

2021/2022 Storytelling Selections

Resource: *The Gutenberg Project* (gutenberg.org)

1. How The Rabbit Lost His Tail
2. The Stone-Cutter
3. The Frog Prince
4. The Steadfast Tin Soldier
5. The Hawks and Their Friends
6. The Fish and the Ring
7. Orpheus the Sweet Singer
8. The Monkey's Fiddle
9. The Seven Ravens
10. The Swineherd
11. The Contest
12. The Nightingale
13. Rumpelstiltskin
14. Urashima Taro and the Turtle
15. How The Camel Got His Hump

Notes:

- 1) Since these stories come from many sources with many authors and editors, it is the suggestion of the storytelling committee that, for the sake of simplicity, students should cite their story in one of the following ways:
 - [*Title of story*], as found in the Gutenberg Project.
 - [*Title of story*], a [*country/tribe of origin*] story as found in the Gutenberg Project.
- 2) All these stories are in the public domain, and minor edits have been made to certain texts at the discretion of the Storytelling Committee.
- 3) We recognize that many of these tales have been edited and translated from their original sources. Storytellers are encouraged to research the origins of these stories and take those origins into consideration when presenting them for a modern audience.

Storytelling Committee Members

Jessica Fedje
 Dr. Paulette Reikowski
 Kathleen Westgard
 Max Wojtanowicz

Contributing Readers

Mikayla Curry	Jim Fedje
Zoe DeBoer	Ben Habegger
Amanda Engels	Bret Hemmerlin
Jessica Fedje	Stewart Wilson

2022 Storytelling Theme: CHANGE

Change is inevitable. When life deals out change, we have opportunities to grow and learn, but that's rarely easy. Embracing change can be much harder than resisting it, denying it, or ignoring it. Embracing change means you choose not to see it as adversarial. It just...is. It could be good or bad, but it's up to us to address new realities, to adapt, to grow, and to refuse to fall victim to stagnation. John Wooden tells us, "Not all change is progress, but there is no progress without change."

The characters in these stories are confronted with inevitable change. How will they handle it? Can they summon the courage to embrace it? Let the storyteller explore the life lessons to be learned, so that the audience may be transformed by listening to these adventures.

1. HOW THE RABBIT LOST HIS TAIL

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

Author: Elsie Spicer Eells

Origin: Brazilian

Once upon a time, ages and ages ago, the rabbit had a long tail, but the cat had none. She looked with envious eyes at the one which the rabbit had. It was exactly the sort of a tail she longed to have.

The rabbit was always a thoughtless careless little beast. One day he went to sleep with his beautiful long tail hanging straight out behind him. Along came Mistress Puss carrying a sharp knife, and with one blow she cut off Mr. Rabbit's tail. Mistress Puss was very spry and she had the tail nearly sewed onto her own body before Mr. Rabbit saw what she was doing.

"Don't you think it looks better on me than it did on you?" asked Mistress Puss.

"It surely is very becoming to you," replied the generous unselfish rabbit. "It was a little too long for me anyway and I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you keep it if you will give me that sharp knife in exchange for it."

The cat gave Mr. Rabbit the knife and he started out into the deep forest with it. "I've lost my tail but I've gained a knife," said he; "I'll get a new tail or something else just as good."

Mr. Rabbit hopped along through the forest for a long time and at last he came to a little old man who was busily engaged in making baskets. He was making the baskets out of rushes and he was biting them off with his teeth. He looked up and spied Mr. Rabbit with the knife in his mouth.

"O, please, Mr. Rabbit," said he, "will you not be so kind as to let me borrow that sharp knife you are carrying? It is very hard work to bite the rushes off with my teeth."

Mr. Rabbit let him take the knife. He started to cut off the rushes with it, when *snap* went the knife! It broke into halves.

"O, dear! O, dear!" cried Mr. Rabbit. "What shall I do! What shall I do! You have broken my nice new knife."

The little old man said that he was very sorry and that he did not mean to do it.

Then Mr. Rabbit said, "A broken knife is of no use to me but perhaps you can use it, even if it is broken. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you keep the knife if you will give me one of your baskets in exchange for it."

The little old man gave Mr. Rabbit a basket and he started on through the deep forest with it. "I lost my tail but I gained a knife. I've lost my knife but I've gained a basket," said he. "I'll get a new tail or something else just as good."

Mr. Rabbit hopped along through the deep forest for a long time until at last he came to a clearing. Here there was an old woman busily engaged in picking lettuce. When she had gathered it she put it into her apron. She looked up and spied Mr. Rabbit hopping along with his basket.

"O, please, Mr. Rabbit," said she, "will you not be so kind as to let me borrow that nice basket you are carrying?"

Mr. Rabbit let her take the basket. She began to put her lettuce into it when out fell the bottom of the basket.

"O, dear! O, dear!" cried Mr. Rabbit. "What shall I do! What shall I do! You have broken the bottom out of my nice new basket."

The old woman said that she was very sorry and that she did not mean to do it.

Then said Mr. Rabbit, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you keep that broken basket if you will give me some of your lettuce."

The old woman gave Mr. Rabbit some lettuce and he hopped along with it, saying, "I lost my tail but I gained a knife. I lost my knife but I gained a basket. I lost my basket but I gained some lettuce."

The rabbit was getting very hungry and how nice the lettuce smelled! He took a bite. It was just the very best thing he had ever tasted in all his life. "I don't care if I did lose my tail," said he, "I've found something I like very much better."

From that day to this no rabbit has ever had a tail. Neither has there ever been a rabbit who cared because he had no tail. From that time to this there has never been a rabbit who did not like lettuce to eat and who was not perfectly happy and contented if there was plenty of it.

2. THE STONE-CUTTER

Book: *The Crimson Fairy Book*

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: English

Once upon a time there lived a stone-cutter, who went every day to a great rock in the side of a big mountain and cut out slabs for gravestones or for houses. He understood very well the

kinds of stones wanted for the different purposes, and as he was a careful workman he had plenty of customers. For a long time he was quite happy and contented, and asked for nothing better than what he had.

Now in the mountain dwelt a spirit which now and then appeared to men, and helped them in many ways to become rich and prosperous. The stone-cutter, however, had never seen this spirit, and only shook his head, with an unbelieving air, when anyone spoke of it. But a time was coming when he learned to change his opinion.

One day the stone-cutter carried a gravestone to the house of a rich man, and saw there all sorts of beautiful things, of which he had never even dreamed. Suddenly his daily work seemed to grow harder and heavier, and he said to himself: 'Oh, if only I were a rich man, and could sleep in a bed with silken curtains and golden tassels, how happy I should be!'

And a voice answered him: 'Your wish is heard; a rich man you shall be!'

At the sound of the voice the stone-cutter looked round, but could see nobody. He thought it was all his fancy, and picked up his tools and went home, for he did not feel inclined to do any more work that day. But when he reached the little house where he lived, he stood still with amazement, for instead of his wooden hut was a stately palace filled with splendid furniture, and most splendid of all was the bed, in every respect like the one he had envied. He was nearly beside himself with joy, and in his new life the old one was soon forgotten.

It was now the beginning of summer, and each day the sun blazed more fiercely. One morning the heat was so great that the stone-cutter could scarcely breathe, and he determined he would stay at home till the evening. He was rather dull, for he had never learned how to amuse himself, and was peeping through the closed blinds to see what was going on in the street, when a little carriage passed by, drawn by servants dressed in blue and silver. In the carriage sat a prince, and over his head a golden umbrella was held, to protect him from the sun's rays.

'Oh, if I were only a prince!' said the stone-cutter to himself, as the carriage vanished round the corner. 'Oh, if I were only a prince, and could go in such a carriage and have a golden umbrella held over me, how happy I should be!'

And the voice of the mountain spirit answered: 'Your wish is heard; a prince you shall be.'

And a prince he was. Before his carriage rode one company of men and another behind it; servants dressed in scarlet and gold bore him along, the coveted umbrella was held over his head, everything heart could desire was his. But yet it was not enough. He looked round still for something to wish for, and when he saw that in spite of the water he poured on his grass the rays of the sun scorched it, and that in spite of the umbrella held over his head each day his face grew burned by the sun, he cried in his anger: 'The sun is mightier than I; oh, if I were only the sun!'

And the mountain spirit answered: 'Your wish is heard; the sun you shall be.'

And the sun he was, and felt himself proud in his power. He shot his beams above and below, on earth and in heaven; he burnt up the grass in the fields and scorched the faces of princes as well as of poorer folk. But in a short time he began to grow tired of his might, for there seemed nothing left for him to do. Discontent once more filled his soul, and when a cloud covered his face, and hid the earth from him, he cried in his anger: 'Does the cloud hold captive my rays, and is it mightier than I? Oh, that I were a cloud, and mightier than any!'

And the mountain spirit answered: 'Your wish is heard; a cloud you shall be!'

And a cloud he was, and lay between the sun and the earth. He caught the sun's beams and held them, and to his joy the earth grew green again and flowers blossomed. But that was not enough for him, and for days and weeks he poured forth rain till the rivers overflowed their banks, and the crops of rice stood in water. Towns and villages were destroyed by the power of the rain, only the great rock on the mountain side remained unmoved. The cloud was amazed at the sight, and cried in wonder: 'Is the rock, then, mightier than I? Oh, if I were only the rock!'

And the mountain spirit answered: 'Your wish is heard; the rock you shall be!'

And the rock he was, and gloried in his power. Proudly he stood, and neither the heat of the sun nor the force of the rain could move him. 'This is better than all!' he said to himself. But one day he heard a strange noise at his feet, and when he looked down to see what it could be, he saw a stone-cutter driving tools into his surface. Even while he looked a trembling feeling ran all through him, and a great block broke off and fell upon the ground. Then he cried in his wrath: 'Is a mere child of earth mightier than a rock? Oh, if I were only a man!'

And the mountain spirit answered: 'Your wish is heard. A man once more you shall be!'

And a man he was, and in the sweat of his brow he toiled again at his trade of stone-cutting. His bed was hard and his food scanty, but he had learned to be satisfied with it, and did not long to be something or somebody else. And as he never asked for things he had not got, or desired to be greater and mightier than other people, he was happy at last, and heard the voice of the mountain spirit no longer.

3. THE FROG PRINCE

Book: *Grimms' Fairy Stories*

Authors: Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm

Origin: German

In the olden time, when wishing was having, there lived a King, whose daughters were all beautiful; but the youngest was so exceedingly beautiful that the Sun himself, although he saw her very, very often, was delighted every time she came out into the sunshine.

Near the castle of this King was a large and gloomy forest, where in the midst stood an old lime-tree, beneath whose branches splashed a little fountain; so, whenever it was very hot, the King's youngest daughter ran off into this wood, and sat down by the side of the fountain; and, when she felt dull, would often divert herself by throwing a golden ball up into the air and catching it again. And this was her favorite amusement.

Now, one day it happened that this golden ball, when the King's daughter threw it into the air, did not fall down into her hand, but on to the grass; and then it rolled right into the fountain. The King's daughter followed the ball with her eyes, but it disappeared beneath the water, which was so deep that she could not see to the bottom. Then she began to lament, and to cry more loudly and more loudly; and, as she cried, a voice called out, "Why weepest thou, O King's daughter? thy tears would melt even a stone to pity." She looked around to the spot whence the voice came, and saw a frog stretching his thick, ugly head out of the water. "Ah! you old water-paddler," said she, "was it you that spoke? I am weeping for my golden ball which bounced away from me into the water."

"Be quiet, and do not cry," replied the Frog; "I can give thee good assistance. But what wilt thou give me if I succeed in fetching thy plaything up again?"

"What would you like, dear Frog?" said she. "My dresses, my pearls and jewels, or the golden crown which I wear?"

The Frog replied, "Dresses, or jewels, or golden crowns, are not for me; but if thou wilt love me, and let me be thy companion and playmate, and sit at thy table, and eat from thy little golden plate, and drink out of thy cup, and sleep in thy little bed,—if thou wilt promise me all these things, then I will dive down and fetch up thy golden ball."

"Oh, I will promise you all," said she, "if you will only get me my golden ball." But she thought to herself, "What is the silly Frog chattering about? Let him stay in the water with his equals; he cannot enter into society." Then the Frog, as soon as he had received her promise, drew his head under the water and dived down. Presently he swam up again with the golden ball in his mouth, and threw it on to the grass. The King's daughter was full of joy when she again saw her beautiful plaything; and, taking it up, she ran off immediately. "Stop! stop!" cried the Frog; "take me with thee. I cannot run as thou canst."

But this croaking was of no avail; although it was loud enough, the King's daughter did not hear it, but, hastening home, soon forgot the poor Frog, who was obliged to leap back into the fountain.

The next day, when the King's daughter was sitting at table with her father and all his courtiers, and was eating from her own little golden plate, something was heard coming up the marble stairs, splish-splash, splish-splash; and when it arrived at the top, it knocked at the door, and a voice said—

"Open the door, thou youngest daughter of the King!"

So she arose and went to see who it was that called to her; but when she opened the door and caught sight of the Frog, she shut it again very quickly and with great passion, and sat down at the table, looking exceedingly pale.

But the King perceived that her heart was beating violently, and asked her whether it were a giant who had come to fetch her away who stood at the door. "Oh, no!" answered she; "it is no giant, but an ugly Frog."

"What does the Frog want with you?" said the King.

"Oh, dear father, yesterday when I was playing by the fountain, my golden ball fell into the water, and this Frog fetched it up again because I cried so much: but first, I must tell you, he pressed me so much, that I promised him he should be my companion. I never thought that he could come out of the water, but somehow he has managed to jump out, and now he wants to come in here."

At that moment there was another knock, and a voice said—

"King's daughter, youngest,
Open the door.
Hast thou forgotten
Thy promises made
At the fountain so clear
'Neath the lime-tree's shade?
King's daughter, youngest.
Open the door."

Then the King said, "What you have promised, that you must perform; go and let him in." So the King's daughter went and opened the door, and the Frog hopped in after her right up to her chair: and as soon as she was seated, he said, "Lift me up;" but she hesitated so long that the King had to order her to obey. And as soon as the Frog sat on the chair he jumped on to the table and said, "Now push thy plate near me, that we may eat together." And she did so, but as every one noticed, very unwillingly. The Frog seemed to relish his dinner very much, but every bit that the King's daughter ate nearly choked her, till at last the Frog said, "I have satisfied my hunger, and feel very tired; wilt thou carry me upstairs now into thy chamber, and make thy bed ready that we may sleep together?" At this speech the King's daughter began to cry, for she was

afraid of the cold Frog, and dared not touch him; and besides, he actually wanted to sleep in her own beautiful, clean bed!

But her tears only made the King very angry, and he said, "He who helped you in the time of your trouble must not now be despised!" So she took the Frog up with two fingers, and put him into a corner of her chamber. But as she lay in her bed, he crept up to it, and said, "I am so very tired that I shall sleep well; do take me up, or I will tell thy father." This speech put the King's daughter into a terrible passion, and catching the Frog up, she threw him with all her strength against the wall, saying "Now will you be quiet, you ugly Frog!"

But as he fell he was changed from a Frog into a handsome Prince with beautiful eyes, who after a little while became her dear companion and betrothed.

4. THE STEADFAST TIN SOLDIER

Book: *Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales*

Author: Hans Christian Andersen

Origin: Danish

There were once five and twenty tin soldiers. They were brothers, for they had all been made out of the same old tin spoon. They all shouldered their bayonets, held themselves upright, and looked straight before them. Their uniforms were very smart-looking—red and blue—and very splendid. The first thing they heard in the world, when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay, was the words "Tin soldiers!" These words were spoken by a little boy, who clapped his hands for joy. The soldiers had been given him because it was his birthday, and now he was putting them out upon the table.

Each was exactly like the rest to a hair, except one who had but one leg. He had been cast last of all, and there had not been quite enough tin to finish him; but he stood as firmly upon his one leg as the others upon their two, and it was he whose fortunes became so remarkable.

On the table where the tin soldiers had been set up were several other toys, but the one that attracted most attention was a pretty little paper castle. Through its tiny windows one could see straight into the hall. In front of the castle stood little trees, clustering round a small mirror which was meant to represent a transparent lake. Swans of wax swam upon its surface, and it reflected back their images.

All this was very pretty, but prettiest of all was a little lady who stood at the castle's open door. She too was cut out of paper, but she wore a frock of the clearest gauze and a narrow

blue ribbon over her shoulders, like a scarf, and in the middle of the ribbon was placed a shining tinsel rose. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and then she lifted one leg so high that the Soldier quite lost sight of it. He thought that, like himself, she had but one leg.

"That would be just the wife for me," thought he, "if she were not too grand. But she lives in a castle, while I have only a box, and there are five and twenty of us in that. It would be no place for a lady. Still, I must try to make her acquaintance." A snuffbox happened to be upon the table and he lay down at full length behind it, and here he could easily watch the dainty little lady, who still remained standing on one leg without losing her balance.

When the evening came all the other tin soldiers were put away in their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Now the playthings began to play in their turn. They visited, fought battles, and gave balls. The tin soldiers rattled in the box, for they wished to join the rest, but they could not lift the lid. The nutcrackers turned somersaults, and the pencil jumped about in a most amusing way. There was such a din that the canary woke and began to speak—and in verse, too. The only ones who did not move from their places were the Tin Soldier and the Lady Dancer. She stood on tiptoe with outstretched arms, and he was just as persevering on his one leg; he never once turned away his eyes from her.

Twelve o'clock struck—crash! up sprang the lid of the snuffbox. There was no snuff in it, but a little black goblin. You see it was not a real snuffbox, but a jack-in-the-box.

"Tin Soldier," said the Goblin, "keep thine eyes to thyself. Gaze not at what does not concern thee!"

But the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear.

"Only wait, then, till to-morrow," remarked the Goblin.

Next morning, when the children got up, the Tin Soldier was placed on the window sill, and, whether it was the Goblin or the wind that did it, all at once the window flew open and the Tin Soldier fell head foremost from the third story to the street below. It was a tremendous fall! Over and over he turned in the air, till at last he rested, his cap and bayonet sticking fast between the paving stones, while his one leg stood upright in the air.

The maidservant and the little boy came down at once to look for him, but, though they nearly trod upon him, they could not manage to find him. If the Soldier had but once called "Here am I!" they might easily enough have heard him, but he did not think it becoming to cry out for help, being in uniform.

It now began to rain; faster and faster fell the drops, until there was a heavy shower; and when it was over, two street boys came by.

"Look you," said one, "there lies a tin soldier. He must come out and sail in a boat."

So they made a boat out of an old newspaper and put the Tin Soldier in the middle of it, and away he sailed down the gutter, while the boys ran along by his side, clapping their hands.

Goodness! how the waves rocked that paper boat, and how fast the stream ran! The Tin Soldier became quite giddy, the boat veered round so quickly; still he moved not a muscle, but looked straight before him and held his bayonet tightly.

All at once the boat passed into a drain, and it became as dark as his own old home in the box. "Where am I going now?" thought he. "Yes, to be sure, it is all that Goblin's doing. Ah! if the little lady were but sailing with me in the boat, I would not care if it were twice as dark."

Just then a great water rat, that lived under the drain, darted suddenly out.

"Have you a passport?" asked the rat. "Where is your passport?"

But the Tin Soldier kept silence and only held his bayonet with a firmer grasp.

The boat sailed on, but the rat followed. Whew! how he gnashed his teeth and cried to the sticks and straws: "Stop him! stop him! He hasn't paid toll! He hasn't shown his passport!"

But the stream grew stronger and stronger. Already the Tin Soldier could see daylight at the point where the tunnel ended; but at the same time he heard a rushing, roaring noise, at which a bolder man might have trembled. Think! just where the tunnel ended, the drain widened into a great sheet that fell into the mouth of a sewer. It was as perilous a situation for the Soldier as sailing down a mighty waterfall would be for us.

He was now so near it that he could not stop. The boat dashed on, and the Tin Soldier held himself so well that no one might say of him that he so much as winked an eye. Three or four times the boat whirled round and round; it was full of water to the brim and must certainly sink.

The Tin Soldier stood up to his neck in water; deeper and deeper sank the boat, softer and softer grew the paper; and now the water closed over the Soldier's head. He thought of the pretty little dancer whom he should never see again, and in his ears rang the words of the song:

Wild adventure, mortal danger,
Be thy portion, valiant stranger.

The paper boat parted in the middle, and the Soldier was about to sink, when he was swallowed by a great fish.

Oh, how dark it was! darker even than in the drain, and so narrow; but the Tin Soldier retained his courage; there he lay at full length, shouldering his bayonet as before.

To and fro swam the fish, turning and twisting and making the strangest movements, till at last he became perfectly still.

Something like a flash of daylight passed through him, and a voice said, "Tin Soldier!"

The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold and bought, and taken to the kitchen, where the cook had cut him with a large knife. She seized the Tin Soldier between her finger and thumb and took him to the room where the family sat, and where all were eager to see the celebrated man who had traveled in the maw of a fish; but the Tin Soldier remained unmoved. He was not at all proud.

They set him upon the table there. But how could so curious a thing happen? The Soldier was in the very same room in which he had been before. He saw the same children, the same toys stood upon the table, and among them the pretty dancing maiden, who still stood upon one leg. She too was steadfast. That touched the Tin Soldier's heart. He could have wept tin tears, but that would not have been proper. He looked at her and she looked at him, but neither spoke a word.

And now one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and threw him into the stove. He gave no reason for doing so, but no doubt the Goblin in the snuffbox had something to do with it.

The Tin Soldier stood now in a blaze of red light. The heat he felt was terrible, but whether it proceeded from the fire or from the love in his heart, he did not know. He saw that the colors were quite gone from his uniform, but whether that had happened on the journey or had been caused by grief, no one could say. He looked at the little lady, she looked at him, and he felt himself melting; still he stood firm as ever, with his bayonet on his shoulder. Then suddenly the door flew open; the wind caught the Dancer, and she flew straight into the stove to the Tin Soldier, flashed up in a flame, and was gone! The Tin Soldier melted into a lump; and in the ashes the maid found him next day, in the shape of a little tin heart, while of the Dancer nothing remained save the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

5. THE HAWKS AND THEIR FRIENDS

Book: *More Jataka Tales*

Author: Ellen C. Babbitt

Origin: Indian

A family of Hawks lived on an island in a lake not far from the great forest. On the northern shore of this lake lived a Lion, King of Beasts. On the eastern shore lived a Kingfisher. On the southern shore of the lake lived a Turtle.

"Have you many friends near here?" the Mother Hawk asked the Father Hawk.

"No, not one in this part of the forest," he said.

"You must find some friends. We must have someone who can help us if ever we are in danger, or in trouble," said the Mother Hawk.

"With whom shall I make friends?" asked the Father Hawk.

"With the Kingfisher, who lives on the eastern shore, and with the Lion on the north," said the Mother Hawk, "and with the Turtle who lives on the southern shore of this lake."

The Father Hawk did so.

One day men hunted in the great forest from morning until night, but found nothing. Not wishing to go home empty-handed, they went to the island to see what they could find there.

"Let us stay here to-night," they said, "and see what we can find in the morning."

So they made beds of leaves for themselves and lay down to sleep. They had made their beds under the tree in which the Hawks had their nest.

But the hunters could not go to sleep because they were bothered by the flies and mosquitoes. At last the hunters got up and made a fire on the shore of the lake, so that the smoke would drive away the flies and mosquitoes. The smoke awoke the birds, and the young ones cried out.

"Did you hear that?" said one of the hunters. "That was the cry of birds! They will do very well for our breakfast. There are young ones in that nest." And the hunters put more wood on the fire, and made it blaze up.

Then the Mother bird said to the Father: "These men are planning to eat our young ones. We must ask our friends to save us. Go to the Kingfisher and tell him what danger we are in."

The Father Hawk flew with all speed to the Kingfisher's nest and woke him with his cry.

"Why have you come?" asked the Kingfisher.

Then the Father Hawk told the Kingfisher what the hunters planned to do.

"Fear not," said the Kingfisher. "I will help you. Go back quickly and comfort my friend your mate, and say that I am coming."

So the Father Hawk flew back to his nest, and the Kingfisher flew to the island and went into the lake near the place where the fire was burning.

While the Father Hawk was away, one of the hunters had climbed up into the tree. Just as he neared the nest, the Kingfisher, beating the water with his wings, sprinkled water on the fire and put it out.

Down came the hunter to make another fire. When it was burning well he climbed the tree again. Once more the Kingfisher put it out. As often as a fire was made, the Kingfisher put it out. Midnight came and the Kingfisher was now very tired.

The Mother Hawk noticed this and said to her mate: "The Kingfisher is tired out. Go and ask the Turtle to help us so that the Kingfisher may have a rest."

The Father Hawk flew down and said, "Rest awhile, Friend Kingfisher; I will go and get the Turtle."

So the Father Hawk flew to the southern shore and wakened the Turtle.

"What is your errand, Friend?" asked the Turtle.

"Danger has come to us," said the Father Hawk, and he told the Turtle about the hunters. "The Kingfisher has been working for hours, and now he is very tired. That is why I have come to you."

The Turtle said, "I will help you at once."

Then the Turtle went to the island where the Hawks lived. He dived into the water, collected some mud, and put out the fire with it. Then he lay still.

The hunters cried: "Why should we bother to get the young Hawks? Let us kill this Turtle. He will make a fine breakfast for all of us. We must be careful or he will bite us. Let us throw a net over him and turn him over."

They had no nets with them, so they took some vines, and tore their clothes into strings and made a net.

But when they had put the net all over the Turtle, they could not roll him over. Instead, the Turtle suddenly dived down into the deep water. The men were so eager to get him that they did not let go of the net, so down they went into the water. As they came out they said: "Half the night a Kingfisher kept putting out our fires. Now we have torn our clothes and got all wet trying to get this Turtle. We will build another fire, and at sunrise we will eat those young Hawks." And they began to build another fire.

The Mother Hawk heard them, and said to her mate: "Sooner or later these men will get our young. Do go and tell our friend the Lion."

At once the Father Hawk flew to the Lion.

"Why do you come at this hour of the night?" asked the Lion.

The Hawk told him the whole story.

The Lion said: "I will come at once. You go back and comfort your mate and the young ones." Soon the Lion came roaring.

When the hunters heard the Lion's roar they cried, "Now we shall all be killed." And away they ran as fast as they could go.

When the Lion came to the foot of the tree, not one of the hunters was to be seen. Then the Kingfisher and the Turtle came up, and the Hawks said: "You have saved us. Friends in need are friends indeed."

6. THE FISH AND THE RING

Book: *English Fairy Tales*

Author: Joseph Jacobs

Origin: English

Once upon a time, there was a mighty baron in the North Countrie who was a great magician that knew everything that would come to pass. So one day, when his little boy was four years old, he looked into the Book of Fate to see what would happen to him. And to his dismay, he found that his son would wed a lowly maid that had just been born in a house under the shadow of York Minster. Now the Baron knew the father of the little girl was very, very poor, and he had five children already. So he called for his horse, and rode into York; and passed by the father's house, and saw him sitting by the door, sad and doleful. So he dismounted and went up to him and said: "What is the matter, my good man?" And the man said: "Well, your honour, the fact is, I've five children already, and now a sixth's come, a little lass, and where to get the bread from to fill their mouths, that's more than I can say."

"Don't be downhearted, my man," said the Baron. "If that's your trouble, I can help you. I'll take away the last little one, and you won't have to bother about her."

"Thank you kindly, sir," said the man; and he went in and brought out the lass and gave her to the Baron, who mounted his horse and rode away with her. And when he got by the bank of the river, he threw the little thing into the river, and rode off to his castle.

But the little lass didn't sink; her clothes kept her up for a time, and she floated, and she floated, till she was cast ashore just in front of a fisherman's hut. There the fisherman found her, and took pity on the poor little thing and took her into his house, and she lived there till she was fifteen years old, and a fine handsome girl.

One day it happened that the Baron went out hunting with some companions along the banks of the River Ouse, and stopped at the fisherman's hut to get a drink, and the girl came out to

give it to them. They all noticed her beauty, and one of them said to the Baron: "You can read fates, Baron, whom will she marry, d'ye think?"

"Oh! that's easy to guess," said the Baron; "some yokel or other. But I'll cast her horoscope. Come here girl, and tell me on what day you were born?"

"I don't know, sir," said the girl, "I was picked up just here after having been brought down by the river about fifteen years ago."

Then the Baron knew who she was, and when they went away, he rode back and said to the girl: "Hark ye, girl, I will make your fortune. Take this letter to my brother in Scarborough, and you will be settled for life." And the girl took the letter and said she would go. Now this was what he had written in the letter:

"Dear Brother,—Take the bearer and put her to death immediately.

"Yours affectionately,

"Albert."

So soon after the girl set out for Scarborough, and slept for the night at a little inn. Now that very night a band of robbers broke into the inn, and searched the girl, who had no money, and only the letter. So they opened this and read it, and thought it a shame. The captain of the robbers took a pen and paper and wrote this letter:

"Dear Brother,—Take the bearer and marry her to my son immediately.

"Yours affectionately,

"Albert."

And then he gave it to the girl, bidding her begone. So she went on to the Baron's brother at Scarborough, a noble knight, with whom the Baron's son was staying. When she gave the letter to his brother, he gave orders for the wedding to be prepared at once, and they were married that very day.

Soon after, the Baron himself came to his brother's castle, and what was his surprise to find that the very thing he had plotted against had come to pass. But he was not to be put off that way; and he took out the girl for a walk, as he said, along the cliffs. And when he got her all alone, he took her by the arms, and was going to throw her over. But she begged hard for her life. "I have not done anything," she said: "if you will only spare me, I will do whatever you wish. I will never see you or your son again till you desire it." Then the Baron took off his gold ring and threw it into the sea, saying: "Never let me see your face till you can show me that ring;" and he let her go.

The poor girl wandered on and on, till at last she came to a great noble's castle, and she asked to have some work given to her; and they made her the scullion girl of the castle, for she had been used to such work in the fisherman's hut.

Now one day, who should she see coming up to the noble's house but the Baron and his brother and his son, her husband. She didn't know what to do; but thought they would not see her in the castle kitchen. So she went back to her work with a sigh, and set to cleaning a huge big fish that was to be boiled for their dinner. And, as she was cleaning it, she saw something shine inside it, and what do you think she found? Why, there was the Baron's ring, the very one

he had thrown over the cliff at Scarborough. She was right glad to see it, you may be sure. Then she cooked the fish as nicely as she could, and served it up.

Well, when the fish came on the table, the guests liked it so well that they asked the noble who cooked it. He said he didn't know, but called to his servants: "Ho, there, send up the cook that cooked that fine fish." So they went down to the kitchen and told the girl she was wanted in the hall. Then she washed and tidied herself and put the Baron's gold ring on her thumb and went up into the hall.

When the banqueters saw such a young and beautiful cook they were surprised. But the Baron was in a tower of a temper. So the girl went up to him with her hand before her with the ring on it; and she put it down before him on the table. Then at last the Baron saw that no one could fight against Fate, and he handed her to a seat and announced to all the company that this was his son's true wife; and he took her and his son home to his castle; and they all lived as happy as could be ever afterwards.

7. ORPHEUS THE SWEET SINGER

Book: *The Junior Classics, Volume 2: Folk Tales and Myths*

Author: Sir George W. Cox

Contributors: William Allan Neilson and Charles W. Eliot

Origin: Greek

In the pleasant valleys of a country which was called Thessaly, there lived a man whose name was Orpheus. Every day he made soft music with his golden harp, and sang beautiful songs such as no one had ever heard before. And whenever Orpheus sang, then everything came to listen to him, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear; even the clouds sailed along more gently and brightly in the sky when he sang, and the stream which ran close to his feet made a softer noise, to show how glad his music made it.

Now Orpheus had a wife who was called Eurydice, whom he loved very dearly. All through the winter when the snow was on the hills, and all through the summer when the sunshine made everything beautiful, Orpheus used to sing to her; and Eurydice sat on the grass by his side while the beasts came round to listen, and the trees bowed down their heads to hear him.

But one day when Eurydice was playing with some children on the banks of the river, she trod upon a snake in the long grass, and the snake bit her. And by and by she began to be very sick, and Eurydice knew that she must die. So she told the children to go to Orpheus (for he was far away) and say how sorry she was to leave him, and that she loved him always very dearly; and then she put her head down upon the soft grass, and fell asleep and died. Sad indeed was Orpheus when the children came to tell him that Eurydice was dead. He felt so wretched that he

never played upon his golden harp, and he never opened his lips to sing; and the beasts that used to listen to him wondered why Orpheus sat all alone on the green bank where Eurydice used to sit with him, and why it was that he never made any more beautiful music. All day long he sat there, and his cheeks were often wet with tears. At last he said, "I cannot stay here any more; I must go and look for Eurydice. I cannot bear to be without her, and perhaps the king of the land where people go after they are dead will let her come back and live with me again."

So he took his harp in his hand, and went to look for Eurydice in the land where the sun goes down into his golden cup before the night comes on. He went on and on a very long way, till at last he came to a high and dark gateway. It was barred across with iron bars, and was bolted and locked so that nobody could open it. It was a wretched and gloomy place, because the sunshine never came there, and it was covered with clouds and mist. In front of this great gateway there sat a monstrous dog, with three heads, six eyes, and three tongues; and everything was dark around, except his eyes, which shone like fire, and which saw every one that dared to come near. Now when Orpheus came looking for Eurydice, the dog raised his three heads, opened his three mouths, and gnashed his teeth at him, and roared terribly; but when Orpheus came nearer, the dog jumped up on his feet ready to fly at him and tear him to pieces. Then Orpheus took down his harp and began to play upon its golden strings. And the dog Cerberus (for that was his name) growled and snarled and showed the great white teeth in his three mouths; but he could not help hearing the sweet music, and he wondered why it was that he no longer wished to tear Orpheus in pieces. Soon the music made him quiet and still, and at last it lulled him to sleep. Then Orpheus passed by him and came up to the gate, and found it wide open, for it had come open of its own accord while he was singing. He was glad when he saw this, for he thought that now he should see Eurydice.

So he went on and on a long way, until he came to the palace of the king; and there were guards placed before the door who tried to keep him from going in; but Orpheus played upon his harp, and they could not help letting him pass.

So he went into the great hall, where he saw the king and queen sitting on a throne; and as he came near, the king called out to him with a loud and terrible voice, "Who are you, and how dare you to come here? Do you not know that no one is allowed to come here till after he is dead? I will have you chained and placed in a dungeon, from which you will never be able to get out." Orpheus said nothing; but took his golden harp in his hand and began to sing more sweetly and gently than ever. And as he sang, the face of the king began to look almost glad, and his anger passed away. Then the king said, "You have made me feel happy with your sweet music, although I have never felt happy before; and now tell me why you have come, because you must want something, for, otherwise, no one would come, before he was dead, to this sad and gloomy land of which I am the king." Then Orpheus said, "O king, give me back my dear Eurydice, and let her go from this gloomy place and live with me on the bright earth again." So the king said that she could go. And the king said to Orpheus, "I have given you what you wanted, because you sang so sweetly; and when you go back to the earth from this place, your wife whom you love shall go up after you: but remember that you must never look back until she

has reached the earth, for if you do, Eurydice will be brought back here, and I shall not be able to give her to you again, even if you should sing more sweetly and gently than ever.”

Now Orpheus was longing to see Eurydice, and he hoped that the king would let him see her at once; but when the king said that he must not try to see her till she had reached the earth, he was quite content, for he said, “Shall I not wait patiently a little while, that Eurydice may come and live with me again?” So he promised the king that he would go up to the earth without stopping to look behind and see whether Eurydice was coming after him.

Then Orpheus left the palace of the king, and he passed through the dark gateway, and the dog Cerberus did not bark or growl, for he knew that Orpheus would not have been allowed to come back, if the king had not wished it. So he went on and on a long way; and he became impatient, and longed more and more to see Eurydice. At last he came near to the land of living men, and he saw just a little streak of light, where the sun was going to rise from the sea; and presently the sky became brighter, and he saw everything before him so clearly that he could not help turning round to look at Eurydice. But, ah! she had not yet quite reached the earth, and so he lost her again. He saw something pale and white, which looked like his own dear wife; and he just heard a soft and gentle voice, which sounded like the voice of Eurydice, and then it all melted away. And still he thought that he saw that pale white face, and heard that soft voice, which said, “O Orpheus, Orpheus, why did you look back? How dearly I love you, and how glad I should have been to live with you again; but now I must go back, because you have broken your promise to the king, and I must not even kiss you, and say how much I love you.”

Orpheus sat down at the place where Eurydice was taken from him; he could go no further. There he stayed day after day, and his cheeks became paler, and his body weaker and weaker, till at last he knew that he must die. And Orpheus was not sorry; for although he loved the bright earth, with all its flowers and grass and sunny streams, he knew that he could not be with Eurydice again until he had left it. So at last he laid his head upon the earth, and fell asleep, and died: and then he and Eurydice saw each other in the land which is far away, where the sun goes down at night into his golden cup, and were never parted again.

8. THE MONKEY'S FIDDLE

Book: *South-African Folk-Tales*

Editor: James A. Honey

Origin: South African

Hunger and want forced Monkey one day to forsake his land and to seek elsewhere among strangers for much-needed work. Bulbs, earth beans, scorpions, insects, and such things were completely exhausted in his own land. But fortunately he received, for the time being, shelter with a great uncle of his, Orang Outang, who lived in another part of the country.

When he had worked for quite a while he wanted to return home, and as recompense his great uncle gave him a fiddle and a bow and arrow and told him that with the bow and arrow he could hit and kill anything he desired, and with the fiddle he could force anything to dance.

The first he met upon his return to his own land was Wolf. This old fellow told him all the news and also that he had since early morning been attempting to stalk a deer, but all in vain.

Then Monkey laid before him all the wonders of the bow and arrow that he carried on his back and assured him if he could but see the deer he would bring it down for him. When Wolf showed him the deer, Monkey was ready and down fell the deer.

They made a good meal together, but instead of Wolf being thankful, jealousy overmastered him and he begged for the bow and arrow. When Monkey refused to give it to him, he thereupon began to threaten him with his greater strength, and so when Jackal passed by, Wolf told him that Monkey had stolen his bow and arrow. After Jackal had heard both of them, he declared himself unqualified to settle the case alone, and he proposed that they bring the matter to the court of Lion, Tiger, and the other animals. In the meantime he declared he would take possession of what had been the cause of their quarrel, so that it would be safe, as he said. But he immediately brought to earth all that was eatable, so there was a long time before Monkey and Wolf agreed to have the affair in court.

Monkey's evidence was weak, and to make it worse, Jackal's testimony was against him. Jackal thought that in this way it would be easier to obtain the bow and arrow from Wolf for himself.

And so fell the sentence against Monkey. Theft was looked upon as a great wrong; he must hang.

The fiddle was still at his side, and he received as a last favor from the court the right to play a tune on it.

He was a master player of his time, and in addition to this came the wonderful power of his charmed fiddle. Thus, when he struck the first note of "Cockcrow" upon it, the court began at once to show an unusual and spontaneous liveliness, and before he came to the first waltzing turn of the old tune the whole court was dancing like a whirlwind.

Over and over, quicker and quicker, sounded the tune of "Cockcrow" on the charmed fiddle, until some of the dancers, exhausted, fell down, although still keeping their feet in motion. But Monkey, musician as he was, heard and saw nothing of what had happened around him. With his head placed lovingly against the instrument, and his eyes half closed, he played on, keeping time ever with his foot.

Wolf was the first to cry out in pleading tones breathlessly, "Please stop, Cousin Monkey! For love's sake, please stop!"

But Monkey did not even hear him. Over and over sounded the resistless waltz of "Cockcrow."

After a while Lion showed signs of fatigue, and when he had gone the round once more with his young lion wife, he growled as he passed Monkey, "My whole kingdom is yours, Monkey, if you just stop playing."

"I do not want it," answered Monkey, "but withdraw the sentence and give me my bow and arrow, and you, Wolf, acknowledge that you stole it from me."

"I acknowledge, I acknowledge!" cried Wolf, while Lion cried, at the same instant, that he withdrew the sentence.

Monkey gave them just a few more turns of the "Cockcrow," gathered up his bow and arrow, and seated himself high up in the nearest camel thorn tree.

The court and other animals were so afraid that he might begin again that they hastily disbanded to new parts of the world.

9. THE SEVEN RAVENS

Book: *Grimm's Fairy Tales*

Editor: Frances Jenkins Olcott

Origin: German

There was once a man who had seven sons, but never a daughter no matter how much he wished for one.

At length, his wife had a child, and it was a daughter. The joy was great. But the child was sickly and small, and so weak that it had to be christened at once.

The father sent one of the boys in a hurry to the spring, to fetch water for the christening. The other six boys ran along with him. And as each strove to be the first to fill the jug, it fell into the spring. There they stood, and did not know what to do. None of them dared to go home.

When they did not come back, the father grew impatient, and said, "They have forgotten all about it in a game of play, the wicked boys!"

Soon he grew afraid lest the child should die without being baptized, and he cried out in anger, "I wish the boys were all turned into Ravens!"

Hardly was the word spoken, before he heard a whirring of wings in the air above his head. He looked up, and saw seven coal-black Ravens flying high and away.

The parents could not recall the curse. And though they grieved over the loss of their seven sons, yet they comforted themselves somewhat with their dear little daughter, who soon grew strong and every day more beautiful.

For a long time, she did not know that she had had brothers. Her parents were careful not to mention them before her. But one day, she chanced to overhear some people talking about her, and saying, "that the maiden is certainly beautiful, but really to blame for the misfortune of her seven brothers."

Then she was much troubled, and went to her father and mother, and asked if it was true that she had had brothers, and what was become of them.

The parents did not dare to keep the secret longer, and said that her birth was only the innocent cause of what had happened to her brothers. But the maiden laid it daily to heart, and thought that she must deliver her brothers.

She had no peace and rest until she set out secretly, and went forth into the wide world to seek them out, and set them free, let it cost what it might. She took nothing with her but a little ring belonging to her parents as a keepsake, a loaf of bread against hunger, a little pitcher of water against thirst, and a little chair as a provision against weariness.

And now, she went continually onward, far, far, to the very end of the world. Then she came to the Sun, but it was too hot and terrible, and devoured little children. Hastily she ran away, and ran to the Moon, but it was far too cold, and also awful and malicious. And when it saw the child, it said:

"I smell, I smell

The flesh of men!"

On this she ran swiftly away, and came to the Stars, which were kind and good to her, and each of them sat on its own little chair. But the Morning Star arose, and gave her the drumstick of a chicken, and said, "If you have not that drumstick you cannot open the Glass Mountain, and in the Glass Mountain are your brothers."

The maiden took the drumstick, wrapped it carefully in a cloth, and went onward again until she came to the Glass Mountain. The door was shut, and she thought she would take out the drumstick. But when she undid the cloth, it was empty, and she had lost the good Star's present. What was she now to do? She wished to rescue her brothers, and had no key to the Glass Mountain. The good little sister took a knife, cut off one of her little fingers, put it in the door, and succeeded in opening it.

When she had got inside, a little Dwarf came to meet her, who said, "My Child, what are you looking for?"

"I am looking for my brothers, the Seven Ravens," she replied.

The Dwarf said, "The Lord Ravens are not at home, but if you wish to wait here until they come, step in."

Thereupon the little Dwarf carried the Ravens' dinner in, on seven little plates, and in seven little glasses. The little sister ate a morsel from each plate, and from each little glass she took a sip. But in the last little glass she dropped the ring which she had brought away with her.

Suddenly, she heard a whirring of wings and a rushing through the air, and then the little Dwarf said, "Now the Lord Ravens are flying home."

Then they came, and wanted to eat and drink, and looked for their little plates and glasses. Then said one after the other, "Who has eaten something from my plate? Who has drunk out of my little glass? It was a human mouth."

And when the seventh came to the bottom of the glass, the ring rolled against his mouth. Then he looked at it, and saw that it was a ring belonging to his father and mother, and said, "Spirits grant that our little sister may be here, and then we shall be free."

When the maiden, who was standing behind the door watching, heard that wish, she came forth, and on this all the Ravens were restored to their human form again. And they embraced and kissed each other, and went joyfully home.

10. THE SWINEHERD

Book: *Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales*

Author: Hans Christian Andersen

Origin: Danish

There was once a poor prince who had a kingdom, but it was a very small one. Still it was quite large enough to admit of his marrying, and he wished to marry.

It was certainly rather bold of him to say, as he did, to the emperor's daughter, "Will you have me?" But he was renowned far and wide, and there were a hundred princesses who would have answered, "Yes," and, "Thank you kindly." We shall see what this princess said. Listen!

It happened that where the prince's father lay buried there grew a rose tree, a most beautiful rose tree, which blossomed only once in five years, and even then bore only one flower. Ah, but that was a rose! It smelled so sweet that all cares and sorrows were forgotten by those who inhaled its fragrance!

Moreover, the prince had a nightingale that could sing in such a manner that it seemed as if all sweet melodies dwelt in her little throat. Now the princess was to have the rose and the nightingale; and they were accordingly put into large silver caskets and sent to her.

The emperor had them brought into a large hall, where the princess and the ladies of the court were playing at "Visiting." When she saw the caskets with the presents, the princess clapped her hands for joy.

"Ah, if it should be a little cat," exclaimed she. Instead, the rose tree, with its beautiful rose, came to view.

"Oh, how prettily it is made!" said all the court ladies.

"It is more than pretty," said the emperor; "it is charming."

The princess touched it and was ready to cry. "Fie, papa," said she, "it is not made at all. It is natural!"

"Fie," said all the court ladies; "it is natural!"

"Let us see what the other casket contains before we get into bad humor," proposed the emperor. So the nightingale came forth, and sang so delightfully that at first no one could say anything ill-humored of her.

"*Superbe! charmant!*" exclaimed the ladies, for they all used to chatter French, and each worse than her neighbor.

"How much the bird reminds me of the musical box that belonged to our blessed empress!" remarked an old knight. "Oh! yes, these are the same tunes, the same execution."

"Yes, yes!" said the emperor, and at the remembrance he wept like a child.

"I still hope it is not a real bird," said the princess.

"Yes, it is a real bird," said those who had brought it.

"Well, then, let the bird fly," returned the princess. And she positively refused to see the prince.

However, he was not to be discouraged. He changed into dirt-stained clothing, pulled his cap over his ears, and knocked at the door of the castle.

"Good day to my lord the emperor," said he. "Can I have employment here at the palace?"

"Why, yes," said the emperor. "It just occurs to me that I want some one to take care of the pigs, there are so many of them."

So the prince came to be the imperial swineherd.

He had a miserable little room, close by the pigsty, and here he was obliged to stay; and he sat the whole day long and worked. By evening he had made a pretty little saucepan. Little bells were hung all around it; and when the pot was boiling, the bells tinkled in the most charming manner, and played the old melody,

"Ach, du lieber Augustin,
Alles ist weg, weg, weg."

But what was still more curious, whoever held his finger in the smoke of this saucepan, at once smelled all the dishes that were cooking on every hearth of the city. This, you see, was something quite different from the rose.

Now the princess happened to walk that way with her court ladies, and when she heard the tune she stood quite still and seemed pleased, for she could play "Dearest Augustine." It was the only piece she knew, and she played it with one finger.

"Why, that is the piece that I play on the piano!" said the princess. "That swineherd must certainly have been well educated. Go in and ask him the price of the instrument."

So one of the court ladies had to go in, but she drew on wooden slippers first.

"What will you take for the saucepan?" inquired the lady.

"I must have ten kisses from the princess," said the swineherd.

"Heaven preserve us!" exclaimed the maid of honor.

"I cannot sell it for less," answered the swineherd.

"Well, what does he say?" asked the princess.

"I cannot tell you, really," replied the lady. "It is too dreadful."

"Then you may whisper it." So the lady whispered it.

"He is an impudent fellow," said the princess, and she walked on. But when she had gone a little way, the bells again tinkled prettily,

"Ah! thou dearest Augustine,
All is gone, gone, gone."

"Stay!" said the princess. "Ask him if he will have ten kisses from the ladies of my court."

"No, thank you!" answered the swineherd. "Ten kisses from the princess, or I keep the saucepan myself."

"How tiresome! That must not be either!" said the princess; "but do you all stand before me, that no one may see us."

The court ladies placed themselves in front of her. So the swineherd got ten kisses, and the princess got the saucepan.

That was delightful! The saucepan was kept boiling all the evening and the whole of the following day. They knew perfectly well what was cooking on every hearth in the city, from the chamberlain's to the cobbler's. The court ladies danced and clapped their hands.

"We know who has soup, and who has pancakes for dinner to-day; who has cutlets, and who has eggs. How interesting!"

"Yes, but keep my secret, for I am an emperor's daughter."

The prince—that is, the swineherd, for no one knew that he was other than an ill-favored swineherd—let not a day pass without working at something. At last he constructed a rattle, which, when it was swung round and round, played all the waltzes and jig tunes which have been heard since the creation of the world.

"Ah, that is *superbe!*" said the princess, when she passed by. "I have never heard prettier compositions. Go in and ask him the price of the instrument. But mind, he shall have no more kisses."

"He will have a hundred kisses from the princess," said the lady who had been to ask.

"He is not in his right senses," said the princess, and walked on. But when she had gone a little way she stopped again. "One must encourage art," said she; "I am the emperor's daughter. Tell him he shall, as on yesterday, have ten kisses from me, and may take the rest from the ladies of the court."

"Oh, but we should not like that at all," said the ladies.

"What are you muttering?" asked the princess. "If I can kiss him, surely you can! Remember I give you food and wages."

"A hundred kisses from the princess," said he, "or else let every one keep his own."

"Stand round," said she, and all the ladies stood round as before.

"What can be the reason for such a crowd close by the pigsty?" asked the emperor, who happened just then to step out on the balcony. He rubbed his eyes and put on his spectacles.

"They are the ladies of the court. I must go and see what they are about." So he pulled up his slippers at the heel, for he had trodden them down.

As soon as he had got into the courtyard he moved very softly, and the ladies were so much engrossed with counting the kisses that they did not perceive the emperor. He rose on his tiptoes.

"What is all this?" said he, when he saw what was going on, just as the swineherd was taking the eighty-sixth kiss.

"Be off with you! March out!" cried the emperor, for he was very angry. Both princess and swineherd were thrust out of the city, and the princess stood and wept, while the swineherd scolded, and the rain poured down.

"Alas, unhappy creature that I am!" said the princess. "If I had but married the handsome young prince! Ah, how unfortunate I am!"

The swineherd went behind a tree, threw off his dirty clothing, and stepped forth in his princely robes. He looked so noble that the princess could not help bowing before him.

"I have come to despise thee," said he. "Thou wouldst not have an honorable prince! Thou couldst not prize the rose and the nightingale, but thou wast ready to kiss the swineherd for the sake of a trumpery plaything. Thou art rightly served."

He then went back to his own little kingdom, where he shut the door of his palace before her very eyes. Now she might well sing,

"Ah! thou dearest Augustine,
All is gone, gone, gone."

11. THE CONTEST

Book: *The Sandman's Hour: Stories for Bedtime*

Author: Abbie Phillips Walker

Origin: English

The old white rooster was dead.

The hens stood in groups of threes and fours all around the yard, the turkeys were gathered around the big gobbler and seemed to be talking very earnestly.

The ducks stood around the old drake, who was shaking his head emphatically as he talked.

The geese were listening very attentively to the gander, and he was stretching his neck and seemed to be trying to impress them with its length.

"I see no reason now why I should not be king of the yard," he was saying. "White Rooster is dead and there is no other rooster to take his place. I am going to see the hens and ask them what they think.

"White Rooster is dead," he said to them, "and I think I should be king of the yard. My neck is very long and I can see over the heads of all the fowls; I see no reason why I should not take the place of White Rooster."

The turkeys and the geese, seeing the gander approach the hens, ran as fast as they could to hear what he was saying.

The turkey gobbler, hearing the last part of the gander's remark, said: "How can you say that you can see over all heads? Have you forgotten me and my height? And as for being king," he said, "the rooster never should have been cock of the walk. I am a much more majestic-looking bird than any rooster. No, indeed, you should never think of ruling, Sir Gander. I should be king of the yard."

The gobbler walked away, spreading out his wings and letting them drag on the ground and gobbling very loudly.

The ducks and the drake stood listening to all this talk, and as the gobbler walked away the drake said: "I cannot understand why any one should think of being king when I know so much of the world. I am the one to rule, for I have been all around the pond, and it is very large; because of my knowledge I think I should be king."

"He must not be king," whispered one old hen to another; "he would make us go in the water, and we will all be drowned."

They had talked a long time without reaching any decision, when the dog happened along. "What is the matter?" he asked.

"The old white rooster is dead," said the gobbler, who had returned with his family to hear the discussion, "and I think I should be king, and the drake and the gander think they should, but, of course, you can see that I am best suited to rule the yard."

"You can settle that very easily," said the dog. "You can all take a turn at being king, and in that way you will know who is best suited to rule." And so it was decided, and the gobbler was the first one to go on trial. The poor hens tagged along after the turkeys, for the gobbler insisted upon parading all around the yard. The gander and the drake would not follow behind, so the gander and his family walked on one side of the gobbler, and the drake and his family on the other.

The poor hens wept as they followed behind. "I never was so humiliated in my life," said one old hen, "and it is not right."

The next day there was so much dissatisfaction because of the gobbler's overbearing way that the dog decided that the drake must take his turn.

"Everybody must learn to swim," said the drake as soon as he was appointed ruler. "Come down to the pond," and off he started, his family waddling after him.

"What did I tell you?" said the old hen. "This will be the end of us."

The geese did not mind being in the water part of the time, but the turkeys set up such a gobble and the hens cackled so loudly that the dog had to decide right there that the drake was not a suitable king.

The gander, knowing that his time had come, stretched his neck and looked very important.

"You need not go near the pond," he said to the hens, "but you must learn to fly," and he spread out his wings as he spoke and flew over the fence, the geese following him.

The turkeys flew to the top of the fence and roosted there, but the hens and ducks stood on the ground, looking up at them in the most discouraged way, and at the gobbler, who gobbled at them, saying, "You are to be pitied, for you do not see all the sights we do and you never can fly to the top of this fence.

"There is the master," he said. "He is coming down the road and he has something under his arm. I'll tell you what it is when he gets nearer."

The hens were trying to look under the fence and through the holes.

The gobbler looked for a minute, and then he said: "I do believe--" then he stopped. "Yes, it is," he continued, looking again; "it's a rooster."

The gobbler flew down and the turkeys followed and the master drove the gander and his family back to the yard. "You will get your wings clipped to-morrow," he said, and then from under his arm he released a big yellow-and-black rooster, which flew to the ground, looked about, spread his wings and crowed in a way that plainly said: "I am cock of this walk and king of this yard. Let none dispute my rights."

The drake collected his family and started for the pond, and the gander and geese followed along behind.

The turkey spread his wings and held his head high as he strutted away with his family. But he did not impress the new rooster; he was ruler and he knew it.

"Now the sun will know when to rise," said one hen, "and we shall know when to awake."

"Yes," said another, "and we have had a narrow escape; it looked for a while as if our family were to lose its social standing, but now that we have a new king we can hold up our heads again and look down on the others, if we have to go to the top of the wood-pile to do it."

The dog laughed to himself as he walked away. "I knew all the time," he said, "that the new rooster was coming, but I thought it would do them good to know they were only fitted to care for their own flock."

12. THE NIGHTINGALE

Book: *The Yellow Fairy Book*

Author: Leonora Blanche Alleyne Lang

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: Danish

The story I am going to tell you happened many years ago, but it is worth while for you to listen to it, before it is forgotten.

The Emperor's Palace was the most splendid in the world, all made of priceless porcelain, but so brittle and delicate that you had to take great care how you touched it. In the garden were the most beautiful flowers, and on the loveliest of them were tied silver bells which tinkled, so that if you passed you could not help looking at the flowers. Everything in the Emperor's garden was admirably arranged with a view to effect; and the garden was so large that even the gardener himself did not know where it ended. If you ever got beyond it, you came to a stately forest with great trees and deep lakes in it. The forest sloped down to the sea, which was a clear blue. Large ships could sail under the boughs of the trees, and in these trees there lived a Nightingale. She sang so beautifully that even the poor fisherman who had so much to do stood and listened when he came at night to cast his nets. 'How beautiful it is!' he said; but he had to

attend to his work, and forgot about the bird. But when she sang the next night and the fisherman came there again, he said the same thing, 'How beautiful it is!'

From all the countries round came travellers to the Emperor's town, who were astonished at the Palace and the garden. But when they heard the Nightingale they all said, 'This is the finest thing after all!'

The travellers told all about it when they went home, and learned scholars wrote many books upon the town, the Palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the Nightingale; she was praised the most, and all the poets composed splendid verses on the Nightingale in the forest by the deep sea.

The books were circulated throughout the world, and some of them reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read and read. He nodded his head every moment, for he liked reading the brilliant accounts of the town, the Palace, and the garden. 'But the Nightingale is better than all,' he saw written.

'What is that?' said the Emperor. 'I don't know anything about the Nightingale! Is there such a bird in my empire, and so near as in my garden? I have never heard it! Fancy reading for the first time about it in a book!'

And he called his First Lord to him.

'Here is a most remarkable bird which is called a Nightingale!' said the Emperor. 'They say it is the most glorious thing in my kingdom. Why has no one ever said anything to me about it?'

'I have never before heard it mentioned!' said the First Lord. 'I will look for it and find it!'

But where was it to be found? The First Lord ran up and down stairs, through the halls and corridors; but none of those he met had ever heard of the Nightingale. And the First Lord ran again to the Emperor, and told him that it must be an invention on the part of those who had written the books.

'Your Imperial Majesty cannot really believe all that is written!'

'But the book in which I read this,' said the Emperor, 'is sent me by a wise king; so it cannot be untrue, and I will hear the Nightingale! She must be here this evening! She has my gracious permission to appear, and if she does not, the whole Court shall be trampled under foot after supper!'

The First Lord ran up and down stairs, through the halls and corridors, and half the Court ran with him, for they did not want to be trampled under foot. Everyone was asking after the wonderful Nightingale which all the world knew of, except those at Court.

At last they met a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said, 'Oh! I know the Nightingale well. How she sings! I have permission to carry the scraps over from the Court meals to my poor sick mother, and when I am going home at night, tired and weary, and rest for a little in the wood,

then I hear the Nightingale singing! It brings tears to my eyes, and I feel as if my mother were kissing me!’

‘Little kitchenmaid!’ said the First Lord, ‘I will give you a place in the kitchen, and you shall have leave to see the Emperor at dinner, if you can lead us to the Nightingale, for she is invited to come to Court this evening.’

And so they all went into the wood where the Nightingale was wont to sing, and half the Court went too.

When they were on the way there they heard a cow mooing.

‘Oh!’ said the Courtiers, ‘now we have found her! What a wonderful power for such a small beast to have! I am sure we have heard her before!’

‘No; that is a cow mooing!’ said the little kitchenmaid. ‘We are still a long way off!’

Then the frogs began to croak in the marsh. ‘Splendid!’ said the chaplain. ‘Now we hear her; it sounds like a little church-bell!’

‘No, no; those are frogs!’ said the little kitchenmaid. ‘But I think we shall soon hear her now!’

Then the Nightingale began to sing.

‘There she is!’ cried the little girl. ‘Listen! She is sitting there!’ And she pointed to a little dark-grey bird up in the branches.

‘Is it possible!’ said the First Lord. ‘I should never have thought it! How ordinary she looks! She must surely have lost her feathers because she sees so many distinguished men round her!’

‘Little Nightingale,’ called out the little kitchenmaid, ‘our Gracious Emperor wants you to sing before him!’

‘With the greatest of pleasure!’ said the Nightingale; and she sang so gloriously that it was a pleasure to listen.

‘It sounds like glass bells!’ said the First Lord. ‘And look how her little throat works! It is wonderful that we have never heard her before! She will be a great success at Court.’

‘Shall I sing once more for the Emperor?’ asked the Nightingale, thinking that the Emperor was there.

‘My esteemed little Nightingale,’ said the First Lord, ‘I have the great pleasure to invite you to Court this evening, where His Gracious Imperial Highness will be enchanted with your charming song!’

‘It sounds best in the green wood,’ said the Nightingale; but still, she came gladly when she heard that the Emperor wished it. At the Palace everything was splendidly prepared. The porcelain walls and floors glittered in the light of many thousand gold lamps; the most gorgeous

flowers which tinkled out well were placed in the corridors. There was such a hurrying and draught that all the bells jingled so much that one could not hear oneself speak. In the centre of the great hall where the Emperor sat was a golden perch, on which the Nightingale sat. The whole Court was there, and the little kitchenmaid was allowed to stand behind the door, now that she was a Court-cook. Everyone was dressed in his best, and everyone was looking towards the little grey bird to whom the Emperor nodded.

The Nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the Emperor's eyes and ran down his cheeks. Then the Nightingale sang even more beautifully; it went straight to all hearts. The Emperor was so delighted that he said she should wear his gold slipper round her neck. But the Nightingale thanked him, and said she had had enough reward already. 'I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes—that is a great reward. An Emperor's tears have such power!' Then she sang again with her gloriously sweet voice.

'That is the most charming coquetry I have ever seen!' said all the ladies round. And they all took to holding water in their mouths that they might gurgle whenever anyone spoke to them. Then they thought themselves nightingales. Yes, the lackeys and chambermaids announced that they were pleased; which means a great deal, for they are the most difficult people of all to satisfy. In short, the Nightingale was a real success.

She had to stay at Court now; she had her own cage, and permission to walk out twice in the day and once at night.

She was given twelve servants, who each held a silken string which was fastened round her leg. There was little pleasure in flying about like this.

The whole town was talking about the wonderful bird, and when two people met each other one would say 'Nigh-tin,' and the other 'Gale,' and then they would both sigh and understand one another. Yes, and eleven grocer's children were called after her, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the Emperor received a large parcel on which was written 'The Nightingale.'

'Here is another new book about our famous bird!' said the Emperor.

But it was not a book, but a little mechanical toy, which lay in a box—an artificial nightingale which was like the real one, only that it was set all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. When it was wound up, it could sing the piece the real bird sang, and moved its tail up and down, and glittered with silver and gold.

'This is magnificent!' they all said, and the man who had brought the clockwork bird received on the spot the title of 'Bringer of the Imperial First Nightingale.'

'Now they must sing together; what a duet we shall have!'

And so they sang together, but their voices did not blend, for the real Nightingale sang in her way and the clockwork bird sang waltzes.

'It is not its fault!' said the bandmaster; 'it keeps very good time and is quite after my style!'

Then the artificial bird had to sing alone. It gave just as much pleasure as the real one, and then it was so much prettier to look at; it sparkled like bracelets and necklaces. Three-and-thirty times it sang the same piece without being tired. People would like to have heard it again, but the Emperor thought that the living Nightingale should sing now—but where was she? No one had noticed that she had flown out of the open window away to her green woods.

'What *shall* we do!' said the Emperor.

And all the Court scolded, and said that the Nightingale was very ungrateful. 'But we have still the best bird!' they said and the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time they had heard the same piece. But they did not yet know it by heart; it was much too difficult. And the bandmaster praised the bird tremendously; yes, he assured them it was better than a real nightingale, not only because of its beautiful plumage and diamonds, but inside as well. 'For see, my Lords and Ladies and your Imperial Majesty, with the real Nightingale one can never tell what will come out, but all is known about the artificial bird! You can explain it, you can open it and show people where the waltzes lie, how they go, and how one follows the other!'

'That's just what we think!' said everyone; and the bandmaster received permission to show the bird to the people the next Sunday. They should hear it sing, commanded the Emperor. And they heard it, and they were as pleased as if they had been intoxicated with tea, after the fashion, and they all said 'Oh!' and held up their forefingers and nodded time. But the poor fishermen who had heard the real Nightingale said: 'This one sings well enough, the tunes glide out; but there is something wanting—I don't know what!'

The real Nightingale was banished from the kingdom.

The artificial bird was put on silken cushions by the Emperor's bed, all the presents which it received, gold and precious stones, lay round it, and it was given the title of Imperial Night-singer, First from the left. For the Emperor counted that side as the more distinguished, being the side on which the heart is; the Emperor's heart is also on the left.

And the bandmaster wrote a work of twenty-five volumes about the artificial bird. It was so learned and long that everyone said they had read it and understood it; for once they had been very stupid about a book, and had been trampled under foot in consequence. So a whole year passed. The Emperor and all the Court knew every note of the artificial bird's song by heart. But they liked it all the better for this; they could even sing with it, and they did. The street boys sang 'Tra-la-la-la-la,' and the Emperor sang too sometimes. It was indeed delightful.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the Emperor lay in bed listening to it, something in the bird went crack. Something snapped! Whir-r-r! all the wheels ran down and then the music ceased. The Emperor sprang up, and had his physician summoned, but what could *he* do! Then the clockmaker came, and, after a great deal of talking and examining, he put the bird somewhat in order, but he said that it must be very seldom used as the works were nearly worn out, and it was impossible to put in new ones. Here was a calamity!

Only once a year was the artificial bird allowed to sing, and even that was almost too much for it. But then the bandmaster made a little speech full of hard words, saying that it was just as good as before. And so, of course, it was just as good as before. So five years passed, and then a great sorrow came to the nation. The Emperor was ill, and not likely to live, it was said.

Already a new Emperor had been chosen.

Cold and pale lay the Emperor in his splendid great bed; the whole Court believed him dead, and one after the other left him to pay their respects to the new Emperor. Everywhere in the halls and corridors cloth was laid down so that no footstep could be heard, and everything was still—very, very still. And nothing came to break the silence.

The Emperor longed for something to come and relieve the monotony of this deathlike stillness. If only someone would speak to him! If only someone would sing to him. Music would carry his thoughts away, and would break the spell lying on him. The moon was streaming in at the open window; but that, too, was silent, quite silent.

‘Music! music!’ cried the Emperor. ‘You little bright golden bird, sing! do sing! I gave you gold and jewels; I have hung my gold slipper round your neck with my own hand—sing! do sing!’ But the bird was silent. There was no one to wind it up, and so it could not sing. And all was silent, so terribly silent!

All at once there came in at the window the most glorious burst of song. It was the little living Nightingale, who, sitting outside on a bough, had heard the need of her Emperor and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. And as she sang the blood flowed quicker and quicker in the Emperor’s weak limbs, and life began to return.

‘Thank you, thank you!’ said the Emperor. ‘You divine little bird! I know you. I chased you from my kingdom, and you have given me life again! How can I reward you?’

‘You have done that already!’ said the Nightingale. ‘I brought tears to your eyes the first time I sang. I shall never forget that. They are jewels that rejoice a singer’s heart. But now sleep and get strong again; I will sing you a lullaby.’ And the Emperor fell into a deep, calm sleep as she sang.

The true Nightingale sings to the Emperor.

The sun was shining through the window when he awoke, strong and well. None of his servants had come back yet, for they thought he was dead. But the Nightingale sat and sang to him.

‘You must always stay with me!’ said the Emperor. ‘You shall sing whenever you like, and I will break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces.’

‘Don’t do that!’ said the Nightingale. ‘He did his work as long as he could. Keep him as you have done! I cannot build my nest in the Palace and live here; but let me come whenever I like. I will sit in the evening on the bough outside the window, and I will sing you something that will make you feel happy and grateful. I will sing of joy, and of sorrow; I will sing of the evil and the good

which lies hidden from you. The little singing-bird flies all around, to the poor fisherman's hut, to the farmer's cottage, to all those who are far away from you and your Court. I love your heart more than your crown. Now I will sing to you again; but you must promise me one thing——'

'Anything!' said the Emperor, standing up in his Imperial robes, which he had himself put on, and fastening on his sword richly embossed with gold.

'One thing I beg of you! Don't tell anyone that you have a little bird who tells you everything. It will be much better not to!' Then the Nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look at their dead Emperor.

The Emperor said, 'Good-morning!'

13. RUMPLESTILTZKIN

Book: *The Blue Fairy Book*

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: German

There was once upon a time a poor miller who had a very beautiful daughter. Now it happened one day that he had an audience with the King, and in order to appear a person of some importance he told him that he had a daughter who could spin straw into gold. "Now that's a talent worth having," said the King to the miller; "if your daughter is as clever as you say, bring her to my palace to-morrow, and I'll put her to the test." When the girl was brought to him he led her into a room full of straw, gave her a spinning-wheel and spindle, and said: "Now set to work and spin all night till early dawn, and if by that time you haven't spun the straw into gold you shall die." Then he closed the door behind him and left her alone inside.

So the poor miller's daughter sat down, and didn't know what in the world she was to do. She hadn't the least idea of how to spin straw into gold, and became at last so miserable that she began to cry. Suddenly the door opened, and in stepped a tiny little man and said: "Good-evening, Miss Miller-maid; why are you crying so bitterly?" "Oh!" answered the girl, "I have to spin straw into gold, and haven't a notion how it's done." "What will you give me if I spin it for you?" asked the manikin. "My necklace," replied the girl. The little man took the necklace, sat himself down at the wheel, and whir, whir, whir, the wheel went round three times, and the bobbin was full. Then he put on another, and whir, whir, whir, the wheel went round three times, and the second too was full; and so it went on till the morning, when all the straw was spun away, and all the bobbins were full of gold. As soon as the sun rose the King came, and when he perceived the gold he was astonished and delighted, but his heart only lusted more than ever after the precious metal. He had the miller's daughter put into another room full of straw, much

bigger than the first, and bade her, if she valued her life, spin it all into gold before the following morning. The girl didn't know what to do, and began to cry; then the door opened as before, and the tiny little man appeared and said: "What'll you give me if I spin the straw into gold for you?" "The ring from my finger," answered the girl. The manikin took the ring, and whir! round went the spinning-wheel again, and when morning broke he had spun all the straw into glittering gold. The King was pleased beyond measure at the sights but his greed for gold was still not satisfied, and he had the miller's daughter brought into a yet bigger room full of straw, and said: "You must spin all this away in the night; but if you succeed this time you shall become my wife." "She's only a miller's daughter, it's true," he thought; "but I couldn't find a richer wife if I were to search the whole world over." When the girl was alone the little man appeared for the third time, and said: "What'll you give me if I spin the straw for you once again?" "I've nothing more to give," answered the girl. "Then promise me when you are Queen to give me your first child." "Who knows what may not happen before that?" thought the miller's daughter; and besides, she saw no other way out of it, so she promised the manikin what he demanded, and he set to work once more and spun the straw into gold. When the King came in the morning, and found everything as he had desired, he straightway made her his wife, and the miller's daughter became a queen.

When a year had passed a beautiful son was born to her, and she thought no more of the little man, till all of a sudden one day he stepped into her room and said: "Now give me what you promised." The Queen was in a great state, and offered the little man all the riches in her kingdom if he would only leave her the child. But the manikin said: "No, a living creature is dearer to me than all the treasures in the world." Then the Queen began to cry and sob so bitterly that the little man was sorry for her, and said: "I'll give you three days to guess my name, and if you find it out in that time you may keep your child."

Then the Queen pondered the whole night over all the names she had ever heard, and sent a messenger to scour the land, and to pick up far and near any names he could come across. When the little man arrived on the following day she began with Kasper, Melchior, Belshazzar, and all the other names she knew, in a string, but at each one the manikin called out: "That's not my name." The next day she sent to inquire the names of all the people in the neighborhood, and had a long list of the most uncommon and extraordinary for the little man when he made his appearance. "Is your name, perhaps, Sheepshanks Cruickshanks, Spindleshanks?" but he always replied: "That's not my name." On the third day the messenger returned and announced: "I have not been able to find any new names, but as I came upon a high hill round the corner of the wood, where the foxes and hares bid each other good-night, I saw a little house, and in front of the house burned a fire, and round the fire sprang the most grotesque little man, hopping on one leg and crying:

*"To-morrow I brew, to-day I bake,
And then the child away I'll take;
For little deems my royal dame
That Rumpelstiltzkin is my name!"*

You can imagine the Queen's delight at hearing the name, and when the little man stepped in shortly afterward and asked: "Now, my lady Queen, what's my name?" she asked first: "Is your name Conrad?" "No." "Is your name Harry?" "No." "Is your name perhaps, Rumpelstilzkin?" "Some spirit has told you that! some demon has told you that!" screamed the little man, and in his rage drove his right foot so far into the ground that it sank in up to his waist; then in a passion he seized the left foot with both hands and tore himself in two.

14. URASHIMA TARO AND THE TURTLE

Book: *The Pink Fairy Book*

Editor: Andrew Lang

Origin: Japanese

There was once a worthy old couple who lived on the coast, and supported themselves by fishing. They had only one child, a son, who was their pride and joy, and for his sake they were ready to work hard all day long, and never felt tired or discontented with their lot. This son's name was Urashima Taro, which means in Japanese, 'Son of the island,' and he was a fine well-grown youth and a good fisherman, minding neither wind nor weather. Not the bravest sailor in the whole village dared venture so far out to sea as Urashima Taro, and many a time the neighbours used to shake their heads and say to his parents, 'If your son goes on being so rash, one day he will try his luck once too often, and the waves will end by swallowing him up.' But Urashima Taro paid no heed to these remarks, and as he was really very clever in managing a boat, the old people were very seldom anxious about him.

One beautiful bright morning, as he was hauling his well-filled nets into the boat, he saw lying among the fishes a tiny little turtle. He was delighted with his prize, and threw it into a wooden vessel to keep till he got home, when suddenly the turtle found its voice, and tremblingly begged for its life. 'After all,' it said, 'what good can I do you? I am so young and small, and I would so gladly live a little longer. Be merciful and set me free, and I shall know how to prove my gratitude.'

Now Urashima Taro was very good-natured, and besides, he could never bear to say no, so he picked up the turtle, and put it back into the sea.

Years flew by, and every morning Urashima Taro sailed his boat into the deep sea. But one day as he was making for a little bay between some rocks, there arose a fierce whirlwind, which shattered his boat to pieces, and she was sucked under by the waves. Urashima Taro himself very nearly shared the same fate. But he was a powerful swimmer, and struggled hard to reach the shore. Then he saw a large turtle coming towards him, and above the howling of the storm he heard what it said: 'I am the turtle whose life you once saved. I will now pay my debt and

show my gratitude. The land is still far distant, and without my help you would never get there. Climb on my back, and I will take you where you will.' Urashima Taro did not wait to be asked twice, and thankfully accepted his friend's help. But scarcely was he seated firmly on the shell, when the turtle proposed that they should not return to the shore at once, but go under the sea, and look at some of the wonders that lay hidden there.

Urashima Taro agreed willingly, and in another moment they were deep, deep down, with fathoms of blue water above their heads. Oh, how quickly they darted through the still, warm sea! The young man held tight, and marvelled where they were going and how long they were to travel, but for three days they rushed on, till at last the turtle stopped before a splendid palace, shining with gold and silver, crystal and precious stones, and decked here and there with branches of pale pink coral and glittering pearls. But if Urashima Taro was astonished at the beauty of the outside, he was struck dumb at the sight of the hall within, which was lighted by the blaze of fish scales.

'Where have you brought me?' he asked his guide in a low voice.

'To the palace of Ringu, the house of the sea god, whose subjects we all are,' answered the turtle. 'I am the first waiting maid of his daughter, the lovely princess Otohime, whom you will shortly see.'

Urashima Taro was still so puzzled with the adventures that had befallen him, that he waited in a dazed condition for what would happen next. But the turtle, who had talked so much of him to the princess that she had expressed a wish to see him, went at once to make known his arrival. And directly the princess beheld him her heart was set on him, and she begged him to stay with her, and in return promised that he should never grow old, neither should his beauty fade. 'Is not that reward enough?' she asked, smiling, looking all the while as fair as the sun itself. And Urashima Taro said 'Yes,' and so he stayed there. For how long? That he only knew later.

His life passed by, and each hour seemed happier than the last, when one day there rushed over him a terrible longing to see his parents. He fought against it hard, knowing how it would grieve the princess, but it grew on him stronger and stronger, till at length he became so sad that the princess inquired what was wrong. Then he told her of the longing he had to visit his old home, and that he must see his parents once more. The princess was almost frozen with horror, and implored him to stay with her, or something dreadful would be sure to happen. 'You will never come back, and we shall meet again no more,' she moaned bitterly. But Urashima Taro stood firm and repeated, 'Only this once will I leave you, and then will I return to your side for ever.' Sadly the princess shook her head, but she answered slowly, 'One way there is to bring you safely back, but I fear you will never agree to the conditions of the bargain.'

'I will do anything that will bring me back to you,' exclaimed Urashima Taro, looking at her tenderly, but the princess was silent: she knew too well that when he left her she would see his face no more. Then she took from a shelf a tiny golden box, and gave it to Urashima Taro, praying him to keep it carefully, and above all things never to open it. 'If you can do this,' she said as she bade him farewell, 'your friend the turtle will meet you at the shore, and will carry you back to me.'

Urashima Taro thanked her from his heart, and swore solemnly to do her bidding. He hid the box safely in his garments, seated himself on the back of the turtle, and vanished in the ocean path, waving his hand to the princess. Three days and three nights they swam through the sea, and at length Urashima Taro arrived at the beach which lay before his old home. The turtle bade him farewell, and was gone in a moment.

Urashima Taro drew near to the village with quick and joyful steps. He saw the smoke curling through the roof, and the thatch where green plants had thickly sprouted. He heard the children shouting and calling, and from a window that he passed came the twang of the koto, and everything seemed to cry a welcome for his return. Yet suddenly he felt a pang at his heart as he wandered down the street. After all, everything was changed. Neither men nor houses were those he once knew. Quickly he saw his old home; yes, it was still there, but it had a strange look. Anxiously he knocked at the door, and asked the woman who opened it after his parents. But she did not know their names, and could give him no news of them.

Still more disturbed, he rushed to the burying ground, the only place that could tell him what he wished to know. Here at any rate he would find out what it all meant. And he was right. In a moment he stood before the grave of his parents, and the date written on the stone was almost exactly the date when they had lost their son, and he had forsaken them for the Daughter of the Sea. And so he found that since he had left his home, three hundred years had passed by.

Shuddering with horror at his discovery he turned back into the village street, hoping to meet some one who could tell him of the days of old. But when the man spoke, he knew he was not dreaming, though he felt as if he had lost his senses.

In despair he bethought him of the box which was the gift of the princess. Perhaps after all this dreadful thing was not true. He might be the victim of some enchanter's spell, and in his hand lay the counter-charm. Almost unconsciously he opened it, and a purple vapour came pouring out. He held the empty box in his hand, and as he looked he saw that the fresh hand of youth had grown suddenly shrivelled, like the hand of an old, old man. He ran to the brook, which flowed in a clear stream down from the mountain, and saw himself reflected as in a mirror. It was the face of a mummy which looked back at him. Wounded to death, he crept back through the village, and no man knew the old, old man to be the strong handsome youth who had run down the street an hour before. So he toiled wearily back, till he reached the shore, and here he sat sadly on a rock, and called loudly on the turtle. But she never came back any more, but instead, death came soon, and set him free. But before that happened, the people who saw him sitting lonely on the shore had heard his story, and when their children were restless they used to tell them of the good son who from love to his parents had given up for their sakes the splendour and wonders of the palace in the sea, and the most beautiful woman in the world besides.

15. HOW THE CAMEL GOT HIS HUMP

Book: *Just So Stories*

Author: Rudyard Kipling

Origin: English

In the beginning of years, when the world was so new and all, and the Animals were just beginning to work for Man, there was a Camel, and he lived in the middle of a Howling Desert because he did not want to work; and besides, he was a Howler himself. So he ate sticks and thorns and tamarisks and milkweed and prickles, most 'scruciating idle; and when anybody spoke to him he said 'Humph!' Just 'Humph!' and no more.

Presently the Horse came to him on Monday morning, with a saddle on his back and a bit in his mouth, and said, 'Camel, O Camel, come out and trot like the rest of us.'

'Humph!' said the Camel; and the Horse went away and told the Man.

Presently the Dog came to him, with a stick in his mouth, and said, 'Camel, O Camel, come and fetch and carry like the rest of us.'

'Humph!' said the Camel; and the Dog went away and told the Man.

Presently the Ox came to him, with the yoke on his neck and said, 'Camel, O Camel, come and plough like the rest of us.'

'Humph!' said the Camel; and the Ox went away and told the Man.

At the end of the day the Man called the Horse and the Dog and the Ox together, and said, 'Three, O Three, I'm very sorry for you (with the world so new-and-all); but that Humph-thing in the Desert can't work, or he would have been here by now, so I am going to leave him alone, and you must work double-time to make up for it.'

That made the Three very angry (with the world so new-and-all), and they held a palaver, and an *indaba*, and a *punchayet*, and a pow-wow on the edge of the Desert; and the Camel came chewing on milkweed most 'scruciating idle, and laughed at them. Then he said 'Humph!' and went away again.

Presently there came along the Djinn in charge of All Deserts, rolling in a cloud of dust (Djinns always travel that way because it is Magic), and he stopped to palaver and pow-pow with the Three.

'Djinn of All Deserts,' said the Horse, 'is it right for any one to be idle, with the world so new-and-all?'

'Certainly not,' said the Djinn.

'Well,' said the Horse, 'there's a thing in the middle of your Howling Desert (and he's a Howler himself) with a long neck and long legs, and he hasn't done a stroke of work since Monday morning. He won't trot.'

'Whew!' said the Djinn, whistling, 'that's my Camel, for all the gold in Arabia! What does he say about it?'

'He says "Humph!"' said the Dog; 'and he won't fetch and carry.'

'Does he say anything else?'

'Only "Humph!"; and he won't plough,' said the Ox.

'Very good,' said the Djinn. 'I'll humph him if you will kindly wait a minute.'

The Djinn rolled himself up in his dust-cloak, and took a bearing across the desert, and found the Camel most 'scruciatingly idle, looking at his own reflection in a pool of water.

'My long and bubbling friend,' said the Djinn, 'what's this I hear of your doing no work, with the world so new-and-all?'

'Humph!' said the Camel.

The Djinn sat down, with his chin in his hand, and began to think a Great Magic, while the Camel looked at his own reflection in the pool of water.

'You've given the Three extra work ever since Monday morning, all on account of your 'scruciating idleness,' said the Djinn; and he went on thinking Magics, with his chin in his hand.

'Humph!' said the Camel.

'I shouldn't say that again if I were you,' said the Djinn; 'you might say it once too often. Bubbles, I want you to work.'

And the Camel said 'Humph!' again; but no sooner had he said it than he saw his back, that he was so proud of, puffing up and puffing up into a great big lolloping humph.

'Do you see that?' said the Djinn. 'That's your very own humph that you've brought upon your very own self by not working. To-day is Thursday, and you've done no work since Monday, when the work began. Now you are going to work.'

'How can I,' said the Camel, 'with this humph on my back?'

'That's made a-purpose,' said the Djinn, 'all because you missed those three days. You will be able to work now for three days without eating, because you can live on your humph; and don't you ever say I never did anything for you. Come out of the Desert and go to the Three, and behave. Humph yourself!'

And the Camel humphed himself, humph and all, and went away to join the Three. And from that day to this the Camel always wears a humph (we call it 'hump' now, not to hurt his feelings); but he has never yet caught up with the three days that he missed at the beginning of the world, and he has never yet learned how to behave.