WONDERFUL STORIES FOR CHILDREN

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OLÉ LUCKOIÈ, (SHUT-EYE.)

There is nobody in all this world who knows so many tales as Olé Luckoiè! He can tell tales! In an evening, when a child sits so nicely at the table, or on its little stool, Olé Luckoiè comes. He comes so quietly into the house, for he walks without shoes; he opens the door without making any noise, and then he flirts sweet milk into the children's eyes; but so gently, so very gently, that they cannot keep their eyes open, and, therefore, they never see him; he steals softly behind them and blows gently on their necks, and thus their heads become heavy. Oh yes! But then it does them no harm; for Olé Luckoiè means nothing but kindness to the children, he only wants to amuse them; and the best thing that can be done is for somebody to carry them to bed, where they may lie still and listen to the tales that he will tell them.

Now when the children are asleep, Olé Luckoiè sits down on the bed; he is very well dressed; his coat is of silk, but it is not possible to tell what color it is, because it shines green, and red, and blue, just as if one color ran into another. He holds an umbrella under each arm; one of them is covered all over the inside with pictures, and this he sets over the good child, and it dreams all night long the most beautiful histories. The other umbrella has nothing at all within it; this he sets over the heads of naughty children, and they sleep so heavily, that next morning when they wake they have not dreamed the least in the world.

Now we will hear how Olé Luckoiè came every evening for a whole week to a little boy, whose name was Yalmar, and what he told him. There are seven stories, because there are seven days in a week.

MONDAY.

"Just listen!" said Olé Luckoiè, in the evening, when they had put Yalmar in bed; "now I shall make things fine!"—and with that all the plants in the flower–pots grew up into great trees which stretched out their long branches along the ceiling and the walls, till the whole room looked like the most beautiful summer–house; and all the branches were full of flowers, and every flower was more beautiful than a rose, and was so sweet, that if anybody smelt at it, it was sweeter than raspberry jam! The fruit on the trees shone like gold, and great big bunches of raisins hung down—never had any thing been seen like it! —but all at once there began such a dismal lamentation in the table–drawer where Yalmar kept his school–books.

"What is that?" said Olé Luckoiè, and went to the table and opened the drawer. It was the slate that was in great trouble; for there was an addition sum on it that was added up wrong, and the slate–pencil was hopping and jumping about in its string, like a little dog that wanted to help the sum, but it could not! And besides this, Yalmar's copy–book was crying out sadly! All the way down each page stood a row of great letters, each with a little one by its side; these were the copy; and then there stood other letters, which fancied that they looked like the copy; and these Yalmar had written; but they were some one way and some another, just as if they were tumbling over the pencil–lines on which they ought

to have stood.

“Look, you should hold yourselves up—thus!” said the copy; “thus, all in a line, with a brisk air!”

“Oh! we would so gladly, if we could,” said Yalmar’s writing; “but we cannot, we are so miserable!”

“Then we will make you!” said Olé Luckoiè gruffly.

“Oh, no!” cried the poor little crooked letters; but for all that they straightened themselves, till it was quite a pleasure to see them.

“Now, then, cannot we tell a story?” said Olé Luckoiè; “now I can exercise them! One, two! One, two!” And so, like a drill–sergeant, he put them all through their exercise, and they stood as straight and as well–shaped as any copy. After that Olé Luckoiè went his way; and Yalmar, when he looked at the letters next morning, found them tumbling about just as miserably as at first.

TUESDAY.

No sooner was Yalmar in bed than Olé Luckoiè came with his little wand, and touched all the furniture in the room; and, in a minute, every thing began to chatter; and they chattered all together, and about nothing but themselves. Every thing talked except the old door–mat, which lay silent, and was vexed that they should be all so full of vanity as to talk of nothing but themselves, and think only about themselves, and never have one thought for it which lay so modestly in a corner and let itself be trodden upon.

There hung over the chest of drawers a great picture in a gilt frame; it was a landscape; one could see tall, old trees, flowers in the grass, and a great river, which ran through great woods, past many castles out into the wild sea.

Olé Luckoiè touched the picture with his wand; and with that the birds in the picture began to sing, the tree–branches began to wave, and the clouds regularly to move,—one could see them moving along over the landscape!

Olé Luckoiè now lifted little Yalmar up into the picture; he put his little legs right into it, just as if into tall grass, and there he stood. The sun shone down through the tree–branches upon him. He ran down to the river, and got into a little boat which lay there. It was painted red and white, the sails shone like silk, and six swans, each with a circlet of gold round its neck and a beaming blue star upon its head, drew the little boat past the green–wood,—where he heard the trees talking about robbers, and witches, and flowers, and the pretty little fairies, and all that the summer birds had told them of.

The loveliest fishes, with scales like silver and gold, swam after the boat, and leaped up in the water; and birds, some red and some blue, small and great, flew, in two long rows, behind; gnats danced about, and cockchafers said hum, hum! They all came following Yalmar, and you may think what a deal they had to tell him.

It was a regular voyage! Now the woods were so thick and so dark—now they were like the most beautiful garden, with sunshine and flowers; and in the midst of them there stood great castles of glass and of marble. Upon the balconies of these castles stood princesses, and every one of them were the little girls whom Yalmar knew very well, and with whom

he had played. They all reached out their hands to him, and held out the most delicious sticks of barley–sugar which any confectioner could make; and Yalmar bit off a piece from every stick of barley–sugar as he sailed past, and Yalmar's piece was always a very large piece! Before every castle stood little princes as sentinels; they stood with their golden swords drawn, and showered down almonds and raisins. They were perfect princes!

Yalmar soon sailed through the wood, then through a great hall, or into the midst of a city; and at last he came to that in which his nurse lived, she who had nursed him when he was a very little child, and had been so very fond of him. And there he saw her, and she nodded and waved her hand to him, and sang the pretty little verse which she herself had made about Yalmar—

> Full many a time I thee have missed,
> My Yalmar, my delight!
> I, who thy cherry–mouth have kissed,
> Thy rosy cheeks, thy forehead white!
> I saw thy earliest infant mirth—
> I now must say farewell!
> May our dear Lord bless thee on earth,
> Then take thee to his heaven to dwell!

And all the birds sang, too, the flowers danced upon their stems, and the old trees nodded like as Olé Luckoiè did while he told his tales.

WEDNESDAY.

How the rain did pour down! Yalmar could hear it in his sleep! and when Olé Luckoiè opened the casement, the water stood up to the very window–sill. There was a regular sea outside; but the most splendid ship lay close up to the house.

"If thou wilt sail with me, little Yalmar," said Olé Luckoiè, "thou canst reach foreign countries in the night, and be here again by to–morrow morning!"

And with this Yalmar stood in his Sunday clothes in the ship, and immediately the weather became fine, and they sailed through the streets, tacked about round the church, and then came out into a great, desolate lake. They sailed so far, that at last they could see no more land, and then they saw a flock of storks, which were coming from home, on their way to the warm countries; one stork after another flew on, and they had already flown such a long, long way. One of the storks was so very much tired that it seemed as if his wings could not support him any longer; he was the very last of all the flock, and got farther and farther behind them; and, at last, he sank lower and lower, with his outspread wings: he still flapped his wings, now and then, but that did not help him; now his feet touched the cordage of the ship; now he glided down the sail, and, bounce! down he came on the deck.

A sailor–boy then took him up, and set him in the hencoop among hens, and ducks, and turkeys. The poor stork stood quite confounded among them all.

"Here's a thing!" said all the hens.

And the turkey–cock blew himself up as much as ever he could, and asked the stork who

he was; and the ducks they went on jostling one against the other, saying, “Do thou ask! do thou ask!”

The stork told them all about the warm Africa, about the pyramids, and about the simoom, which sped like a horse over the desert: but the ducks understood not a word about what he said, and so they whispered one to the other, “We are all agreed, he is silly!”

“Yes, to be sure, he is silly,” said the turkey–cock aloud. The poor stork stood quite still, and thought about Africa.

“What a pair of beautiful thin legs you have got!” said the turkey–cock; “what is the price by the yard?”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed all the ducks; but the stork pretended that he did not hear.

“I cannot help laughing,” said the turkey–cock, “it was so very witty; or, perhaps, it was too low for him!—ha! ha! he can’t take in many ideas! Let us only be interesting to ourselves!” And with that they began to gobble, and the ducks chattered, “Gik, gak! gik, gak!” It was amazing to see how entertaining they were to themselves.

Yalmar, however, went up to the hencoop, opened the door, and called to the stork, which hopped out to him on the deck. It had now rested itself; and it seemed as if it nodded to Yalmar to thank him. With this it spread out its wings and flew away to its warm countries; but the hens clucked, the ducks chattered, and the turkey–cocks grew quite red in the head.

“To–morrow we shall have you for dinner!” said Yalmar; and so he awoke, and was lying in his little bed.

It was, however, a wonderful voyage that Olé Luckoiè had taken him that night.

THURSDAY.

“Dost thou know what?” said Olé Luckoiè. “Now do not be afraid, and thou shalt see a little mouse!” and with that he held out his hand with the pretty little creature in it.

“It is come to invite thee to a wedding,” said he. “There are two little mice who are going to be married to–night; they live down under the floor of thy mother’s store–closet; it will be such a nice opportunity for thee.”

“But how can I get through the little mouse–hole in the floor?” asked Yalmar.

“Leave that to me,” said Olé Luckoiè; “I shall make thee little enough!” And with that he touched Yalmar with his wand, and immediately he grew less and less, until at last he was no bigger than my finger.

“Now thou canst borrow the tin soldier’s clothes,” said Olé Luckoiè; “I think they would fit thee, and it looks so proper to have uniform on when people go into company.”

“Yes, to be sure!” said Yalmar; and in a moment he was dressed up like the most beautiful new tin soldier.

“Will you be so good as to seat yourself in your mother’s thimble,” said the little mouse; “and then I shall have the honor of driving you!”

“Goodness!” said Yalmar; “will the young lady herself take the trouble?” and with that

they drove to the mouse’s wedding.

First of all, after going under the floor, they came into a long passage, which was so low that they could hardly drive in the thimble, and the whole passage was illuminated with touchwood.

“Does it not smell delicious?” said the mouse as they drove along; “the whole passage has been rubbed with bacon–sward; nothing can be more delicious!”

They now came into the wedding–hall. On the right hand stood the little she–mice, and they all whispered and tittered as if they were making fun of one another; on the left hand all the he–mice, and stroked their mustachios with their paws. In the middle of the floor were to be seen the bridal pair, who stood in a hollow cheese–paring; and they kept kissing one another before everybody, for they were desperately in love, and were going to be married directly.

And all this time there kept coming in more and more strangers, till one mouse was ready to trample another to death; and the bridal pair had placed themselves in a doorway, so that people could neither go in nor come out. The whole room, like the passage, had been smeared with sward of bacon; that was all the entertainment: but as a dessert a pea was produced, on which a little mouse of family had bitten the name of the bridal pair,—that is to say, the first letters of their name; that was something quite out of the common way.

All the mice said that it was a charming wedding, and that the conversation had been so good!

Yalmar drove home again; he had really been in very grand society, but he must have been regularly squeezed together to make himself small enough for a tin soldier’s uniform.

FRIDAY.

“It is incredible how many elderly people there are who would be so glad of me,” said Olé Luckoiè, “especially those who have done any thing wrong. ‘Good little Olé,’ say they to me, ‘we cannot close our eyes; and so we lie all night long awake, and see all our bad deeds, which sit, like ugly little imps, on the bed’s head, and squirt hot water on us. Wilt thou only just come and drive them away, that we may have a good sleep!’ and with that they heave such deep sighs—‘we would so gladly pay thee; good–night, Olé!’ Silver pennies lie for me in the window,” said Olé Luckoiè, “but I do not give sleep for money!”

“Now what shall we have to–night?” inquired Yalmar.

“I do not know whether thou hast any desire to go again to–night to a wedding,” said Olé Luckoiè; “but it is of a different kind to that of last night. Thy sister’s great doll, which is dressed like a gentleman, and is called Herman, is going to be married to the doll Bertha; besides, it is the doll’s birthday, and therefore there will be a great many presents made.”

“Yes, I know,” said Yalmar; “always, whenever the dolls have new clothes, my sister entreats that they have a birthday or a wedding; that has happened certainly a hundred times!”

“Yes, but to–night it is the hundred and first wedding, and when a hundred and one is done then all is over! Therefore it will be incomparably grand. Only look!”

Yalmar looked at the table; there stood the little doll's house with lights in the windows, and all the tin soldiers presented arms outside. The bridal couple sat upon the floor, and leaned against the table–legs, and looked very pensive, and there might be reason for it. But Olé Luckoiè, dressed in the grandmother's black petticoat, married them, and when they were married, all the furniture in the room joined in the following song, which was written in pencil, and which was sung to the tune of the drum:—

Our song like a wind comes flitting
Into the room where the bride–folks are sitting;
They are partly of wood, as is befitting:
Their skin is the skin of a glove well fitting!
Hurrah, hurrah! for sitting and fitting!
Thus sing we aloud as the wind comes flitting!

And now the presents were brought, but they had forbidden any kind of eatables, for their love was sufficient for them.

"Shall we stay in the country, or shall we travel into foreign parts?" asked the bridegroom; and with that they begged the advice of the breeze, which had travelled a great deal, and of the old hen, which had had five broods of chickens. The breeze told them about the beautiful, warm countries where the bunches of grapes hung so large and so heavy; where the air was so mild, and the mountains had colors of which one could have no idea "in this country."

"But there they have not our green cabbage!" said the hen. "I lived for one summer with all my chickens in the country; there was a dry, dusty ditch in which we could go and scuttle, and we had admittance to a garden where there was green cabbage! O, how green it was! I cannot fancy any thing more beautiful!"

"But one cabbage–stalk looks just like another," said the breeze; "and then there is such wretched weather here."

"Yes, but one gets used to it," said the hen.

"But it is cold—it freezes!"

"That is good for the cabbage!" said the hen. "Besides, we also have it warm. Had not we four years ago a summer which lasted five weeks, and it was so hot that people did not know how to bear it? And then we have not all the poisonous creatures which they have there! and we are far from robbers. He is a good–for–nothing fellow who does not think our country the most beautiful in the world! and he does not deserve to be here!" and with that the hen cried.—"And I also have travelled," continued she; "I have gone in a boat above twelve miles; there is no pleasure in travelling."

"The hen is a sensible body!" said the doll Bertha; "I would rather not travel to the mountains, for it is only going up to come down again. No! we will go down into the ditch, and walk in the cabbage–garden."

And so they did.

SATURDAY.

“Shall I have any stories?” said little Yalmar, as soon as Olé Luckoiè had put him to sleep.

“In the evening we have no time for any,” said Olé, and spread out his most beautiful umbrella above his head. “Look now at this Chinese scene!” and with that the whole inside of the umbrella looked like a great china saucer, with blue trees and pointed bridges, on which stood little Chinese, who stood and nodded with their heads. “We shall have all the world dressed up beautifully this morning,” said Olé, “for it is really a holiday; it is Sunday. I shall go up into the church towers to see whether the little church–elves polish the bells, because they sound so sweetly. I shall go out into the market, and see whether the wind blows the dust, and grass, and leaves, and what is the hardest work there. I shall have all the stars down to polish them; I shall put them into my apron, but first of all I must have them all numbered, and the holes where they fit up there numbered also; else we shall never put them into their proper places again, and then they will not be firm, and we shall have so many falling stars, one dropping down after another!”

“Hear, you Mr. Luckoiè, there!” said an old portrait that hung on the wall of the room where Yalmar slept: “I am Yalmar’s grandfather. We are obliged to you for telling the boy pretty stories, but you must not go and confuse his ideas. The stars cannot be taken down and polished! The stars are globes like our earth, and they want nothing doing at them!”

“Thou shalt have thanks, thou old grandfather,” said Olé Luckoiè; “thanks thou shalt have! Thou art, to be sure, the head of the family; thou art the old head of the family; but for all that, I am older than thou! I am an old heathen; the Greeks and the Romans called me the god of dreams. I go into great folks’ houses, and I shall go there still. I know how to manage both with young and old. But now thou mayst take thy turn.” And with this Olé Luckoiè went away, and took his umbrella with him.

“Now, one cannot tell what he means!” said the old Portrait.

And Yalmar awoke.

SUNDAY.

“Good–evening!” said Olé Luckoiè, and Yalmar nodded; but he jumped up and turned the grandfather’s portrait to the wall, that it might not chatter as it had done the night before.

“Now thou shalt tell me a story,” said Yalmar, “about the five peas that live in one pea–pod, and about Hanebeen who cured Honebeen; and about the darning–needle, that was so fine that it fancied itself a sewing–needle.”

“One might do a deal of good by so doing,” said Olé Luckoiè; “but, dost thou know, I would rather show thee something. I will show thee my brother; he also is called Olé Luckoiè. He never comes more than once to anybody,—and when he comes he takes the person away with him on his horse, and tells him a great and wonderful history. But he only knows two, one of them is the most incomparably beautiful story, so beautiful that nobody in the world can imagine it; and the other is so dismal and sad—oh, it is impossible to describe how sad!”

Having said this, Olé Luckoiè lifted little Yalmar up to the window and said, “There thou mayst see my brother, the other Olé Luckoiè! They call him Death! Dost thou see, he does not look horrible as they have painted him in picture–books, like a skeleton; no, his coat is embroidered with silver; he wears a handsome Hussar uniform! A cloak of black velvet

flies behind, over his horse. See how he gallops!”

Yalmar looked, and saw how the other Olé Luckoiè rode along, and took both young and old people with him on his horse. Some he set before him, and some he set behind; but his first question always was, “How does it stand in your character–book?”

Everybody said, “Good!”

“Yes! let me see myself,” said he; and they were obliged to show him their books: and all those in whose books were written, “Very good!” or “Remarkably good!” he placed before him on his horse; and they listened to the beautiful story that he could tell. But they in whose books was written, “Not very good,” or “Only middling,” they had to sit behind and listen to the dismal tale. These wept bitterly, and would have been glad to have got away, that they might have amended their characters; but it was then too late.

“Death is, after all, the most beautiful Olé Luckoiè,” said Yalmar; “I shall not be afraid of him.”

“Thou need not fear him,” said Olé Luckoiè, “if thou only take care and have a good character–book.”

“There is instruction in that,” mumbled the old grandfather’s portrait; “that is better: one sees his meaning!” and he was pleased.

* * * * *

See, this is the story about Olé Luckoiè. This night, perhaps, he may tell thee some others.

The Daisy

Now thou shalt hear!—Out in the country, close by the high road, there stood a pleasure–house,—thou hast, no doubt, seen it thyself. In the front is a little garden full of flowers, and this is fenced in with painted palisades. Close beside these, in a hollow, there grew, all among the loveliest green grass, a little tuft of daisies. The sun shone upon it just as warmly and as sweetly as upon the large and rich splendid flowers within the garden, and, therefore, it grew hour by hour. One morning it opened its little shining white flower–leaves, which looked just like rays of light all round the little yellow sun in the inside. It never once thought that nobody saw it down there in the grass, and that it was a poor, despised flower! No, nothing of the kind! It was so very happy; turned itself round towards the warm sun, looked up, and listened to the lark which sang in the blue air.

The little daisy was as happy as if it had been some great holiday, and yet it was only a Monday. All the children were in school, and while they sat upon the benches learning their lessons, it also sat upon its little green stalk, and learned from the warm sun and from every thing around it, how good God is. And it seemed to it quite right that the little lark sang so intelligibly and so beautifully every thing which it felt in stillness; and it looked up with a sort of reverence to the happy bird, which could sing and fly, but it was not at all vexed because it could not do the same.

“I see it and hear it,” thought the daisy; “the sun shines upon me, and the winds kiss me! O, what a many gifts I enjoy!”

Inside the garden paling there were such a great many stiff, grand flowers; and all the less fragrance they had the more they seemed to swell themselves out. The pionies blew themselves out that they might be bigger than the roses; but it is not size which does every thing. The tulips had the most splendid colors, and they knew it too, and held themselves so upright on purpose that people should see them all the better. They never paid the least attention to the little daisy outside, but it looked at them all the more, and thought, “How rich they are, and how beautiful! Yes, to be sure, the charming bird up there must fly down and pay them a visit. Thank God! that I am so near that I can see all the glory!” And while she was thinking these thoughts—“Quirrevit!” down came the lark flying,—but not down to the pionies and the tulips: no! but down into the grass to the poor little daisy; which was so astonished by pure joy, that it did not know what it should think.

The little bird danced round about, and sang, “Nay, but the grass is in flower! and see, what a sweet little blossom, with a golden heart and a silver jerkin on!”—for the yellow middle of the daisy looked as if it were of gold, and the little leaves round about were shining and silver white.

So happy as the little daisy was it is quite impossible to describe! The bird kissed it with its beak, sang before it, and then flew up again into the blue air. It required a whole quarter of an hour before the daisy could come to itself again. Half bashfully, and yet with inward delight, it looked into the garden to the other flowers; they had actually seen the honor and the felicity which she had enjoyed; they could certainly understand, she thought, what a

happiness it was. But the tulips stood yet just as stiffly as before, and their faces were so peaked and so red!—for they were quite vexed. The pionies were quite thick–headed, too! it was a good thing that they could not talk, or else the daisy would have been regularly scolded. The poor little flower, however, could see very plainly that they were not in a good humor, and that really distressed her. At that very moment there came a girl into the garden with a great knife in her hand, which was very sharp and shining, and she went all among the tulips, and she cut off first one and then another.

“Ah!” sighed the little daisy, “that was very horrible; now all is over with them!”

So the girl went away with the tulips. The daisy was glad that it grew in the grass, and was a little mean flower; it felt full of gratitude, and when the sun set, it folded its leaves, slept, and dreamed the whole night long about the sun and the little bird.

Next morning, the flower again, full of joy, spread out all its white leaves, like small arms, towards the air and the light; it recognised the bird’s voice; but the song of the bird was very sorrowful. Yes, the poor little bird had good reason for being sad! it had been taken prisoner, and now sat in a cage close by the open window of the pleasure–house. It sang about flying wherever it would in freedom and bliss; it sang about the young green corn in the fields, and about the charming journeys which it used to make up in the blue air upon its hovering wings. The poor bird was heavy at heart, and was captive in a cage.

The little daisy wished so sincerely that it could be of any service; but it was difficult to tell how. In sympathizing with the lark, the daisy quite forgot how beautiful was every thing around it—how warmly the sun shone, and how beautifully white were its own flower–leaves. Ah! it could think of nothing but of the captive bird, for which it was not able to do any thing.

Just then came two little boys out of the garden; one of them had a knife in his hand, large and sharp, like that which the girl had, and with which she cut off the tulips. They went straight up to the little daisy, which could not think what they wanted.

“Here we can get a beautiful grass turf for the lark,” said one of the boys; and began deeply to cut out a square around the daisy–root, so that it was just in the middle of the turf.

“Break off the flower!” said the other boy; and the daisy trembled for very fear of being broken off, and thus losing its life; when it would so gladly live and go with the turf into the cage of the captive lark.

“Nay, let it be where it is!” said the other boy; “it makes it look so pretty!”

And so it was left there, and was taken into the cage to the lark.

But the poor bird made loud lamentations over its lost freedom, and struck the wires of the cage with its wings. The little daisy could not speak, could not say one consoling word, however gladly it would have done so. Thus passed the forenoon.

“There is no water here,” said the captive lark; “they are all gone out, and have forgotten to give me a drop to drink! my throat is dry and burning! it is fire and ice within me, and the air is so heavy! Ah! I shall die away from the warm sunshine, from the fresh green leaves, from all the glorious things which God has created!” and with that it bored its little

beak down into the cool turf to refresh itself a little. At that moment it caught sight of the daisy, nodded to it, kissed it with its beak, and said, “Thou also must wither here, thou poor little flower! Thou and the little plot of grass, which they have given me for the whole world which I had out there! Every little blade of grass may be to me a green tree, every one of thy little white leaves a fragrant flower! Ah! you only tell me how much I have lost!”

“Ah! who can comfort him!” thought the daisy, but could not move a leaf; and yet the fragrance which was given forth from its delicate petals was much sweeter than is usual in such flowers. The bird remarked this, and when, overcome by the agony of thirst and misery, it tore up every green blade of grass, it touched not the little flower.

Evening came, and yet no one brought a single drop of water to the poor bird. It stretched out its beautiful wings, fluttered them convulsively, and its song was a melancholy wailing; its little head bowed down towards the flower, and its heart broke from thirst and longing. The little flower knew this not; before the evening was ended, it had folded its petals together and slept upon the earth, overcome with sickness and sorrow.

Not until the next morning came the boys, and when they saw that the bird was dead they wept, wept many tears, and dug for it a handsome grave, which they adorned with leaves of flowers. The corpse of the bird was laid in a beautiful red box. It was to be buried royally, the poor bird! which, when full of life and singing its glorious song, they forgot, and let it pine in a cage, and suffer thirst—and now they did him honor, and shed many tears over him!

But the sod of grass with the daisy, that they threw out into the dust of the highway; no one thought about it, though it had felt more than any of them for the little bird, and would so gladly have comforted it.

The Naughty Boy

There was once upon a time an old poet, such a really good old poet! One evening, he sat at home—it was dreadful weather out of doors—the rain poured down; but the old poet sat so comfortably, and in such a good humor, beside his stove, where the fire was burning brightly, and his apples were merrily roasting.

“There will not be a dry thread on the poor souls who are out in this weather!” said he; for he was such a good old poet.

“O let me in! I am freezing, and I am so wet!” cried the voice of a little child outside. It cried and knocked at the door, while the rain kept pouring down, and the wind rattled at all the windows.

“Poor little soul!” said the old poet, and got up to open the door. There stood a little boy; he had not any clothes on, and the rain ran off from his long yellow hair. He shook with the cold; if he had not been taken in, he would most surely have died of that bad weather.

“Thou poor little soul!” said the kind old poet, and took him by the hand; “come in, and I will warm thee! and thou shalt have some wine, and a nice roasted apple, for thou art a pretty little boy!”

And so he was. His eyes were like two bright stars, and, although the water ran down from his yellow hair, yet it curled so beautifully. He looked just like a little angel; but he was pale with the cold, and his little body trembled all over. In his hand he carried a pretty little bow; but it was quite spoiled with the rain, and all the colors of his beautiful little arrows ran one into another with the wet.

The good old poet seated himself by the stove, and took the little boy upon his knee; he wrung the rain out of his hair, warmed his little hands in his, and made some sweet wine warm for him; by this means the rosy color came back into his cheeks, he jumped down upon the floor, and danced round and round the old poet.

“Thou art a merry lad,” said the poet; “what is thy name?”

“They call me Love,” replied the boy; “dost thou not know me? There lies my bow; I shoot with it, thou mayst believe! See, now, the weather clears up; the moon shines!”

“But thy bow is spoiled,” said the old poet.

“That would be sad!” said the little boy, and took it up to see if it were. “Oh, it is quite dry,” said he; “it is not hurt at all! The string is quite firm: now I will try it!”

And with that he strung it, laid an arrow upon it, took his aim, and shot the good old poet right through the heart!

“Thou canst now see that my bow is not spoiled!” said he; and laughing as loud as he could, ran away. What a naughty boy! to shoot the good old poet who had taken him into the warm room; who had been so kind to him, and given him nice wine to drink, and the very best of his roasted apples!

The poor poet lay upon the floor and wept, for he was actually shot through the heart, and he said, “Fy! what a naughty boy that Love is! I will tell all good little children about him, that they may drive him away before he makes them some bad return!”

All good children, boys and girls, to whom he told this, drove away that naughty little lad; but for all that he has made fools of them all, for he is so artful! When students go from their lectures, he walks by their side with a book under his arm, and they fancy that he too is a student, and so he runs an arrow into their breasts. When young girls go to church, and when they stand in the aisle of the church, he too has followed them. Yes, he is always following people!

He sits in the great chandelier in the theatre, and burns with a bright flame, and so people think he is a lamp, but afterwards they find something else! He runs about the king’s garden, and on the bowling–green! Yes! he once shot thy father and mother through the heart! Ask them about it, and then thou wilt hear what they say. Yes, indeed, he is a bad boy, that Love; do thou never have any thing to do with him!—he is always running after people! Only think! once upon a time, he even shot an arrow at thy good old grandmother! —but that is a long time ago, and it is past. But thus it is, he never forgets anybody!

Fy, for shame, naughty Love! But now thou knowest him, and knowest what a bad boy he is!

TOMMELISE

Once upon a time, a beggar woman went to the house of a poor peasant, and asked for something to eat. The peasant's wife gave her some bread and milk. When she had eaten it, she took a barley–corn out of her pocket, and said—"This will I give thee; set it in a flower–pot, and see what will come out of it."

The woman set the barley–corn in an old flower–pot, and the next day the most beautiful plant had shot up, which looked just like a tulip, but the leaves were shut close together, as if it still were in bud.

"What a pretty flower it is!" said the woman, and kissed the small red and yellow leaves; and just as she had kissed them, the flower gave a great crack, and opened itself. It was a real tulip, only one could see that in the middle of the flower there sat upon the pintail a little tiny girl, so delicate and lovely, and not half so big as my thumb, and, therefore, woman called her Tommelise.

A pretty polished walnut–shell was her cradle, blue violet leaves were her mattress, and a rose leaf was her coverlet; here she slept at night, but in the day she played upon the table, where the woman had set a plate, around which she placed quite a garland of flowers, the stalks of which were put in water. A large tulip–leaf floated on the water. Tommelise seated herself on this, and sailed from one end of the plate to the other; she had two white horse–hairs to row her little boat with. It looked quite lovely; and then she sang—Oh! so beautifully, as nobody ever had heard!

One night, as she lay in her nice little bed, there came a fat, yellow frog hopping in at the window, in which there was a broken pane. The frog was very large and heavy, but it hopped easily on the table where Tommelise lay and slept under the red rose leaf.

"This would be a beautiful wife for my son!" said the frog; and so she took up the walnut–shell in which Tommelise lay, and hopped away with it, through the broken pane, down into the garden.

Here there ran a large, broad river; but just at its banks it was marshy and muddy: the frog lived here, with her son. Uh! he also was all spotted with green and yellow, and was very like his mother. "Koax, koax, brekke–ke–kex!" that was all that he could say when he saw the pretty little maiden in the walnut–shell.

"Don't make such a noise, or else you will waken her," said the old frog; "and if you frighten her, she may run away from us, for she is as light as swan's down! We will take her out on the river, and set her on a waterlily leaf; to her who is so light, it will be like an island; she cannot get away from us there, and we will then go and get ready the house in the mud, where you two shall live together."

There grew a great many waterlilies in the river, with their broad green leaves, which seemed to float upon the water. The old frog swam to the leaf which was the farthest out in the river, and which was the largest also, and there she set the walnut–shell, with little Tommelise.

The poor little tiny thing awoke quite early in the morning, and when she saw where she was she began to cry bitterly, for there was water on every side of the large green leaf, and she could not get to land.

The old frog sat down in the mud, and decked her house with sedge and yellow water–reeds, that it might be regularly beautiful when her new daughter–in–law came. After this was done, she and her fat son swam away to the lily leaf, where Tommelise stood, that they might fetch her pretty little bed, and so have every thing ready before she herself came to the house.

The old frog courtesied to her in the water, and said,—"Allow me to introduce my son to you, who is to be your husband, and you shall live together, so charmingly, down in the mud!"

"Koax, koax, brekke–ke–kex!" that was all that the son could say.

So they took the pretty little bed, and swam away with it; but Tommelise sat, quite alone, and wept, upon the green leaf, for she did not wish to live with the queer–looking, yellow frog, nor to have her ugly son for her husband. The little fishes which swam down in the water had seen the frog, and had heard what she said; they put up, therefore, their heads, to look at the little girl. The moment they saw her they thought her very pretty; and they felt very sorry that she should have to go down into the mud and live with the frog. No, never should it be! They therefore went down into the water in a great shoal, and gathered round the green stalk of the leaf upon which she stood; they gnawed the stalk in two with their teeth, and thus the leaf floated down the river. Slowly and quietly it floated away, a long way off, where the frog could not come to it.

Tommelise sailed past a great many places, and the little birds sat in the bushes, looked at her, and sang,—"What a pretty little maiden!" The leaf on which she stood floated away farther and farther, and, at last, she came to a foreign land.

A pretty little white butterfly stayed with her, and flew round about her, and, at length, seated itself upon the leaf; for it knew little Tommelise so well and she was so pleased, for she knew that now the frog could not come near her, and the land to which she had come was very beautiful. The sun shone upon the water, and it was like the most lovely gold. She took off her girdle, therefore, and bound one end of it to the butterfly, and the other end of it to the leaf, and thus she glided on more swiftly than ever, and she stood upon the leaf as it went.

As she was thus sailing on charmingly, a large stag–beetle came flying towards her; it paused for a moment to look at her, then clasped its claws around her slender waist, and flew up into a tree with her, but the green lily leaf floated down the stream, and the white butterfly with it, because it was fastened to it, and could not get loose.

Poor Tommelise! how frightened she was when the stag–beetle flew away with her up into the tree! but she was most of all distressed for the lovely white butterfly which she had fastened to the leaf. But that did not trouble the stag–beetle at all. It seated itself upon one of the largest green leaves of the tree, gave her the honey of the flowers to eat, and said that she was very pretty, although she was not at all like a stag–beetle. Before long, all the other stag–beetles that lived in the tree came to pay her a visit; they looked at Tommelise; and the misses stag–beetle, they examined her with their antennæ, and said,—"Why, she

has only two legs, that is very extraordinary!" "She has no antennæ!" said the others. "She has such a thin body! Why she looks just like a human being!" "How ugly she is!" said all the lady stag–beetles; and yet Tommelise was exceedingly pretty.

The stag–beetle which had carried her away had thought so himself, at first; but now, as all the others said that she was ugly, he fancied, at last, that she was so, and would not have her, and she could now go where she would. They flew down with her out of the tree, and set her upon a daisy. Here she wept, because she was so ugly, and the stag–beetles would have nothing to do with her; and yet she really was so very lovely as nobody could imagine, as delicate and bright as the most beautiful rose leaf!

Poor Tommelise lived all that long summer, though quite alone, in the great wood. She wove herself a bed of grass, and hung it under a large plantain leaf, so that the rain could not come to her; she fed from the honey of the flowers, and drank of the dew which stood in glittering drops every morning on the grass. Thus passed the summer and the autumn; but now came winter, the cold, long winter. All the birds which had sung so sweetly to her were flown away; the trees and the flowers withered; the large plantain leaf under which she had dwelt shrunk together, and became nothing but a dry, yellow stalk; and she was so cold, for her clothes were in rags; and she herself was so delicate and small!—poor Tommelise, she was almost frozen to death! It began to snow, and every snow–flake which fell upon her was just as if a whole drawer–full had been thrown upon us, for we are strong, and she was so very, very small! She crept, therefore, into a withered leaf, but that could not keep her warm; she shook with the cold.

Close beside the wood in which she now was, lay a large cornfield; but the corn had long been carried; nothing remained but dry stubble, which stood up on the frozen ground. It was, to her, like going into a bare wood—Oh! how she shivered with cold! Before long she came to the fieldmouse's door. The fieldmouse had a little cave down below the roots of the corn–stubble, and here she dwelt warm and comfortable, and had whole rooms full of corn, and a beautiful kitchen and a store–closet. Poor Tommelise stood before the door, like any other little beggar–child, and prayed for a little bit of a barley–corn, for she had now been two whole days without having eaten the least morsel.

"Thou poor little thing!" said the fieldmouse, for she was at heart a good old fieldmouse; "come into my warm parlor, and have a bit of dinner with me."

How kind that seemed to Tommelise!

"Thou canst stop with me the whole winter," said the old fieldmouse; "but then thou must be my little maid, and keep my parlor neat and clean, and tell me tales to amuse me, for I am very fond of them!" And Tommelise did all that the good old fieldmouse desired of her, and was very comfortable.

"Before long we shall have a visitor," said the fieldmouse, soon after Tommelise was settled in her place; "my neighbor is accustomed to visit me once a week. He is much better off in the world than I am; he has a large house, and always wears such a splendid velvet dress! If thou couldst only manage to get him for thy husband, thou wouldst be lucky,—but then he is blind. Thou canst tell him the very prettiest story thou knowest."

But Tommelise gave herself no trouble about him; she did not wish to have the neighbor, for he was only a mole. He came and paid his visits in his black velvet dress; he was very

rich and learned, the fieldmouse said, and his dwelling–house was twenty times larger than hers; and he had such a deal of earning, although he made but little of the sum and the beautiful flowers; he laughed at them; but then he had never seen them!

The fieldmouse insisted on Tommelise singing, so she sang. She sang both “Fly, stag–beetle, fly!” and “The green moss grows by the water side;” and the mole fell deeply in love with her, for the sake of her sweet voice, but he did not say any thing, for he was a very discreet gentleman.

He had lately dug a long passage through the earth, between his house and theirs; and in this he gave Tommelise and the fieldmouse leave to walk whenever they liked. But he told them not to be afraid of a dead bird which lay in the passage, for it was an entire bird, with feathers and a beak; which certainly was dead just lately, at the beginning of winter, and had been buried exactly where he began his passage.

The mole took a piece of touchwood in his mouth, for it shines just like fire in the dark, and went before them, to light them in the long, dark passage. When they were come where the dead bird lay, the mole set his broad nose to the ground, and ploughed up the earth, so that there was a large hole, through which the daylight could shine. In the middle of the floor lay a dead swallow, with its beautiful wings pressed close to its sides. Its legs and head were drawn up under the feathers; the poor bird had certainly died of cold. Tommelise was very sorry for it, for she was so fond of little birds; they had, through the whole summer, sung and twittered so beautifully to her; but the mole stood beside it, with his short legs, and said,—“Now it will tweedle no more! It must be a shocking thing to be born a little bird; thank goodness that none of my children have been such; for a bird has nothing at all but its singing; and it may be starved to death in winter!”

“Yes, that you, who are a sensible man, may well say,” said the fieldmouse; “what has the bird, with all its piping and singing, when winter comes? It may be famished or frozen!”

Tommelise said nothing; but when the two others had turned their backs, she bent over it, stroked aside the feathers which lay over its head, and kissed its closed eyes.

“Perhaps it was that same swallow which sang so sweetly to me in summer,” thought she; “what a deal of pleasure it caused me, the dear, beautiful bird!”

The mole stopped up the opening which it had made for the daylight to come in, and accompanied the ladies home. Tommelise, however, could not sleep in the night; so she got up out of bed, and wove a small, beautiful mat of hay; and that she carried down and spread over the dead bird; laid soft cotton–wool, which she had found in the fieldmouse’s parlor, around the bird, that it might lie warm in the cold earth.

“Farewell, thou pretty little bird,” said she; “farewell, and thanks for thy beautiful song, in summer, when all the trees were green, and the sun shone so warmly upon us!”

With this she laid her head upon the bird’s breast, and the same moment was quite amazed, for it seemed to her as if there were a slight movement within it. It was the bird’s heart. The bird was not dead; it lay in a swoon, and now being warmed, it was reanimated.

In the autumn all the swallows fly away to the warm countries; but if there be one which tarries behind, it becomes stiff with cold, so that it falls down as if dead, and the winter’s snow covers it.

Tommelise was quite terrified, for in comparison with her the bird was a very large creature; but she took courage, however, laid the cotton–wool closer around the poor swallow, and fetched a coverlet of chrysanthemum leaves, which she had for her bed, and laid it over its head.

Next night she listened again, and it was quite living, but so weak that it could only open its eyes a very little, and see Tommelise, who stood with a piece of touchwood in her hand, for other light she had none.

“Thanks thou shalt have, thou pretty little child!” said the sick swallow to her; “I have been beautifully revived! I shall soon recover my strength, and be able to fly again out into the warm sunshine!”

“O,” said she, “it is so cold out–of–doors! it snows and freezes! stop in thy warm bed, and I will nurse thee!”

She brought the swallow water, in a flower–leaf, and it drank it, and related to her how it had torn one of its wings upon a thorn–bush, and, therefore, had not been able to fly so well as the other swallows, who had flown far, far away, into the warm countries. It had, at last, fallen down upon the ground; but more than that it knew not, nor how it had come there.

During the whole winter it continued down here, and Tommelise was very kind to it, and became very fond of it; but neither the mole nor the fieldmouse knew any thing about it, for they could not endure swallows.

As soon as ever spring came, and the sun shone warm into the earth, the swallow bade farewell to Tommelise, who opened the hole which the mole had covered up. The sun shone so delightfully down into it, and the swallow asked whether she would not go with him; she might sit upon his back, and he would fly out with her far into the green–wood. But Tommelise knew that it would distress the old fieldmouse if she thus left her.

“No, I cannot,” said Tommelise.

“Farewell, farewell, thou good, sweet little maiden!” said the swallow, and flew out into the sunshine. Tommelise looked after it, and the tears came into her eyes, for she was very fond of the swallow, and she felt quite forlorn now it was gone.

“Quivit! quivit!” sung the bird, and flew into the green–wood.

Tommelise was very sorrowful. She could not obtain leave to go out into the warm sunshine. The corn which had been sown in the field above the mouse’s dwelling, had grown so high that it was now like a thick wood to her.

“Now, during this summer, thou shalt get thy wedding clothes ready,” said the fieldmouse to her; for the old neighbor, the wealthy mole, had presented himself as a wooer.

“Thou shalt have both woollen and linen clothes; thou shalt have both table and body linen, if thou wilt be the mole’s wife,” said the old fieldmouse.

Tommelise was obliged to sit down and spin; and the fieldmouse hired six spiders to spin and weave both night and day. Every evening the mole came to pay a visit, and always said that when the summer was ended, and the sun did not shine so hotly as to bake the

earth to a stone,—yes, when the summer was over, then he and Tommelise would have a grand wedding; but this never gave her any pleasure, for she did not like the wealthy old gentleman. Every morning, when the sun rose, and every evening, when it set, she stole out to the door; and if the wind blew the ears of corn aside so that she could see the blue sky, she thought how bright and beautiful it was out there, and she wished so much that she could, just once more, see the dear swallow. But he never came; he certainly had flown far, far away from the lovely green–wood.

It was now autumn, and all Tommelise's wedding things were ready.

"In four weeks thou shalt be married," said the old fieldmouse to her. But Tommelise cried, and said that she would not have the rich mole.

"Snick, snack!" said the fieldmouse; "do not go and be obstinate, else I shall bite thee with my white teeth! He is, indeed, a very fine gentleman! The queen herself has not got a dress equal to his black velvet! He has riches both in kitchen and coffer. Be thankful that thou canst get such a one!"

So the wedding was fixed. The bridegroom was already come, in his best black velvet suit, to fetch away Tommelise. She was to live with him deep under ground, never to come out into the warm sunshine, for that he could not bear. The poor child was full of sorrow; she must once more say farewell to the beautiful sun; and she begged so hard, that the fieldmouse gave her leave to go to the door to do so.

"Farewell, thou bright sun!" said she, and stretched forth her arms, and went a few paces from the fieldmouse's door, for the corn was now cut, and again there was nothing but the dry stubble.

"Farewell! farewell!" said she, and threw her small arms around a little red flower which grew there; "greet the little swallow for me, if thou chance to see him!"

"Quivit! quivit!" said the swallow, that very moment, above her head; she looked up, there was the little swallow, which had just come by. As soon as Tommelise saw it, she was very glad; she told it how unwilling she was to marry the rich old mole, and live so deep underground, where the sun never shone. She could not help weeping as she told him.

"The cold winter is just at hand," said the little swallow; "I am going far away to the warm countries, wilt thou go with me? Thou canst sit upon my back; bind thyself fast with thy girdle, and so we will fly away from the rich mole and his dark parlor, far away over the mountains, to the warm countries, where the sun shines more beautifully than here, and where there always is summer, and where the beautiful flowers are always in bloom. Only fly away with me, thou sweet little Tommelise, who didst save my life when I lay frozen in the dark prison of the earth!"

"Yes, I will go with thee!" said Tommelise, and seated herself upon the bird's back, with her feet upon one of his outspread wings. She bound her girdle to one of the strongest of his feathers, and thus the swallow flew aloft into the air, over wood and over sea, high up above the great mountains, where lies the perpetual snow, and Tommelise shivered with the intensely cold air; but she then crept among the bird's warm feathers, and only put out her little head, that she might look at all the magnificent prospect that lay below her.

Thus they came to the warm countries. There the sun shone much brighter than it does

here; the heavens were twice as high, and upon trellis and hedge grew the most splendid purple and green grapes. Oranges and lemons hung golden in the woods, and myrtle and wild thyme sent forth their fragrance; the most beautiful children, on the highways, ran after and played with large, brilliantly–colored butterflies. But the swallow still flew onward, and it became more and more beautiful. Among lovely green trees, and beside a beautiful blue lake, stood a palace, built of the shining white marble of antiquity. Vines clambered up the tall pillars; on the topmost of these were many swallow nests, and in one of these dwelt the very swallow which carried Tommelise.

“Here is my home!” said the swallow; “but wilt thou now seek out for thyself one of the lovely flowers which grow below, and then I will place thee there, and thou shalt make thyself as comfortable as thou pleasest?”

“That is charming!” said she, and clapped her small hands.

Just by there lay a large white marble pillar, which had fallen down, and broken into three pieces, but amongst these grew the most exquisite large white flowers.

The swallow flew down with Tommelise, and seated her upon one of the broad leaves,—but how amazed she was! There sat a little man in the middle of the flower, as white and transparent as if he were of glass; the most lovely crown of gold was upon his head, and the most beautiful bright wings upon his shoulders; and he, too, was no larger than Tommelise. He was the angel of the flower. In every flower lived such a little man or woman, but this was the king of them all.

“Good heavens! how small he is!” whispered Tommelise to the swallow. The little prince was as much frightened at the swallow, for it was, indeed, a great, gigantic bird in comparison of him, who was so very small and delicate; but when he saw Tommelise he was very glad, for she was the prettiest little maiden that ever he had seen. He took, therefore, the golden crown from off his head, and set it upon hers, and asked her what was her name, and whether she would be his wife, and be the queen of all the flowers? Yes, he was really and truly a little man, quite different to the frog’s son, and to the mole, with his black velvet dress; she therefore said, Yes, to the pretty prince; and so there came out of every flower a lady or a gentleman, so lovely that it was quite a pleasure to see them, and brought, every one of them, a present to Tommelise; but the best of all was a pair of beautiful wings, of fine white pearl, and these were fastened on Tommelise’s shoulders, and thus she also could fly from flower to flower,—that was such a delight! And the little swallow sat up in its nest and sang to them as well as it could, but still it was a little bit sad at heart, for it was very fond of Tommelise, and wished never to have parted from her.

“Thou shalt not be called Tommelise!” said the angel of the flowers to her; “it is an ugly name, and thou art so beautiful. We will call thee Maia!”

“Farewell, farewell!” said the little swallow, and flew again forth from the warm countries, far, far away, to Denmark. There it had a little nest above the window of a room in which dwelt a poet, who can tell beautiful tales; for him it sang,—“Quivit, quivit!” and from the swallow, therefore, have we this history.

THE ROSE-ELF

There grew a rose–tree in the middle of a garden; it was quite full of roses; and in one of these, the prettiest of them all, dwelt an elf. He was so very, very small, that no human eye could see him; behind every leaf in the rose he had a sleeping–room; he was as well–formed and as pretty as any child could be, and had wings, which reached from his shoulders down to his feet. O, how fragrant were his chambers, and how bright and beautiful the walls were! They were, indeed, the pale pink, delicate rose leaves.

All day long he enjoyed himself in the warm sunshine, flew from flower to flower, danced upon the wings of the fluttering butterfly, or counted how many paces it was from one footpath to another, upon one single lime leaf. What he considered as footpaths, were what we call veins in the leaf; yes, it was an immense way for him! Before he had finished, the sun had set; thus, he had begun too late.

It became very cold; the dew fell, and the wind blew; the best thing he could do was to get home as fast as he could. He made as much haste as was possible, but all the roses had closed—he could not get in; there was not one single rose open; the poor little elf was quite terrified, he had never been out in the night before; he always had slept in the snug little rose leaf. Now, he certainly would get his death of cold!

At the other end of the garden he knew that there was an arbor, all covered with beautiful honeysuckle. The flowers looked like exquisitely painted horns; he determined to creep down into one of these, and sleep there till morning.

He flew thither. Listen! There are two people within the bower; the one, a handsome young man, and the other, the loveliest young lady that ever was seen; they sat side by side, and wished that they never might be parted, through all eternity. They loved each other very dearly, more dearly than the best child can love either its father or mother.

They kissed each other; and the young lady wept, and gave him a rose; but before she gave it to him she pressed it to her lips, and that with such a deep tenderness, that the rose opened, and the little elf flew into it, and nestled down into its fragrant chamber. As he lay there, he could very plainly hear that they said,—Farewell! farewell! to each other; and then he felt that the rose had its place on the young man’s breast. Oh! how his heart beat!—the little elf could not go to sleep because the young man’s heart beat so much.

The rose lay there; the young man took it forth whilst he went through a dark wood, and kissed it with such vehemence that the little elf was almost crushed to death; he could feel, through the leaves, how warm were the young man’s lips, and the rose gave forth its odor, as if to the noon–day’s sun.

Then came another man through the wood; he was dark and wrathful, and was the handsome young lady’s cruel brother. He drew forth from its sheath a long and sharp dagger, and whilst the young man kissed the rose, the wicked man stabbed him to death, and then buried him in the bloody earth, under a lime tree.

“Now he is gone and forgotten!” thought the wicked man; “he will never come back again.

He is gone a long journey over mountains and seas; it would be an easy thing for him to lose his life,—and he has done so! He will never come back again, and I fancy my sister will never ask after him.”

He covered the troubled earth, in which he had laid the dead body, with withered leaves, and then set off home again, through the dark night; but he went not alone, as he fancied; the little elf went with him; it sat in a withered, curled–up lime leaf, which had fallen upon the hair of the cruel man as he dug the grave. He had now put his hat on, and, within, it was very dark; and the little elf trembled with horror and anger over the wicked deed.

In the early hour of morning he came home; he took off his hat, and went into his sister’s chamber; there lay the beautiful, blooming maiden, and dreamed about the handsome young man. She loved him very dearly, and thought that now he went over mountains and through woods. The cruel brother bent over her; what were his thoughts we know not, but they must have been evil. The withered lime leaf fell from his hair down upon the bed cover, but he did not notice it; and so he went out, that he, too, might sleep a little in the morning hour.

But the elf crept out of the withered leaf, crept to the ear of the sleeping maiden, and told her, as if in a dream, of the fearful murder; described to her the very place where he had been stabbed, and where his body lay; it told about the blossoming lime tree close beside, and said,—“And that thou mayest not fancy that this is a dream which I tell thee, thou wilt find a withered lime leaf upon thy bed!”

And she found it when she woke.

Oh! what salt tears she wept, and she did not dare to tell her sorrow to any one. The window stood open all day, and the little elf could easily go out into the garden, to the roses and all the other flowers; but for all that, he resolved not to leave the sorrowful maiden.

In the window there stood a monthly rose, and he placed himself in one of its flowers, and there could be near the poor young lady who was so unhappy. Her brother came often into her room, but she could not say one word about the great sorrow of her heart.

As soon as it was night she stole out of the house, went to the wood, and to the very place where the lime tree stood; tore away the dead leaves from the sod, dug down, and found him who was dead! Oh! how she wept and prayed our Lord, that she, too, might soon die!

Gladly would she have taken the body home with her,—but that she could not; so she cut away a beautiful lock of his hair, and laid it near her heart!

Not a word she said; and when she had laid earth and leaves again upon the dead body, she went home; and took with her a little jasmine tree, which grew, full of blossoms, in the wood where he had met with his death.

As soon as she returned to her chamber, she took a very pretty flower–pot, and, filling it with mould, laid in it the beautiful curling hair, and planted in it the jasmine tree.

“Farewell, farewell!” whispered the little elf; he could no longer bear to see her grief, so he flew out into the garden, to his rose; but its leaves had fallen; nothing remained of it but the four green calix leaves.

“Ah! how soon it is over with all that is good and beautiful!” sighed he. At last he found a rose,—which became his house; he crept among its fragrant leaves, and dwelt there.

Every morning he flew to the poor young lady’s window, and there she always stood by the flower–pot, and wept. Her salt tears fell upon the jasmine twigs, and every day, as she grew paler and paler, they became more fresh and green; one cluster of flower–buds grew after another; and then the small white buds opened into flowers, and she kissed them. Her cruel brother scolded her, and asked her whether she had lost her senses. He could not imagine why she always wept over that flower–pot, but he did not know what secret lay within its dark mould. But she knew it; she bowed her head over the jasmine bloom, and sank exhausted on her couch. The little rose–elf found her thus, and, stealing to her ear he whispered to her about the evening in the honeysuckle arbor, about the rose’s fragrance, and the love which he, the little elf, had for her. She dreamed so sweetly, and while she dreamed, the beautiful angel of death conveyed her spirit away from this world, and she was in heaven with him who was so dear to her.

The jasmine buds opened their large white flowers; their fragrance was wondrously sweet.

When the cruel brother saw the beautiful blossoming tree, he took it, as an heir–loom of his sister, and set it in his sleeping–room, just beside his bed, for it was pleasant to look at, and the fragrance was so rich and uncommon. The little rose–elf went with it, and flew from blossom to blossom. In every blossom there dwelt a little spirit, and to it he told about the murdered young man, whose beautiful curling locks lay under their roots; told about the cruel brother, and the heart–broken sister.

“We know all about it,” said the little spirit of each flower; “we know it! we know it! we know it!” and with that they nodded very knowingly.

The rose–elf could not understand them, nor why they seemed so merry, so he flew out to the bees which collected honey, and told them all the story. The bees told it to their queen, who gave orders that, the next morning, they should all go and stab the murderer to death with their sharp little daggers; for that seemed the right thing to the queen–bee.

But that very night, which was the first night after the sister’s death, as the brother slept in his bed, beside the fragrant jasmine tree, every little flower opened itself, and all invisibly came forth the spirits of the flower, each with a poisoned arrow; first of all they seated themselves by his ear, and sent such awful dreams to his brain as made him, for the first time, tremble at the deed he had done. They then shot at him with their invisible poisoned arrows.

“Now we have avenged the dead!” said they, and flew back to the white cups of the jasmine–flowers.

As soon as it was morning, the window of the chamber was opened, and in came the rose–elf, with the queen of the bees and all her swarm.

But he was already dead; there stood the people round about his bed, and they said—“That the strong–scented jasmine had been the death of him!”

Then did the rose–elf understand the revenge which the flowers had taken, and he told it to the queen–bee, and she came buzzing, with all her swarm, around the jasmine–pot.

The bees were not to be driven away; so one of the servants took up the pot to carry it out, and one of the bees stung him, and he let the pot fall, and it was broken in two.

Then they all saw the beautiful hair of the murdered young man; and so they knew that he who lay in the bed was the murderer.

The queen–bee went out humming into the sunshine, and she sung about how the flowers had avenged the young man’s death; and that behind every little flower–leaf is an eye which can see every wicked deed.

Old and young, think on this! and so, Fare ye well.

THE GARDEN OF PARADISE

There was a king's son: nobody had so many, or such beautiful books as he had. Every thing which had been done in this world he could read about, and see represented in splendid pictures. He could give a description of every people and every country; but—where was the Garden of Paradise?—of that he could not learn one word; and that it was of which he thought most.

His grandmother had told him, when he was quite a little boy, and first began to go to school, that every flower in the Garden of Paradise was the most delicious cake; one was history, another geography, a third, tables, and it was only needful to eat one of these cakes, and so the lesson was learned; and the more was eaten of them, the better acquainted they were with history, geography, and tables.

At that time he believed all this; but when he grew a bigger boy, and had learned more, and was wiser, he was quite sure that there must be some other very different delight in this Garden of Paradise.

"Oh! why did Eve gather of the tree of knowledge? why did Adam eat the forbidden fruit? If it had been me, I never would have done so! If it had been me, sin should never have entered into the world!"

So said he, many a time, when he was young; so said he when he was much older! The Garden of Paradise filled his whole thoughts.

One day he went into the wood; he went alone, for that was his greatest delight.

The evening came. The clouds drew together; it began to rain as if the whole heavens were one single sluice, of which the gate was open; it was quite dark, or like night in the deepest well. Now, he slipped in the wet grass; now, he tumbled over the bare stones, which were scattered over the rocky ground. Every thing streamed with water; not a dry thread remained upon the prince. He was obliged to crawl up over the great blocks of stone, where the water poured out of the wet moss. He was ready to faint. At that moment he heard a remarkable sound, and before him he saw a large, illuminated cave. In the middle of it burned a fire, so large that a stag might have been roasted at it,—and so it was; the most magnificent stag, with his tall antlers, was placed upon a spit, and was slowly turning round between two fir trees, which had been hewn down. A very ancient woman, tall and strong, as if she had been a man dressed up in woman's clothes, sat by the fire, and threw one stick after another upon it.

"Come nearer!" said she, seeing the prince; "sit down by the fire, and dry thy clothes."

"It is bad travelling to–night," said the prince; and seated himself on the floor of the cave.

"It will be worse yet, when my sons come home!" replied the woman. "Thou art in the cave of the winds; my sons are the four winds of the earth; canst thou understand?"

"Where are thy sons?" asked the prince.

"Yes, it is not well to ask questions, when the questions are foolish," said the woman. "My

sons are queer fellows; they play at bowls with the clouds, up in the big room there;" and with that she pointed up into the air.

"Indeed!" said the prince, "and you talk somewhat gruffly, and are not as gentle as the ladies whom I am accustomed to see around me."

"Yes, yes, they have nothing else to do!" said she; "I must be gruff if I would keep my lads in order! But I can do it, although they have stiff necks. Dost thou see the four sacks which hang on the wall; they are just as much afraid of them, as thou art of the birch–rod behind the looking–glass! I can double up the lads, as I shall, perhaps, have to show thee, and so put them into the bags; I make no difficulties about that; and so I fasten them in, and don't let them go running about, for I do not find that desirable. But here we have one of them."

With that in came the northwind; he came tramping in with an icy coldness; great, round hail–stones hopped upon the floor, and snow–flakes flew round about. He was dressed in a bear's–skin jerkin and hose; a hat of seal's–skin was pulled over his ears; long icicles hung from his beard, and one hail–stone after another fell down upon his jerkin–collar.

"Do not directly go to the fire!" said the prince, "else thou wilt have the frost in thy hands and face!"

"Frost!" said the northwind, and laughed aloud. "Frost! that is precisely my greatest delight! What sort of a little dandified chap art thou? What made thee come into the winds' cave?"

"He is my guest!" said the old woman; "and if that explanation does not please thee, thou canst get into the bag!—now thou knowest my mind!"

This had the desired effect; and the northwind sat down, and began to tell where he was come from, and where he had been for the greater part of the last month.

"I come from the Arctic Sea; I have been upon Bear Island with the Russian walrus–hunters. I lay and slept whilst they sailed up to the North Cape. When I now and then woke up a little, how the storm–birds flew about my legs! They are ridiculous birds! they make a quick stroke with their wings, and then keep them immoveably expanded, and yet they get on."

"Don't be so diffuse!" said the winds' mother; "and so you came to Bear Island."

"That is a charming place; that is a floor to dance upon!" roared the northwind, "as flat as a pan–cake! Half covered with snow and dwarfish mosses, sharp stones and leg–bones of walruses and ice–bears lie scattered about, looking like the arms and legs of giants. One would think that the sun never had shone upon them. I blew the mist aside a little, that one might see the erection there; it was a house, built of pieces of wrecks, covered with the skin of the walrus, the fleshy side turned outward; upon the roof sat a living ice–bear, and growled. I went down to the shore, and looked at the birds' nests, in which were the unfledged young ones, which screamed, and held up their gaping beaks; with that I blew down a thousand throats, and they learned to shut their mouths. Down below tumbled about the walruses, like gigantic ascarides, with pigs' heads and teeth an ell long!"

"Thou tell'st it very well, my lad!" said the mother; "it makes my mouth water to hear

thee!”

“So the hunting began,” continued the northwind. “The harpoons were struck into the breast of the walrus, so that the smoking blood started like a fountain over the iron. I then thought of having some fun! I blew, and let my great ships, the mountain–like fields of ice, shut in the boats. How the people shrieked and cried; but I cried louder than they! The dead bodies of their fish, their chests and cordage, were they obliged to throw out upon the ice! I showered snow–flakes upon them, and left them, in their imprisoned ship, to drive southward with their prey, there to taste salt–water. They will never again come to Bear Island!”

“It was very wrong of thee!” said the winds’ mother.

“The others can tell what good I have done!” said he! “And there we have my brother from the west; I like him the best of them all; he smacks of the sea, and has a blessed coldness about him!”

“Is it the little zephyr?” inquired the prince.

“Yes, certainly, it is the zephyr!” said the old woman; “but he is not so little now. In old times he was a very pretty lad, but that is all over now.”

He looked like a wild man, but he had one of those pads round his head, which children used to wear formerly, to prevent them from being hurt. He held in his hand a mahogany club, which had been cut in the mahogany woods of America.

“Where dost thou come from?” asked the mother.

“From the forest–wilderness,” said he, “where the prickly lianas makes a fence around every tree; where the water–snakes lie in the wet grass, and man seems superfluous!”

“What didst thou do there?”

“I looked at the vast river, saw how it was hurled from the cliffs, became mist, and was thrown back into the clouds, to become rainbows. I saw the wild buffalo swim in the river; but the stream bore him along with it; madly did it bear him onward, faster and faster, to where the river was hurled down the cliffs—down, also, must he go! I bethought myself, and blew a hurricane, so the old trees of the forest were torn up, and carried down, too, and became splinters!”

“And didst thou do any thing else?” asked the old woman.

“I tumbled head–over–heels in the Savannas; I have patted the wild horses, and shook down cocoa–nuts! Yes, yes, I could tell tales, if I would! But one must not tell all one knows, that thou know’st, old lady!” said he, and kissed his mother so roughly that he nearly knocked her backward from her chair; he was a regularly wild fellow.

Now came in the southwind, with a turban on his head, and a flying Bedouin–cloak.

“It is dreadfully cold out here!” said he, and threw more wood on the fire; “one can very well tell that the northwind has come first!”

“Here it is so hot, that one might roast an ice–bear!” said the northwind.

“You are an ice–bear, yourself!” replied the southwind.

“Do you want to go in the bags?” asked the old woman; “sit down on the stone, and tell us where thou hast been.”

“In Africa, mother,” said he; “I have been lion–hunting, with the Hottentots, in Caffreland. What grass grows in the fields there, as green as the olive! There dances the gnu; and the ostrich ran races with me, but my legs were the nimblest. I came to the deserts of yellow sand, which look like the surface of the ocean. There I met a caravan! They had killed their last camel to get water to drink, but they only found a little. The sun burned above them, and the sand beneath their feet. There was no limit to the vast desert. I then rolled myself in the fine, loose sand, and whirled it up in great pillars—that was a dance! You should have seen how close the dromedaries stood together, and the merchants pulled their kaftans over their heads. They threw themselves down before me, as if before Allah, their god. They are now buried; a pyramid of sand lies heaped above them; I shall, some day, blow it away, and then the sun will bleach their white bones, and so travellers can see that there have been human beings before them in the desert; without this it were hard to believe it!”

“Thou, also, hast done badly!” said the mother. “March into the bag!” and before the southwind knew what she would be at, she had seized him by the body, and thrust him into the bag. The bag, with him in it, rolled about on the floor; but she seized it, held it fast, and sat down upon it; so he was forced to lie still.

“They are rough fellows!” said the prince.

“So they are!” returned she; “but I can chastise them! But here we have the fourth!”

This was the eastwind, and he was dressed like a Chinese.

“Indeed! so thou comest from that corner, dost thou?” asked the mother; “I fancied that thou hadst been to the Garden of Paradise.”

“I shall go there to–morrow,” said the eastwind. “It will be a hundred years, to–morrow, since I was there. I am now come from China, where I have been dancing around the porcelain tower, till all the bells have rung. Down in the street the royal officers were beating people; bamboos were busy with their shoulders, and from the first, down to the ninth rank, they cried out—‘Thanks, my fatherly benefactor!’ but they did not mean any thing by it; and I rung the bells, and sang—‘Tsing, tsang, tsu! Tsing, tsang, tsu!’”

“Thou art merry about it,” said the old woman; “it is a good thing that to–morrow morning thou art going to the Garden of Paradise; that always mends thy manners! Drink deeply of wisdom’s well, and bring a little bottleful home with thee, for me!”

“That I will!” said the eastwind; “but why hast thou put my brother from the south down in the bag? Let him come out! I want him to tell me about the phoenix; the princess of the Garden of Paradise always likes to hear about it, when I go, every hundred years, to see her. Open the bag! and so thou shalt be my sweetest mother, and I will give thee a pocketful of tea, very fresh and green, which I myself gathered, on the spot!”

“Nay, for the sake of the tea, and because thou art my darling, I will open the bag!”

She did so, and the southwind crept out, and looked so ashamed, because the foreign prince had seen him.

“There hast thou a palm leaf for the princess,” said the southwind; “that leaf was given to me by the phoenix bird, the only one in the whole world. He has written upon it, with his beak, the whole history of his life during the hundred years that he lived; now she can read it herself. I saw how the phoenix himself set fire to his nest, and sat in it and burned like a Hindoo widow. How the dry branches crackled! There was a smoke and an odor. At length it flamed up into a blaze; the old phoenix was burned to ashes, but its egg lay glowingly red in the fire; then it burst open with a great report, and the young one flew out; now it is the regent of all birds, and the only phoenix in the whole world. He has bitten a hole in the palm leaf which I gave thee; it is his greeting to the princess.”

“Let us now have something to strengthen us!” said the mother of the winds; and with that they all seated themselves, and ate of the roasted stag; and the prince sat at the side of the eastwind, and therefore they soon became good friends.

“Listen, and tell me,” said the prince, “what sort of a princess is that of which thou hast said so much, and who lives in the Garden of Paradise?”

“Ho! ho!” said the eastwind, “if you wish to go there, you can fly with me there to–morrow morning. This, however, I must tell you, there has been no human being there since Adam and Eve’s time. You have heard of them, no doubt, in the Bible.”

“Yes, to be sure!” said the prince.

“At the time when they were driven out,” said the eastwind, “the Garden of Paradise sank down into the earth; but it still preserved its warm sunshine, its gentle air, and its wonderful beauty. The queen of the fairies lives there; there lies the Island of Bliss, where sorrow never comes, and where it is felicity to be. Seat thyself on my back to–morrow morning, and so I will take thee with me. I think that will be permitted. But now thou must not talk any more, for I want to go to sleep!”

And so they all slept together.

Early the next morning the prince awoke, and was not a little amazed to find himself already high above the clouds. He sat upon the back of the eastwind, which kept firm hold of him. They were so high in the air, that the woods and fields, the rivers and sea, showed themselves as if upon a large illustrated map.

“Good–morning,” said the eastwind; “thou mightest have slept a little bit longer, for there is not much to see upon the flat country below us, unless thou hast any pleasure in counting the churches, which stand like dots of chalk upon the green board.”

They were the fields and meadows which he called the green board.

“It was very ill–mannered that I did not say good–by to thy mother and brothers,” said the prince.

“There is no blame when people are asleep!” said the eastwind; and with that flew away faster than ever. One could have heard, as they went over the woods, how the trees shook their leaves and branches; one could have heard, on lakes and seas that they were passing over, for the billows heaved up more loftily, and the great ships bowed down into the water like sailing swans.

Towards evening, when it grew dusk, it was curious to look down to the great cities; the

lights burned within them, now here, now there; it was exactly like the piece of paper which children burn to see the multitude of little stars in it, which they call people coming out of church. The prince clapped his hands, but the eastwind told him not to do so, but much better to keep fast hold; or else he might let him fall, and then, perhaps, he would pitch upon a church spire.

The eagle flew lightly through the dark wood, but the eastwind flew still lighter; the Cossack on his little horse sped away over the plain, but the prince sped on more rapidly by another mode.

“Now thou canst see the Himalaya,” said the eastwind; “they are the highest mountains in Asia; we shall not be long before we come to the Garden of Paradise!”

With that they turned more southward, and perceived the fragrance of spice and flowers. Figs and pomegranates grew wild, and the wild vine hung with its clusters of blue and red grapes. There they both of them alighted, stretched themselves on the tender grass, where the flowers nodded, as if they would say,—“Welcome back again!”

“Are we now in the Garden of Paradise?” asked the prince.

“No, certainly not,” replied the eastwind; “but we shall soon come there. Dost thou see the winding field–path there, and the great cavern where the vine leaves hang like rich green curtains? We shall go through there. Wrap thee in thy cloak; here the sun burns, but one step more and it is icy cold! The birds which fly past the cavern have the one, outer wing, in the warm summer, and the other, inner one, in the cold winter!”

“Really! And that is the way to the Garden of Paradise!” said the prince.

They now went into the cave. Ha! how ice–cold it was; but that did not last long, for the southwind spread out his wings, and they gave the warmth of the brightest fire. Nay, what a cavern it was! The huge masses of stone, from which the water dripped, hung above them in the most extraordinary shapes; before long it grew so narrow that they were obliged to creep upon hands and feet; again, and it expanded itself high and wide, like the free air. It looked like a chapel of the dead, with its silent organ pipes and organ turned to stone!

“Then we go the way of the dead to the Garden of Paradise,” said the prince; but the eastwind replied not a word, but pointed onward, and the most lovely blue light beamed towards them. The masses of stone above them became more and more like a chiselled ceiling, and at last were bright, like a white cloud in the moonshine. They now breathed the most deliciously mild atmosphere, as if fresh from the mountains, and as fragrant as the roses of the valley.

A river flowed on as clear as the air itself, and the fishes were of gold and silver; crimson eels, whose every movement seemed to emit blue sparks of fire, played down in the water, and the broad leaf of the waterlily had all the colors of the rainbow; the flower itself was an orange–colored burning flame, to which the water gave nourishment, in the same manner as the oil keeps the lamp continually burning. A firm bridge of marble, as artistically and as exquisitely built as if it had been of pearl and glass, led across the water to the Island of Bliss, where the Garden of Paradise bloomed.

The eastwind took the prince in his arms and carried him over. The flowers and the leaves

began the most exquisite song about his youth, so incomparably beautiful as no human voice could sing.

Were they palm trees or gigantic water plants which grew there? Trees so large and succulent the prince had never seen. Long garlands of the most wondrously formed twining plants, such as one only sees painted in rich colors and gold upon the margins of old missals, or which twined themselves through their initial letters, were thrown from tree to tree. It was altogether the most lovely and fantastic assemblage of birds, flowers, and graceful sweeping branches. In the grass just by them was a flock of peacocks, with outspread glittering tails. Yes, it was really so!—No, when the prince touched them he observed that they were not animals, but plants; it was the large plantain, which has the dazzling hues of the peacock's tail! Lions and tigers gambolled about, like playful cats, between the green hedges, which sent forth an odor like the blossom of the olive; and the lions and tigers were tame; the wild wood–dove glittered like the most beautiful pearl, and with its wings playfully struck the lion on the cheek; and the antelope, which usually is so timid, stood and nodded with its head, as if it too should like to join in the sport.

Now came the Fairy of Paradise; her garments shone like the sun, and her countenance was as gentle as that of a glad mother when she rejoices over her child. She was youthful; and the most beautiful girls attended her, each of whom had a beaming star in her hair.

The eastwind gave her a written leaf from the phoenix, and her eyes sparkled with joy; she took the prince by the hand, and led him into her castle, the walls of which were colored like the most splendid leaf of the tulip when held against the sun. The ceiling itself was a large glittering flower, and the longer one gazed into it the deeper seemed its cup. The prince stepped up to the window and looked through one of the panes; there he saw the Tree of Knowledge, with the snake and Adam and Eve standing close beside it.

"Are they not driven out?" asked he; and the Fairy smiled, and explained to him that upon every pane of glass had time burned in its picture, but not as we are accustomed to see it, —no, here all was living; the trees moved their leaves, and people came and went as in reality. He looked through another pane, and there was Jacob's dream, where the ladder reached up to heaven, and the angels with their large wings ascended and descended upon it. Yes, every thing which had been done in this world lived and moved in these panes of glass. Such pictures as these could only be burnt in by time.

The Fairy smiled, and led him into a large and lofty hall, the walls of which seemed transparent, and were covered with pictures, the one more lovely than the other. These were the millions of the blessed, and they smiled and sang so that all flowed together into one melody. The uppermost were so small that they seemed less than the smallest rosebud, when it looks like a pin–prick on paper. In the middle of the hall stood a great tree with drooping luxuriant branches; golden apples, large and small, hung like oranges among the green leaves. It was the Tree of Knowledge; of the fruit of which Adam and Eve had eaten. On every leaf hung a crimson drop of dew; it was as if the tree wept tears of blood.

"Let us now go into the boat," said the Fairy; "it will be refreshing to us out upon the heaving water. The boat rocks, but does not move from the place, and all the regions of the world pass before our eyes."

And it was wonderful to see how the coast moved! There came the lofty, snow–covered

Alps, with clouds and dark pine trees; horns resounded with such a deep melancholy, and peasants *jodelled* sweetly in the valleys. Now the banyan tree bowed its long depending branches over the boat; black swans swam upon the water, and the strangest animals and flowers showed themselves along the shores: this was Australia, the fifth quarter of the world, which glided past, with its horizon bounded by blue mountains. They heard the song of the priests, and saw the savages dancing to the sound of the drum and bone–tubes. The pyramids of Egypt now rose into the clouds; overturned pillars and sphinxes, half buried in sand, sailed past them. The northern lights flamed above the Hecla of the north; they were such magnificent fireworks as no one could imitate. The prince was delighted, and in fact, he saw a hundred times more than what we have related.

“And may I always remain here?” asked he.

“That depends upon thyself,” replied the Fairy. “If thou do not, like Adam, take of the forbidden thing, then thou mayest always remain here.”

“I shall not touch the apples upon the Tree of Knowledge,” said the prince; “here are a thousand fruits more beautiful than that. I should never do as Adam did!”

“Prove thyself, and if thou be not strong enough, then return with the eastwind which brought thee; he is about to go back again, and will not return here for a whole century. That time will pass to thee in this place as if it were only a hundred minutes, but it is time enough for temptation and sin. Every evening when I am about to leave thee, I shall say to thee, ‘Follow me!’ and beckon to thee. But follow me not, for with every step would the temptation become stronger, and thou wouldst come into the hall where grows the Tree of Knowledge. I sleep beneath its fragrant depending branches; if thou follow me, if thou impress a kiss upon me, then will Paradise sink deep in the earth, and it will be lost to thee. The sharp winds of the desert will howl around thee, cold rain will fall upon thy hair, and sorrow and remorse will be thy punishment!”

“I will remain here!” said the prince; so the eastwind kissed his brow, and said, “Be strong! and then we shall meet again here in a hundred years!”

The eastwind spread out his large wings, which shone like the harvest moon in autumn, or the northern lights in the cold winter.

“Farewell! farewell!” resounded from the flowers and the trees. The storks and the pelicans flew after, in a line like a waving riband, and accompanied him to the boundary of the Garden.

“Now we begin our dance!” said the Fairy; “at the conclusion, when I have danced with thee, thou wilt see that when the sun sets I shall beckon to thee, and thou wilt hear me say, ‘Follow me!’ But do it not! That is thy temptation—that is sin to thee! During a hundred years I shall every evening repeat it. Every time that thou resistest the temptation wilt thou gain more strength, till at length it will cease to tempt thee. This evening is the first trial! Remember that I have warned thee!”

The Fairy led him into a great hall of white transparent lilies; in each one the yellow stamina was a little golden harp, which rung with clear and flute–like tones. The most beautiful maidens floated in the dance, and sung how glorious was the gift of life; that they who were purified by trial should never die, and that the Garden of Paradise for them

should bloom forever!

The sun went down, the whole heaven became of gold, which gave to the lilies the splendor of the most beautiful roses. The prince felt a bliss within his heart such as he had never experienced before. He looked, and the background of the hall opened, and the Tree of Knowledge stood there with a splendor which dazzled his eyes. A song resounded from it, low and delicious as the voice of his mother, and it seemed as if she sung, “My child! my beloved child!”

Then beckoned the Fairy, and said, “Follow, follow me!”

He started towards her—he forgot his promise—forgot it all the first evening! “Follow, follow me!” alone sounded in his heart. He paused not—he hastened after her.

“I will,” said he; “there is really no sin in it! Why should I not do so? I will see her! There is nothing lost if I only do not kiss her, and that I will not do—for I have a firm will!”

The Fairy put aside the green, depending branches of the Tree of Knowledge, and the next moment was hidden from sight.

“I have not sinned,” said the prince, “and I will not!” He also put aside the green, depending branches of the Tree of Knowledge, and there sat the Fairy with her hands clasped, and the tears on her dark eyelashes!

“Weep not for me!” said he passionately. “There can be no sin in what I have done; weep not!” and he kissed away her tears, and his lips touched hers!

At once a thunder crash was heard—a loud and deep thunder crash, and all seemed hurled together! The beautiful, weeping Fairy, the Garden of Paradise, sunk—sunk so deep—so deep!—and the prince saw it sink in the deep night! Like a little gleaming star he saw it shining a long way off! The coldness of death went through his limbs; he closed his eyes, and lay long as if dead!

The cold rain fell upon his face; the keen wind blew around his head; his thoughts turned to the past.

“What have I done!” sighed he; “I have sinned like Adam! Sinned, and I have forfeited Paradise!”

He opened his eyes; the star so far off, which had shone to him like the sunken Paradise, he now saw was the morning star in heaven.

He raised himself up, and was in the great wood near to the cave of the winds; the old woman sat by his side, she looked angrily at him, and lifted up her arm.

“Already! the first time of trial!” said she: “I expected as much! Yes, if thou wast a lad of mine, I would punish thee!”

“Punishment will come!” said a strong old man, with a scythe in his hand, and with large, black wings!—“I shall lay him in his coffin, but not now. Let him return to the world, atone for his sin, and become good in deed, and not alone in word. I shall come again; if he be then good and pious, I will take him above the stars, where blooms the Garden of Paradise; and he shall enter in at its beautiful pearl gates, and be a dweller in it forever and ever; but if then his thoughts are evil, and his heart full of sin, he will sink deeper than

Paradise seemed to sink—sink deeper, and that forever!—Farewell!”

The prince arose—the old woman was gone—the cave of the winds was nothing now but a hollow in the rock; he wondered how it had seemed so large the night before; the morning star had set, and the sun shone with a clear and cheerful light upon the little flowers and blades of grass, which were heavy with the last night’s rain; the birds sang, and the bees hummed in the blossoms of the lime tree. The prince walked home to his castle. He told his grandmother how he had been to the Garden of Paradise, and what had happened to him there, and what the old man with the black wings had said.

“This will do thee more good than many book–lessons,” said the old grandmother; “never let it go out of thy memory!”—and the prince never did.

A Night in the Kitchen

Once upon a time, there was a bunch of brimstone matches, which were exceedingly proud, because they were of high descent; their ancestral tree, that is to say, the great fir tree, of which they were little bits of chips, had been a great, old tree in the forest. The brimstone matches now lay beside the kitchen fender, together with the tinder and an old iron pot, and were speaking of their youth.

“Yes, we were then on the green branch,” said they; “then we were really and truly on a green branch; every morning and evening we drank diamond tea, that was the dew; every day we had sunshine, if the sun shone, and all the little birds told us tales. We could very well observe also, that we were rich; for the common trees were only dressed in summer, but our family had a good stock of green clothing both winter and summer. But then came the wood–cutters—that was a great revolution, and our family was cut up root and branch; the main head of the family, he took a place as mainmast in a magnificent ship, which sailed round the world wherever it would; the other branches, some took one place, and some took another; and we have now the post of giving light to the common herd; and, therefore, high–born as we are, are we now in the kitchen.”

“Yes, it was different with me,” said the iron pot, when the matches were silent; “as soon as ever I came into the world I was cleaned and boiled many a time! I care for the solid, and am properly spoken of as first in the house. My only pleasure is, as soon as dinner is over, to lie clean and bright upon the shelf, and head a long row of comrades. If I except the water–bucket, which now and then goes down in the yard, we always live in–doors. Our only newsmonger is the coal–box; but it talks so violently about government and the people!—yes, lately there was an old pot, which, out of horror of it, fell down and broke to pieces!”

“Thou chatterest too much!” interrupted the tinder, and the steel struck the flint until sparks came out. “Should we not have a merry evening?”

“Yes; let us talk about who is the most well–bred among us,” said the brimstone matches.

“No, I don’t think it right to talk about ourselves,” said an earthen jug; “let us have an evening’s entertainment. I will begin; I will tell something which everybody has experienced; people can do that so seldom, and it is so pleasant. By the Baltic sea—”

“That is a beautiful beginning!” said all the talkers; “it will certainly be a history which we shall like.”

“Yes, then I passed my youth in a quiet family; the furniture was of wood; the floors were scoured; they had clean curtains every fortnight.”

“How interestingly you tell it!” said the dusting–brush; “one can immediately tell that the narrator is a lady, such a thread of purity always runs through their relations.”

“Yes, that one can feel!” said the water–bucket, and made a little skip of pleasure on the floor.

And the earthen jug continued her story, and the end of it was like the beginning.

All the talkers shook for pleasure; and the dusting–brush took green parsley leaves from the dust–heap, and crowned the jug; for he knew that it would vex the others; and thinks he to himself, “If I crown her to–day, she will crown me to–morrow!”

“Now we will dance,” said the fire–tongs; and began dancing. Yes, indeed! and it is wonderful how he set one leg before the other; the old shoehorn, which hung on a hook, jumped up to see it. “Perhaps I, too, may get crowned,” said the fire–tongs; and it was crowned.

“They are only the rabble!” thought the brimstone matches.

The tea–urn was then asked to sing; but it said it had got a cold, and it could not sing unless it was boiling; but it was nothing but an excuse, because it did not like to sing, unless it stood upon the table, in grand company.

In the window there sat an old pen, which the servant–girl was accustomed to write with: there was nothing remarkable about it; it was dipped deep into the ink–stand. “If the tea–urn will not sing,” said the pen, “then she can let it alone! Outside there hangs a nightingale in a cage, which can sing, and which has not regularly learned any thing; but we will not talk scandal this evening!”

“I think it highly unbecoming,” said the tea–kettle, which was the kitchen singer, and half–sister to the tea–urn, “that such a foreign bird should be listened to! Is it patriotic? I will let the coal–box judge.”

“It only vexes me,” said the coal–box; “it vexes me so much, that no one can think! Is this a proper way to spend an evening? Would it not be much better to put the house to rights? Every one go to his place, and I will rule; that will produce a change!”

“Yes, let us do something out of the common way!” said all the things together.

At that very moment the door opened. It was the servant–girl, and so they all stood stock still; not a sound was heard; but there was not a pot among them that did not know what they might have done, and how genteel they were.

“If I might have had my way,” thought they, “then it would have been a regularly merry evening!”

The servant–girl took the brimstone matches, and put fire to them. Bless us! how they sputtered and burst into a flame!

“Now every one can see,” thought they, “that we take the first rank! What splendor we have! what brilliancy!”—and with that they were burnt out.

Little Ida's Flowers

"My poor flowers are quite dead," said little Ida. "They were so beautiful last evening, and now all their leaves hang withered. How can that be?" asked she from the student who sat on the sofa. She was very fond of him, for he knew the most beautiful tales, and could cut out such wonderful pictures; he could cut out hearts with little dancing ladies in them; flowers he could cut out, and castles with doors that would open. He was a very charming student.

"Why do the flowers look so miserably to–day?" again asked she, and showed him a whole bouquet of withered flowers.

"Dost thou not know what ails them?" said the student; "the flowers have been to a ball last night, and therefore they droop so."

"But flowers cannot dance," said little Ida.

"Yes, when it is dark, and we are all asleep, then they dance about merrily; nearly every night they have a ball!" said the student.

"Can no child go to the ball?" inquired Ida.

"Yes," said the student, "little tiny daisies and lilies of the valley."

"Where do the prettiest flowers dance?" asked little Ida.

"Hast thou not," said the student, "gone out of the city gate to the great castle where the king lives in summer, where there is a beautiful garden, with a great many flowers in it? Thou hast certainly seen the swans which come sailing to thee for little bits of bread. There is a regular ball, thou mayst believe!"

"I was in the garden yesterday with my mother," said Ida, "but all the leaves were off the trees, and there were hardly any flowers at all! Where are they? In summer I saw such a many."

"They are gone into the castle," said the student. "Thou seest, as soon as the king and all his court go away to the city, the flowers go directly out of the garden into the castle, and are very merry. Thou shouldst see them! The two most beautiful roses sit upon the throne, and are king and queen; all the red cockscombs place themselves on each side, and stand and bow, they are the chamberlains. Then all the prettiest flowers come, and so there is a great ball; the blue violets represent young midshipmen and cadets, they dance with hyacinths and crocuses, which they call young ladies. The tulips and the great yellow lilies, they are old ladies who look on, and see that the dancing goes on properly, and that every thing is beautiful."

"But is there nobody who gives the flowers any thing while they dance in the king's castle?" asked little Ida.

"There is nobody who rightly knows about it," said the student. "In the summer season at night the old castle–steward goes regularly through the castle; he has a great bunch of keys

with him, but as soon as ever the flowers hear the jingling of his keys, they are quite still, hide themselves behind the long curtains, and peep out with their little heads. ‘I can smell flowers somewhere about,’ says the old castle–steward, ‘but I cannot see them!’”

“That is charming!” said little Ida, and clapped her hands; “but could not I see the flowers?”

“Yes,” said the student, “only remember the next time thou art there to peep in at the window, and then thou wilt see them. I did so one day; there lay a tall yellow Turk’s–cap lily on a sofa; that was a court lady.”

“And can the flowers in the botanic garden go out there? Can they come such a long way?” asked Ida.

“Yes, that thou mayst believe,” said the student; “for if they like they can fly. Hast thou not seen the pretty butterflies, the red, and yellow, and white ones, they look almost like flowers,—and so they have been; they have grown on stalks high up in the air, and have shot out leaves as if they were small wings, and so they fly, and when they can support them well, then they have leave given them to fly about by day. That thou must have seen thyself! But it is very possible that the flowers in the botanic garden never have been into the king’s castle, nor know how merry they are there at night. And now, therefore, I will tell thee something that will put the professor of botany who lives beside the garden into a perplexity. Thou knowest him, dost thou not? Next time thou goest into his garden, do thou tell one of the flowers that there will be a great ball at the castle; it will tell it to its neighbor, and it to the next, and so on till they all know, and then they will all fly away. Then the professor will come into the garden, and will not find a single flower, and he will not be able to imagine what can have become of them.”

“But how can one flower tell another? flowers cannot talk,” said little Ida.

“No, they cannot properly talk,” replied the student, “and so they have pantomime. Hast not thou seen when it blows a little the flowers nod and move all their green leaves; that is just as intelligible as if they talked.”

“Can the professor understand pantomime?” inquired Ida.

“Yes, that thou mayst believe! He came one morning down into his garden, and saw a tall yellow nettle pantomiming to a beautiful red carnation, and it was all the same as if it had said, ‘Thou art so handsome, that I am very fond of thee!’ The professor was not pleased with that, and struck the nettle upon its leaves, which are its fingers; but they stung him so, that from that time he has never meddled with a nettle again.”

“That is delightful!” said little Ida, and laughed.

“Is that the stuff to fill a child’s mind with!” exclaimed the tiresome chancellor, who was come in on a visit, and now sat on the sofa. He could not bear the student, and always grumbled when he saw him cutting out the beautiful and funny pictures,—now a man hanging on a gallows, with a heart in his hand, because he had stolen hearts; and now an old lady riding on a horse, with her husband sitting on her nose. The cross old chancellor could not bear any of these, and always said as he did now, “Is that the stuff to cram a child’s head with! It is stupid fancy!”

But for all that, little Ida thought that what the student had told her about the flowers was so charming, that she could not help thinking of it. The flowers hung down their heads, because they had been at the ball, and were quite worn out. So she took them away with her, to her other playthings, which lay upon a pretty little table, the drawers of which were all full of her fine things. In the doll's bed lay her doll, Sophie, asleep; but for all that little Ida said to her, "Thou must actually get up, Sophie, and be thankful to lie in the drawer to–night, for the poor flowers are ill, and so they must lie in thy bed, and, perhaps, they will then get well."

With this she took up the doll, but it looked so cross, and did not say a single word; for it was angry that it must be turned out of its bed.

So Ida laid the flowers in the doll's bed, tucked them in very nicely, and said, that now they must lie quite still, and she would go and get tea ready for them, and they should get quite well again by to–morrow morning; and then she drew the little curtains close round the bed, that the sun might not blind them.

All the evening long she could not help thinking about what the student had told her; and then when she went to bed herself, she drew back the curtains from the windows where her mother's beautiful flowers stood, both hyacinths and tulips, and she whispered quite softly to them, "I know that you will go to the ball to–night!" but the flowers looked as if they did not understand a word which she said, and did not move a leaf—but little Ida knew what she knew.

When she was in bed, she lay for a long time thinking how delightful it would be to see the beautiful flowers dancing in the king's castle.

"Can my flowers actually have been there?" and with these words she fell asleep. In the night she woke; she had been dreaming about the flowers, and the student, who the chancellor said stuffed her head with nonsense. It was quite silent in the chamber where Ida lay; the night lamp was burning on the table, and her father and her mother were asleep.

"Are my flowers now lying in Sophie's bed?" said she to herself; "how I should like to know!" She lifted herself up a little in bed, and looked through the door, which stood ajar, and in that room lay the flowers, and all her playthings. She listened, and it seemed to her as if some one was playing on the piano, which stood in that room, but so softly and so sweetly as she had never heard before.

"Now, certainly, all the flowers are dancing in there," said she; "O, how I should like to go and see!" but she did not dare to get up, lest she should wake her father and mother. "If they would only just come in here!" said she; but the flowers did not come, and the music continued to play so sweetly. She could not resist it any longer, for it was so delightful; so she crept out of her little bed, and went, quite softly, to the door, and peeped into the room. Nay! what a charming sight she beheld!

There was not any night lamp in that room, and yet it was quite light; the moon shone through the window into the middle of the floor, and it was almost as light as day. All the hyacinths and tulips stood in two long rows along the floor; they were not any longer in the window, where stood the empty pots. All the flowers were dancing so beautifully, one round another, on the floor; they made a regular chain, and took hold of one another's

green leaves when they swung round. But there sat at the piano a great yellow lily, which little Ida had certainly seen in the summer, for she remembered very well that the student had said, “Nay, how like Miss Lina it is!” and they had all laughed at him. But now it seemed really to Ida as if the tall yellow lily resembled the young lady, and that she, also, really did just as if she were playing; now she laid her long yellow face on one side, now on the other, and nodded the time to the charming music. Not one of them observed little Ida.

She now saw a large blue crocus spring upon the middle of the table where the playthings lay, go straight to the doll’s bed, and draw aside the curtains, where lay the sick flowers; but they raised themselves up immediately, and nodded one to another, as much as to say, that they also would go with them and dance. The old snapdragon, whose under lip was broken off, stood up and bowed to the pretty flowers, which did not look poorly at all, and they hopped down among the others, and were very merry.

All at once it seemed as if something had fallen down from the table. Ida looked towards it; it was the Easter–wand, which had heard the flowers. It was also very pretty; upon the top of it was set a little wax–doll, which had just such a broad hat upon its head as that which the chancellor wore. The Easter–wand hopped about upon its three wooden legs, and stamped quite loud, for it danced the mazurka; and there was not one of the flowers which could dance that dance, because they were so light and could not stamp.

The wax–doll upon the Easter–wand seemed to become taller and stouter, and whirled itself round above the paper flowers on the wand, and exclaimed, quite loud, “Is that the nonsense to stuff a child’s mind with! It is stupid fancy!”—And the wax–doll was precisely like the cross old chancellor with the broad hat, and looked just as yellow and ill–tempered as he did; but the paper flowers knocked him on the thin legs, and with that he shrunk together again, and became a little tiny wax–doll. It was charming to see it! little Ida could hardly help laughing. The Easter–wand continued to dance, and the chancellor was obliged to dance too; it mattered not whether he made himself so tall and big, or whether he were the little yellow wax–doll, with the great black hat. Then came up the other flowers, especially those which had lain in Sophie’s bed, and so the Easter–rod left off dancing.

At that very moment a great noise was heard within the drawer where Ida’s doll, Sophie, lay, with so many of her playthings; and with this the snapdragon ran up to the corner of the table, lay down upon his stomach, and opened the drawer a little bit. With this Sophie raised herself up, and looked round her in astonishment.

“There is a ball here!” said she, “and why has not anybody told me of it?”

“Wilt thou dance with me?” said the snapdragon.

“Yes, thou art a fine one to dance with!” said she, and turned her back upon him. So she seated herself upon the drawer, and thought that to be sure some one of the flowers would come and engage her, but not one came; so she coughed a little, hem! hem! hem! but for all that not one came. The snapdragon danced alone, and that was not so very bad either!

As now none of the flowers seemed to see Sophie, she let herself drop heavily out of the drawer down upon the floor,—and that gave a great alarum; all the flowers at once came running up and gathered around her, inquiring if she had hurt herself; and they were all so

exceedingly kind to her, especially those which had lain in her bed. But she had not hurt herself at all, and all Ida's flowers thanked her for the beautiful bed, and they paid her so much attention, and took her into the middle of the floor, where the moon shone, and danced with her, while all the other flowers made a circle around them. Sophie was now very much delighted; and she said they would be very welcome to her bed, for that she had not the least objection to lie in the drawer.

But the flowers said, "Thou shalt have as many thanks as if we used it, but we cannot live so long! To–morrow we shall be quite dead; but now tell little Ida," said they, "that she must bury us down in the garden, where the canary–bird lies, and so we shall grow up again next summer, and be much prettier than ever!"

"No, you shall not die," said Sophie, and the flowers kissed her. At that very moment the room door opened, and a great crowd of beautiful flowers came dancing in. Ida could not conceive where they came from; they must certainly have been all the flowers out of the king's castle. First of all went two most magnificent roses, and they had little gold crowns on; they were a king and a queen; then came the most lovely gilliflowers and carnations, and they bowed first on this side and then on that. They had brought music with them; great big poppies and pionies blew upon peapods till they were red in the face. The blue–bells and the little white convolvuluses rung as if they were musical bells. It was charming music. Then there came in a many other flowers, and they danced all together; the blue violets and the red daisies, the anemones and the lilies of the valley; and all the flowers kissed one another: it was delightful to see it!

At last they all bade one another good–night, and little Ida also went to her bed, where she dreamed about every thing that she had seen.

The next morning, when she got up, she went as quickly as she could to her little table, to see whether the flowers were there still; she drew aside the curtains from the little bed;—yes, there they all lay together, but they were quite withered, much more than yesterday. Sophie lay in the drawer, where she had put her; she looked very sleepy.

"Canst thou remember what thou hast to tell me?" said little Ida; but Sophie looked quite stupid, and did not say one single word.

"Thou art not at all good," said Ida, "and yet they all danced with thee."

So she took a little paper box, on which were painted beautiful birds, and this she opened, and laid in it the dead flowers.

"This shall be your pretty coffin," said she, "and when my Norwegian cousins come, they shall go with me and bury you, down in the garden, that next summer you may grow up again, and be lovelier than ever!"

The Norwegian cousins were two lively boys, who were called Jonas and Adolph; their father had given them two new cross–bows, and these they brought with them to show to Ida. She told them about the poor flowers which were dead, and so they got leave to bury them. The two boys went first, with their cross–bows on their shoulders; and little Ida came after, with the dead flowers in the pretty little box. Down in the garden they dug a little grave. Ida kissed the flowers, and then put them in their box, down into the earth, and Jonas and Adolph stood with their cross–bows above the grave, for they had neither arms

nor cannon.

The Constant Tin Soldier

There were, once upon a time, five–and–twenty tin soldiers; they were all brothers, for they were born of an old tin spoon. They held their arms in their hands, and their faces were all alike; their uniform was red and blue, and very beautiful. The very first word which they heard in this world, when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay, was, “Tin soldiers!” This was the exclamation of a little boy, who clapped his hands as he said it. They had been given to him, for it was his birthday, and he now set them out on the table. The one soldier was just exactly like another; there was only one of them that was a little different; he had only one leg, for he had been the last that was made, and there was not quite tin enough; yet he stood just as firmly upon his one leg as they did upon their two, and he was exactly the one who became remarkable.

Upon the table on which he had set them out, there stood many other playthings; but that which was most attractive to the eye, was a pretty little castle of pasteboard. One could look through the little windows as if into the rooms. Outside stood little trees, and round about it a little mirror, which was to look like a lake; swans of wax swam upon this, and were reflected in it. It was altogether very pretty; but the prettiest thing of all was the little young lady who stood at the open castle door, for she was a dancer; and she lifted one of her legs so high in the air, that the tin soldier might almost have fancied that she had only one leg, like himself.

“That is a wife for me!” thought he, “but she is a great lady; she lives in a castle, I in nothing but a box; and then we are five–and–twenty of us, there is no room for her! Yet I must make her acquaintance!”

And so he set himself behind a snuff–box, which stood on the table, and from thence he could very plainly see the pretty little lady, which remained standing upon one leg, without ever losing her balance.

That continued all the evening, and then the other tin soldiers were put into their box, and the people of the house went to bed. The playthings now began to amuse themselves; they played at company coming, at fighting, and at having a ball. The tin soldiers rattled about in their box, for they wanted to be with the rest of the things, but they could not get the box lid off. The nutcrackers knocked about the gingerbread nuts, and the slate–pencil laughed with the slate; it was so entertaining that the canary–bird awoke, and began to chatter with them also, but she chattered in verse. The only two which did not move from their place were the tin soldier and the little dancing lady. She kept herself so upright, standing on the point of her toe, with both her arms extended; and he stood just as steadily upon his one leg, and his eyes did not move from her for one moment.

It now struck twelve o’clock, and crash! up sprang the lid of the snuff–box, but there was no snuff in it; no, there was a little black imp—it was a jack–in–the–box.

“Tin soldier!” said the imp, “keep thy eyes to thyself!”

But the tin soldier pretended that he did not hear.

“Yes, we shall see in the morning!” said the imp.

And now it was the next morning, and the children got up, and they set the tin soldier in the window,—and either it was the imp, or else it was a sudden gust of wind, but the casement burst open, and out went the tin soldier, head foremost, down from the third story! It was a horrible fall, he turned head over heels, and remained standing with his one leg up in the air, and with his bayonet down among the stones of a sink.

The maid–servant and the little boy went down directly to seek for him, but although they almost trod upon him, still they could not see him. If the tin soldier had only shouted out, “Here I am!” they would have found him; but he did not think it would be becoming in him to shout out when he had his uniform on.

It now began to rain; one drop fell heavier than another; it was a regular shower. When it was over there came up two street boys.

“Look here!” said one of them, “here lies a tin soldier. He shall have a sail!”

So they made a boat of a newspaper, and set the tin soldier in it, and now he sailed down the kennel; the two lads ran, one on each side, and clapped their hands. Dear me! what billows there were in the uneven kennel, and what a torrent there was, for it had poured down with rain! The paper boat rocked up and down, and whirled round so fast! The tin soldier must have trembled, but he showed no fear at all, he never changed his countenance, and stood holding his weapon in his hand.

Just then the boat was driven under a large arch of the kennel, and it was as dark to the tin soldier as if he had been in his box.

“Where am I now come to?” thought he; “yes, yes, it is all that imp’s doing! Ah! if the little dancing lady were only in the boat, I would not mind if it were twice as dark!”

At that moment up came a great big water–rat, which lived under the kennel’s archway.

“Have you a passport?” asked the rat. “Out with your passport!”

But the tin soldier said not a word, and stood stock still, shouldering his arms. The boat shot past, and the rat came after. Ha! how he set his teeth, and cried to the sticks and the straws,—

“Stop him! stop him! he has not paid the toll! He has not shown his passport!”

But the stream got stronger and stronger. The tin soldier could already see daylight at the end of the tunnel, but at the same time he heard a roaring sound, which might well have made a bolder man than he tremble. Only think! where the tunnel ended, the water of the kennel was poured down into a great canal; which would be, for him, just as dangerous as for us to sail down a great waterfall!

He was now come so near to it that he could no longer stand upright. The boat drove on; the tin soldier held himself as stiff as he could; nobody could have said of him that he winked with an eye. The boat whirled round three times, and filled with water to the very edge—it must sink! The tin soldier stood up to his neck in water! Deeper and deeper sank the boat, the paper grew softer and softer! Now went the water above the soldier’s head!—he thought of the little dancing lady, whom he should never see more, and it rung in the tin

soldier’s ear,—

> “Fare thee well, thou man of war!
> Death with thee is dealing!”

The paper now went in two, and the tin soldier fell through; and at that moment was swallowed by a large fish!

Nay, how dark it was now in there! It was darker than in the kennel archway, and much narrower. But the tin soldier was steadfast to his duty; and he lay there, shouldering his arms. The fish twisted about, and made the most horrible sort of movements; at last it became quite still; a flash of lightning seemed to go through it. Light shone quite bright, and some one shouted aloud, “Tin soldier!”

The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold, and brought into the kitchen, where the servant–girl cut it up with a great knife. She took the soldier, who was as alive as ever, between her two fingers, and carried it into the parlor, where she showed them all what a remarkable little man had been travelling about in the stomach of the fish! But the tin soldier was not proud. They set him upon the table, and there—Nay, how wonderfully things happen in this world!—the tin soldier was in the self–same room he had been in before; he saw the self–same child, and the self–same playthings on the table; the grand castle, with the pretty little dancing lady standing at the door. She was standing still upon one leg, with the other raised; she also was constant. It quite affected the tin soldier, he was ready to shed tin tears, only that would not have been becoming in him. He looked at her, and she looked at him, but neither of them said a word.

At that very moment one of the little boys took up the tin soldier, and threw it into the stove. There was no reason for his doing so; it must certainly have been the jack–in–the–box that was the cause of it.

The tin soldier stood amid the flames, and felt a great heat, but whether it was actual fire, or love, he knew not. All color was quite gone out of him; whether from his long journeying, or whether from care, there is no saying. He looked at the little dancing lady, and she looked at him; he felt that he was melting away, but for all that, he stood shouldering his arms. With that the door of the room suddenly opened, and a draught of wind carried away the dancer. Like a sylph she flew into the stove to the tin soldier; became, all at once, flame, and was gone! The tin soldier melted to a little lump; and when the servant, the next day, was carrying out the ashes, she found him like a little tin heart: of the dancing lady, on the contrary, there was nothing but the ground on which she had stood, and that was burned as black as a coal.

The Storks

Upon the last house in a little town there stood a stork's nest. The stork–mother sat in the nest, with her four young ones, which stuck out their heads, with their little black beaks, for their beaks had not yet become red. Not far off, upon the ridge of the house roof, stood the stork–father, as stiffly and proudly as possible; he had tucked up one leg under him, for though that was rather inconvenient, still he was standing as sentinel. One might have fancied that he was carved out of wood, he stood so stock still.

"It looks, certainly, very consequential," thought he to himself, "that my wife should have a sentinel to her nest! Nobody need know that I am her husband; they will think, of course, that I commanded the sentinel to stand here. It looks so very proper!" And having thus thought, he continued to stand on one leg.

A troop of little boys were playing down in the street below, and when they saw the storks, the boldest lad amongst them began to sing, and at last they all sang together, that old rhyme about the storks, which the children in Denmark sing; but they sang it now, because it had just come into their heads:—

"Stork, stork on one leg,
Fly home to thy egg;
Mrs. Stork she sits at home,
With four great, big young ones;
The eldest shall be hung,
The second have its neck wrung;
The third shall be burned to death,
The fourth shall be murdered!"

"Only hear what those lads sing!" said the little storks; "they sing that we shall be hanged and burned!"

"Do not vex yourselves about that," said the stork–mother; "don't listen to them, and then it does not matter."

But the boys continued to sing, and they pointed with their fingers to the stork; there was one boy, however, among them, and his name was Peter, and he said that it was a sin to make fun of the storks, and he would not do it.

The stork–mother consoled her young ones thus: "Don't annoy yourselves about that. Look how funnily your father stands on one leg!"

"We are so frightened!" said the young ones, and buried their heads down in the nest.

The next day, when the children assembled again to play, they saw the storks, and they began their verse:—

"The second have its neck wrung;
The third shall be burned to death!"

“Shall we be hanged and burned?” asked the young storks.

“No, certainly not!” said the mother. “You will learn to fly; I will exercise you; and so we shall take you out into the meadows, and go a visiting to the frogs, that make courtesies to us in the water; they sing—‘koax! koax!’ and so we eat them up; that is a delight!”

“And how so?” asked the young storks.

“All the storks which are in the whole country assemble,” said the mother, “and so the autumn manoeuvres begin; every one must be clever at flying; that is of great importance, for those that cannot fly are pecked to death by the general, with his beak; and, therefore, it is well to learn something before the exercise begins.”

“And so we really may be murdered! as the boys said; and hark! now they are singing it again.”

“Listen to me, and not to them!” said the stork–mother. “After the great manoeuvre, we fly away to the warm countries—O, such a long way off, over mountains and woods! We fly to Egypt, where there are three–cornered stone houses, which go up in a point above the clouds; they are called pyramids, and are older than any stork can tell. There is a river which overflows its banks, and so the country becomes all mud. One goes in the mud, and eats frogs.”

“O!” said all the young ones.

“Yes, that is so delightful! One does nothing at all but eat, all day long; and whilst we are so well off, in this country there is not a single green leaf upon the trees; here it is, then, so cold; and the very clouds freeze into pieces, and fall down in little white rags!”

That was the snow which she meant, but she could not explain it more intelligibly.

“Will it freeze the naughty boys into bits?” asked the young ones.

“No, it will not freeze them into bits, but it will pretty nearly do so; and they will be obliged to sit in dark rooms and cough. You, on the contrary, all that time, can be flying about in the warm countries, where there are flowers and warm sunshine!”

Some time had now passed, and the young ones were so large that they could stand up in the nest and look about them, and the stork–father came flying every day with nice little frogs and snails, and all the stork–delicacies which he could find. O, it was extraordinary what delicious morsels he got for them. He stretched out his head, clattered with his beak, as if it had been a little rattle, and thus he told them tales about the marshes.

“Listen to me; now you must learn to fly,” said the stork–mother, one day; and so all the four young ones were obliged to get out of the nest upon the ridge of the house; and how dizzy they were; how they balanced themselves with their wings, and for all that were very near falling!

“Look at me,” said the mother, “you must hold your heads thus! and thus must you set your wings! Now! one, two! one, two! This it is which must help you out into the world!”

With this she flew a little way, and the young ones made a little clumsy hop—bump!—there lay they, for their bodies were heavy.

“I cannot fly!” said one of the young ones; “it’s no use my trying!” and crept up to the nest

again.

“Wilt thou be frozen to death here, when winter comes?” asked the mother. “Shall the boys come and hang thee, and burn thee, and wring thy neck? Shall I go and call them?”

“O, no!” said the young stork; and so hopped again on the roof, like the others.

On the third day after that it could regularly fly a little, and so they thought that they could now rest awhile in the air. They tried to do so, but—bump!—there they tumbled, and so they were obliged to flutter their wings again.

The boys were now down in the street once more, and sung their rhyme:—

“Stork, stork, fly.”

“Shall not we fly down and peck their eyes out?” said the young ones.

“No, let them be,” said the mother, “and listen to me, that is far wiser. One, two, three! Now we fly round, higher than ever! One, two, three! Now to the left of the chimney!—see, that was very well done! and the last stroke of the wings was so beautiful and correct, that I will give you leave to go down to the marsh with me, to–morrow! There will come a great number of pleasant stork–families there, with their children; let me have the happiness of seeing that mine are the nicest, and that they can make a bow and courtesy; that looks so well, and gains respect!”

“But shall we not have revenge on the naughty boys?” inquired the young storks.

“Let them sing what they like!” said the mother; “you will fly amid the clouds, go to the land of the pyramids, when they must freeze, and neither have a green leaf left, nor a sweet apple!”

“Yes, but we will be revenged!” whispered they one to another, and then went out again to exercise.

Of all the boys in the street there was not one who sung the jeering rhymes about the storks so much as he who first began it; and he was a very little one, and was not more than six years old. The young storks thought to be sure that he must be a hundred years old, for he was so much larger than either their mother or their father; and they, poor things, knew nothing about how old children and great men might be. All their revenge, they determined, should be taken upon this boy; he was the first to begin, and he it was who always sang. The young storks were very much irritated, and the more they were determined on revenge, the less they said of it to their mother. Their mother, they thought, would at last grant their wishes, but they would leave it till the last day they were in the country.

“We must see how you conduct yourselves in the great manoeuvre,” said the mother; “if you fail in that, then the general will run you through with his beak, and then the boys will be right in one way, at least. Now let us see.”

“Yes, thou shalt see!” said the young ones; and so they took great pains and practised every day, and flew so beautifully and so lightly that it was charming to see them.

Now came the autumn; and all the storks began to assemble to fly away into the warm

countries, while we have winter. That was a manoeuvre! Over wood and town went they, just to see how they could fly. The young storks performed so expertly that they could discern very well both frogs and snakes. That was the very best test of skill. “Frogs and snakes, therefore, they should eat;” and they did so.

“Now let us have revenge,” said they.

“Leave off talking of revenge,” said the mother. “Listen to me, which is a great deal better. Do not you remember the good little boy who said, when the others sung, ‘that it was a sin to make fun of the storks?’ let us reward him, that is better than having revenge.”

“Yes, let us reward him,” said the young storks.

“He shall have, next summer, a nice little sister, such a beautiful little sister as never was seen!—Will not that be a reward for him?” said the mother.

“It will,” said the young ones; “a sweet little sister he shall have!”

“And as he is called Peter,” continued the mother, “so shall you also be called Peter altogether.”

And that which she said was done. The little boy had the loveliest of little sisters next year; and, from that time, all the storks in Denmark were called Peter; and so are they to this day.