and I met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Cock-lock turned back, and they met Duck-luck.

"Well, Duck-luck, where are you going?"

And Duck-luck said: "I'm going to the wood."

Then Cock-lock said: "Oh! Duck-luck, don't go, for I was going, and I met Hen-len, and Hen-len met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Duck-luck turned back, and met Drake-lake.

"Well, Drake-lake, where are you going?"

And Drake-lake said: "I'm going to the wood."

Then Duck-luck said: "Oh! Drake-lake, don't go, for I was going, and I met Cock-lock, and Cock-lock met Hen-len, and Hen-len met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Drake-lake turned back, and met Goose-loose.

"Well, Goose-loose, where are you going?"

And Goose-loose said: "I'm going to the wood."

Then Drake-lake said: "Oh, Goose-loose, don't go, for I was going, and I met Duck-luck, and Duck-luck met Cock-lock, and Cock-lock met Hen-len, and Hen-len met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Goose-loose turned back, and met Gander-lander.

"Well, Gander-lander, where are you going?"

And Gander-lander said: "I'm going to the wood."

Then Goose-loose said: "Oh! Gander-lander, don't go, for I was going, and I met Drake-lake, and Drake-lake met Duck-luck, and Duck-luck met Cock-lock, and Cock-lock met Hen-len, and Hen-len met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Gander-lander turned back, and met Turkey-lurkey.

"Well, Turkey-lurkey, where are you going?"

And Turkey-lurkey said: "I'm going to the wood."

Then Gander-lander said: "Oh! Turkey-lurkey, don't go, for I was going, and I met Goose-loose, and Goose-loose met Drake-lake, and Drake-lake met Duck-luck, and Duck-luck met Cock-lock, and Cock-lock met Hen-len, and Hen-len met Chicken-licken, and Chicken-licken had been at the wood, and the sky had fallen on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

So Turkey-lurkey turned back, and walked with Gander-lander, Goose-loose, Drake-lake, Duck-luck, Cock-lock, Hen-len, and Chicken-licken.

And as they were going along, they met Fox-lox. And Fox-lox said:

"Where are you going?"

And they said: "Chicken-licken went to the wood, and the sky fell on to his head, and we are going to tell the King."

And Fox-lox said: "Come along with me, and I will show you the way."

But Fox-lox took them into the fox's hole, and he and his young ones soon ate up poor Chicken-licken, Hen-len, Cock-lock, Duck-luck, Drake-lake, Goose-loose, Gander-lander, and Turkey-lurkey; and they never saw the King to tell him that the sky had fallen.

## 2. THE LITTLE SISTER OF THE GIANTS

Book: Tales of Giants from Brazil

Author: Elsie Spicer

Origin: Brazilian

Link: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/21678/21678-h/21678-h.htm#sister>

Once upon a time there was a little girl who was very beautiful. Her eyes were like the eyes of the gazelle; her hair hid in its soft waves the deep shadows of the night; her smile was like the sunrise. Each year as she grew older she grew also more and more beautiful. Her name was Angelita.

The little girl's mother was dead, and her father, the image-maker, had married a second time. The step-mother was a woman who was renowned in the city for her great beauty. As her little step-daughter grew more and more lovely each day of her life she soon became jealous of the child. Each night she asked the image-maker, "Who is more beautiful, your wife or your child?"

The image-maker was a wise man and knew all too well his wife's jealous disposition. He always responded, "You, my wife, are absolutely peerless."

One day the image-maker suddenly died, and the step-mother and step-daughter were left alone in the world. They both mourned deeply the passing of the kind image-maker.

One day as they were leaning over the balcony two passers-by observed them, and one said to the other, "Do you notice those beautiful women in the balcony? The mother is beautiful, but the daughter is far more beautiful." The step-mother had always been jealous of the daughter's loveliness, but now her jealousy was fanned into a burning flame. The wise image-maker was no longer there to tell her that she was peerless.

The next day the mother and daughter again leaned over the balcony. Two soldiers passed by and one said to the other: "Do you observe those two beautiful women in the balcony? The mother is beautiful, but the daughter is far more beautiful." The step-mother flew into a terrible rage. She now knew that it was true as she had long feared. The girl was more beautiful than she. Her jealousy knew no bounds. She seized her step-daughter roughly and shut her up in a little room in the attic.

The little room in the attic had just one tiny window high up in the wall. The window was shut, but Angelita climbed up to open it in order to get a little air. The next afternoon she grew weary

of the confinement of the little room, so she dug a foothold in the wall where she could stand and look out of the window. Her step-mother was leaning over the balcony all alone when two *cavalheiros* passed by. One said to the other, "Do you observe the beautiful woman in the balcony?" "Yes," replied the other. "She is a beautiful woman, but the little maid who is kept a prisoner in the attic is far more beautiful."

The step-mother became desperate. She ordered the old servant to carry the girl into the jungle and kill her. "Be sure that you bring back the tip of Angelita's tongue, so that I may know that you have obeyed my order," she said.

Angelita was very happy to be taken out of the little attic room, and set out for a walk with the old servant with a light heart. They walked through the city streets and out into the open country. Soon they had reached the deep jungle. "Where are we going?" the girl asked in surprise.

"We are taking a walk for our health, *yayazinha*," replied the servant.

Soon they were so far in the jungle that the path was entirely overgrown. No ray of light penetrated through the deep foliage. Angelita became frightened. "I'll not go another step if you do not tell me where you are taking me," she said as she stamped her little foot upon the ground.

The old servant burst into tears and told Angelita all that her step-mother had commanded. "I could not hurt one hair of your lovely head, much less cut off the tip of your little tongue, *yayazinha*," sobbed the old man.

Angelita stood still and thought. "Go back to my step-mother," she said to the old man. "On the way you will see plenty of dogs. Cut off the tip of a little dog's tongue and carry it home to my step-mother."

This is what the old servant did. The step-mother believed him and thought that he had slain her step-daughter according to her command.

Angelita, in the meantime, wandered on and on through the jungle. The big snakes glided swiftly out of her path. The monkeys and the parrots chattered to keep her from being lonely. She wandered on and on until finally she came to an enormous palace. The front door was wide open. She went from room to room, but the palace was entirely deserted. There was not a neat, orderly room in the entire palace.

"I can make these lovely rooms neat and clean," said Angelita. "They surely need someone to do it!" She found a broom and went to work at once. Soon the whole palace was in order once more. Everything was clean and bright.

Just as Angelita was finishing her task she heard a great noise. She looked out of the door, and there were three enormous giants entering the house. She had never dreamed that giants could be so big. She was frightened nearly to death and scrambled under a chair as fast as she could.

When the giants came into the house they were amazed to find everything in such splendid order. "This is a different looking place from what we left," said the biggest giant.

“What dirty, disorderly giants we have been, living here all by ourselves,” said the middle-sized giant. “I just realize it, now that I see what our house looks like when it is neat and clean.”

“What kind fairy could have done all this work while we were away?” said the littlest giant, who was not little at all, but almost as big as his enormous brothers.

The three giants fell to discussing the question. They could not guess how their house could have been made so clean. Their voices were so very kind, in spite of being so loud and heavy, that Angelita decided she dare come out from under the chair and let them see who had done the work for them. She quickly crawled out from her hiding place.

“What lovely fairy is this?” asked the biggest giant, looking at her kindly. He thought that she really was a fairy.

“This is the loveliest fairy I ever saw in all my life,” said the middle-sized giant.

“How did such a lovely fairy ever happen to find our dirty, disorderly palace?” asked the littlest giant who was not little at all.

Angelita told the three giants her story. Her beauty and her sweet ways completely entranced them.

“Please live with us always here in our palace in the jungle and be our little sister,” said the biggest giant, and the middle-sized giant and the littlest giant, speaking all at once. Their three big deep voices all together made a noise like thunder.

Angelita lived in the palace with the three giants after that. Every day when they went out to hunt she would take the broom and make the palace neat and clean. They called her “little sister” and loved her with all their big giant hearts.

All was well until a little bird went and told Angelita’s step-mother that she was alive and living in the depths of the jungle with the three giants. When the step-mother heard about it she was so angry that she thought she could never be happy as long as Angelita was living in the world. She consulted a wicked witch as soon as she could find her shawl.

The wicked witch gave the step-mother some poisoned slippers. “These will cause the immediate death of any person who puts them on,” said the wicked witch. Then she showed the step-mother just how to reach the palace where Angelita lived in the depths of the jungle with the three giants.

Angelita’s step-mother followed the directions which the witch had given her and easily found the giants’ palace. Angelita was so happy living with the giants and keeping house for them that she had forgotten what fear was like. She was not frightened at all when she heard someone clap hands before the door one day when the giants were away. She went to the door; and, though she was very much surprised to see her step-mother, she invited her into the house. Her step-mother gave her a loving embrace and kissed her upon both cheeks. “Dear child, it is a long time since I have seen you,” she said. “I have brought you a little gift to show you that I have not forgotten you. It is only a poor, mean little gift, but it is the best I could bring.”

Angelita was touched at her step-mother's gift and accepted it with hearty thanks. As soon as her step-mother had gone she untied the red ribbon around the package and opened it. Inside was a pair of leather slippers. Angelita looked at the little slippers. They were like the slippers which her dear father, the image-maker, had once brought home to her. "How kind it was in my step-mother to bring these slippers to me," she said as she put them on.

As soon as the slippers were on Angelita's feet, she fell dead just as the wicked witch had promised the step-mother she would do. Her step-mother was watching through the window, and when she saw Angelita dead she hurried home in joy. "Now I, alone, am the peerless beauty," she said.

When the three giants came home to dinner they knew at once that there was something wrong. There were dirty tracks on the floor and dirty finger prints upon the door. "Who made these dirty marks?" said the biggest giant.

"What has happened to our dear little sister that she has not cleaned them away?" asked the middle-sized giant.

"I am afraid there is something wrong with little sister," said the littlest giant who was not little at all.

They clapped their big hands before the door, but no smiling little sister ran to meet them. They entered the big hall of the palace with a bound. There in the middle of the floor lay Angelita, just as she had fallen when she put on the poisoned slippers which her step-mother had given her.

"What evil, has befallen our dear little sister?" said the biggest giant.

"Who could have slain our little sister whom we loved so much?" said the middle-sized giant.

"Who will keep house for us now that our dear little sister is dead?" asked the littlest giant.

Then the biggest giant and the middle-sized giant and the littlest giant all began to sob so loud that it shook the earth. "Our dear little sister is dead! What shall we do! What shall we do!"

The giants could not go into the city to give their little sister Christian burial, but they built a beautiful casket out of silver and carried it to the path which led to the city. Then they hid themselves to watch and make sure that someone found it to carry to the burying place.

Soon a handsome prince passed by on horseback. He noticed the silver casket at once and opened it. The girl whose still form lay inside was the most beautiful maid he had ever gazed upon. "This dead maid is my own true love," he said and he carried the silver casket home to his own palace.

He commanded that no one should enter the room where he placed the silver casket, and this aroused the curiosity of his little sister at once. At the very first opportunity she slipped into the room. She opened the casket and was surprised to see the beautiful quiet maid. "You are very lovely," she said to the still form, "all except your slippers. I think they are very ugly." With these words she pulled off the leather slippers.

Angelita gave a deep sigh, opened her beautiful eyes, and asked for a drink of water.

The little sister called the prince at once. When he saw Angelita was really alive he could hardly believe the good fortune. He asked that the wedding night be celebrated immediately.

Angelita begged that she might go back into the deep jungle and invite the three giants to the wedding. The biggest giant, the middle-sized giant, and the littlest giant who was not little at all, came to the wedding feast. After that they visited their little sister often at her new home; and, when she had children of her own, it was the funniest sight one ever saw to see the biggest giant hold the tiny babes upon his knee.

### 3. THE BOY WHO WAS CALLED THICK HEAD

Book: Canadian Fairy Tales

Author: Cyrus Macmillan

Origin: Canadian

Link: [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/36241/36241-h/36241-h.htm#Page\\_40](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/36241/36241-h/36241-h.htm#Page_40)

Three brothers lived with their old Indian mother in the forest near the sea. Their father had long been dead. At his death he had little of the world's goods to his credit and his widow and her sons were very poor. In the place where they dwelt, game was not plentiful, and to get food enough to keep them from want they had often to go far into the forest. The youngest boy was smaller and weaker than the others, and when the two older sons went far away to hunt, they always left him behind, for although he always wished to accompany them they would never allow him to go. He had to do all the work about the house, and all day long he gathered wood in the forest and carried water from the stream. And even when his brothers went out in the spring-time to draw sap from the maple trees he was never permitted to go with them. He was always making mistakes and doing foolish things. His brothers called him Thick-head, and all the people round about said he was a simpleton because of his slow and queer ways. His mother alone was kind to him and she always said, "They may laugh at you and call you fool, but you will prove to be wiser than all of them yet, for so it was told me by a forest fairy at your birth."

The Chief of the people had a beautiful daughter who had many suitors. But her father spurned them all from his door and said, "My daughter is not yet of age to marry; and when her time of marriage comes, she will only marry the man who can make great profit from hunting." The two older sons of the old woman decided that one of them must win the girl. So they prepared to set out on a great hunting expedition far away in the northern forest, for it was now autumn, and the hunter's moon had come. The youngest boy wanted to go with them, for he had never been away from home and he wished to see the world. And his mother said he might go. His brothers were very angry when they heard his request, and they said, "Much good Thick-head can do us in the chase. He will only bring us bad luck. He is not a hunter but a scullion and a drudge fit only for the fireside." But his mother commanded them to grant the

boy's wish and they had to obey. So the three brothers set out for the north country, the two older brothers grumbling loudly because they were accompanied by the boy they thought a fool.

The two older brothers had good success in the chase and they killed many animals—deer and rabbits and otters and beavers. And they came home bearing a great quantity of dried meat and skins. They each thought, "Now we have begun to prove our prowess to the Chief, and if we succeed as well next year when the hunter's moon comes again, one of us will surely win his daughter when she is old enough to marry." But all the youngest boy brought home as a result of his journey into the game country was a large Earth-Worm as thick as his finger and as long as his arm. It was the biggest Earth-Worm he had ever seen. He thought it a great curiosity as well as a great discovery, and he was so busy watching it each day that he had no time to hunt. When he brought it home in a box, his brothers said to their mother, "What did we tell you about Thick-head? He has now surely proved himself a fool. He has caught only a fat Earth-Worm in all these weeks." And they noised it abroad in the village and all the people laughed loudly at the simpleton, until "Thick-head's hunt" became a by-word in all the land. But the boy's mother only smiled and said, "He will surprise them all yet."

The boy kept the Earth-Worm in a tiny pen just outside the door of his home. One day a large Duck came waddling along, and sticking her bill over the little fence of the pen she quickly gobbled up the Worm. The boy was very angry and he went to the man who owned the Duck, and said, "Your Duck ate up my pet Worm. I want my Worm." The man offered to pay him whatever price he asked, but the boy said, "I do not want your price. I want my Worm." But the man said, "How can I give you your Worm when my Duck has eaten it up? It is gone forever." And the boy said, "It is not gone. It is in the Duck's belly. So I must have the Duck." Then to avoid further trouble the man gave Thick-head the Duck, for he thought to himself, "What is the use of arguing with a fool."

The boy took the Duck home and kept it in a little pen near his home with a low fence around it. And he tied a great weight to its foot so that it could not fly away. He was quite happy again, for he thought, "Now I have both my Worm and the Duck." But one day a Fox came prowling along looking for food. He saw the fat Duck tied by the foot in the little pen. And he said, "What good fortune! There is a choice meal for me," and in a twinkling he was over the fence. The Duck quacked and made a great noise, but she was soon silenced. The Fox had just finished eating up the Duck when the boy, who had heard the quacking, came running out of the house. The Fox was smacking his lips after his good meal, and he was too slow in getting away. The boy fell to beating him with a stout club and soon killed him and threw his body into the yard behind the house. And he thought, "That is not so bad. Now I have my Worm and the Duck and the Fox."

That night an old Wolf came through the forest in search of food. He was very hungry, and in the bright moonlight he saw the dead Fox lying in the yard. He pounced upon it greedily and devoured it until not a trace of it was left. But the boy saw him before he could get away, and he came stealthily upon him and killed him with a blow of his axe. "I am surely in good luck," he thought, "for now I have the Worm and the Duck and the Fox and the Wolf." But the next day when he told his brothers of his good fortune and his great skill, they laughed at him loudly and

said, "Much good a dead Wolf will do you. Before two days have passed it will be but an evil-smelling thing and we shall have to bury it deep. You are indeed a great fool." The boy pondered for a long time over what they had said, and he thought, "Perhaps they are right. The dead Wolf cannot last long. I will save the skin."

So he skinned the Wolf and dried the skin and made a drum from it. For the drum was one of the few musical instruments of the Indians in those old times, and they beat it loudly at all their dances and festivals. The boy beat the drum each evening, and made a great noise, and he was very proud because he had the only drum in the whole village. One day the Chief sent for him and said to him, "I want to borrow your drum for this evening. I am having a great gathering to announce to all the land that my daughter is now of age to marry and that suitors may now seek her hand in marriage. But we have no musical instruments and I want your drum, and I myself will beat it at the dance." So Thick-head brought his drum to the Chief's house, but he was not very well pleased, because he was not invited to the feast, while his brothers were among the favoured guests. And he said to the Chief, "Be very careful. Do not tear the skin of my drum, for I can never get another like it. My Worm and my Duck and my Fox and my Wolf have all helped to make it."

The next day he went for his drum. But the Chief had struck it too hard and had split it open so that it would now make no sound and it was ruined beyond repair. He offered to pay the boy a great price for it, but the boy said, "I do not want your price. I want my drum. Give me back my drum, for my Worm and the Duck and the Fox and the Wolf are all in it." The Chief said, "How can I give you back your drum when it is broken? It is gone forever. I will give you anything you desire in exchange for it. Since you do not like the price I offer, you may name your own price and you shall have it." And the boy thought to himself, "Here is a chance for good fortune. Now I shall surprise my brothers." And he said, "Since you cannot give me my drum, I will take your daughter in marriage in exchange." The Chief was much perplexed, but he had to be true to his word. So he gave his daughter to Thick-head, and they were married, and the girl brought him much treasure and they lived very happily. And his brothers were much amazed and angered because they had failed. But his mother said, "I told you he was wiser than you and that he would outwit you yet although you called him Thick-head and fool. For the forest fairy said it to me at his birth."

## 4. HOW BRAVE WALTER HUNTED WOLVES

Book: The Lilac Fairy Book

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: Finnish

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28096/28096-h/28096-h.htm#Page\\_67](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28096/28096-h/28096-h.htm#Page_67)

A little back from the high road there stands a house which is called 'Hemgard.' Perhaps you remember the two beautiful mountain ash trees by the reddish-brown palings, and the high gate, and the garden with the beautiful barberry bushes which are always the first to become green in spring, and which in summer are weighed down with their beautiful berries.

Behind the garden there is a hedge with tall aspens which rustle in the morning wind, behind the hedge is a road, behind the road is a wood, and behind the wood the wide world.

But on the other side of the garden there is a lake, and beyond the lake is a village, and all around stretch meadows and fields, now yellow, now green.

In the pretty house, which has white window-frames, a neat porch and clean steps, which are always strewn with finely-cut juniper leaves, Walter's parents live. His brother Frederick, his sister Lotta, old Lena, Jonas, Caro and Bravo, Putte and Murre, and Kuckeliku.

Caro lives in the dog house, Bravo in the stable, Putte with the stableman, Murre a little here and a little there, and Kuckeliku lives in the hen house, that is his kingdom.

Walter is six years old, and he must soon begin to go to school. He cannot read yet, but he can do many other things. He can turn cartwheels, stand on his head, ride see-saw, throw snowballs, play ball, crow like a cock, eat bread and butter and drink sour milk, tear his trousers, wear holes in his elbows, break the crockery in pieces, throw balls through the windowpanes, draw old men on important papers, walk over the flower-beds, and eat himself sick with gooseberries. For the rest he has a good heart but a bad memory, and forgets his father's and his mother's admonitions, and so often gets into trouble and meets with adventures, as you shall hear, but first of all I must tell you how brave he was and how he hunted wolves.

Once in the spring, a little before Midsummer, Walter heard that there were a great many wolves in the wood, and that pleased him. He was wonderfully brave when he was in the midst of his companions or at home with his brothers and sister, then he used often to say 'One wolf is nothing, there ought to be at least *four*.'

When he wrestled with Klas Bogenstrom or Frithiof Waderfelt and struck them in the back, he would say: 'That is what I shall do to a wolf!' and when he shot arrows at Jonas and they rattled against his sheepskin coat he would say 'That is how I should shoot you if you were a wolf!'

Indeed, some thought that the brave boy boasted a little; but one must indeed believe him since he said so himself. So Jonas and Lena used to say of him 'Look, there goes Walter, who shoots the wolves.' And other boys and girls would say: 'Look, there goes brave Walter who is brave enough to fight with four.'

There was no one so fully convinced of this as Walter himself, and one day he prepared himself for a real wolf hunt. He took with him his drum, which had holes in one end, since the time he had climbed up on it to reach a cluster of rowan berries, and his tin sabre, which was a

little broken because he had with incredible courage fought his way through a whole unfriendly army of gooseberry bushes.

He did not forget to arm himself quite to the teeth with his pop-gun, his bow, and his air-pistol. He had a burnt cork in his pocket to blacken his moustache, and a red cock's feather to put in his cap to make himself look fierce. He had besides in his trouser pocket a clasp-knife with a bone handle, to cut off the ears of the wolves as soon as he had killed them, for he thought it would be cruel to do that while they were still living.

It was such a good thing that Jonas was going with corn to the mill, for Walter got a seat on the load, while Caro ran barking beside them. As soon as they came to the wood Walter looked cautiously around him to see perchance there was a wolf in the bushes, and he did not omit to ask Jonas if wolves were afraid of a drum. 'Of course they are' (that is understood) said Jonas. Thereupon Walter began to beat his drum with all his might while they were going through the wood.

When they came to the mill Walter immediately asked if there had been any wolves in the neighbourhood lately.

'Alas! yes,' said the miller, 'last night the wolves have eaten our fattest ram there by the kiln not far from here.'

'Ah!' said Walter, 'do you think that there were many?'

'We don't know,' answered the miller.

'Oh, it is all the same,' said Walter. 'I only asked so that I should know if I should take Jonas with me.'

'I could manage very well alone with *three*, but if there were more, I might not have time to kill them all before they ran away.'

'In Walter's place I should go quite alone, it is more manly,' said Jonas.

'No, it is better for you to come, too,' said Walter. 'Perhaps there are many.'

'No, I have not time,' said Jonas, 'and besides there are sure not to be more than three. Walter can manage them very well alone.'

'Yes,' said Walter, 'certainly I could; but, you see, Jonas, it might happen that one of them might bite me in the back, and I should have more trouble in killing them. If I only knew that there were not more than two I should not mind, for then I should take one in each hand and give them a good shaking, like Susanna once shook me.'

'I certainly think that there will not be more than two,' said Jonas, 'there are never more than two when they slay children and rams; Walter can very well shake them without me.'

'But, you see Jonas,' said Walter, 'if there are two, it might still happen that one of them escapes and bites me in the leg, for you see I am not so strong in the left hand as in the right.'

You can very well come with me, and take a good stick in case there are really two. Look, if there is only one, I shall take him so with both my hands and throw him living on to his back, and he can kick as much as he likes, I shall hold him fast.'

'Now, when I really think over the thing,' said Jonas, 'I am almost sure there will not be more than one. What would two do with one ram? There will certainly not be more than one.'

'But you should come with me all the same, Jonas,' said Walter. 'You see I can very well manage one, but I am not quite accustomed to wolves yet, and he might tear holes in my new trousers.'

'Well, just listen,' said Jonas, 'I am beginning to think that Walter is not so brave as people say. First of all Walter would fight against four, and then against three, then two, and then one, and now Walter wants help with one. Such a thing must never be; what would people say? Perhaps they would think that Walter is a coward?'

'That's a lie,' said Walter, 'I am not at all frightened, but it is more amusing when there are two. I only want someone who will see how I strike the wolf and how the dust flies out of his skin.'

'Well, then, Walter can take the miller's little Lisa with him. She can sit on a stone and look on,' said Jonas.

'No, she would certainly be frightened,' said Walter, 'and how would it do for a girl to go wolf-hunting? Come with me, Jonas, and you shall have the skin, and I will be content with the ears and the tail.'

'No, thank you,' said Jonas, 'Walter can keep the skin for himself. Now I see quite well that he is frightened. Fie, shame on him!'

This touched Walter's pride very near. 'I shall show that I am not frightened,' he said; and so he took his drum, sabre, cock's feather, clasp-knife, pop-gun and air-pistol, and went off quite alone to the wood to hunt wolves.

It was a beautiful evening, and the birds were singing in all the branches. Walter went very slowly and cautiously. At every step he looked all round him to see if perchance there was anything lurking behind the stones. He quite thought something moved away there in the ditch. Perhaps it was a wolf. It is better for me to beat the drum a little before I go there, thought Walter.

Br-r-r, so he began to beat his drum. Then something moved again. Caw! caw! a crow flew up from the ditch. Walter immediately regained courage. 'It was well I took my drum with me,' he thought, and went straight on with courageous steps. Very soon he came quite close to the kiln, where the wolves had killed the ram. But the nearer he came the more dreadful he thought the kiln looked. It was so grey and old. Who knew how many wolves there might be hidden there? Perhaps the very ones which killed the ram were still sitting there in a corner. Yes, it was not at all safe here, and there were no other people to be seen in the

neighbourhood. It would be horrible to be eaten up here in the daylight, thought Walter to himself; and the more he thought about it the uglier and grayer the old kiln looked, and the more horrible and dreadful it seemed to become the food of wolves.

'Shall I go back and say that I struck one wolf and it escaped?' thought Walter. 'Fie!' said his conscience, 'Do you not remember that a lie is one of the worst sins, both in the sight of God and man? If you tell a lie to-day and say you struck a wolf, to-morrow surely it will eat you up.'

'No, I will go to the kiln,' thought Walter, and so he went. But he did not go quite near. He went only so near that he could see the ram's blood which coloured the grass red, and some tufts of wool which the wolves had torn from the back of the poor animal.

It looked so dreadful.

'I wonder what the ram thought when they ate him up,' thought Walter to himself; and just then a cold shiver ran through him from his collar right down to his boots.

'It is better for me to beat the drum,' he thought to himself again, and so he began to beat it. But it sounded horrid, and an echo came out from the kiln that seemed almost like the howl of a wolf. The drum-sticks stiffened in Walter's hands, and he thought now they are coming. . . . !

Yes, sure enough, just then a shaggy, reddish-brown wolf's head looked out from under the kiln!

What did Walter do now? Yes, the brave Walter who alone could manage four, threw his drum far away, took to his heels and ran, and ran as fast as he could back to the mill.

But, alas! the wolf ran after him. Walter looked back; the wolf was quicker than he and only a few steps behind him. Then Walter ran faster. But fear got the better of him, he neither heard nor saw anything more. He ran over sticks, stones and ditches; he lost drum-sticks, sabre, bow, and air-pistol, and in his terrible hurry he tripped over a tuft of grass. There he lay, and the wolf jumped on to him. . . .

It was a gruesome tale! Now you may well believe that it was all over with Walter and all his adventures. That would have been a pity. But do not be surprised if it was not quite so bad as that, for the wolf was quite a friendly one. He certainly jumped on to Walter, but he only shook his coat and rubbed his nose against his face; and Walter shrieked. Yes, he shrieked terribly!

Happily Jonas heard his cry of distress, for Walter was quite near the mill now, and he ran and helped him up.

'What has happened?' he asked. 'Why did Walter scream so terribly?'

'A wolf! A wolf!' cried Walter, and that was all he could say.

'Where is the wolf?' said Jonas, 'I don't see any wolf.'

'Take care, he is here, he has bitten me to death,' groaned Walter.

Then Jonas began to laugh; yes, he laughed so that he nearly burst his skin belt.

Well, well, was that the wolf? Was that the wolf which Walter was to take by the neck and shake and throw down on its back, no matter how much it struggled? Just look a little closer at him, he is your old friend, your own good old Caro. I quite expect he found a leg of the ram in the kiln. When Walter beat his drum, Caro crept out, and when Walter ran away, Caro ran after him, as he so often does when Walter wants to romp and play.

'Down, Caro, you ought to be rather ashamed to have put such a great hero to flight!'

Walter got up feeling very foolish.

'Down, Caro!' he said, both relieved and annoyed.

'It was only a dog, then if it had been a wolf I certainly should have killed him. . . .'

'If Walter would listen to my advice, and boast a little less, and do a little more,' said Jonas, consolingly. 'Walter is not a coward is he?'

'I! You shall see Jonas when we next meet a bear. You see I like so much better to fight with bears.'

'Indeed!' laughed Jonas. 'Are you at it again?'

'Dear Walter, remember that it is only cowards who boast; a really brave man never talks of his bravery.'

## 5. HOW THE TIGER GOT HIS STRIPES

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

Editor: Elsie Spicer Eells

Origin: Brazilian

Link: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/24714/24714-h/24714-h.htm#IV>

Once upon a time, ages and ages ago, so long ago that the tiger had no stripes upon his back and the rabbit still had his tail, there was a tiger who had a farm. The farm was very much overgrown with underbrush and the owner sought a workman to clear the ground for him to plant.

The tiger called all the beasts together and said to them when they had assembled, "I need a good workman at once to clear my farm of the underbrush. To the one of you who will do this work I offer an ox in payment."

The monkey was the first one to step forward and apply for the position. The tiger tried him for a little while but he was not a good workman at all. He did not work steadily enough to accomplish anything. The tiger discharged him very soon and he did not pay him.

Then the tiger hired the goat to do the work. The goat worked faithfully enough but he did not have the brains to do the work well. He would clear a little of the farm in one place and then he would go away and work on another part of it. He never finished anything neatly. The tiger discharged him very soon without paying him.

Next the tiger tried the armadillo. The armadillo was very strong and he did the work well. The trouble with him was that he had such an appetite. There were a great many ants about the place and the armadillo could never pass by a sweet tender juicy ant without stopping to eat it. It was lunch time all day long with him. The tiger discharged him and sent him away without paying him anything.

At last the rabbit applied for the position. The tiger laughed at him and said, "Why, little rabbit, you are too small to do the work. The monkey, the goat, and the armadillo have all failed to give satisfaction. Of course a little beast like you will fail too."

However, there were no other beasts who applied for the position so the tiger sent for the rabbit and told him that he would try him for a little while.

The rabbit worked faithfully and well, and soon he had cleared a large portion of the ground. The next day he worked just as well. The tiger thought that he had been very lucky to hire the rabbit. He got tired staying around to watch the rabbit work. The rabbit seemed to know just how to do the work anyway, without orders, so the tiger decided to go away on a hunting trip. He left his son to watch the rabbit.

After the tiger had gone away the rabbit said to the tiger's son, "The ox which your father is going to give me is marked with a white spot on his left ear and another on his right side, isn't he?"

"O, no," replied the tiger's son. "He is red all over with just a tiny white spot on his right ear."

The rabbit worked for a while longer and then he said, "The ox which your father is going to give me is kept by the river, isn't he?"

"Yes," replied the tiger's son.

The rabbit had made a plan to go and get the ox without waiting to finish his work. Just as he started off he saw the tiger returning. The tiger noticed that the rabbit had not worked so well when he was away. After that he stayed and watched the rabbit until the whole farm was cleared. Then the tiger gave the rabbit the ox as he had promised.

"You must kill this ox," he said to the rabbit, "in a place where there are neither flies nor mosquitoes."

The rabbit went away with the ox. After he had gone for some distance he thought he would kill him. He heard a cock, however, crowing in the distance and he knew that there must be a farm yard near. There would be flies of course. He went on farther and again he thought that he would kill the ox. The ground looked moist and damp and so did the leaves on the bushes. Since the rabbit thought there would be mosquitoes there he decided not to kill the ox. He went on and on and finally he came to a high place where there was a strong breeze blowing. "There are no mosquitoes here," he said to himself. "The place is so far removed from any habitation that there are no flies, either." He decided to kill the ox.

Just as he was ready to eat the ox, along came the tiger. "O, rabbit, you have been such a good friend of mine," said the tiger, "and now I am so very, very hungry that all my ribs show, as you yourself can see. Will you not be a good kind rabbit and give me a piece of your ox?"

The rabbit gave the tiger a piece of the ox. The tiger devoured it in the twinkling of an eye. Then he leaned back and said, "Is that all you are going to give me to eat?"

The tiger looked so big and savage that the rabbit did not dare refuse to give him any more of the ox. The tiger ate and ate and ate until he had devoured that entire ox. The rabbit had been able to get only a tiny morsel of it. He was very, very angry at the tiger.

One day not long after the rabbit went to a place not far from the tiger's house and began cutting down big staves of wood. The tiger soon happened along and asked him what he was doing.

"I'm getting ready to build a stockade around myself," replied the rabbit. "Haven't you heard the orders?" The tiger said that he hadn't heard any orders.

"That is very strange," said the rabbit. "The order has gone forth that every beast shall fortify himself by building a stockade around himself. All the beasts are doing it."

The tiger became very much alarmed. "O, dear! O, dear! What shall I do," he cried. "I don't know how to build a stockade. I never could do it in the world. O, good rabbit! O, kind rabbit! You are such, a very good friend of mine. Couldn't you, as a great favour, because of our long friendship, build a stockade about me before you build one around yourself?"

The rabbit replied that he could not think of risking his own life by building the tiger's fortifications first. Finally, however, he consented to do it.

The rabbit cut down great quantities of long sharp sticks. He set them firmly in the ground about the tiger. He fastened others securely over the top until the tiger was completely shut in by strong bars. Then he went away and left the tiger.

The tiger waited and waited for something to happen to show him the need of the fortifications. Nothing at all happened.

He got very hungry and thirsty. After a while the monkey passed that way.

The tiger called out, "O, monkey, has the danger passed?"

The monkey did not know what danger the tiger meant, but he replied, "Yes."

Then the tiger said, "O, monkey, O, good, kind monkey, will you not please be so kind as to help me out of my stockade?"

"Let the one who got you in there help you out," replied the monkey and he went on his way.

Along came the goat and the tiger called out, "O, goat, has the danger passed?"

The goat did not know anything about any danger, but he replied, "Yes."

Then the tiger said, "O, goat, O, good kind goat, please be so kind as to help me out of my stockade."

"Let the one who got you in there help you out," replied the goat as he went on his way.

Along came the armadillo and the tiger called out, "O, armadillo, has the danger passed?"

The armadillo had not heard of any danger, but he replied that it had passed.

Then the tiger said, "O, armadillo, O, good, kind armadillo, you have always been such a good friend and neighbour. Please help me now to get out of my stockade."

"Let the one who got you in there help you out," replied the armadillo as he went on his way.

The tiger jumped and jumped with all his force at the top of the stockade, but he could not break through. He jumped and jumped with all his might at the front side of the stockade, but he could not break through. He thought that never in the world would he be able to break out. He rested for a little while and as he rested he thought. He thought how bright the sun was shining outside. He thought what good hunting there was in the jungle. He thought how cool the water was at the spring. Once more he jumped and jumped with all his might at the back side of the stockade. At last he broke through. He did not get through, however, without getting bad cuts on both his sides from the sharp edges of the staves. Until this day the tiger has stripes on both his sides.

## 6. THE WOLF AND THE FIVE LITTLE GOATS

Book: Mother's Nursery Tales

Author: Katherine Pyle

Origin: German

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/49001/49001-h/49001-h.htm#Page\\_174](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/49001/49001-h/49001-h.htm#Page_174)

There was once a mother goat who had five little kids, and these kids were so dear to her that nothing could have been dearer.

One day the mother goat was going to the forest to gather some wood for her fire. "Now, my little kids," said she, "you must be very careful while I am away. Bar the door behind me, and open it to nobody until I return. If the wicked wolf should get in he would certainly eat you."

The little kids promised they would be careful, and then their mother started out, and as soon as she had gone they barred the door behind her.

Now it so happened the old wolf was on the watch that day. He saw the mother goat trotting away toward the forest, and as soon as she was out of sight, he crept down to the house and knocked at the door—rap-tap-tap!

"Who is there?" called the little kids within.

"It is I, your mother, my dears," answered the wolf in his great rough voice. "Open the door and let me in."

But the kids were very clever little kids. "No, no," they cried. "You are not our mother. Our mother has a soft, sweet voice, and your voice is harsh and rough. You must be the wolf."

When the wolf heard this he was very angry. He battered and battered at the door, but they would not let him in. Then he turned and galloped away as fast as he could until he came to a dairy. There he stuck his head in at the window, and the woman had just finished churning her butter.

"Woman, woman," cried the wolf, "give me some butter. If you do not I will come in and upset your churn."

The woman was frightened. At once she gave him a great deal of butter—all he could eat.

The wolf swallowed it down, and then he ran back to the goat's house and knocked at the door—rat-tat-rat!

"Who is there?" asked the little goats within.

"Your mother, my dears," answered the wolf, and now his voice was very soft and smooth because of the butter he had swallowed.

"It *is* our mother," cried the little kids, and they were about to open the door, but the littlest kid of all, who was a very wise little kid, stopped them.

"Wait a bit," said he. "It sounds like our mother's voice, but before we open the door we had better be very, very sure it is not the wolf." Then he called through the door, "Put your paws up on the windowsill."

The wolf suspected nothing. He put his paws up on the windowsill, and as soon as the little kids saw them they knew at once that it was not their mother. "No, no," they cried, "you are not

our mother. Our mother has pretty white feet, and your feet are as black as soot. You must be the wolf.”

When the wolf heard this he was angrier than ever. He turned and galloped away again, and as he galloped he growled to himself and gnashed his teeth.

Presently he came to a baker’s shop, and there he stuck his head in at the window.

“Baker, baker, give me some dough,” he cried. “If you do not I will upset your pans and spoil your baking.”

The baker was frightened. At once he gave the wolf all the dough he wanted. The wolf seized it and ran away with it. He ran until he came to the goat’s house. There he sat down and covered his black feet all over with the white dough. Then he knocked at the door—rat-tat-tat!

“Who is there?” cried the little goats within.

“Your mother, my dears, come home again,” answered the wolf, in his smooth buttery voice.

“Put your paws up on the windowsill.”

The wolf put his paws up on the windowsill, and they looked quite white because of the dough. Then the little kids felt sure it was their mother, and they gladly opened the door.

“Woof!” In bounded the wicked wolf.

The little goats cried out and away they ran, some in one direction, and some in another. They hid themselves one behind the door, and one in the dough-trough, and one in the wash-tub, and one under the bed, and one (and he was the littlest one of all) hid in the tall clock-case. The wolf stood there glaring about him, and not as much as a tail of one of them could he see.

Then he began to hunt about for them, but he had to be in a hurry, because he was afraid the mother goat would come home again.

He found the kid behind the door, and he was in such a hurry he swallowed it whole without hurting it in the least. He found the one in the wash-tub, and he swallowed it whole, too. He found the one in the dough-trough, and it, too, he swallowed whole. He found the one under the bed and he swallowed it whole. The only one he did not find was the one in the clock-case, and he never thought of looking there. He hunted around and hunted around, and he was afraid to stay any longer for fear their mother would come home.

But now the old wolf felt very heavy and sleepy. He looked around for a place to go in order to lie down and rest.

Not far away were some rocks and trees that made a pleasant shadow. Here the wolf stretched himself out, and presently he was snoring so loudly that the leaves of the trees shook overhead.

Soon after this the mother goat came home. As soon as she saw the door of the house standing open, she knew at once that some misfortune had happened. She went in and looked about her. The furniture was all upset and scattered about the room. "Alas, alas! My dear little kids!" cried the mother. "The wicked wolf has certainly been here and eaten them all."

"He didn't eat me," said a little voice in the clock-case.

The mother goat opened the door of the clock-case and the littlest kid of all hopped out.

"But why were you in the clock-case? And what has happened?" asked the mother.

Then the little kid told her all about how the wolf had come there with his buttery voice and his whitened paws, and how they had let him in, and how he had swallowed all four of the other little kids, so that he alone was left.

After the mother goat had heard the story she went to the door and looked about. Then she heard the old wolf snoring where he lay asleep under the nut-trees in the shade of the rocks.

"That must be the old wolf snoring," said the mother goat, "and he cannot be far away. Do not make a noise, my little kid, but come with me."

The mother goat stole over to the heap of rocks, and the little kid followed her on tiptoes. She peeped and peered, and there lay the old wolf so fast asleep that nothing less than an earthquake would have wakened him.

"Now, my little kid," whispered the mother, "run straight home again as fast as you can, and fetch me my shears and a needle and some stout thread."

This the little kid did, and he ran so softly over the grass that not even a mouse could have heard him.

As soon as he returned the mother goat crept up to the old wolf, and with the sharp shears she slit his hide up just as though it had been a sack. Out popped one little kid, and out popped another little kid, and another, and another, and there they all were, just as safe and sound as though they had never been swallowed. And all this while the old wolf never stirred nor stopped snoring.

"And now, my little kids," whispered the mother, "do you each one of you bring me a big round stone, but be very quick and quiet, for your lives depend upon it."

So the little kids ran away, and hunted around, and each fetched her back a big round stone, and they were very quick and quiet about it, just as their mother had bade them be.

The old goat put the stones inside the wolf, where the little kids had been, and then she drew the hide together and sewed it up, using the stout, strong thread. After that she and the little kids hid themselves behind the rocks, and watched and waited.

Presently the old wolf yawned and opened his eyes. Then he got up and shook himself, and when he did so the stones inside him rattled together so that the goat and the little kids could hear them, where they hid behind the rocks.

“Oh, dear! Oh, dear me!” groaned the wolf;

“What rattles, what rattles against my poor bones?

Not little goats, I fear, but only big stones.”

Now what with the stones inside of him and the hot sun overhead the wolf grew very thirsty. Nearby was a deep well, with water almost up to the brink of it. The old wolf went to drink. He leaned over, and all the stones rolled up to his head and upset him. Plump! he went down into the water, and the stones carried him straight to the bottom. He could not swim at all, and so he was drowned.

But all the little kids ran out from behind the rocks and began to dance around the well.

“The old wolf is dead, A-hey! A-hey!

The old wolf is dead, A-hey!”

they sang, and the mother goat came and danced with them, they were all so delighted.

## 7. THE LITTLE BOY AND GIRL IN THE CLOUDS

Book: American Indian Fairy Tales

Author: W.T. Larned

Origin: Miwok

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45279/45279-h/45279-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0003](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45279/45279-h/45279-h.htm#link2H_4_0003)

In the days when all animals and men lived on friendly terms, when Coyote, the prairie wolf, was not a bad sort of fellow when you came to know him, and even the Mountain Lion would growl pleasantly and pass you the time of day—there lived in a beautiful valley a little boy and girl.

This valley was a lovely place to live in; never was such a playground anywhere on earth. It was like a great green carpet stretching for miles and miles, and when the wind blew upon the long grass it was like looking at the waves of the sea. Flowers of all colors bloomed in the beautiful valley, berries grew thick on the bushes, and birds filled the summer air with their songs.

Best of all, there was nothing whatever to fear. The children could wander at will—watching the gay butterflies, making friends with the squirrels and rabbits, or following the flight of the bee to some tree where his honey is stored.

As for the wild animals, it was all very different from what it is to-day, when they keep the poor things in cages, or coop them up in a little patch of ground behind a high fence. In the beautiful valley the animals ran free and happily, as they were meant to do. The Bear was a big, lazy, good-natured fellow, who lived on berries and wild honey in the summer, and in winter crept into his cavern in the rocks and slept there till the spring. The deer were not only gentle, but tame as sheep, and often came to crop the tender grass that grew where the two children were accustomed to play.

They loved all the animals, and the animals loved them; but perhaps their special favorites were Jack Rabbit and Antelope. Jack Rabbit had long legs, and long ears—almost as long as a mule's, and no animal of his size could jump so high. But of course he could not jump as high as Antelope—the name of a beautiful little deer, with short horns and slender legs, who could run like the wind.

Another thing that made the happy valley such a pleasant place to live in was the river that flowed through it. All the animals came from miles around to drink from its clear, cool waters, and to bathe in it on a hot summer day. One shallow pool seemed made especially for the little boy and girl. Their friend, the Beaver, with his flat tail like an oar and his feet webbed like a duck's, had taught them how to swim almost as soon as they had learned to walk; and to splash around in the pool on a warm afternoon was among their greatest pleasures.

One day in mid-summer the water was so pleasant that they remained in the pool much longer than usual, so that when at last they came out they were quite tired. And as they were a little chilled besides, they looked around for a good place where they could get dry and warm.

"Let's climb up on that big, flat rock, with the moss on it," said the little boy. "We've never done it before. It would be lots of fun."

So he clambered up the side of the rock, which was only a few feet high, and drew his sister up after him. Then they lay down to rest, and pretty soon, without intending it at all, they were fast asleep.

Nobody knows how it happened that exactly at this time the rock began to rise and grow. But it did happen, because there it is today, high and bare and steep, higher than the other hills in the valley. As the children slept, it rose and rose, inch by inch, foot by foot; by the next day it was taller than the tallest trees.

Meanwhile their father and mother were searching for them everywhere, but all in vain; nor was any trace of them to be found. No one had seen them climb up on the rock, and everyone concerned was too much excited to notice what had really happened to it. The parents wandered far and wide saying: "Antelope, have you seen our little boy and girl? Jack Rabbit, you must have seen our little boy and girl." But none of the animals had seen them.

At last they met Coyote, the cleverest of them all, trotting along the valley with his nose in the air; so they put the same question to him.

"No," said Coyote. "I have not seen them for a long time. But my nose was given me to smell with, and my brains were given me to think with. So who can tell but that I may help you?"

He trotted by their side, along the banks of the river, and pretty soon they came to the pool where the children had been in swimming. Coyote sniffed and sniffed. He ran around and around, with his nose to the ground; then he ran right up to the rock, put his forepaws up as high as he could reach, and sniffed again.

"H-m-m!" he grunted. "I cannot fly like the Eagle, and I cannot swim like the Beaver. But neither am I stupid like the Bear, nor ignorant like the Jack Rabbit. My nose has never deceived me yet; your little boy and girl must be up there on that rock."

"But how could they get there?" asked the astonished parents. For the rock was now so high that the top was lost to sight in the clouds.

"That is not the question," said Coyote severely, unwilling to admit there was anything he did not know. "That is not the question at all. Anybody could ask that. The only question worth asking is: How are we to get them down again?"

So they called all the animals together, to talk it over and see what could be done. Then the Bear said: "If I could only put my arms around the rock I could climb it. But it is much too big for that." And the Fox said: "If it were only a deep hole, instead of a high hill, I would be able to help you." And the Beaver said: "If it were just a place out in the water I could swim to, I'd show you very quickly."

But as this kind of talk did not take them very far, they decided to try what jumping would do. There seemed to be no other way; and as each one was anxious to do his part, the smallest one was permitted to make the first attempt. So the Mouse made a funny little hop, about as high as your hand. The Squirrel went a little higher. Jack Rabbit made the highest jump of his life, and almost broke his back, to no purpose. Antelope gave a great bound in the air, but managed to light on his feet again without doing himself any harm. Finally, the Mountain Lion went a long way off, to get a good start, ran toward the rock with great leaps, sprang straight up—and fell and rolled over on his back. He had made a higher jump than any of them; but it was not nearly high enough.

No one knew what to do next. It seemed as if the little boy and girl must be left sleeping on forever, up among the clouds. Suddenly they heard a tiny voice saying:

"Perhaps if you let *me* try, I might *climb* up the rock." They all looked around in surprise, wondering who it was that spoke; and at first they could see nobody, and thought that Coyote must be playing a trick on them. But Coyote was as much surprised as anyone.

"Wait a minute. I'm coming as fast as I can," said the tiny voice again. Then a Measuring Worm crawled out of the grass—a funny little worm that made its way along by hunching up its back and drawing itself ahead an inch at a time.

"Ho, ho!" said the Mountain Lion, from deep down in his throat. He always spoke that way when his dignity was offended. "Ho, ho! Did you ever hear of such impudence? If I, a lion, have failed, how can a miserable little crawling worm like you hope to succeed; just tell me that!"

"It's downright silly," said Jack Rabbit. "That's what it is. I never heard of such conceit."

However, after much talk, they agreed at last that it could do no harm to let him try. So the Measuring Worm made his way slowly to the rock, and began to climb. In a few minutes he was higher than Jack Rabbit had jumped. Soon he was farther up than the lion had been able to leap: before long he had climbed out of sight.

It took the Measuring Worm a whole month, climbing day and night, to reach the top of the magic rock. When he got there he awakened the little boy and girl, who were much surprised to see where they were, and guided them safely down along a path no one else knew anything about. Thus, by patience and perseverance, the weak little creature was able to do something that the Bear, for all his size, and the Lion, for all his strength, could never have done at all. That was a long time ago; today there are no more lions or bears in the valley, and no one ever thinks of them. But everybody thinks of the Measuring Worm, because the Big Rock is still there, and the Indians have named it after him. Tu-tok-a-nu-la, they call it, a big name indeed for a little fellow, yet by no means too big when you come to think of the big, brave thing he did.

## 8. HOW THE ELEPHANT AND THE WHALE WERE TRICKED

Book: Fairy Tales From Many Lands

Author: Katherine Pyle

Origin: Louisiana

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/47178/47178-h/47178-h.htm#Page\\_247](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/47178/47178-h/47178-h.htm#Page_247)

One time the rabbit and the ground hog went out to walk together. The rabbit wore his blue coat with brass buttons, for it was a fine day, and cocked his hat gayly over one eye, but the ground hog was content with his old fur overcoat, and galoshes to keep his feet dry.

They walked along until at last they came to the seashore, and there they saw the elephant standing and talking to the whale. "Look!" said the ground hog; "that is a wonderful sight, for I reckon those are the two biggest animals in all the world."

"Let's go close and hear what they're talking about," said the rabbit.

"No, no," answered the ground hog. "They might not like it, and if I'm going to be impolite I'd rather be impolite to animals that are more my own size."

However, the rabbit was determined to know what two such big beasts talked to each other about, so he stole up close to them unnoticed, and hid back of a clump of grass to listen.

"Of all the beasts that walk the earth not one is as great as I am," boasted the elephant. "The ground trembles at my tread; the trees shake and the other animals are afraid and hide lest I should be angry with them."

“True, brother,” answered the whale. “On the other hand, there is not a fish in the sea that compares to me in size. I swallow hundreds at one gulp, and when I lash the waters with my tail it is like a storm.”

“And that is true, too,” answered the elephant. “Brother, how would it be if we proclaimed ourselves kings of the earth and sea, and made all of the other fish and animals our subjects?”

“That would be a fine scheme,” the whale agreed, “and then we would make them pay us tribute.”

The elephant was pleased with that idea, too. “Good! good!” he trumpeted. “That is what we will do.”

So the two beasts talked together, each one praising himself and the other, and saying how great they were.

The rabbit listened until he could bear it no longer, and then he stole back to the ground hog, his whiskers trembling with rage.

“Well, what were they talking about?” asked the ground hog.

“All their talk was of how great and powerful they were,” answered the rabbit, “and they say they will declare themselves kings and make us pay tribute. But I will show them a thing or two before that.”

“What will you show them?” asked the other.

“I have thought of a trick to play upon them, and it is a trick that will make them feel so silly they will forget all about making kings of themselves.”

The ground hog begged and entreated the rabbit not to think of such a thing. The whale and the elephant were too big and powerful for a little rabbit to try to play a trick upon them, and if he did, they would surely punish him. But the rabbit would not listen to him, and at last the ground hog rose and buttoned up his overcoat. “Well, I’m not going to get *myself* into trouble,” he said. “I’m going home, I am, to look through the closets and get some tribute ready for them.” So home he ambled, and did not mind one bit when the rabbit called after him that he was a coward.

But the rabbit made haste to the house of a neighbor to borrow a coil of rope he knew of, for that was the first thing he needed for his trick.

He got the rope and came back and hid in some bushes by the roadside. Presently he saw the elephant come swinging up the road. He had finished his talk with the whale and was now on his way home. He looked very pleased with himself, and was smiling and idly breaking off the little trees with his trunk as he came.

The rabbit sprang out of the bushes with the coil of rope over his arm, and ran toward the elephant, shouting at the top of his lungs, “Help, help!”

The elephant stopped and looked at him with surprise. "What is the matter, Rabbit?" he asked.

"My cow! My cow has fallen into the quicksands down by the sea, and no one can get her out. Oh, dear good kind Master Elephant, if you would but help me! You are so great and strong and wonderful that it would be nothing at all for you to pull her out."

The elephant was very much pleased with these compliments to his strength. "Yes, I will help you," he said good-naturedly. "I am indeed very great and powerful. Come! Show me where she is."

"No need of that," answered the sly rabbit. "Do you stand here and hold this end of the rope, and I will run and tie the other end around her horns. When all is ready I will beat a drum. As soon as you hear that begin to pull and you will have her out in a twinkling."

The elephant agreed to do this; he took hold of the end of the rope and stood there, waiting and thinking how strong he was, and how the animals were obliged to come to him when they needed help.

Meanwhile the rabbit ran down to the seashore with the other end of the rope. The whale was still there resting on the sand-bar, and thinking how great and powerful *he* was.

"Help! help!" cried the rabbit as soon as he was near enough for the whale to hear him.

The great creature turned, and looked at him lazily. "What is the matter, Rabbit?" he asked.

"Oh, dear good Master Whale, I am in great trouble. My cow is stuck in a marsh and no one on land is powerful enough to pull her out. But you are so strong and wonderful that it would mean nothing to you to get her out for me."

The whale was pleased at these words, but he said, "I am quite willing to help you, but I do not see how I can do so. I cannot leave the sea nor travel on dry land."

"No need of that," answered the rabbit. "I have tied the other end of this rope around her horns. If you will but take hold of this end you can pull her out in a twinkling."

The good-natured whale was very ready to do this. "I must not pull too hard," he said, "for so great is my strength that I might not only jerk her out of the marsh but all the way into the sea so that she would be drowned."

"Yes, you must be careful about that," answered the rabbit, and then he ran up into the bushes where he had hidden a drum and beat it loudly.

As soon as the elephant heard the drum he began to pull on the rope. At first he did not pull hard, for he thought it was an easy task he had on hand. But the whale, holding the other end, started to swim out to sea, and the elephant found himself pulled down toward the shore. He was very much surprised, but he tightened his hold and began to use his strength.

And now it was the turn of the whale to be dragged toward the shore. "This will never do," he thought to himself, and he beat the waters, and swam with all his might, and the elephant began to lose ground.

So the two creatures strove together. First one was dragged along and then the other. They thought they had never known of such a strong cow before. But the rabbit up in the bushes laughed and laughed until he thought his sides would split. He rolled upon the ground and the tears ran down his furry cheeks, and still, the more the huge beasts strove and grunted, the harder he laughed.

At last the great elephant put forth all his strength. He dug his feet into the solid ground and braced himself. The whale in the sea had nothing to brace itself against, and so at last it was pulled up on the shore. Then the elephant turned to see what sort of a cow it was that weighed so much, and there it was no cow at all, but his friend, the whale, who lay there gasping and panting on the beach.

The elephant ran down to him, and the first thing he did was to push the whale back into the water again. Then they began to talk and explain to each other how it all happened. When they found what a trick the rabbit put upon them they were furiously angry, and consulted as to how they could best punish him.

"I," said the whale, "shall send word to all the fish in streams and rivers, and tell them he must not be allowed to drink one drop of water."

"And I," said the elephant, "will send word to all the creatures on the earth that he shall not be allowed to eat so much as one blade of grass."

And now the rabbit was in a bad way, indeed. If he went to the river to get a drink the fish and lobsters gathered in a crowd and drove him away. If he tried to eat, some animal or other was there to prevent him. It seemed as though he must soon die of hunger and thirst. His trick was like to cost him dear.

He was hopping along a path very sadly one day, with his ears drooping and all the spirit gone out of him, when he came across a dead deer that had been torn by the dogs. The rabbit stopped and scratched his ear and thought a bit. Then he set to work and very neatly stripped off the deerskin and drew it over his own body. Then he set out for the main road, limping and uttering cries of pain as he went.

Presently whom should he see but the elephant swinging along the road toward him.

The rabbit cried out still louder, and made out as though he could scarcely drag himself along for his wounds.

"What has happened to you, friend Deer? And who has wounded you in this way?" asked the elephant.

"Oh, that Rabbit! That Rabbit! And I was only doing as you told me."

“The Rabbit?”

“Yes; oh, indeed good Master Elephant, he is very terrible. He came to eat in the woods where I was and I tried to drive him away, because you had told us all to do that, but as soon as I spoke to him, he threw me down and beat me and almost tore me to pieces, as you see.”

“That is strange,” said the elephant. “I did not know he was as strong as that.”

“Oh, yes; he is small, but he knows much magic. No one could stand against him, not even you. And he is very angry. He says he is going to tear you to pieces too, and the whale, and he only left me alive so that I might come and tell you.”

“But he could not kill *me!*” cried the elephant.

“His magic is very strong. I am afraid, now that he is angry, that he will kill all the animals in the world, and keep it for himself.”

Now the elephant really began to be afraid. “Oh, well, it was only a joke that the whale and I played on him. Go back and tell him so. Tell him it was only a joke, and that I am not angry with him now. Then tell him he may eat wherever he pleases, for I would not want to annoy such a little animal as he is.”

So the rabbit, still speaking like the deer, said he would, and, moaning and limping, he turned and crawled back the way he had come. But when he was safely out of sight, he fell down in the dust of the road and laughed and laughed till he was sick with laughing.

## 9. THE GOLDEN BLACKBIRD

Book: The Green Fairy Book

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: French

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7277/7277-h/7277-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0014](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7277/7277-h/7277-h.htm#link2H_4_0014)

Once upon a time there was a great lord who had three sons. He fell very ill, sent for doctors of every kind, even bonesetters, but they, none of them, could find out what was the matter with him, or even give him any relief. At last there came a foreign doctor, who declared that the Golden Blackbird alone could cure the sick man.

So the old lord despatched his eldest son to look for the wonderful bird, and promised him great riches if he managed to find it and bring it back.

The young man began his journey, and soon arrived at a place where four roads met. He did not know which to choose, and tossed his cap in the air, determining that the direction of its fall should decide him. After travelling for two or three days, he grew tired of walking without

knowing where or for how long, and he stopped at an inn which was filled with merrymakers and ordered something to eat and drink.

'My faith,' said he, 'it is sheer folly to waste more time hunting for this bird. My father is old, and if he dies I shall inherit his goods.'

The old man, after waiting patiently for some time, sent his second son to seek the Golden Blackbird. The youth took the same direction as his brother, and when he came to the cross roads, he too tossed up which road he should take. The cap fell in the same place as before, and he walked on till he came to the spot where his brother had halted. The latter, who was leaning out of the window of the inn, called to him to stay where he was and amuse himself.

'You are right,' replied the youth. 'Who knows if I should ever find the Golden Blackbird, even if I sought the whole world through for it. At the worst, if the old man dies, we shall have his property.'

He entered the inn and the two brothers made merry and feasted, till very soon their money was all spent. They even owed something to their landlord, who kept them as hostages till they could pay their debts.

The youngest son set forth in his turn, and he arrived at the place where his brothers were still prisoners. They called to him to stop, and did all they could to prevent his going further.

'No,' he replied, 'my father trusted me, and I will go all over the world till I find the Golden Blackbird.'

'Bah,' said his brothers, 'you will never succeed any better than we did. Let him die if he wants to; we will divide the property.'

As he went his way he met a little hare, who stopped to look at him, and asked:

'Where are you going, my friend?'

'I really don't quite know,' answered he. 'My father is ill, and he cannot be cured unless I bring him back the Golden Blackbird. It is a long time since I set out, but no one can tell me where to find it.'

'Ah,' said the hare, 'you have a long way to go yet. You will have to walk at least seven hundred miles before you get to it.'

'And how am I to travel such a distance?'

'Mount on my back,' said the little hare, 'and I will conduct you.'

The young man obeyed: at each bound the little hare went seven miles, and it was not long before they reached a castle that was as large and beautiful as a castle could be.

'The Golden Blackbird is in a little cabin near by,' said the little hare, 'and you will easily find it. It lives in a little cage, with another cage beside it made all of gold. But whatever you do, be sure not to put it in the beautiful cage, or everybody in the castle will know that you have stolen it.'

The youth found the Golden Blackbird standing on a wooden perch, but as stiff and rigid as if he was dead. And beside the beautiful cage was the cage of gold.

'Perhaps he would revive if I were to put him in that lovely cage,' thought the youth.

The moment that Golden Bird had touched the bars of the splendid cage he awoke, and began to whistle, so that all the servants of the castle ran to see what was the matter, saying that he was a thief and must be put in prison.

'No,' he answered, 'I am not a thief. If I have taken the Golden Blackbird, it is only that it may cure my father, who is ill, and I have travelled more than seven hundred miles in order to find it.'

'Well,' they replied, 'we will let you go, and will even give you the Golden Bird, if you are able to bring us the Porcelain Maiden.'

The youth departed, weeping, and met the little hare, who was munching wild thyme.

'What are you crying for, my friend?' asked the hare.

'It is because,' he answered, 'the castle people will not allow me to carry off the Golden Blackbird without giving them the Porcelain Maiden in exchange.'

'You have not followed my advice,' said the little hare. 'And you have put the Golden Bird into the fine cage.'

'Alas! yes!'

'Don't despair! the Porcelain Maiden is a young girl, beautiful as Venus, who dwells two hundred miles from here. Jump on my back and I will take you there.'

The little hare, who took seven miles in a stride, was there in no time at all, and he stopped on the borders of a lake.

'The Porcelain Maiden,' said the hare to the youth, 'will come here to bathe with her friends, while I just eat a mouthful of thyme to refresh me. When she is in the lake, be sure you hide her clothes, which are of dazzling whiteness, and do not give them back to her unless she consents to follow you.'

The little hare left him, and almost immediately the Porcelain Maiden arrived with her friends. She undressed herself and got into the water. Then the young man glided up noiselessly and laid hold of her clothes, which he hid under a rock at some distance.

When the Porcelain Maiden was tired of playing in the water she came out to dress herself, but, though she hunted for her clothes high and low, she could find them nowhere. Her friends helped her in the search, but, seeing at last that it was of no use, they left her, alone on the bank, weeping bitterly.

'Why do you cry?' said the young man, approaching her.

'Alas!' answered she, 'while I was bathing someone stole my clothes, and my friends have abandoned me.'

'I will find your clothes if you will only come with me.'

And the Porcelain Maiden agreed to follow him, and after having given up her clothes, the young man bought a small horse for her, which went like the wind. The little hare brought them both back to seek for the Golden Blackbird, and when they drew near to the castle where it lived the little hero said to the young man:

'Now, do be a little sharper than you were before, and you will manage to carry off both the Golden Blackbird and the Porcelain Maiden. Take the golden cage in one hand, and leave the bird in the old cage where he is, and bring that away too.'

The little hare then vanished; the youth did as he was bid, and the castle servants never noticed that he was carrying off the Golden Bird. When he reached the inn where his brothers were detained, he delivered them by paying their debt. They set out all together, but as the two elder brothers were jealous of the success of the youngest, they took the opportunity as they were passing by the shores of a lake to throw themselves upon him, seize the Golden Bird, and fling him in the water. Then they continued their journey, taking with them the Porcelain Maiden, in the firm belief that their brother was drowned. But, happily, he had snatched in falling at a tuft of rushes and called loudly for help. The little hare came running to him, and said 'Take hold of my leg and pull yourself out of the water.'

When he was safe on shore the little hare said to him:

'Now this is what you have to do: dress yourself like a Breton seeking a place as stable-boy, and go and offer your services to your father. Once there, you will easily be able to make him understand the truth.'

The young man did as the little hare bade him, and he went to his father's castle and enquired if they were not in want of a stable-boy.

'Yes,' replied his father, 'very much indeed. But it is not an easy place. There is a little horse in the stable which will not let anyone go near it, and it has already kicked to death several people who have tried to groom it.'

'I will undertake to groom it,' said the youth. 'I never saw the horse I was afraid of yet.' The little horse allowed itself to be rubbed down without a toss of its head and without a kick.

'Good gracious!' exclaimed the master; 'how is it that he lets you touch him, when no one else can go near him?'

'Perhaps he knows me,' answered the stable-boy.

Two or three days later the master said to him: 'The Porcelain Maiden is here: but, though she is as lovely as the dawn, she is so wicked that she scratches everyone that approaches her. Try if she will accept your services.'

When the youth entered the room where she was, the Golden Blackbird broke forth into a joyful song, and the Porcelain Maiden sang too, and jumped for joy.

'Good gracious!' cried the master. 'The Porcelain Maiden and the Golden Blackbird know you too?'

'Yes,' replied the youth, 'and the Porcelain Maiden can tell you the whole truth, if she only will.'

Then she told all that had happened, and how she had consented to follow the young man who had captured the Golden Blackbird.

'Yes,' added the youth, 'I delivered my brothers, who were kept prisoners in an inn, and, as a reward, they threw me into a lake. So I disguised myself and came here, in order to prove the truth to you.'

So the old lord embraced his son, and promised that he should inherit all his possessions, and he put to death the two elder ones, who had deceived him and had tried to slay their own brother.

The young man married the Porcelain Maiden, and had a splendid wedding-feast.

## 10. SHIN-GE-BIS FOOLS THE NORTH WIND

Book: American Indian Fairy Tales

Editor: W.T. Larned

Origin: Ojibwe

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45279/45279-h/45279-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0002](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45279/45279-h/45279-h.htm#link2H_4_0002)

Long, long ago, in the time when only a few people lived upon the earth, there dwelt in the North a tribe of fishermen. Now, the best fish were to be found in the summer season, far up in the frozen places where no one could live in the winter at all. For the King of this Land of Ice was a fierce old man called Ka-bib-on-okka by the Indians—meaning in our language, the North Wind.

Though the Land of Ice stretched across the top of the world for thousands and thousands of miles, Ka-bib-on-okka was not satisfied. If he could have had his way there would have been no grass or green trees anywhere; all the world would have been white from one year's end to another, all the rivers frozen tight, and all the country covered with snow and ice. .

Luckily there was a limit to his power. Strong and fierce as he was, he was no match at all for Sha-won-dasee, the South Wind, whose home was in the pleasant land of the sun-flower. Where Sha-won-dasee dwelt it was always summer. When he breathed upon the land, violets appeared in the woods, the wild rose bloomed on the yellow prairie, and the cooing dove called musically to his mate. It was he who caused the melons to grow, and the purple grapes; it was he whose warm breath ripened the corn in the fields, clothed the forests in green, and made the earth all glad and beautiful. Then, as the summer days grew shorter in the North, Sha-won-dasee would climb to the top of a hill, fill his great pipe, and sit there—dreaming and smoking. Hour after hour he sat and smoked; and the smoke, rising in the form of a vapor, filled the air with a soft haze until the hills and lakes seemed like the hills and lakes of dreamland. Not a breath of wind, not a cloud in the sky; a great peace and stillness over all. Nowhere else in the world was there anything so wonderful. It was Indian Summer.

Now it was that the fishermen who set their nets in the North worked hard and fast, knowing the time was at hand when the South Wind would fall asleep, and fierce old Ka-bib-on-okka would swoop down upon them and drive them away. Sure enough! One morning a thin film of ice covered the water where they set their nets; a heavy frost sparkled in the sun on the bark roof of their huts.

That was sufficient warning. The ice grew thicker, the snow fell in big, feathery flakes. Coyote, the prairie wolf, trotted by in his shaggy white winter coat. Already they could hear a muttering and a moaning in the distance.

"Ka-bib-on-okka is coming!" cried the fishermen. "Ka-bib-on-okka will soon be here. It is time for us to go."

But Shin-ge-bis, the diver, only laughed.

Shin-ge-bis was always laughing. He laughed when he caught a big fish, and he laughed when he caught none at all. Nothing could dampen his spirits.

"The fishing is still good," he said to his comrades. "I can cut a hole in the ice, and fish with a line instead of a net. What do I care for old Ka-bib-on-okka?"

They looked at him with amazement. It was true that Shin-ge-bis had certain magic powers, and could change himself into a duck. They had seen him do it; and that is why he came to be called the "diver." But how would this enable him to brave the anger of the terrible North Wind?

"You had better come with us," they said. "Ka-bib-on-okka is much stronger than you. The biggest trees of the forest bend before his wrath. The swiftest river that runs freezes at his touch. Unless you can turn yourself into a bear, or a fish, you will have no chance at all."

But Shin-ge-bis only laughed the louder.

"My fur coat lent me by Brother Beaver and my mittens borrowed from Cousin Muskrat will protect me in the daytime," he said, "and inside my wigwam is a pile of big logs. Let Ka-bib-on-okka come in by my fire if he dares."

So the fishermen took their leave rather sadly; for the laughing Shin-ge-bis was a favorite with them, and, the truth is, they never expected to see him again.

When they were gone, Shin-ge-bis set about his work in his own way. First of all he made sure that he had plenty of dry bark and twigs and pine-needles, to make the fire blaze up when he returned to his wigwam in the evening. The snow by this time was pretty deep, but it froze so hard on top that the sun did not melt it, and he could walk on the surface without sinking in at all. As for fish, he well knew how to catch them through the holes he made in the ice; and at night he would go tramping home, trailing a long string of them behind him, and singing a song he had made up himself:

"Ka-bib-on-okka, ancient man,  
Come and scare me if you can.  
Big and blustery though you be,  
You are mortal just like me!"

It was thus that Ka-bib-on-okka found him, plodding along late one afternoon across the snow.

"Whoo, whoo!" cried the North Wind. "What impudent, two-legged creature is this who dares to linger here long after the wild goose and the heron have winged their way to the south? We

shall see who is master in the Land of Ice. This very night I will force my way into his wigwam, put his fire out, and scatter the-ashes all around. Whoo, whoo!"

Night came; Shin-ge-bis sat in his wigwam by the blazing fire. And such a fire! Each backlog was so big it would last for a moon. That was the way the Indians, who had no clocks or watches, counted time; instead of weeks or months, they would say "a moon"—the length of time from one new moon to another.

Shin-ge-bis had been cooking a fish, a fine, fresh fish caught that very day. Broiled over the coals, it was a tender and savory dish; and Shin-ge-bis smacked his lips, and rubbed his hands with pleasure. He had tramped many miles that day; so it was a pleasant thing to sit there by the roaring fire and toast his shins. How foolish, he thought, his comrades had been to leave a place where fish was so plentiful, so early in the winter.

"They think that Ka-bib-on-okka is a kind of magician," he was saying to himself, "and that no one can resist him. It's my own opinion that he's a man, just like myself. It's true that I can't stand the cold as he does; but then, neither can he stand the heat as I do."

This thought amused him so that he began to laugh and sing:

"Ka-bib-on-okka, frosty man,  
                   Try to freeze me if you can.  
 Though you blow until you tire,  
                   I am safe beside my fire!"

He was in such a high good humor that he scarcely noticed a sudden uproar that began without. The snow came thick and fast; as it fell it was caught up again like so much powder and blown against the wigwam, where it lay in huge drifts. But instead of making it colder inside, it was really like a thick blanket that kept the air out.

Ka-bib-on-okka soon discovered his mistake, and it made him furious. Down the smoke-vent he shouted; and his voice was so wild and terrible that it might have frightened an ordinary man. But Shin-ge-bis only laughed. It was so quiet in that great, silent country that he rather enjoyed a little noise.

"Ho, ho!" he shouted back. "How are you, Ka-bib-on-okka? If you are not careful you will burst your cheeks."

Then the wigwam shook with the force of the blast, and the curtain of buffalo hide that formed the doorway flapped and rattled, and rattled and flapped.

"Come on in, Ka-bib-on-okka!" called Shin-ge-bis merrily. "Come on in and warm yourself. It must be bitter cold outside."

At these jeering words, Ka-bib-on-okka hurled himself against the curtain, breaking one of the buckskin thongs; and made his way inside. Oh, what an icy breath!—so icy that it filled the hot wigwam like a fog.

Shin-ge-bis pretended not to notice. Still singing, he rose to his feet, and threw on another log. It was a fat log of pine, and it burned so hard and gave out so much heat that he had to sit a little distance away. From the corner of his eye he watched Ka-bib-on-okka; and what he saw made him laugh again. The perspiration was pouring from his forehead; the snow and icicles in his flowing hair quickly disappeared. Just as a snowman made by children melts in the warm sun of March, so the fierce old North Wind began to thaw! There could be no doubt of it; Ka-bib-on-okka, the terrible, was melting! His nose and ears became smaller, his body began to shrink. If he remained where he was much longer, the King of the Land of Ice would be nothing better than a puddle.

"Come on up to the fire," said Shin-ge-bis cruelly. "You must be chilled to the bone. Come up closer, and warm your hands and feet."

But the North Wind had fled, even faster than he came, through the doorway.

Once outside, the cold air revived him, and all his anger returned. As he had not been able to freeze Shin-ge-bis, he spent his rage on everything in his path. Under his tread the snow took on a crust; the brittle branches of the trees snapped as he blew and snorted; the prowling fox hurried to his hole; and the wandering coyote sought the first shelter at hand.

Once more he made his way to the wigwam of Shin-ge-bis, and shouted down the flue. "Come out," he called. "Come out, if you dare, and wrestle with me here in the snow. We'll soon see who's master then!"

Shin-ge-bis thought it over. "The fire must have weakened him," he said to himself. "And my own body is warm. I believe I can overpower him. Then he will not annoy me anymore, and I can stay here as long as I please."

Out of the wigwam he rushed, and Ka-bib-on-okka came to meet him. Then a great struggle took place. Over and over on the hard snow they rolled, locked in one another's arms.

All night long they wrestled; and the foxes crept out of their holes, sitting at a safe distance in a circle, watching the wrestlers. The effort he put forth kept the blood warm in the body of Shin-ge-bis. He could feel the North Wind growing weaker and weaker; his icy breath was no longer a blast, but only a feeble sigh.

At last, as the sun rose in the east, the wrestlers stood apart, panting. Ka-bib-on-okka was conquered. With a despairing wail, he turned and sped away. Far, far to the North he sped, even to the land of the White Rabbit; and as he went, the laughter of Shin-ge-bis rang out and followed him. Cheerfulness and courage can overcome even the North Wind.

## 11. LITTLE ONE EYE, LITTLE TWO EYES AND LITTLE THREE EYES

Book: The Book of Fables and Folk Stories

Editor: Horace E. Scudder

Origin: German

Link: [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45384/45384-h/45384-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0007](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45384/45384-h/45384-h.htm#link2H_4_0007)

There was once a woman who had three daughters. The eldest was called Little One Eye, because she had only one eye in the middle of her forehead. The second was called Little Two Eyes, because she had two eyes like other people. The youngest was called Little Three Eyes, because she had three eyes; the third eye was in the middle of her forehead.

Because Little Two Eyes looked like other people, her sisters and her mother could not bear her. They said:—

“You have two eyes and are no better than anybody else. You do not belong to us.” They knocked her about, and gave her shabby clothes, and fed her with food left over from their meals.

One day Little Two Eyes was sent into the fields to look after the goat. She was hungry, because her sisters had given her so little to eat, and she sat down and began to cry. She cried so hard that a little stream of tears ran out of each eye. All at once a wise woman stood near her, and asked:—

“Little Two Eyes, why do you cry?” Little Two Eyes said:—

“Have I not need to cry? Because I have two eyes, like other people, my sisters and my mother cannot bear me. They knock me about and they give me shabby clothes. They feed me only with the food left over from their table. To-day they have given me so little that I am very hungry.”

The wise woman said:—

“Little Two Eyes, dry your eyes, and I will tell you what to do. Only say to your goat: ‘Little goat, bleat; little table, rise,’ and a table will stand before you, covered with food. Eat as much as you like. When you have had all you want, only say: ‘Little goat, bleat; little table, away,’ and it will be gone.” Then the wise woman disappeared. Little Two Eyes thought: “I must try at once, for I am too hungry to wait.” So she said:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, rise,” and there stood before her a little table covered with a white cloth. On it were laid a plate, knife and fork, and silver spoon. The nicest food was on the plate, smoking hot. Then Little Two Eyes began to eat, and found the food very good. When she had had enough, she said:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, away.” In an instant the table was gone.

“That is a fine way to keep house,” thought Little Two Eyes.

At the end of the day Little Two Eyes drove her goat home. She found a dish with some food in it. Her sisters had put it aside for her, but she did not taste it. She did not need it.

The next day she went out again with her goat, and did not take the few crusts which her sisters put aside for her. This went on for several days. At last her sisters said to each other:—

“All is not right with Little Two Eyes. She always leaves her food. She used to eat all that was given her. She must have found some other way to be fed.”

They meant to find out what Little Two Eyes did. So the next time that Little Two Eyes set out, Little One Eye came to her and said:—

“I will go with you into the field, and see that the goat is well taken care of, and feeds in the best pasture.” But Little Two Eyes saw what Little One Eye had in her mind. So she drove the goat into the long grass, and said:—

“Come, Little One Eye, we will sit down and I will sing to you.” Little One Eye sat down. She was tired after her long walk in the hot sun, and Little Two Eyes began to sing:—

“Are you awake, Little One Eye? Are you asleep, Little One Eye? Are you awake, Little One Eye? Are you asleep, Little One Eye? Are you awake? Are you asleep? Awake? Asleep?” By this time Little One Eye had shut her one eye and was fast asleep. When Little Two Eyes saw this, she said softly:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, rise;” and she sat at the table and ate and drank till she had had enough. Then she said as before:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, away,” and in a twinkling all was gone.

Little Two Eyes now awoke Little One Eye, and said:—

“Little One Eye, why do you not watch? You have been asleep, and the goat could have run all over the world. Come! let us go home.” So home they went, and Little Two Eyes again did not touch the dish. The others asked Little One Eye what Little Two Eyes did in the field. But she could only say:—

“Oh, I fell asleep out there.”

The next day, the mother said to Little Three Eyes:—

“This time *you* must go with Little Two Eyes, and see if any one brings her food and drink.” Then Little Three Eyes said to Little Two Eyes:

“I will go with you into the field, and see that the goat is well taken care of, and feeds in the best pasture.” But Little Two Eyes saw what Little Three Eyes had in her mind. So she drove the goat into the long grass, and said:—“Come, Little Three Eyes, we will sit down, and I will sing to you.” Little Three Eyes sat down. She was tired after her long walk in the hot sun, and Little Two Eyes began to sing, as before:—

“Are you awake, Little Three Eyes?” but instead of going on,—

“Are you asleep, Little Three Eyes?” she did not think, and sang:—

“Are you asleep, Little Two Eyes?” and went on:—

“Are you awake, Little Three Eyes? Are you asleep, Little Two Eyes? Are you awake? Are you asleep? Awake? Asleep?” By this time the two eyes of Little Three Eyes fell asleep. But the third eye did not go to sleep, for it was not spoken to by the verse. Little Three Eyes, to be sure, shut it, and made believe that it went to sleep. Then she opened it a little way and watched Little Two Eyes.

When Little Two Eyes thought Little Three Eyes was fast asleep, she said softly:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, rise;” and she sat at the table and ate and drank till she had had enough. Then she said as before:—

“Little goat, bleat; little table, away.” But Little Three Eyes had seen everything. Little Two Eyes now woke Little Three Eyes, and said:—

“Little Three Eyes, why do you not watch? You have been asleep, and the goat could have run all over the world. Come! let us go home.”

So home they went, and Little Two Eyes again did not touch the dish. Then Little Three Eyes said to the mother:—

“I know why the proud thing does not eat. She says to the goat: ‘Little goat, bleat; little table, rise,’ and there stands a table before her. It is covered with the very best of things to eat, much better than anything we have. When she has had enough to eat, she says: ‘Little goat, bleat; little table, away,’ and all is gone. I have seen it just as it is. She put two of my eyes to sleep, but the one in my forehead stayed awake.” Then the mother cried out:—

“Shall she be better off than we are?” With that she took a knife and killed the goat. Poor Little Two Eyes went to the field, and sat down and began to cry. All at once the wise woman stood near her, and asked:—

“Little Two Eyes, why do you cry?” Little Two Eyes said:—

“Have I not need to cry? My mother has killed the goat. Now I must suffer hunger and thirst again.” The wise woman said:—

“Little Two Eyes, dry your eyes, and I will tell you what to do. Beg your sisters to give you the heart of the goat. Then bury it in the ground before the door of the house. All will go well with you.” Then the wise woman was gone, and Little Two Eyes went home and said to her sisters:—

“Sisters, give me some part of my goat. I do not ask for anything but the heart.” They laughed, and said:—

“You can have that, if you do not want anything else.”

Little Two Eyes took the heart and buried it in the ground before the door of the house.

Next morning the sisters woke and saw a splendid tree in front of the house. It had leaves of silver and fruit of gold. It was wonderful to behold; and they could not think how the tree had come there in the night. Only Little Two Eyes knew that the tree had grown out of the heart of the goat. Then the mother said to Little One Eye:—

“Climb up, my child, and pluck some fruit from the tree.” Little One Eye climbed the tree. She put out her hand to take a golden apple, but the branch sprang back. This took place every time. Try as hard as she could, she could not get a single apple. Then the mother said:—

“Little Three Eyes, you climb up. You can see better with your three eyes than Little One Eye can.” Down came Little One Eye, and Little Three Eyes climbed the tree. She put out her hand, and the branch sprang back as it had from Little One Eye. At last the mother tried, but it was the same with her. She could not get a single apple. Then Little Two Eyes said:—

“Let me try.”

“You!” they all cried. “You, with your two eyes like other people! What can you do?” But Little Two Eyes climbed the tree, and the branch did not spring back. The golden apples dropped into her hands, and she brought down her apron full of them. Her mother took them away from her,

and her two sisters were angry because they had failed, and they were more cruel than ever to Little Two Eyes.

While they stood by the tree, the Prince came riding near on a fine horse.

“Quick, Little Two Eyes,” said her sisters, “creep under this cask; we are ashamed of you.” And they threw an empty cask over her, and pushed the golden apples under it.

The Prince rode up and gazed at the splendid tree. “Is this splendid tree yours?” he asked of the sisters. “If you will give me a branch from it, I will give you anything you wish.” Then Little One Eye and Little Three Eyes said the tree was theirs, and they would break off a branch for him. They put out their hands, but again the branches sprang back. Then the Prince said:—

“This is very strange. The tree is yours, and yet you cannot pluck the fruit.”

They kept on saying that the tree was theirs, but while they were saying this, Little Two Eyes rolled a few of the apples out from under the cask. The Prince saw them, and asked:—

“Why! where did these golden apples come from? Who is under the cask?” Little One Eye and Little Three Eyes told the Prince that they had a sister.

“But she does not show herself,” they said. “She is just like other people. She has two eyes.” Then the Prince called:—

“Little Two Eyes! come out!” So Little Two Eyes was very glad and crept out from under the cask.

“Can you get me a branch from the tree?”

“Yes,” said Little Two Eyes, “I can, for the tree is mine.” Then she climbed the tree and broke off a branch. It had silver leaves and golden fruit, and she gave it to the Prince. Then the Prince said:—

“Little Two Eyes, what shall I give you for it?”

“Oh,” said Little Two Eyes, “I suffer hunger and thirst all day long. If you would take me with you, I should be happy.”

So the Prince lifted Little Two Eyes upon his horse, and they rode away. He took her to his father’s house and made her Princess, and she had plenty to eat and drink and good clothes to wear. Best of all, the Prince loved her, and she had no more hard knocks and cross words.

Now, when Little Two Eyes rode away with the Prince, the sisters said:—

“Well, we shall have the tree. We may not pluck the fruit, but every one will stop to see it and come to us and praise it.” But the next morning when they went to look at the tree, it was gone.

Little Two Eyes lived long and happily. One day, two poor women came to her, and asked for something to eat. Little Two Eyes looked at their faces and knew them. They were Little One Eye and Little Three Eyes. They were so poor that they were begging bread from door to door. Little Two Eyes brought them into the house and was very good to them. Then they both were sorry for the evil they had once done their sister.

## 12. TAMLANE

Book: Wonder Tales From Many Lands

Author: Katherine Pyle

Origin: Scottish

Link: [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/48351/48351-h/48351-h.htm#Page\\_99](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/48351/48351-h/48351-h.htm#Page_99)

AIR Janet was the daughter of the Earl of March, and she was so beautiful that many knights and noble gentlemen had asked her to marry them, but she would say yes to none of them.

One day she sat at her window sewing a seam, and she heard the sound of a horn down in the forest. It blew so sweet and it blew so clear that she laid down her seam to listen, and it seemed to her that it called "Janet, fair Janet, come hither!"

Fair Janet dropped her sewing and down to the wood she ran. She looked about her, and there stood a handsome knight. From head to foot he was dressed in green, and in his hand he held a silver horn, and when he saw her he raised it to his lips and blew again so soft and clear that Janet had never heard anything like it.

"Now tell me," said she, "is that a fairy horn that it blows so sweet a note?"

"It is indeed a fairy horn," answered the stranger, "and it was in Fairyland that I learned to wind it. In many a forest have I blown it, north and south, and east and west, and you are the first to hear and answer it."

Then fair Janet was afraid, for she thought the stranger must be a fairy knight, and she did not know what charm he might cast about her.

The knight saw she was frightened, so he said, "From Fairyland I brought it, yet I am of human flesh and blood like you. I am the son of the Earl of Murray, and once my name was John, though in Fairyland they call me Tamlane. When I was a child, the fairies stole me, and they have kept me with them ever since. Bright and fair it is in Fairyland, and I am the Queen's favoured knight, but my heart wearies to be back in my own country and living with my own kind once more."

"And will not the fairies let you go?" asked fair Janet, and now she was not afraid.

"That they will not of their own wills, and only a lady brave and true can set me free. You yourself are that lady, fair Janet, for you alone have heard and answered my horn."

Then Janet promised she would do whatever Tamlane bade her do, if by so doing she might bring him back from Fairyland, for he was very good to look upon. She let him put a ring upon her finger, and they kissed each other as a sign that they were betrothed.

Then Tamlane told her what she must do. On every Hallowe'en at midnight the fairies ride abroad, and on that night she must go to Miles-cross and wait for them to pass. At midnight they would come.

First would ride the Fairy Queen, her horse hung round with bells. After her would come all her ladies and esquires, and then her band of knights, and it was among these that Tamlane would ride.

"You'll know me from among them all," said he, "by the snow-white horse I ride. Moreover, I'll wear a glove on my right hand, but my left hand will hang bare. Then is the time for you, Janet. Spring up and pull me from my horse and hold me tight. There will be a loud cry raised, and they'll change me into many shapes in your arms, but hold me tight, whatever I seem to be. Always it will be I, and I will not harm you. Do this, and when I take my own shape again I will be free of the fairies forever."

Janet promised to do all that he told her to, though she was terrified at the thought of what might happen, and then they kissed each other again and parted.

Now three nights after it was Hallowe'en, and Janet went out to Miles-cross, and hid herself there and waited.

When midnight came there was a sound of bells, and a white light, and the fairies came riding by. First came the Queen, and she was very beautiful, with a circlet of stars about her head. Then came her ladies and squires, talking and laughing together; and next a troop of knights all in green, and each with a silver horn. Some rode on black horses, and some on brown, but one knight there was who rode a milk-white steed. His right hand was gloved, but his left hand hung down bare at his side. He rode on and never turned his head, but when Janet saw him she knew him for her true love, Tamlane, and she sprang forward and caught him by the mantle and pulled him down from off his horse and gripped him tight. Then from all the fairy train there arose a cry, "Tamlane's awa'!" "Tamlane's awa'!"

Suddenly it was no knight that Janet held in her arms, but a great grey wolf. It struggled and snapped, and its breath was hot in her face. Almost it broke from her, but she remembered Tamlane's words and held it tight. And then it was not a wolf she held, but a bale of burning straw. The flames roared in her ears, but she clasped it close, and it did not scorch her. Then it was a great serpent that wrapped itself about her, and tried to slip from her arms, but she held it tight and did not let it go. Then it was a swan that beat its wings in her face, but she shut her eyes and held it. Then the wings were still, and she opened her eyes, and saw it was her own true love, Tamlane, that she clasped in her arms.

The Fairy Queen turned herself about, and she cried, "Tamlane, Tamlane, if I had known yesterday what I know to-day, I would have taken out your two blue eyes and given you eyes of stone; had I known yesterday what I know to-day, I would have taken the heart of flesh out of your bosom and put in a heart of clay; had I but known yesterday what I know now, never should you have ridden abroad with me this night!"

Then suddenly the fairies were gone, and Tamlane and Janet stood there alone. He took her by the hand, and they went back to her father's castle together. There they were married with great joy and feasting, and they lived together happily all the rest of their lives, a faithful and loving man and wife.

### 13. HOW THE ROBIN BURNED HIS BREAST

Book: Stories the Iroquois Tell Their Children

Author: Mabel Powers

Origin: Iroquois

Link: [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22096/22096-h/22096-h.htm#Page\\_187](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/22096/22096-h/22096-h.htm#Page_187)

Some Indian hunters once made their way north, to hunt for moose. It was at the time of Falling Leaves.

They journeyed for several days, until they came to a lake. Close by the lake they built a log cabin. Moss was placed between the logs to keep out the wind, and a thick roof was made from hemlock boughs. In the center of the roof, a small opening was left for the smoke from the lodge fire to pass out.

Here the hunters lived during the Moon of Falling Leaves. Every day they went on the moose trail, but they found no moose. Their arrows brought them little game of any kind. They became discouraged and sick, and one by one the hunters lay down and died.

At last there was but one hunter left. He, too, was sick, and he grew weaker day by day. His food was nearly gone. It was growing cold, and there was little wood in the cabin to burn.

But the man did not give up. Again and again he cried aloud, "Some one will come and help me! Some one will come and help me!"

One day, as he lay there too weak to rise, the fire flickered and went out. It seemed that he must die. But even then he did not give up. Again and again, with his weak voice he cried, "Some one will come and help me! Some one will come and help me!"

And some one did come and help him. His cry was heard, for a bird came flying in through the smoke hole in the roof of the lodge.

The bird had such a cheery, brave voice that the man felt better the moment he [Pg 189] flew in. The bird said to the man, "I was near; I heard you calling. I have come to help you."

Then the bird saw that the fire was out, and that the man was cold. He fluttered among the ashes until he found a bit of live coal. With a glad chirp, he flew out through the roof. Soon

he was back, with his bill full of dried twigs. He placed them on the fire and began to fan them into flame with his wings. Soon the twigs were blazing. Then he flew out for more twigs,—and more, and more, and more.

The brave little bird kept on carrying twigs until the fire burned hot, and the lodge was warm once more.

When the bird had flown into the lodge, he had had a clean, white breast. After the fire was built, his breast was covered with red and brown spots. He tried to pick them off with his bill, but they would not come off. Instead, they seemed to spread, and his whole breast became red-brown. Then the bird knew that he must have burned his breast to a red-brown, when he was fanning the fire into flame.

But the little bird did not care if he had soiled his white breast, and burned it red-brown. Had he not brought cheer and life to a dying man?

He chirped a few glad notes, then said to the man, "I will go now, but I shall be near your lodge. When you need me, call, and I will come again."

Later in the day, the man again called for help. The fire was getting low, and he was not yet strong enough to go out and gather twigs. Again the bird came to his aid. In and out he flew, many times, after small branches and twigs, until they were piled high on the fire, and once more it crackled and burned.

There was a little wood in the lodge. The man placed it on the fire, and the warmth healed the man, so that soon he was well and strong again.

Every day the man talked with the bird, for he was always near, and his cheery voice and brave words gave the man courage.

Once more he went on the moose trail, and this time his arrows brought him moose. In a short time the hunter had all the meat, skins, and moose hair he wanted. The moose hair he was taking to his wife, to work into pretty forms on moccasins.

The first snow was falling, as the hunter started south on the home trail. The bird hopped along by his side for a little way, then said, "I must leave you now. Winter is coming, and I must be on my way to the Southland, or the snow will catch me. In the spring you will see me again."

When spring came, the bird with the red-brown breast came with his mate, and built a nest close to the hunter's home lodge. In the nest, that summer, there grew up five little birds, and they, too, had red and brown breasts.

And ever since, Robin Redbreast has continued to come and build his nest close to the lodges of men, for Robin Redbreast is a friend to man.

## 14. THE TALKING EGGS

Book: Tales of Folk and Fairies

Editor: Katherine Pyle

Origin: Louisiana

Link:

[http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25913/25913-h/25913-h.htm#THE\\_TALKING\\_EGGS\\_A\\_STORY\\_FROM\\_LOUISIANA](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25913/25913-h/25913-h.htm#THE_TALKING_EGGS_A_STORY_FROM_LOUISIANA)

There was once a widow who had two daughters, one named Rose and the other Blanche.

Blanche was good and beautiful and gentle, but the mother cared nothing for her and gave her only hard words and harder blows; but she loved Rose as she loved the apple of her eye, because Rose was exactly like herself, coarse-looking, and with a bad temper and a sharp tongue.

Blanche was obliged to work all day, but Rose sat in a chair with folded hands as though she were a fine lady, with nothing in the world to do.

One day the mother sent Blanche to the well for a bucket of water. When she came to the well she saw an old woman sitting there. The woman was so very old that her nose and her chin met, and her cheeks were as wrinkled as a walnut.

“Good day to you, child,” said the old woman.

“Good day, auntie,” answered Blanche.

“Will you give me a drink of water?” asked the old woman.

“Gladly,” said Blanche. She drew the bucket full of water, and tilted it so the old woman could drink, but the crone lifted the bucket in her two hands as though it were a feather and drank and drank till the water was all gone. Blanche had never seen any one drink so much; not a drop was left in the bucket.

“May heaven bless you!” said the old woman, and then she went on her way.

And now Blanche had to fill the bucket again, and it seemed as though her arms would break, she was so tired.

When she went home her mother struck her because she had tarried so long at the well. Her blows made Blanche weep. Rose laughed when she saw her crying.

The very next day the mother became angry over nothing and gave Blanche such a beating that the girl ran away into the woods; she would not stay in the house any longer. She ran on and on, deeper and deeper into the forest, and there, in the deepest part, she met the old woman she had seen beside the well.

“Where are you going, my child? And why are you weeping so bitterly?” asked the crone.

“I am weeping because my mother beat me,” answered Blanche; “and now I have run away from her, and I do not know where to go.”

“Then come with me,” said the old woman. “I will give you a shelter and a bite to eat, and in return there is many a task you can do for me. Only, whatever you may see as we journey along together you must not laugh nor say anything about it.”

Blanche promised she would not, and then she trudged away at the old woman’s side.

After a while they came to a hedge so thick and wide and so set with thorns that Blanche did not see how they could pass it without being torn to pieces, but the old hag waved her staff, and the branches parted before them and left the path clear. Then, as they passed, the hedge closed together behind them.

Blanche wondered but said nothing.

A little further on they saw two axes fighting together with no hand to hold them. That seemed a curious thing, but still Blanche said nothing.

Further on were two arms that strove against each other without a sound. Still Blanche was silent.

Further on again two heads fought, butting each other like goats. Blanche looked and stared but said no word. Then the heads called to her. “You are a good girl, Blanche. Heaven will reward you.”

After that she and her companion came to the hut where the old woman lived. They went in, and the hag bade Blanche gather some sticks of wood and build a fire. Meanwhile she sat down beside the hearth and took off her head. She put it in her lap and began to comb her hair and twist it up.

Blanche was frightened, but she held her peace and built the fire as the old woman had directed. When it was burning the old woman put back her head in place, and told Blanche to look on the shelf behind the door. “There you will find a bone; put it on to boil for our dinners,” said she.

Blanche found the bone and put it on to boil, though it seemed a poor dinner.

The old woman gave her a grain of rice and bade her grind it in the mortar. Blanche put the rice in the mortar and ground it with the pestle, and before she had been grinding two minutes the mortar was full of rice, enough for both of them and to spare.

When it was time for dinner she looked in the pot and it was full of good, fresh meat. She and the old woman had all they could eat.

After dinner was over the old woman lay down on the bed. “Oh, my back! Oh, my poor back! How it does ache,” groaned she. “Come hither and rub it.”

Blanche came over and uncovered the old crone's back, and she was surprised when she saw it; it was as hard and ridgy as a turtle's. Still she said nothing but began to rub it. She rubbed and rubbed till the skin was all worn off her hand.

"That is good," said the old woman. "Now I feel better." She sat up and drew her clothes about her. Then she blew upon Blanche's hand, and at once it was as well as ever.

Blanche stayed with the old woman for three days and served her well; she neither asked questions nor spoke of what she saw.

At the end of that time her mistress said to her, "My child, you have now been with me for three days, and I can keep you here no longer. You have served me well, and you shall not lack your reward. Go to the chicken-house and look in the nests. You will find there a number of eggs. Take all that say to you, 'Take me,' but those that say, 'Do not take me,' you must not touch."

Blanche went out to the chicken-house and looked in the nests. There were ever so many eggs; some of them were large and beautiful and white and shining and so pretty that she longed to take them, but each time she stretched out her hand toward one it cried, "Do not take me." Then she did not touch it. There were also some small, brown, muddy-looking eggs, and these called to her, "Take me!" So those were the ones she took.

When she came back to the house the old woman looked to see which ones she had taken. "You have done what was right," said she, "and you will not regret it." She then showed Blanche a path by which she could return to her own home without having to pass through the thorn hedge.

"As you go throw the eggs behind you," she said, "and you will see what you shall see. One thing I can tell you, your mother will be glad enough to have you home again after that."

Blanche thanked her for the eggs, though she did not think much of them, and started out. After she had gone a little way she threw one of the eggs over her shoulder. It broke on the path, and a whole bucket full of gold poured out from it. Blanche had never seen so much gold in all her life before.

She gathered it up in her apron and went a little farther, and then she threw another egg over her shoulder. When it broke a whole bucket full of diamonds poured out over the path. They fairly dazzled the eyes, they were so bright and sparkling.

Blanche gathered them up, and went on farther, and threw another egg over her shoulder. Out from it came all sorts of fine clothes, embroidered and set all over with gems. Blanche put them on, and then she looked like the most beautiful princess that ever was seen.

She threw the last egg over her shoulder, and there stood a magnificent golden coach drawn by four white horses, and with coachman and footman all complete. Blanche stepped into the coach, and away they rolled to the door of her mother's house without her ever having to give an order or speak a word.

When her mother and sister heard the coach draw up at the door they ran out to see who was coming. There sat Blanche in the coach, all dressed in fine clothes, and with her lap full of gold and diamonds.

Her mother welcomed her in and then began to question her as to how she had become so rich and fine. It did not take her long to learn the whole story.

Nothing would satisfy her but that Rose should go out into the forest, and find the old woman, and get her to take her home with her as a servant.

Rose grumbled and muttered, for she was a lazy girl and had no wish to work for any one, whatever the reward, and she would rather have sat at home and dozed; but her mother pushed her out of the door, and so she had to go.

She slouched along through the forest, and presently she met the old woman. "Will you take me home with you for a servant?" asked Rose.

"Come with me if you will," said the old woman, "but whatever you may see do not laugh nor say anything about it."

"I am a great laugher," said Rose, and then she walked along with the old woman through the forest.

Presently they came to the thorn hedge, and it opened before them just as it had when Blanche had journeyed there. "That is a good thing," said Rose. "If it had not done that, not a step farther would I have gone."

Soon they came to the place where the axes were fighting. Rose looked and stared, and then she began to laugh.

A little later they came to where the arms were striving together, and at that Rose laughed harder still. But when she came to where the heads were butting each other, she laughed hardest of all. Then the heads opened their mouths and spoke to her. "Evil you are, and evil you will be, and no luck will come through your laughter."

Soon after they arrived at the old woman's house. She pushed open the door, and they went in. The crone bade Rose gather sticks and build a fire; she herself sat down by the hearth, and took off her head, and began to comb and plait her hair.

Rose stood and looked and laughed. "What a stupid old woman you are," she said, "to take off your head to comb your hair!" and she laughed and laughed.

The old woman was very angry. Still she did not say anything. She put on her head and made up the fire herself. Rose would not do anything. She would not even put the pot on the fire. She was as lazy at the old woman's house as she was at home, and the old crone was obliged to do the work herself. At the end of three days she said to Rose. "Now you must go home, for you are of no use to anybody, and I will keep you here no longer."

"Very well," said Rose. "I am willing enough to go, but first pay me my wages."

“Very well,” said the old woman. “I will pay you. Go out to the chicken-house and look for eggs. All the eggs that say, ‘Take me’, you may have, but if they say, ‘Do not take me’, then you must not touch them.”

Rose went out to the chicken-house and hunted about and soon found the eggs. Some were large and beautiful and white, and of these she gathered up an apronful, though they cried to her ever so loudly, “Do not take me.” Some of the eggs were small and ugly and brown. “Take me! Take me!” they cried.

“A pretty thing if I were to take you,” she cried. “You are fit for nothing but to be thrown out on the hillside.”

She did not return to the hut to thank the old woman or bid her good-by but set off for home the way she had come. When she reached the thorn thicket it had closed together again. She had to force her way through, and the thorns scratched her face and hands and almost tore the clothes off her back. Still she comforted herself with the thought of all the riches she would get out of the eggs.

She went a little farther, and then she took the eggs out of her apron. “Now I will have a fine coach to travel in the rest of the way,” said she, “and gay clothes and diamonds and money,” and she threw the eggs down in the path, and they all broke at once. But no clothes, nor jewels, nor fine coach, nor horses came out of them. Instead snakes and toads sprang forth, and all sorts of filth that covered her up to her knees and bespattered her clothing.

Rose shrieked and ran, and the snakes and toads pursued her, spitting venom, and the filth rolled after her like a tide.

She reached her mother’s house, and burst open the door, and ran in, closing it behind her. “Look what Blanche has brought on me,” she sobbed. “This is all her fault.”

The mother looked at her and saw the filth, and she was so angry she would not listen to a word Blanche said. She picked up a stick to beat her, but Blanche ran away out of the house and into the forest. She did not stop for her clothes or her jewels or anything.

She had not gone very far before she heard a noise behind her. She looked over her shoulder, and there was her golden coach rolling after her. Blanche waited until it caught up to her, and then she opened the door and stepped inside, and there were all her diamonds and gold lying in a heap. Her mother and Rose had not been able to keep any of them.

Blanche rode along for a long while, and then she came to a grand castle, and the King and Queen of the country lived there. The coach drew up at the door, and everyone came running out to greet her. They thought she must be some great Princess come to visit them, but Blanche told them she was not a Princess, but only the daughter of a poor widow, and that all the fine things she had, had come out of some eggs an old woman had given her.

When the people heard this they were very much surprised. They took her in to see the King and Queen, and the King and Queen made her welcome. She told them her story, and

they were so sorry for her they declared she should live there with them always and be as a daughter to them.

So Blanche became a grand lady, and after a while she was married to the Prince, the son of the old King and Queen, and she was beloved by all because she was so good and gentle.

But when Blanche's mother and sister heard of the good fortune that had come to her, and how she had become the bride of the Prince, they were ready to burst with rage and spite. Moreover they turned quite green with envy, and green they may have remained to the end of their lives, for all that I know to the contrary.

## 15. JOHNNY CHUCK FINDS THE BEST THING IN THE WORLD

Book: Boys and Girls Bookshelf

Author: Thornton W. Burgess

Origin: American

Link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/29386/29386-h/29386-h.htm#CHUCK>

Old Mother West Wind had stopped to talk with the Slender Fir Tree.

"I've just come across the Green Meadows," said Old Mother West Wind, "and there I saw the Best Thing in the World."

Striped Chipmunk was sitting under the Slender Fir Tree, and he couldn't help hearing what Old Mother West Wind said. "The Best Thing in the World—now what can that be?" thought Striped Chipmunk. "Why, it must be heaps and heaps of nuts and acorns! I'll go and find it."

So Striped Chipmunk started down the Lone Little Path through the wood as fast as he could run. Pretty soon he met Peter Rabbit.

"Where are you going in such a hurry, Striped Chipmunk?" asked Peter Rabbit.

"Down in the Green Meadows to find the Best Thing in the World," replied Striped Chipmunk, and ran faster.

"The Best Thing in the World," said Peter Rabbit, "why, that must be a great pile of carrots and cabbage! I think I'll go and find it."

So Peter Rabbit started down the Lone Little Path through the wood as fast as he could go after Striped Chipmunk.

As they passed the great hollow tree Bobby Coon put his head out. "Where are you going in such a hurry?" asked Bobby Coon.

"Down in the Green Meadows to find the Best Thing in the World!" shouted Striped Chipmunk and Peter Rabbit, and both began to run faster.

"The Best Thing in the World," said Bobby Coon to himself; "why, that must be a whole field of sweet milky corn. I think I'll go and find it."

So Bobby Coon climbed down out of the great hollow tree and started down the Lone Little Path through the wood as fast as he could go after Striped Chipmunk and Peter Rabbit, for there is nothing that Bobby Coon likes to eat so well as sweet milky corn.

At the edge of the wood they met Jimmy Skunk.

"Where are you going in such a hurry?" asked Jimmy Skunk.

"Down in the Green Meadows to find the Best Thing in the World!" shouted Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Bobby Coon. Then they all tried to run faster.

"The Best Thing in the World," said Jimmy Skunk. "Why, that must be packs and packs of beetles!" And for once in his life Jimmy Skunk began to hurry down the Lone Little Path after Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Bobby Coon.

They were all running so fast that they didn't see Reddy Fox until he jumped out of the long grass and asked:

"Where are you going in such a hurry?"

"To find the Best Thing in the World!" shouted Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk, and each did his best to run faster.

"The Best Thing in the World," said Reddy Fox to himself, "why, that must be a whole pen full of tender young chickens, and I must have them."

So away went Reddy Fox as fast as he could run down the Lone Little Path after Striped Chipmunk, Peter Rabbit, Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk.

By-and-by they all came to the house of Johnny Chuck.

"Where are you going in such a hurry?" asked Johnny Chuck.

"To find the Best Thing in the World," shouted Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk, and Reddy Fox.

"The Best Thing in the World," said Johnny Chuck. "Why, I don't know of anything better than my own little home, and the warm sunshine, and the beautiful blue sky."

So Johnny Chuck stayed at home and played all day among the flowers with the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind, and was as happy as could be.

But all day long Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Reddy Fox, and Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk, ran this way and ran that way over the Green Meadows trying to find the Best Thing in the World. The sun was very, very warm, and they ran so far and ran so fast that they were very, very hot and tired, and still they hadn't found the Best Thing in the World.

When the long day was over they started up the Lone Little Path past Johnny Chuck's house to their own homes. They didn't hurry now, for they were so very, very tired! And they were cross—oh, so cross!

Striped Chipmunk hadn't found so much as the leaf of a cabbage. Bobby Coon hadn't found the tiniest bit of sweet milky corn. Jimmy Skunk hadn't seen a single beetle. Reddy Fox hadn't heard so much as the peep of a chicken. And all were hungry as hungry could be.

Halfway up the Lone Little Path they met Old Mother West Wind going to her home behind the hill. "Did you find the Best Thing in the World?" asked Old Mother West Wind.

"No!" shouted Striped Chipmunk, and Peter Rabbit, and Bobby Coon, and Jimmy Skunk, and Reddy Fox, all together.

"Johnny Chuck has it," said Old Mother West Wind. "It is being happy with the things you have, and not wanting things which someone else has. And it is called Con-tent-ment."