

Snow White

A very long time ago, in midwinter, when the snowflakes were falling like feathers from heaven, a beautiful queen sat sewing at her window, which had a frame of black ebony. As she worked, she looked sometimes at the falling snow, and it happened that she pricked her finger with her needle, so that three drops of blood fell upon the snow. How pretty the red blood looked upon the dazzling white! The queen said to herself as she looked it, “Ah me! If only I had a dear little child who had skin as white as the snow, lips as rosy as the blood, and hair as black as the ebony window frame.”

Soon afterwards she had a little daughter, with skin white as snow, lips rosy as blood, and hair as black as ebony – and she was therefore called “Little Snow White.”

But alas! When the little one was born, the good queen died.

A year passed by, and the king took another wife. She was a beautiful woman, but proud and haughty, and she could not bear that anyone else should surpass her in beauty. She had a mirror and when she stood in front of it and asked:

“Mirror, mirror upon the wall, who is the fairest of us all?”

The mirror answered, “Thou, O Queen, art the fairest of all,” and the queen was contented, because she knew the mirror could speak nothing but the truth.

But as time passed on, Little Snow White grew more and more beautiful. When she was seven years old, she was as lovely as the bright day, and still more lovely than the queen herself, so that when the lady one day asked her mirror, "Mirror, mirror upon the wall, who is the fairest of us all?"

It answered, "O Lady Queen, though fair ye be, Snow White is fairer far to see."

The queen was shocked, and grew yellow and green with envy, and from that moment envy and pride grew in her heart like rank weeds, so that she had no peace day or night, until one day she called a huntsman and said, "Take the child away into the woods and kill her, for I can no longer bear the sight of her. When you return, bring with you her heart, that I may know you have obeyed my will."

The huntsman dared not disobey, and he led Snow White out into the woods and placed an arrow in his bow to pierce her innocent heart, but the little girl cried and begged him saying, "Ah dear huntsman, leave me my life! I will run away into the wild forest, and never come home again."

And as she was so beautiful the huntsman had pity on her and said, "Run away then, you poor child." While to himself he thought, "The wild beasts will soon have devoured you," and yet it seemed as if a stone had been rolled from his heart since he no longer had to kill her.

The Golden Fish

There was once a fisherman who lived with his wife in a pigsty, close by the seaside. The fisherman used to go out all day long a-fishing; and one day, as he sat on the shore with his rod, looking at the sparkling waves and watching his line, all of a sudden his float was dragged away deep into the water. When he reeled in his line, he pulled out a golden fish. But the fish said, "Pray let me live! I am not a real fish. I am an enchanted prince. Put me in the water again, and let me go!"

"Oh, ho!" Said the man. "You need not go on much more about the matter. I will have nothing to do with a fish that can talk, so swim away, sir, as soon as you please!" Then he put him back into the water, and the fish darted straight down to the bottom, and left a long streak of blood behind him on the wave.

When the fisherman went home to his wife in the pigsty, he told her how he had caught a golden fish, and how it had told him it was an enchanted prince, and how, on hearing it speak, he had let it go again. "Did not you ask it for anything?" Said the wife. "We live very wretchedly here, in this nasty dirty pigsty. Do go back and tell the fish we want a snug little cottage."

The fisherman did not much like the business - however, he went to the seashore, and when he got back there the water looked all yellow and green. He stood at the water's edge, and said,

"O man of the sea!

Hearken to me!

My wife Ilsabill

Will have her own will,

And hath sent me to beg a gift of thee!"

Then the fish came swimming to him and said, "Well, what is her will? What does your wife want?"

"Ah!" Said the fisherman. "She says that when I caught you, I ought to have asked you for something before I let you go. She does not like living any longer in the pigsty, and wants a snug little cottage."

"Go home then," said the fish, "she is in the cottage already!" So the man went home, and saw his wife standing at the door of a nice trim little cottage.

Sleeping Beauty

Once upon a time, there lived a King and a Queen, who said every day: "If only we had a child!" After many years, their wish came true, and a baby girl was born. Oh, how happy they were!

They shared their joy by inviting seven wise fairies to the palace. When the fairies sat down to eat, they each found a gift made of gold by the side of their plate.

Now there was one other fairy whose magic was more powerful than all the wise ones put together. Unfortunately, this fairy had an evil heart. When she heard of the celebrations for the baby princess, and found out that she had not been invited, she took great offence. Towards the end of the evening, each of the wise fairies gave a magical gift to the baby princess.

The first wished her the gift of reason.

The second wished her the gift of beauty.

The third wished her the gift of grace.

The fourth wished her the gift of music.

The fifth wished her the gift of dance.

The sixth wished her the gift of ...

Well, we do not know what gift she would have wished for, because at that moment the Evil Fairy appeared in the centre of the great hall, her mouth fixed in a false smile, and her eyes delighting in spite.

"Do forgive me for dropping by uninvited," she said, "I will not keep you for long. I have come to wish my own gift upon the baby princess."

While the Evil Fairy held everyone's attention, the seventh good fairy hid behind the curtains.

The wicked one continued: "I do so wish that the dear little princess shall grow up to be a radiant, accomplished and beautiful girl of sixteen years, the delight of her parents' eyes, and then, on her

seventeenth birthday, she shall prick her finger on the needle of a spinning wheel and DIE! How do you like that? Ha haha!”

Still laughing dreadfully, she strode from the hall. Amid the uproar, the seventh wise fairy stepped out of hiding and waved her wand to cast the spell of silence.

“There remains a seventh and final wish that is mine to make,” she said. “It is not in my power to entirely overcome the evil wish, but I can at least do this -when the princess pricks her finger, let her not die, but fall asleep for 100 years until she is awoken by true love’s kiss.”

The very next day the King passed a law forbidding anyone in the land from owning a spinning wheel. After that, no one ever spoke of the ill fated banquet. The child, whose name was Talia, grew up to be as talented as she was beautiful. But she was also strong headed, and when, on her seventeenth birthday, the King and Queen forbade her to leave her room, she disobeyed them. She climbed out of her window to avoid the guard on the door, and walked around the grounds of the palace.